

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 of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Columbus Loup River Bridge  
other name/site number NEHBS Number PT00-68

### 2. Location

street & number U.S. Highway 30 over the Loup River  
city, town south edge of Columbus  
state NE county Platte code 141 N/A not for publication  
N/A vicinity  
zip code 68601

### 3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Nebraska Department of Roads	Number of Resources within Property	
Category of Property	structure	Contributing	Noncontributing
		0	0 buildings
		0	0 sites
		1	0 structures
		0	0 objects
		1	0 Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0  
Name of related multiple property listing: Highway Bridges in Nebraska, 1870-1942

### 4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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 forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register Criteria.

*Bob Puschendorf DSHPS*  
Signature of certifying official \_\_\_\_\_ Date 5/6/99  
*Nebraska State Historical Society*  
State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register Criteria.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

### 5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this 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 \_\_\_\_\_

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**6. Function or Use**

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Historic Function (enter categories from instructions)  
TRANSPORTATION/road-related

Current Function (enter categories from instructions)  
TRANSPORTATION/road-related

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**7. Description**

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Architectural Classification (enter categories from instructions)  
OTHER /rigid-connected Parker through truss

Materials (enter categories from instructions)  
foundation N/A  
walls N/A  
roof N/A  
other N/A

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Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Columbus Loup River Bridge spans the Loup River on the southern edge of Columbus. Other than maintenance-related repairs, the bridge remains essentially unaltered as it continues to carry vehicular traffic. The Columbus Loup River Bridge today retains a high degree of integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. A description of the structure follows:

span number:	7	construction date:	1932-1933
span length:	160.0'	construction cost:	\$451,023.76
total length:	1270.0'	current condition:	excellent
roadway wdt.:	24.0'	alterations:	none

superstructure: steel, 8-panel, rigid-connected Parker through truss  
substructure: concrete abutments, wingwalls and piers  
floor/decking: asphalt covered concrete deck over I-beam stringers  
other features: upper chord: 2 channels with cover plates and lacing; lower chord: 2 channels with batten plates; vertical: 2 channels with batten plates; diagonal: 2 angles with batten plates, two angles with lacing; strut: 2 angles with lacing; lateral bracing: angles; guardrail: steel with concrete curbing.

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## 8. Statement of Significance

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Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

	statewide
Applicable National Register Criteria	C
Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)	N/A
Areas of Significance	Engineering
Period of Significance	1932-33 (The period of significance is derived from the original construction date.)
Significant Dates	1932-33
Cultural Affiliation	N/A
Significant Person	N/A
Architect/Builder (Designer)	Nebraska Bureau of Roads and Bridges
(Fabricator)	Omaha Steel Works, Omaha NE
(Builder)	Omaha Steel Works, Omaha NE

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State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations and areas of significance noted above.

Built in 1888 by the King Iron Bridge Company, the first bridge over the Loup River at its mouth, just south of Columbus was one of Nebraska's most visually striking spans, with its four 250-foot pinned through trusses and lengthy trussed approaches. The structure, combined with another multiple-span truss over the Platte River immediately south, served as a regionally important vehicular crossing, and it proved strategic in the routing of the Lincoln Highway between Fremont and Grand Island in the 1910s. By the late 1920s, however, both bridges had become liabilities. The Nebraska Bureau of Roads and Bridges replaced the Platte River bridge in 1930-31, and late in 1931 bureau engineers designed a replacement for the Loup River bridge. The new Columbus Loup River Bridge consisted of seven riveted Parker through trusses and was immense, consuming nearly 2 million pounds of superstructural steel, some 15,000 feet of steel piling and almost 2000 cubic yards of concrete. Early in 1932 the bureau awarded a construction contract for the new bridge to the Omaha Steel Company. The existing bridge was dismantled and two of the spans (NEHBS Nos. SH00-42 and SH00-43) were re-erected in Sheridan County. Omaha Steel, meanwhile, devoted over a year to fabricating and building the new bridge, completing it in mid-1933 for an overall cost of \$451,023.76, including approach grading. The structure has since carried vehicular traffic along heavily traveled U.S. Highway 30. With only minimal maintenance-related changes, the Columbus Bridge retains a high degree of physical integrity.

The state bureau of roads ordinarily eschewed truss construction in favor of steel stringers and deck girders for its multiple-span structures over the Platte and Loup Rivers. "As might be expected the steel-truss type of bridge is being used sparingly," the bureau reported in 1938, "due to the better adaptation of deck [girder] construction to the Nebraska terrain and stratigraphy." With an overall length of 1270 feet, the Columbus Loup River Bridge was one of the longest trussed crossings developed by the state bureau of roads. It is today the longest vehicular truss bridge in the state, aside from the Missouri River structures. The Columbus Loup River Bridge is technologically significant as a culmination of truss design by the Nebraska State Engineer.

For further contextual information regarding bridge building in Nebraska, registration requirements, and property types, see related multiple property listing "Highway Bridges in Nebraska, 1870 - 1942."

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**9. Major Bibliographical References**

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Nebraska Department of Roads, Structure Inventory and Appraisal: Structure Number S030 37773L; Department of Public Works, **Nineteenth Biennial Report, 1931-1932**, pp. 73, 77; Department of Roads and Irrigation, **Twentieth Biennial Report, 1933-1934**, pp. 30, 83, 96; Plans for "Special Design Class H-15, Columbus Loup River Bridge, 7-160' High Trusses and 2-75' Deck Steel Girders, 24' Roadway, Platte County - prepared by State of Nebraska, Department of Public Works, 1 December 1931; Platte County Supervisors' Record, Book 2: 2 December 1886 (pp.52-53), 14 December 1886 (pp. 56-57), 21 January 1887 (page 96), 12 December 1887 (pp. 194-195), 13 December 1887 (page 208), 7 March 1888 (page 259), 3 October 1888 (page 317); Sheridan County Commissioners Record Book E, 31 August 1933 (page 560), 16 October 1933 (page 571), 3 January 1935 (page 658); field inspection by Clayton Fraser, 16 November 1989.

\_\_\_ See continuation sheet

**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 (specify repository:)

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**10. Geographical Data**

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Acreage of Property    less than one acre  
Cadastral Reference    S30, T17N, R1E  
USGS Quadrangle        Columbus (7.5 Minute Series, 1958; photorevised 1978)  
UTM References         zone 14    easting 636405    northing 4586110

\_\_\_ See continuation sheet

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**Verbal Boundary Description**

The nominated property is a narrow, rectangular shaped parcel measuring 1270 feet by 26 feet, which is centered on the UTM point listed above. Included within this rectangular parcel are the bridge's superstructure, substructure, floor system, and approach spans.

\_\_\_ See continuation sheet

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**Boundary Justification**

The nominated structure includes the bridge's superstructure, substructure, floor system, any approach spans and the property on which they rest. These boundaries encompass, but do not exceed, all of the property that has been historically associated with this bridge.

\_\_\_ See continuation sheet

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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name/title	Clayton B. Fraser, Principal	date	30 June 1991
organization	Fraserdesign and Hess, Roise and Company	telephone	303-669-7969
street & number	1269 Cleveland Avenue	state	Colorado
city or town	Loveland	zip code	80537

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View looking southeast  
Photo by Clayton B. Fraser, 16 Nov 1989  
Original negative located at NeSHPO