

# 02112



ARKANSAS  
HISTORIC  
PRESERVATION  
PROGRAM

April 21, 2000

Carol D. Shull  
Chief of Registration  
United State Department of the Interior  
National Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service  
800 North Capitol Street, Suite 250  
Washington, D.C. 20002

RE: U.S. 63 Black River Bridge – Black Rock, Lawrence County

Dear Carol:

We are enclosing for your review the nomination of the above-referenced property. The Arkansas Historic Preservation Program has complied with all applicable nominating procedures and notification requirements in the nomination process.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Cathy", is written over the typed name of the sender.

Cathy Buford Slater  
State Historic Preservation Officer

CBS:km

Enclosures

1500 Tower Building • 323 Center • Little Rock, Arkansas 72201 • Phone (501) 324-9880  
Fax (501) 324-9184 • TDD (501) 324-9811  
A Division of the Department of Arkansas Heritage



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DIVISION

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name U.S. 63 Black River Bridge

other names/site number LW0079

2. Location

street & number U.S. Highway 63  not for publication

city or town Black Rock  vicinity

state Arkansas Code AR county Lawrence code 075 zip code 72415

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Catherine A. Slater  
Signature of certifying official/Title

4-17-00  
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See Continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

entered in the National Register.

See continuation sheet

determined eligible for the National Register.

See continuation sheet

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

U.S. 63 Black River Bridge

Name of Property

Lawrence Co., Arkansas

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Choose as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Choose only one box)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in count.)

- Ownership and Category checkboxes: private, public-local, public-State, public-Federal, building(s), district, site, structure, object.

Table with 2 columns: Contributing, Noncontributing. Rows for buildings, sites, structures, objects, and Total.

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Historic Bridges of Arkansas

Number of Contributing resources previously listed
in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION: Road-related (vehicular)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION: Road-related (vehicular)

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: Warren truss with verticals, open spandrel
arch, deck truss bridge

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Steel

roof N/A

other N/A

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property.)

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET.

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property  
For National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** moved from its original location.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Levels of Significance** (local, state, national)

LOCAL

**Areas of Significance** (enter categories from instructions)

ENGINEERING

**Period of Significance**

1949-1950

**Significant Dates**

1949

**Significant Person** (Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation** (Complete if Criterion D is marked)

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

BUILDER(S): Maxwell Construction Company

S.M. Dixon Company

Massman Construction Company

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property.)

**SEE CONTINUATION SHEET.**

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department (Environmental Division). *Arkansas Historic Bridge Review and Evaluation: Volume I (December 1987) and Volume II (April 1996)*. Little Rock, AR: no publisher.

Arkansas Highway Department. "OASIS INQUIRY – Bridge 2112." (database). 2000.

Arkansas Historic Preservation Program. "Bridges to the Past." (brochure). 1999.

Comp, Allan, and Donald Jackson. "Technical Leaflet 95: Bridge Truss Types: A Guide to Dating and Identifying." American Association for State and Local History, 1977.

Johnson, A. B. To F.R. Oliver. 15 November 1948. Letter in possession of the Arkansas Highway Department (Record Room – Job 10311).

Zass, W. W. To F.R. Oliver. 17 May 1947. Letter in possession of the Arkansas Highway Department (Record Room – Job 10311).

\_\_\_\_\_. To Oliver. 2 September 1947. Letter in possession of the Arkansas Highway Department (Record Room – Job 10311).

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- Previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreeage of Property** Less than six acres

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references.)

1    15        671750        3996270  
   Zone        Easting        Northing

2    \_\_\_\_\_        \_\_\_\_\_        \_\_\_\_\_

3    \_\_\_\_\_        \_\_\_\_\_        \_\_\_\_\_  
   Zone        Easting        Northing

4    \_\_\_\_\_        \_\_\_\_\_        \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

U.S. 63 Black River Bridge  
Name of Property

Lawrence Co., Arkansas  
County and State

**Verbal Boundary Description**  
(Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Section - 21, Township - 17N, Range - 01E

Beginning at a point 30 feet southeast and 30 feet northeast of the east corner of the bridge proceed southwest approximately 92.3 feet crossing U.S. Highway 63 (at this point you will be approximately 30 feet southeast and 30 feet southwest from the south corner of the bridge). Turning northwest, proceed approximately 2,668 feet, running parallel to the southwest side of the bridge, while crossing the Black River. Turning northeast proceed approximately 92.3 feet crossing U.S. Highway 63 to a point approximately 30 feet northwest and northeast of the north corner of the bridge. Turning southeast proceed approximately 2,668 feet, running parallel to the northeast side of the bridge, while crossing the Black River and returning to the point of origin.

**Boundary Justification**  
(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

This boundary has been established to isolate the bridge, abutments, and piers, all of which are historically associated with this resource and maintain their integrity. Also included in the boundary is the immediate setting extending 30 feet southeast, southwest, northwest, and northeast of the body of the bridge.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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name/title Kara Mills, National Register/Survey Coordinator  
organization Arkansas Historic Preservation Program date April 1, 2000  
street & number 1500 Tower Building, 323 Center Street telephone (501) 324-9880  
city or town Little Rock state Arkansas zip code 72201

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

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### SUMMARY

The U.S. 63 Black River Bridge is located at the crossing of the Black River, on U.S. Highway 63 as you enter the town of Black Rock, Arkansas. Comprised of twelve spans measuring up to 280 feet each, this steel, deck truss, Warren truss with verticals, open spandrel arch bridge spans a total of 2,608 feet. The U.S. 63 Bridge over the Black River is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C for its distinctive type and method of construction.

### ELABORATION

The steel, deck truss, Warren truss bridge is accessed from both the southeast and northwest ends by U.S. Highway 63. Because it is a deck truss, this bridge carries its traffic load level with the top chords. There are 23 approach spans that lead up to this steel bridge, with Warren trusses, vertical supports, and open spandrel arches. The section of the bridge being supported by the Warren truss consists of 12 spans, each measuring approximately 280 feet at the maximum span length, with a total structure length of 2,608 feet. The travel surface is 26 feet wide with an overall width of 32.3 feet. The deck surface is concrete laid over the steel truss. The bridge supports are reinforced concrete and the Warren trusses with verticals runs the entire length of twelve spans of the bridge on the northwest and southeast sides. The Warren truss with verticals is designed to allow the diagonals to carry both compressive and tensile forces, with the verticals serving as bracing for the triangular web system. The Warren truss also displays a total of four open spandrel arches – two larger arches flanked by two smaller arches.

### Integrity

No structural alterations have been made to the bridge to alter its integrity. Its location and setting remains rural and it exemplifies its original historic design and materials. No changes have been made to alter the historic workmanship or detract from its feeling or association as it is still used as a bridge for vehicular travel.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 1

### SUMMARY

Constructed in 1949, the U.S. 63 Bridge over the Black River is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places with local significance under Criterion C because it embodies the distinctive characteristics of a Warren truss with verticals, open spandrel arch, deck truss bridge and is the best example of this design in the surrounding area. This bridge is significant in the area of engineering and is being submitted under the multiple property listing "Historic Bridges of Arkansas" and under the associated historic context "Post WWII Era."

### ELABORATION

According to Allan Comp, Senior Historian and Donald Jackson, Civil Engineer (HAER), the Warren truss design dates back to the 1840s. During the late part of the nineteenth century different styles of trusses were developed but it was the Pratt and the Warren designs that gradually demonstrated their versatility, durability, and economic desirability. Because of the success of both bridge designs, nearly all bridge trusses in the twentieth century were constructed using variations of these forms; and so it is not surprising that the U.S. 63 Bridge over the Black River is a Warren truss with verticals, open spandrel arch, deck truss bridge.

The U.S. 63 Bridge spanning the Black River underwent three phases of construction by three different companies. The State Highway Commission issued notices in the *Arkansas Gazette*, *Arkansas Democrat*, and *The Construction News* to advertise to contractors that proposals for constructing the U.S. 63 Bridge were being accepted. The first contract was let to the Maxwell Construction Company from Columbus, Kansas for the constructions of the piers for the bridge. The second contract was awarded to the S.M. Dixon Company from Warren, Arkansas in 1941 for the construction of the approach spans. After the project was underway it was stopped due to the unattainability of necessary construction materials as a direct result of World War II. The final contract was issued in 1947 to the Massman Construction Company from Kansas City, Missouri, who submitted a bid of \$672,441.50, which was for the construction of the bridge itself.

On June 16, 1948 the Massman Construction Company began working on the U.S. 63 Bridge in an effort to complete work started by earlier companies. During the process of completing the bridge, James Parell a structural ironworker fell to his death while working on the bridge during the Fall of 1948. The construction of the Black Rock Bridge was a project of the State Highway Commission and the Federal Works Agency Public Roads Administration.

### Significance

This bridge is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places with **local significance** under **Criterion C** because it is the best example of a Warren truss with verticals, open spandrel arch, deck truss bridge in this area. This bridge is significant in the area of engineering and is being submitted under the **multiple property listing** "Historic Bridges of Arkansas" and under the associated **historic context** "Post WWII Era."

7256 11 NW  
(IMBODEN)

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

US 63 Black River Bridge  
Black Rock, Lawrence Co., AR  
UTM Reference: 15/671750/399627

