

Sand Creek Tributary Stone Arch Bridge
Name of Property

Rush County, Kansas
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

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

<input type="checkbox"/>	private
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

<input type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
		buildings
		sites
1		structures
		objects
1	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Transportation: Road-Related (Vehicular)

Transportation: Road-Related (Vehicular)

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Other: Stone Arch Bridge

foundation: STONE: Limestone
walls: STONE: Limestone
roof: N/A
other: N/A

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Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources, if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary

This double-arch limestone bridge spans a branch of Sand Creek near La Crosse between Sections 19 and 20 in Township 17S, Range 18W. It is 1.4 miles north of K-4 Highway on a north-south county road (CR 230), which is 2 miles west of La Crosse. CR 230 is a gravel road maintained by Rush County, which also is responsible for the upkeep of the bridge. The bridge is virtually unaltered since its completion in 1942. A tributary of Sand Creek flows beneath the bridge during seasonal rains, but remains mostly dry otherwise.

Elaboration

The double-arch limestone bridge was built by the Works Projects Administration (WPA) in 1942 and was one of many New Deal-era projects in Rush County. This bridge includes two limestone arches between stone abutments with spandrel walls. The total length of the bridge measures 38.1 feet, and the length of the largest span is 16.1 feet. The width of the deck, from edge to edge, is 24.9 feet, and the roadway width between the curbs measures 22.0 feet.

The bridge was constructed of native limestone blocks with an unknown mortar type. The rectangular limestone blocks are of varying sizes and feature rusticated tooled faces. Many stones retain tool markings. The spandrel and railing stones are laid in a coursed ashlar pattern. The elliptical arches are formed with stones laid in a single header course with a center keystone. There is a shallow buttress between the two arches on both faces of the bridge. The color of the stones varies from a light tan to a deep golden yellow-brown, and the mortar color is tan. The stones are partially covered with black biological growth.

Original construction allowed for timber decking with sand roads meeting each apron. Guardrails are stone spandrel walls rising up on either side of the roadway. The stone rails are three courses tall and dressed with limestone caps. These are the only visible features of the bridge from the roadway. Stepped down from both ends of each side rail or wall are slightly angled wingwalls built into the roadside embankment. These are designed to protect the structure from erosion during high water events.

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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 a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

Government

Social History

Engineering

Period of Significance

1941-1964

Significant Dates

1941, 1942

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Works Projects Administration Labor

Clarence Cunningham (County Engineer)

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance begins with the construction of the bridge in 1942 and extends to 1964, the 50-year cut-off established by the National Park Service to provide sufficient passage of time to allow objective evaluation of the historic resource eligibility at the time of its listing.

Criteria Considerations (justification)

N/A

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Narrative Statement of Significance

(Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

Summary

The Sand Creek Tributary Stone Arch Bridge is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C for its local significance in the areas of government, social history, and engineering. This double-arch limestone bridge was constructed by the Works Projects Administration (WPA) in 1942 and is nominated as part of the *New Deal-Era Resources of Kansas* multiple property nomination as an example of a transportation-related property type. It also is nominated as part of the *Masonry Arch Bridges of Kansas* multiple property nomination as an example of the stone arch bridge/culvert property type. The limestone construction is typical of structures built in this area and is representative of master stone builders and the craftsmanship of construction workers trained by the WPA.

The impetus for the nomination of the Sand Creek Tributary Stone Arch Bridge was a Section 106 case that involved the demolition of the National Register-listed Rush County Line Bridge on the Rush/Russell County line. Originally scheduled for repairs, it was determined by the counties that the bridge required replacement. The proposal to demolish the Rush County Line Bridge required a permit from the Army Corps of Engineers, a federal agency. Rush County agreed to list another similar bridge in their county to mitigate for the loss of the Rush County Line Bridge.

Elaboration

Rush County History

The first Euro-American settlers arrived in the area in 1870. Rush County was organized December 5, 1874 following an act of the Kansas Legislature in 1873 to establish new legislative boundaries in the area. The county was named in honor of Captain Alexander Rush, Company H, 2nd Kansas Colored Infantry, who was killed in action on April 30, 1864 at Jenkins' Ferry, Arkansas. The first four municipal divisions of Rush County occurred in 1875 with a population of 5,490. These first townships were then divided further into eight in 1878 and then thirteen in 1880. The community of La Crosse, which is the closest incorporated community to the nominated bridge, is located in La Crosse township and developed along the Missouri Pacific Railroad that ran east-west through the area. It is the county seat of government.¹ Rush County had a population of 9,093 in 1930 and 8,285 in 1940, just two years prior to the construction of the nominated bridge.²

New Deal-era Historic Context³

The WPA was created by executive order on May 6, 1935 using 1.4 billion dollars in funding from the Emergency Relief Appropriation Act. Initially, the agency was designed as a temporary measure and funding was renewed annually. The WPA focused on employing large numbers of people through locally sponsored

¹ Frank W. Blackmar, *Kansas: A Cyclopedia of State History, vol. II* (Chicago: Standard Publishing Co., 1912), 611-613.

² Historical Census Browser (2004). Retrieved [4 December 2013], from the University of Virginia, Geospatial and Statistical Data Center: <http://mapserver.lib.virginia.edu/collections/stats/histcensus/index.html>.

³ The following historic context regarding the Works Projects Administration is included in Elizabeth Rosin's "New Deal-era Resources of Kansas" Multiple Property Document, filed at the Kansas State Historic Preservation Office, Topeka, KS: p. E-20-22.

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projects as well as through projects for state and federal agencies.⁴ Through the WPA, Kansas realized many new roads, highways and bridges. According to a 1939 report, the WPA constructed or repaired 13,706 miles of road, 567 bridges, 11,365 culverts, 112 miles of sidewalks and paths, and 175 miles of curbs, gutters and guardrails. In 1939 there were roughly 30,000 Kansans on the WPA rolls.⁵ When the federal agency closed on June 30, 1943, only 42,000 enrollees remained in the program nationwide.

Under the Reorganization Act of 1939, the agency was renamed the Works Projects Administration and was placed under the control of another new body, the Federal Works Agency. The WPA and its predecessor, the Works Progress Administration, were active in Rush County during the New Deal-era. Projects included the construction of reservoirs, bridges, improvements to the cemetery at La Crosse and the city well at Bison, and the construction of and additions/improvements to public schools.⁶

Stone Arch Bridges in Kansas⁷

Stone arch bridges and culverts were popular in Kansas for many reasons, a major one being that the stone was often available locally. Thus, a large amount of the money expended for the construction could be retained within the area than would be true with other types of structures such as metal trusses. It was also often possible to use local workers on these projects. Generally speaking, stone bridges and culverts were more expensive initially to construct than metal bridges. However, they were stronger and far better able to withstand the periodic floods than their metal counterparts.

Stone arch bridges are constructed with limestone arch rings which spring from and are disposed between abutments or piers. Limestone spandrel walls rest on these arch rings and are used to retain the earthen fill which loads the arch. This earth loading allows for even distribution of the live loads and helps strengthen the arch.

The nominated double-arch bridge was one of eight such structures constructed in Rush County. Three have been removed.

Sand Creek Tributary Stone Arch Bridge History

Few written records mention the construction of the bridge in the early 1940s. The primary newspaper published in La Crosse and Rush County during late 1941 and early 1942 was the weekly *Rush County News*. A survey of issues between November 1941 and May 1942 reveals no substantive coverage of WPA or New Deal-funded projects, or really *any* construction projects. The newspaper did note, in March 1942, a halt to all new state highway construction work in order to conserve critical war materials, but no mention was made of local projects.⁸

The only primary source information about the nominated bridge comes from the written proceedings of the Rush County Board of Commissioners. It is these minutes that record the construction of the bridge as a WPA project. At their meeting on November 10, 1941, the Board of Commissioners agreed to partner with the La Crosse Township Board to erect a bridge between Sections 19 and 20 in Township 17 South, Range 18 West. The agreement required the township to put \$600 toward the cost of the construction of the nominated bridge

⁴ Ibid., 19.

⁵ Ibid., 21. Original citation: Works Projects Administration, *Federal Works Agency*, (Topeka, KS: n.p., 1939), 1, 10. Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka, KS.

⁶ Works Progress Administration, Central Office Reference Card Location Project File, MF 6038-6042.

⁷ The following historic context regarding masonry bridges in Kansas is included in "Masonry Arch Bridges of Kansas" Multiple Property Document, filed at the Kansas State Historic Preservation Office, Topeka, KS: Section 8.

⁸ *Rush County News*, March 26, 1942 (page 6).

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and other road projects.⁹ The Rush County Board of Commissioners and the county engineer Clarence Cunningham inspected the bridge in April.¹⁰ Presumably, the bridge opened to public traffic soon after the inspection.

Summary

The Sand Creek Tributary Stone Arch Bridge is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C for its local significance in the areas of government, social history, and engineering. It is nominated as part of the *New Deal-Era Resources of Kansas* multiple property nomination as an example of a transportation-related property type. It also is nominated as part of the *Masonry Arch Bridges of Kansas* multiple property nomination as an example of the stone arch bridge/culvert property type. The limestone construction is typical of structures built in this area and is representative of master stone builders and the craftsmanship of construction workers trained by the WPA.

⁹ Rush County Board of Commissioners Proceedings, November 10, 1941. Copy filed with nomination in the Cultural Resources Division, Kansas Historical Society, Topeka, KS.

¹⁰ Rush County Board of Commissioners Proceedings, April 13, 1941. Copy filed with nomination in the Cultural Resources Division, Kansas Historical Society, Topeka, KS.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Blackmar, Frank W. *Kansas: A Cyclopedia of State History, vol. II.* Chicago: Standard Publishing Co., 1912.

Historical Census Browser (2004). Retrieved [4 December 2013], from the University of Virginia, Geospatial and Statistical Data Center: <http://mapserver.lib.virginia.edu/collections/stats/histcensus/index.html>.

Jochims, Larry. *Masonry Arch Bridges of Kansas* National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form. Topeka, KS: Kansas State Historical Society, 1985. Accessed online at: http://kshs.org/resource/national_register/MPS/Masonry_Arch_Bridges_Kansas_mps.pdf

Kansas Department of Transportation. Bridge inventory and appraisal 2009-2012.

Rosin, Elizabeth, et.al. *New Deal-Era Resources of Kansas* National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form. Topeka, KS: Kansas State Historical Society, 2002. Accessed online at: http://kshs.org/resource/national_register/MPS/New_Deal_Era_Resources_Kansas_mps.pdf

Rush County Board of Commissioners Proceedings, November 10, 1941; April 20, 1942.

Rush County Historical Society, Bridge Project: 1931 to the present.

Rush County News, March 26, 1942 (page 6).

Works Progress Administration. Central Office Reference Card Location Project File, MF 6038-6042.

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 # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: Kansas Historical Society

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one

Provide latitude/longitude coordinates OR UTM coordinates.

(Place additional coordinates on a continuation page.)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1 38.559896 -99.346979
Latitude: Longitude:

3 _____
Latitude: Longitude:

2 _____
Latitude: Longitude:

4 _____
Latitude: Longitude:

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Verbal Boundary Description (describe the boundaries of the property)

The nominated property includes the bridge structure, its abutments, and the property on and over which the bridge is built. It is 1.4 miles north of K-4 Highway on a north-south county road (CR 230), which is 2 miles west of La Crosse, located along the section line between Sections 19 and 20, in Township 17S, Range 18W.

Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected)

The nominated bridge and property includes that which is historically associated with the Spring Creek Tributary Stone Arch Bridge.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title John Moeder / Nicole Rainey
organization Rush County Highway Department date 11/15/13
street & number 802 W. 1st telephone 785-222-3218
city or town LaCrosse state KS. zip code 67548
e-mail rushcoroads@qbta.net

Property Owner: (complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO)

name Rush County Board of Commissioners
street & number 802 W 1st / PO Box 250 telephone _____
city or town La Crosse state KS zip code 67548

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 listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each digital image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger.

Photograph Log

Name of Property: Sand Creek Tributary Stone Arch Bridge

City or Vicinity: La Crosse

County: Rush State: KS

Photographer: Bradley Penka, County Historian

Date
Photographed: November 3, 2013 (unless noted otherwise)

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 7: View of roadway, camera facing north. (4/11/2009)
- 2 of 7: View of east face of bridge, camera facing northwest.
- 3 of 7: View of east face of bridge, camera facing northwest.
- 4 of 7: View of east face of bridge, camera facing west.
- 5 of 7: View of east face of bridge, camera facing west. (4/11/2009)
- 6 of 7: Close-up view of west face of bridge, camera facing southeast.
- 7 of 7: Close-up view of south arch on east face of bridge, camera facing west.

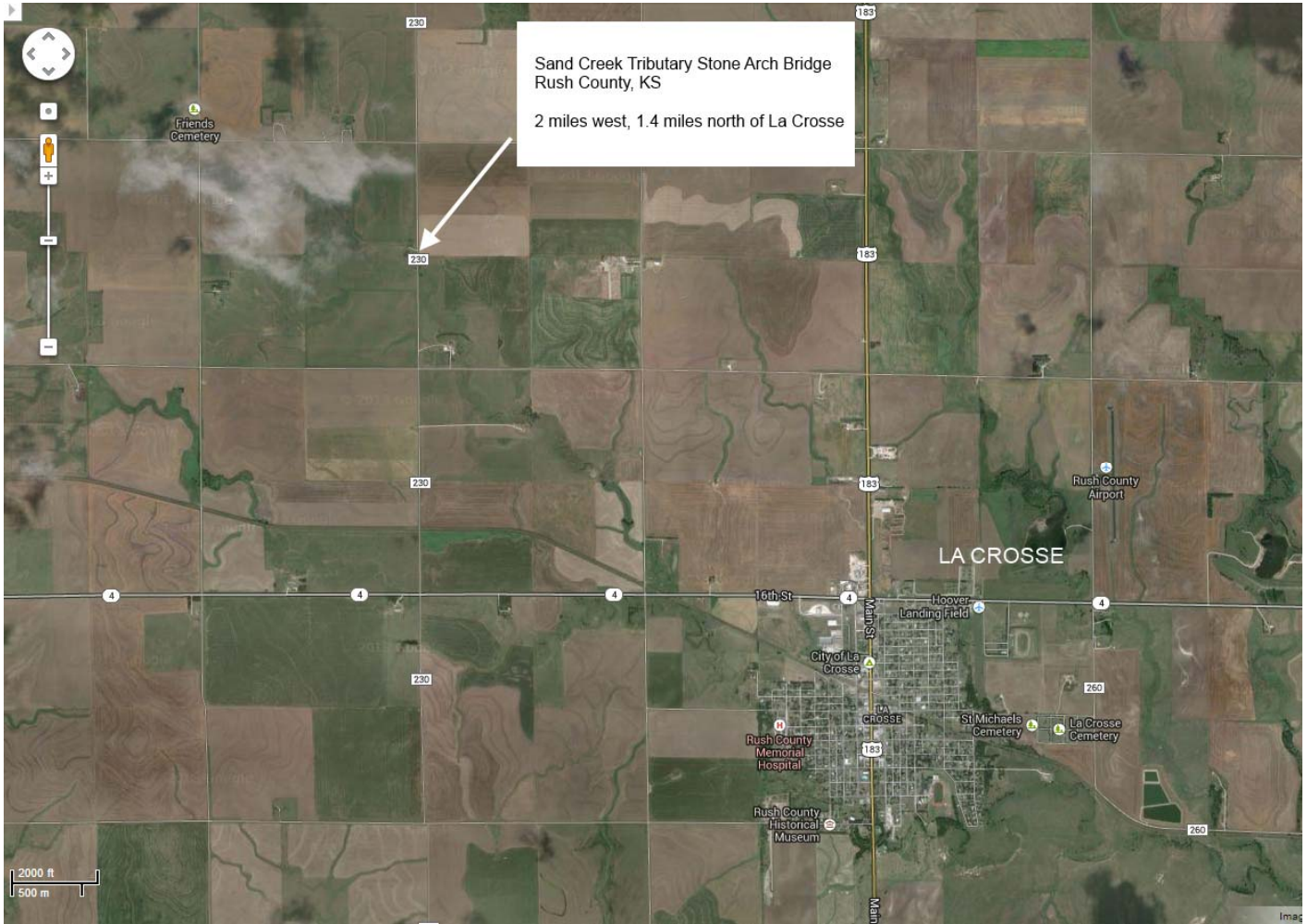
Figures

Include GIS maps, figures, scanned images below.

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Figure 1: Contextual Aerial Image, Google, 2013.



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Figure 2: Close-in Aerial Image, Google, 2013.

