

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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any 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.

1. Name of Property

Historic name Crystola Bridge

Other names/site number 5TL.4515

2. Location

Street & number 0.6 miles north of Crystola on Teller County Road 21 (TC21).

City or town Crystola is located 15 miles west of Colorado Springs on U.S. 24; 2100' east of mile marker 288. It can also be found at GPS coordinates 38.963946, -105.032175.

State Colorado County Teller zip code 80863

X

not for publication

vicinity

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 forth 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 at the following level(s) of significance:

national ___ statewide local


Signature of certifying official/Title

State Historic Preservation Officer

Feb 1-2023
Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of commenting official

Date

Title

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

___ entered in the National Register

___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register

___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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.)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
		buildings
		sites
1		structures
		objects
1		Total

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

Highway Bridges in Colorado

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Transportation: Road-related (vehicular)

Transportation: Road-related (vehicular)

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Other: Reinforced Concrete Arch Bridge

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: REINFORCED CONCRETE

walls: CONCRETE

roof:

other: CONCRETE

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

The Crystola Bridge carries TC21 over a drainage into Fountain Creek, 0.6 miles north of Crystola in northern Teller County. The bridge was completed ca. 1920 to serve State Highway 18 (which later became State Highway 4, U.S 40 South and is now U.S. 24) and carry it over the drainage ditch.

The bridge is an early twentieth century design of a reinforced concrete arch bridge built in the style of Daniel B. Luten. It is one of the few noteworthy examples of historic highway arch bridges remaining in the state.¹ The entire structure is 24' in length, 20' in width, and composed of one 13' 6" deck that spans the ditch. The Highway Bridges in Colorado Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) refers to concrete arch bridges as a noteworthy example of Colorado Highways Department (CHD) design standards during the 1920s. The bridge illustrates the type of design adopted by the CHD (later Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT)) during the era and embodies the standardization of transportation planning within the state.

Narrative Description

Immediate Surroundings

The Crystola Bridge is 0.6 miles northwest of the historic Crystola townsite area and lies immediately adjacent to U.S. 24. Historically, this area was homesteaded in the 1870s by Henry Childs² who was a former Speaker of the House in Illinois. A Spiritualist, he and his wife Catherine often held séances in their Crystola home. At one of those séances, the spirits told them of the presence of gold on their homestead land.

Fountain Creek (historically known as The Fontaine qui Bouille) runs along the west side of the Crystola Bridge. The bridge spans a drainage tributary into the Fountain Creek floodplain. Fountain Creek and the Crystola Bridge drainage are normally dry except during moderate to heavy rains.

The current alignment of U.S. 24 is 125' immediately to the northeast of the Crystola Bridge. U.S. 24 serves as the major east-west road through the northern end of Teller County. In Colorado the highway begins at the Kansas-Colorado border and its western terminus is located near Minturn, Colorado but actually continues west concurrent with Interstate 70. The highway was rerouted through Woodland Park proper in 1936 while its former route over the bridge, the Pikes Peak Ocean to Ocean Highway (PPOO), became TC21. Today, vehicular traffic continues over the bridge at

¹ Statement based on reviewing list of bridges on the National Register of Historic Places in Colorado

² Henry Clay Childs was the founder of Crystola, Colorado ca 1872. Henry and his wife Catherine were Spiritualists, believers in communication between the living and the dead.

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a rate of approximately 350 vehicles per day³. Teller County retains ownership of the bridge which has received little maintenance over the years but has been evaluated as structurally sound according to the Teller County Public Works Department (TCPWD).

Description

The Crystola Bridge is oriented south by southeast to north by northwest and crosses a normally dry drainage ditch. Technically it is considered a culvert by the standards of the TCPWD. The substructure of the bridge is a reinforced concrete barrel arch that allows water to pass under it. It has, according to TCPWD, a concrete reinforced deck, covered with compacted decomposed granite gravel. The road leading to and from the bridge is also gravel.

The span of the bridge is 13' 6" with an overall length of 24'. Its width is 20'. The balustrade on each side of the bridge contains thirteen ornate molded concrete balusters. Its concrete abutments have decorations on each side, molded when the concrete was poured, as well as a concrete filled spandrel arch with incised panels on the spandrel walls. Above the arch is a cornice form that projects from the side of the bridge. There is no date anywhere on the bridge that can be found. The bridge abutments and balustrade have spalling and deterioration from weather and there is a lot of lichen growth on the exterior sides of the bridge. The interior of the bridge also has "scars" from contact with snowplow blades and other vehicles. Eight of the thirteen baluster's on the easterly side have fallen out of place in years past with their whereabouts unknown. In February of 2022 the remaining five had fallen from the bridge into the ditch below. At the time of this nomination, two of those ornamental baluster's in the ditch are missing.

Integrity

Despite the missing easterly balustrade, overall the Crystola Bridge still has integrity and meets the integrity requirements under the guidelines of the MPDF, in particular with its emphasis on materials and design, as this bridge remains unaltered since its date of construction.

The bridge remains in its original site of construction on TC21 and therefore maintains its location. The setting of the bridge appears much as it was during its period of significance of ca. 1920 to 1936. The surrounding area is rural with a grass-covered valley in between hills of Ponderosa Pine. The town of Woodland Park is but two miles north on TC21 and the course of Fountain Creek is 107' away. There is a motel very near as well as an equestrian stable that does not appear to having been used for quite a few years. The primary difference between now and the setting of the bridge's period of significance is the 1936 realignment of what is now U.S. 24. Since that realignment, the Crystola Bridge is no longer on the main east west arterial road but kept in service as TC21, retaining its gravel surface. U.S. 24 when realigned also started as a gravel surface, but was paved over in subsequent years. The realigned two-lane U.S.24 was later expanded into a four-lane highway separated by a median. Essentially, this present realigned course lies upon what had long been a transportation route, the old grade for both the Colorado Midland Railroad and the Midland Terminal Railroad.

The resource has a good level of integrity in its materials. The bridge retains its materials from the period of significance, being composed of reinforced concrete. There is a matter of condition since the balustrade has been knocked out from the east side due to damage from vehicles. Both the balusters and the balustrade railing are totally missing except three balusters that remain in the ditch as of this writing. Although there has been deterioration and some spalling of the concrete, the bridge has not been altered since its period of significance. In retaining the historic materials and with evident details such as the decorative abutments, molded balustrade and outlined arch, the workmanship of the resource is readily apparent. The resource also retains a strong degree of integrity of design with its concrete barrel arch substructure (modeled after Luten bridge patents) for which it is significant under "Engineering". As stated in the MPDF, integrity of the structure's historic materials and design are necessary for the bridge to qualify for the National Register under any criterion.

The integrity of the bridge is good as it retains its original appearance and setting and continues to be recognizable as an early highway bridge. Furthermore, when U.S. 24 was realigned and moved to the east of TC21 in 1936, the new road was paved while this stretch of TC21 and the bridge are unaltered and retain the feeling of traveling on Colorado's early gravel highways. The property also speaks to the historic contexts that led to its construction and type with which it is associated.

In conclusion, although the balustrade and its rail are missing from the east side of the bridge, the overall historic

³ Source: Teller County Public Works, June 2022.

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integrity is not diminished as a result of the bridge's current condition. The remaining balustrade and rail on the western side of the bridge retains the aspects of design, materials and workmanship for this feature and, when taken on the whole, the character defining features of the bridge retain integrity in spite of the bridge's current condition. In addition, the retention of location, setting, association, and feeling are strong. As a result it is clear that the Crystola Bridge has good historic integrity and is able to convey its historic significance.

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

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Engineering

Transportation

Period of Significance

ca. 1920-1936

Significant Dates

The date of construction is unknown.

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

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

The Crystola Bridge is located on TC21 and is locally significant under Criterion A in the area of "Transportation" and Criterion C in the area of "Engineering."

This main east-west route from Colorado Springs to the mountains of Central Colorado and beyond had four different numerical designations (State Highway 18, State Highway 4, U.S. 40 South, and U.S. 24) through the years and for Colorado residents, it was an important transportation corridor that linked mountain communities to Front Range population centers. The Crystola Bridge remains today as an integral reminder of the historic PPOO and the bridge structures that carried the route. The period of significance for Transportation begins with its date of construction (ca.1920) and ends when U.S. 24 was re-routed (1936) to the east of its TC21 route. However, the Crystola Bridge is still serving the community of Woodland Park today. Additionally, the bridge is significant for engineering as it is a comparatively early use of reinforced concrete construction. This bridge is atypical of a rural concrete arch bridge as it contained ornamental balustrades.^{4 & 5} This bridge also illustrates the methods of design standards as stated by the CHD. The period of significance for Engineering is its date of construction in ca. 1920 when the bridge obtained its historic characteristics and form. The Crystola Bridge fulfills the registration requirements of the Highway Bridges in Colorado MPDF under the property type of "Concrete, stone, and steel arch bridges." Efforts to establish the exact date of construction have been unsuccessful. CDOT, TCPWD nor the Teller County Clerk & Records Office has any available or known records of construction or maintenance of this bridge.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Criterion A: Under the MPDF it is noted that "Concrete, stone and steel arch bridges in Colorado may be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for their association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad historical patterns of the country, the state, or the region." It continues to outline that properties may be eligible for their "association with a significant route or event" such as those that opened up a region for travel and commerce or increased the development of nearby communities. In this case the bridge was part of the public transport infrastructure of the historic PPOO.

It is not known if the Crystola Bridge was designed and constructed by the CHD or Teller County but news articles would suggest that the CHD did^{6 7}. Furthermore, no evidence was found in the Teller County Clerk & Records office in the minutes of the Teller County Board of County Commissioner (BOCC) meetings that mentions the Crystola Bridge. No matter which entity did design and construct, either one qualifies it as a representation of bridge construction in ca. 1920 that still remains in place today from its date of construction. The bridge is also an example of the work undertaken as road and bridge construction when such work was organized under state and federal agencies and representative of the standardization those agencies brought to bridge design. The bridge also qualifies because it is associated with a significant route that was part of the broader development of the state's highway system.

As State Highway 4, the route carried a section of the transcontinental PPOO that stretched from New York City to Los Angeles during the 1910s and '20s. In 1920, the Pikes Peak Region, which includes the Crystola Bridge, felt the economical impact of no less than 50,000 automobile tourist.⁸ Automobile tourist "camps" were up and down Ute Pass which brought dollars to local residents of Cascade, Green Mountain Falls, Crystola and Woodland Park. By 1922 the Ute Pass Region was declared a "favorite with vacationist for years."⁹ These automobile tourist crossed the Crystola Bridge in masses.

⁴ County built bridges avoided aesthetic details on its rural bridges as an unnecessary expenditure. As per sec F, page 85 in the Highway Bridges of Colorado continuation sheet (Registration Requirements), the reinforced concrete arch bridge had a short history in Colorado (1925-1952).

⁵ Highway Bridges of Colorado Continuation Sheet, sec E, 1st paragraph, page 6.

⁶ Colorado Springs Gazette, February 16, 1923, page 2.

⁷ Colorado Springs Gazette, February 20, 1921, page 5.

⁸ Colorado Springs Gazette, November 3, 1920, page 2.

⁹ Colorado Springs Gazette, April 2, 1922, page 3.

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By the 1930s and 1940s, the route had become one of the state's most popular tourist highways, helping fuel the industry that sustained many mountain towns and was a central feature to the Colorado economy. According to news reports, the improved Ute Pass highway will "see motors purring into the Pikes Peak region at intervals of but a very few minutes during the height of the summer attraction."¹⁰ Again, the Crystola Bridge witnessed these motorists. The CHD declared in the late summer of 1931 that Ute Pass was the most traveled mountain pass in the state. CHD said that there were "2,400 cars a day using the route."¹¹ This undoubtedly brought many tourist dollars to the communities of Ute Pass, from the town of Divide down to Cascade.

The artery of U.S. 24 through much of Colorado was and continues to be one of the most important tourist routes for the state. The authors of a 2002 context of Colorado state highways found this section of U.S. 24 (5TL.3031.1) as supporting to the National Register eligibility of U.S. 24 for its association with the PPOO and as a piece of transportation history within Colorado.

Criterion C: The Crystola Bridge meets the standards of the Highway Bridges in Colorado MPDF as described by historian Clayton B. Fraser despite being somehow overlooked in the statewide bridge inventory conducted in 2000¹². Concrete arch bridges are specifically referenced within the narrative of the Highway Bridges in Colorado MPDF. In discussing the evolution of CHD bridges, it argues that concrete arch bridges were reflective of changing bridge standards and CHD design policy in the 1920s. According to the MPDF, the CHD constructed filled spandrel arches such as the Crystola Bridge in the 1910s and 1920s, but this structural type was never built in abundance¹³, making this particular bridge with its molded ornamental balustrade an anomaly¹⁴ and a noteworthy example of ornate concrete design from this formative period. In addition, the concrete arch bridge property type may meet registration requirements under the criteria for being an early and/or prominent product of the Colorado State Engineer's Office or CHD.

The MPDF also states that bridge structures may be eligible under Criterion C as structures of engineering significance which may encompass a broad range of considerations. The MPDF states that a bridge can qualify under Criterion C as a well-preserved example of a common type, or as an important variation. The Crystola Bridge meets these registration requirements; one, as an arch they are considered among the highest forms of bridge design and a design that was never built in abundance within Colorado. Additionally it may be considered a bridge with exceptional aesthetic merit. Beyond the engineering for the arch, the Crystola Bridge includes design features that elevate it above the utilitarian, specifically, its ornate molded balustrade guardrails and concrete formed designs on the abutments and incised spandrel walls.

¹⁰ Colorado Springs Evening Gazette, February 26, 1921, page 60.

¹¹ Cripple Creek Times-Record, August 13, 1931, page 1.

¹² US Dept of Interior, Nat'l Park Service, Nat'l Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet, section number F, page 85.

¹³ Highway Bridges of Colorado, Continuation Sheet, section number F, page 83, the last sentence of the last paragraph.

¹⁴ US Dept of Interior, Nat'l Park Service, Nat'l Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet, section number E, page 6, and last sentence of the first paragraph.

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Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

Even before Colorado was admitted to the Union in 1876, roads and road building were a concern to Colorado businesses and politicians. But when the “horseless carriage” era came to be, the “Good Roads Movement”¹⁵ picked up speed. Gasoline powered carriages soon became the preferred vehicle. At first, wealthy families and then a growing American populace across the country, were motoring around towns and cities using their new individual modes of transportation to travel and vacation. Automobiles were the new and modern mode of travel. Previous to that, those traveling the region used wagon roads or simply took the Colorado Midland Railroad. Construction of the Colorado Midland began in 1886 and eventually reached Aspen from Colorado Springs in 1888. The railway made its way through the mountains, which helped facilitate the development of towns such as Cascade, Chipita Park, Green Mountain Falls, and Manitou Park (now known as Woodland Park).

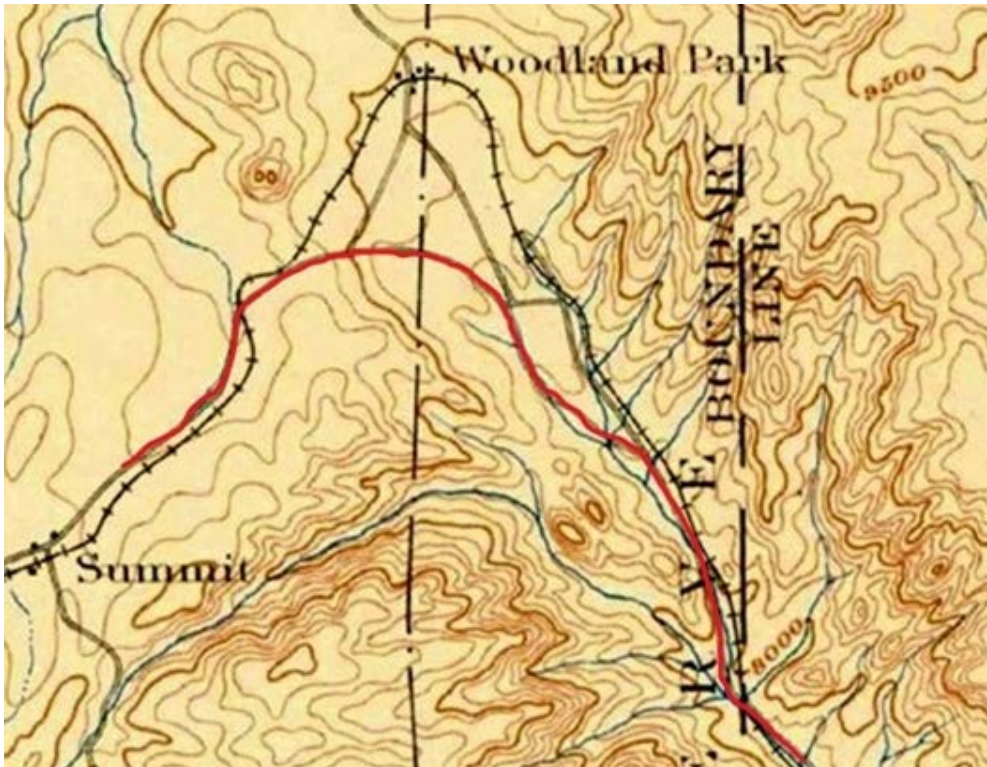


Figure 1. Detail of 1901 Topo map showing alignment of the Upper Ute Pass Wagon Road (marked with red which was later improved to be the PPOO) and the adjacent Colorado Midland Railroad alignment. SOURCE: U.S. Geological Survey, Pikes Peak quadrangle 1:24,000, 7.5 Minute Series, edition of April 1901.

It was in 1899 when the new “automobile tourist industry” came to be in Teller County and the Ute Pass region. That was when the first gasoline powered carriage to climb any mountain road occurred¹⁶ & ¹⁷, and it happened to be up Ute Pass. On July 21, 1899, Dr. Edward J. Cabler and his wife Eugenia along with inventor Robert Temple, loaded 1,000 pounds of food, clothing and automotive supplies into their Temple automobile and left Denver for their destination of Victor, Colorado. They traveled south to Colorado Springs, west up Ute Pass, through Cascade stopping at Ute Park, and on through Green Mountain Falls, Woodland Park, and Divide. The journey took a total of six days to reach Victor.¹⁸

Since the 1890s, a transcontinental highway was dreamed of through Colorado; and Colorado Springs business associations were always pushing for a better Ute Pass. 1910 was the year that the El Paso BOCC enlisted area convicts to do construction work on Ute Pass, west of Manitou to the county line. Their goal was to build retaining walls on each side of the road and on the sharp curves, widen the road. This work was expected to cost several thousand dollars, but when finished, they claimed Ute Pass would be one of the best motorways in the state.¹⁹

¹⁵ The “Good Roads Movement” (initiated by bicyclist) started in the U.S. in the late 1870s and continued into the twentieth century.

¹⁶ The Denver Post, July 20, 1899, page 8.

¹⁷ The Victor Record, July 27, 1899, page 5.

¹⁸ “Auto to Victor”, Denver Post, July 20, 1899

¹⁹ Colorado Springs Gazette, November 27, 1910

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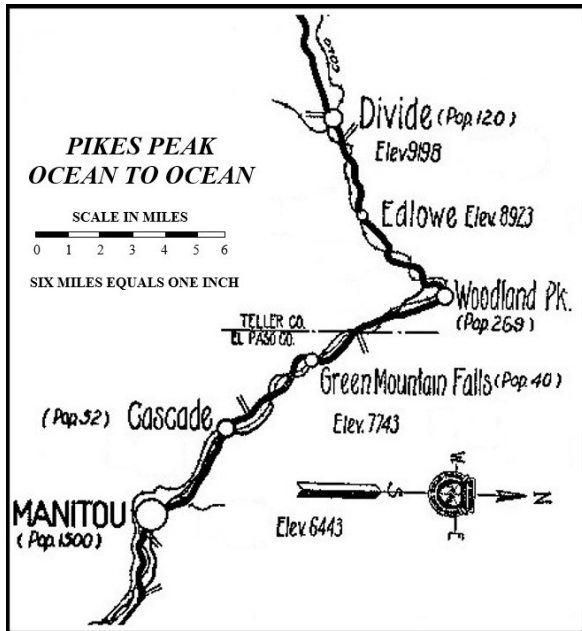
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But it was not until 1912 that the Pikes Peak Ocean to Ocean Highway Association was formed that a more dedicated effort started to make improvements along what would become an important transcontinental route.²⁰ The Association renewed the push for a transcontinental highway route through Teller County and Colorado Springs. One obstacle for obtaining the route was Ute Pass and its many railroad crossings and bridges. The El Paso BOCC again set out to make the road less hazardous to travelers and in the spring of 1915 they let a contract out to realign the Pass so to eliminate two dangerous crossings and four bridges.²¹

With a lot of persistence, the PPOO was recognized nationwide as an official Transcontinental Highway that same year of 1915.²² This meant that a myriad of vehicles would now be crossing Colorado as they traveled from New York City to Los Angeles. And locally, this also meant that after crossing the plains, these travelers would approach and enter Ute Pass west of Colorado Springs, a historic gateway to the scenic and natural wonders of the great Rocky Mountains. They would travel right through Cascade, Green Mountain Falls and Teller County's Woodland Park, Divide and Florissant.



And locally, this also meant that after crossing the plains, these travelers would approach and enter Ute Pass west of Colorado Springs, a historic gateway to the scenic and natural wonders of the great Rocky Mountains. They would travel right through Cascade, Green Mountain Falls and Teller County's Woodland Park, Divide and Florissant.

Figure 2, 1915 Map of PPOO Route.
Image was cropped and cleaned up from map at:
[The Appian Way Of America - The Pikes Peak Ocean To Ocean Highway - General Highway History - Highway History - Federal Highway Administration \(dot.gov\)](http://www.appianwayofamerica.com)

However, this increase in traffic made it necessary to undertake many road improvements for Ute Pass. An inspection was made in 1918 of the Ute Pass Road above Manitou with the goal of eliminating more of the railroad crossings between Cascade and Divide.²³

Spring of 1920 brought extensive work on the narrow parts of the Pass along with several sharp curves straighten by the use of dynamite, making the road wider and safer.²⁴ The spring edition of the 1922 Colorado Springs Gazette declared Ute Pass "one of Colorado's Finest Highways" and a favorite amongst vacationers.

²⁰ Good Road Magazine, March 16, 1912
²¹ Colorado Springs Gazette, March 24, 1915
²² Colorado Springs Gazette, March 12, 1915
²³ Colorado Springs Gazette, October 21, 1918
²⁴ Colorado Springs Gazette, April 18, 1920

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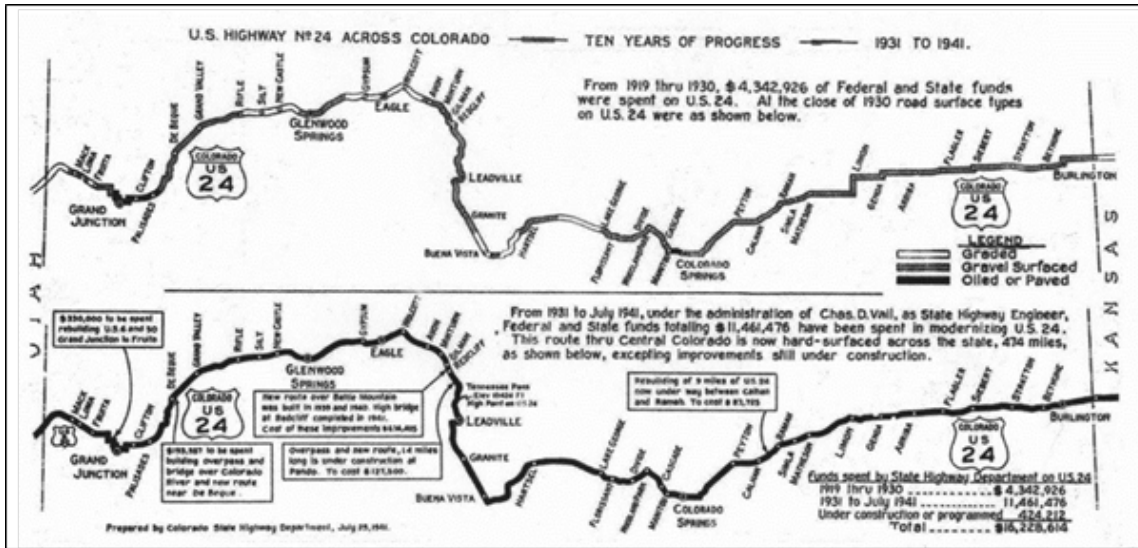


Figure 3. Improvements of Hwy 24/PPOO from 1919-1941.
SOURCE: Rocky Mountain Contractor, September 14, 1941.

A February 14, 1926 *Motors & Motoring* article stated that the Ute Pass portion of the PPOO is traveled by thousands of automobiles daily. The masses of tourists and their dollars traveling the new highway were extremely beneficial to these mountain towns and certainly fostered their tourist based economy. To many mountain towns it was their lifeblood that got them through the long winters.

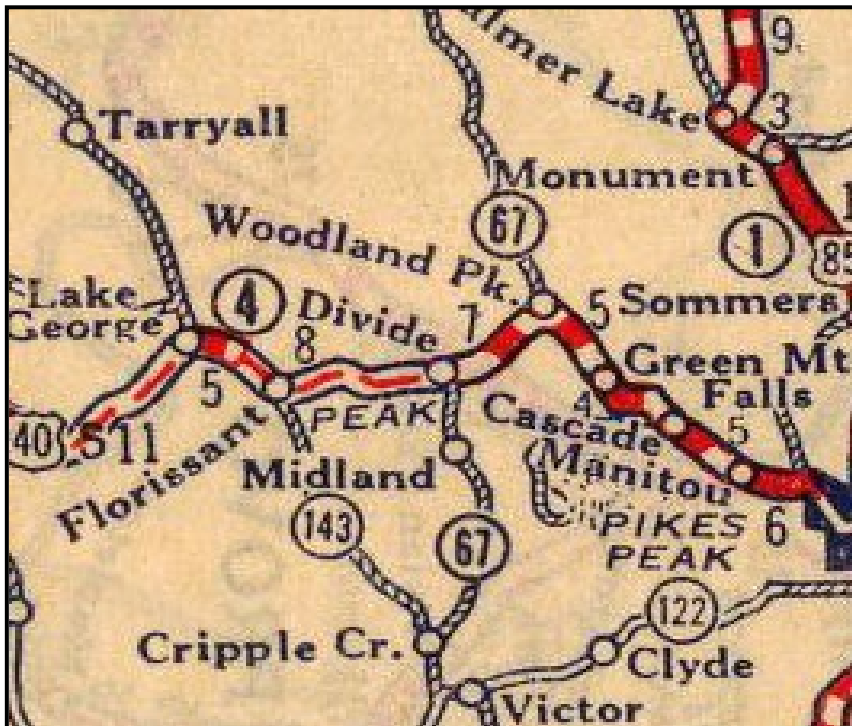


Figure 4
Detail of 1924 Rand McNally map showing route as an improved road.

SOURCE: Rand McNally and Company, "Rand McNally Junior Auto Road Map: Colorado," Chicago: Rand McNally, 1927.

The PPOO continued to generate more traffic through Ute Pass. But in spite of all the improvements over the years, the biggest hazard on this highway was still the railroad with accidents happening at the remaining crossings and bridges. Due to the many accidents, the State Highway Engineer began plans in 1927 for big improvements between Manitou and Cascade²⁵ on what is now referred to as U.S. 40 South.

²⁵ Colorado Springs Gazette, July 28, 1927

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The 1930s brought many improvements to Ute Pass including construction of the Rainbow Falls Bridge above Manitou. When completed, Ute Pass now had modern guard rails, retaining walls, far less curves and a much wider and oiled road surface. The grades were lowered so that none were greater than seven percent and the blind curves were eliminated. This era also included bringing the highway into and through Woodland Park with improvements being made all the way to Buena Vista.

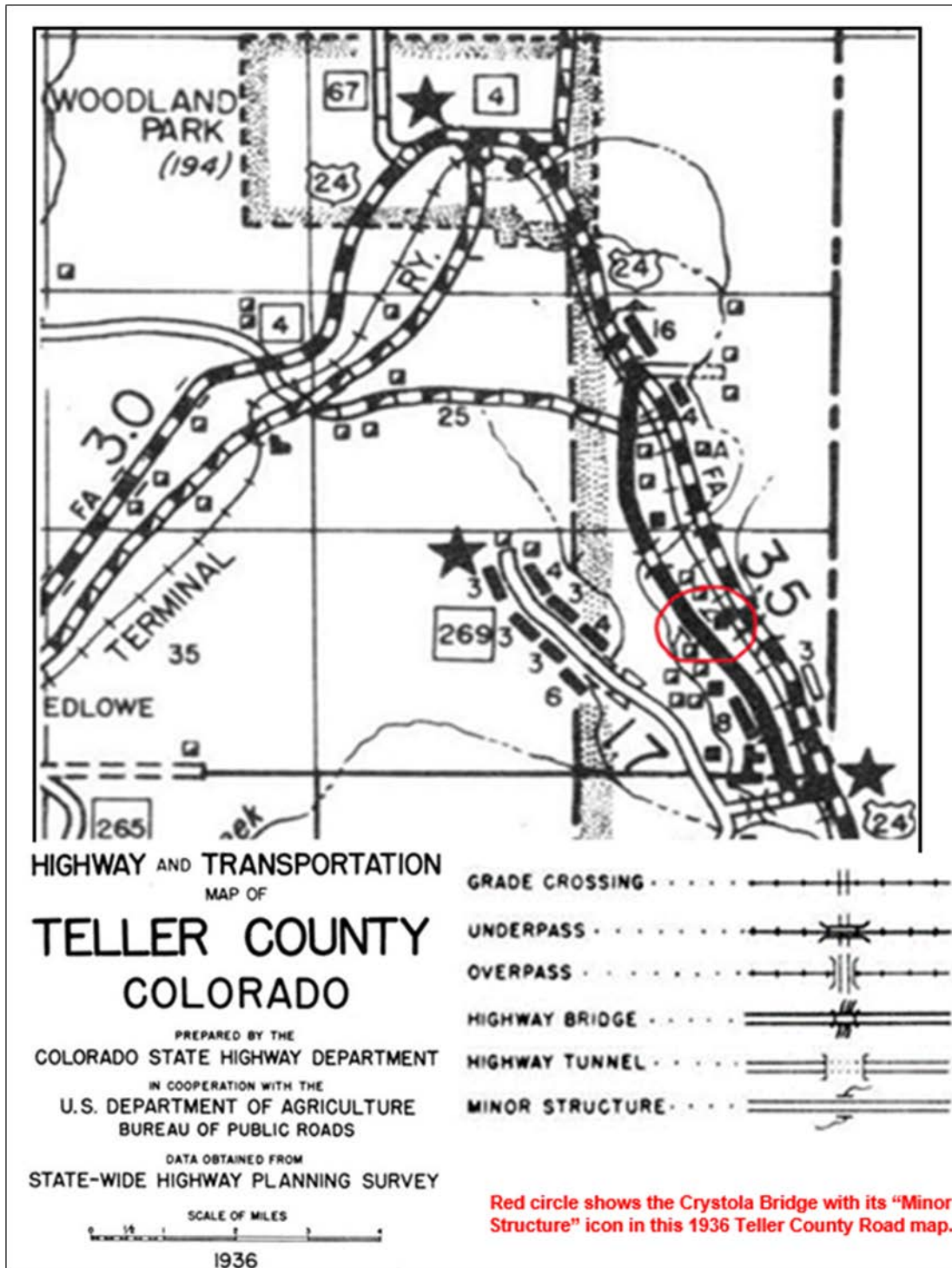


Figure 5. 1936 Transportation Map.

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As early as 1948, plans were being made for four lanes of traffic up Ute Pass.²⁶ But it wasn't until the early 1960s that the first phase of four lanes up Ute Pass started, but took many years to complete. That first phase was from Manitou to Cascade and the second phase took four lanes to Green Mountain Falls. After that, Woodland Park got four lanes to the east end of town, then to the top of Blue Bird Hill and finally to Divide. It remains two lanes from Divide west to the junction of U.S. 24 and U.S. 285 today.

The Crystola Bridge continues to carry automobile traffic within Teller County and still serves as a ditch crossing for TC21. Because of the realignment of U.S. 24, the bridge has little traffic on it now and has not been improved or maintained. Therefore the bridge remains as it was during its period of significance and is a strong example of a filled spandrel concrete arch bridge in the Colorado high country.



Figure 6. Detail of 1953 USGS aerial. Note that drainage had been larger in the past than current topography.
SOURCE: United States Geological Survey,
"W FS 73 AMS," Sheet 6676, September 24, 1953.

²⁶ Colorado Springs Gazette, July 18, 1948

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Transportation Context of U.S. 24 Corridor

Ute Pass has been a main throughfare to the mountains for centuries. It can track its heritage back 5,000 years ago to the Native Americans on the eastern slope of Pikes Peak²⁷. Its namesake, the Ute Indians²⁸, traveled this route from the plains to the hunting grounds of South Park and beyond. It was on August 5, 1862²⁹ that the Ute Pass Wagon Road Company was organized as a toll road. They started building a wagon road (which was nothing but an oxen trail) from Colorado City to the gold fields of Tarryall in Park County and to Leadville in the latter part of October, 1865³⁰.

Ever since this first road up Ute Pass came to be, good bridges were always of importance, as the terrain and Fountain Creek dictated the use of many of them.

In the late 1880s, Ute Pass continued to be a main avenue into the mountains for wagon traffic even after the Colorado Midland Railroad was completed and was in use; but it was still just a narrow trail. So when the "horseless carriage" era came about, the annual budgets for roads and bridge building really came to the forefront in the state and its counties. A national organization known as the "Good Roads Movement"³¹ was also active here in Colorado, focusing on transforming our wagon roads into modern highways. Gasoline powered carriages soon became the preferred form of transportation and wealthy families across the country were motoring around our Colorado cities and towns. Cars were now the new and modern method of travel.

Summertime travel in Ute Pass by automobile increased in the early 1900s, but Ute Pass was always plagued by rain washouts and landslides which kept tourist dollars from reaching Colorado Springs. After the disastrous cloudburst of August 5, 1902³² which wiped out every wagon bridge below Cascade, the El Paso BOCC spent \$11,000 on repairing Ute Pass. Then the following year, they had to allot another \$2,000³³ to continue repairs on the road including its bridges.

1903 was when a National Highway through Ute Pass was first made known. The U.S. Office of Public Road Inquiries declared that a National Highway from coast-to-coast should go through Ute Pass. That office's special agent, James W. Abbott lectured this to the Good Roads Association meeting on February 13 of that year in Perkins Hall at Colorado College. Speaking about a course for that coast-to-coast National Highway, Abbott is quoted saying that "There is only one route for such a road to pursue and that is up your wonderful Ute Pass."³⁴

In 1910 the Ute Pass Highway was renamed "Colorado Primary Road #18"³⁵. In March of 1910 the El Paso BOCC traveled Ute Pass examining trouble spots to prepare for the upcoming summer rains. They decided that stone retaining walls should be erected to prevent future troubles. They also elected to rebuild some bridges but all and all thought that the road was in fairly good condition.³⁶

In October of 1910 the El Paso BOCC traveled to Denver to meet with the State Highway Commission. The BOCC laid out plans to widen Ute Pass from Manitou to Crystola. They requested that the existing 10 and 16 feet of width be expanded to at least a full twenty feet at the narrowest, with thirty feet being the norm for most of the distance.³⁷

Opened in 1912, the transcontinental PPOO brought more traffic yet to the region. The bridges of Ute Pass now carried countless vehicles through Ute Pass.

December 1, 1913 is the date that Henry Ford started producing vehicles on the moving assembly line. This innovation made the price of automobiles affordable to the masses and automobile tourism exploded. Tourist came to Colorado and

²⁷"On the eastern slope of Pikes Peak, archaeologists have found evidence of human occupation dating to 5,000 years ago" according to Colorado Encyclopedia, Front Range, Early Inhabitants. <https://coloradoencyclopedia.org/article/front-range#:~:text=On%20the%20eastern%20slope%20of%20Pikes%20Peak%2C%20archaeologists,the%20Gods%20date%20back%20at%20least%201%2C000%20years.>

²⁸ The Ute people are the oldest residents of Colorado, <https://www.southernute-nsn.gov/history/>.

²⁹ Colorado Prospector, July 1, 1980, page 1.

³⁰ Green Mountain Falls Echo, July 27, 1957, page 7.

³¹ The national "Good Roads Movement" (initiated by bicyclist) started in the U.S. between the late 1870s and continued into the twentieth century.

³² Weekly Gazette, August 7, 1902, page 9.

³³ Colorado Springs Gazette, June 25, 1903, page 17.

³⁴ The Weekly Gazette, Colorado Springs, Colorado, February 19, 1903, page 11.

³⁵ First Biannual Report, 1910, page 11.

³⁶ Colorado Springs Gazette, March 8, 1910, page 5.

³⁷ Colorado Springs Gazette, Mar 18, 1911, page 2.

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the Pikes Peak Region in multitudes. With all of the increased auto traffic, our state recognized the need for a well maintained road and bridge system in order to attract tourist and the dollars they spent. In 1915, 200 plus bridges were built by the counties with the aid and guidance of the Colorado Highway Commission.³⁸

With the passage of the Federal Aid Road Act of 1916, Colorado was provided more money for its highways. The following year saw Colorado's governor sign the Highway Act that transformed the Colorado Highway Commission into the Colorado Highway Department. This change also created a State Highway Fund to distribute state and federal funds for Colorado roads and bridges.

1916 traffic on Ute Pass was also sharply increased as the Pikes Peak Auto Highway was now open to the top of Pikes Peak and caused a lot of traffic safety issues. The first annual Pikes Peak Hill Climb automobile race to the summit of that peak also started in 1916, causing traffic jams from Manitou to Cascade. The state highway department wanted to blast away rocky points on Ute Pass that jetted out on curves in order to increase viewing distance of oncoming traffic.

The next few years many improvements and a lot of maintenance was done to the bridges and highway west of Manitou. Regarding the age of the Crystola Bridge, the best estimates, which are based on news articles^{39 40}, suggest that this is the era of the construction of the Crystola Bridge. In 1922, Ute Pass was celebrated as one of the finest roads in the state and was known as "The Motorist Mecca". It was claimed about Ute Pass that no better mountain highway existed on the entire PPOO. It was boasted that the highway was broad and smooth, blasted out of solid granite with magnificent beauty. Automobile tourist flocked to Cascade, Chipita Park and Green Mountain Falls with the latter becoming the chief community of Ute Pass⁴¹.

On November 5, 1931, Ute Pass underwent major reconstruction to improve the dangerous, rough and rugged four miles between Manitou and Cascade. The completion of this project in 1932 transformed Ute Pass into a thirty foot wide, "high gear" highway from Manitou to Cascade. This new highway required fifty tons of dynamite to blast out 200,000 cubic yards of rock.⁴² The Teller Board of County Commissioners⁴³ declared that the highway was one of the greatest improvements in the Pikes Peak Region.

The 1960s era brought four traffic lanes from Manitou to Cascade. The years following completed new bridges and four lanes to Woodland Park and eventually to Divide.

The bridges of Ute Pass, including the Crystola Bridge, have carried countless automobile tourist through the region, tourist whose dollars sustained the small towns along its route.

³⁸ CDOT Historic Timeline webpage.

³⁹ Colorado Springs Gazette, February 16, 1923, page 2.

⁴⁰ Colorado Springs Gazette, February 20, 1921, page 5.

⁴¹ Colorado Springs Gazette, April 2, 1922, page 89.

⁴² Colorado Springs Gazette Telegraph, March 28, 1932, page 1.

⁴³ The Teller County Board of Commissioners were: Alf Coulson of Divide, Hardy Potts of Victor and Silas Pinion of Cripple Creek.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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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: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

Latitude/Longitude

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(Insert additional points as needed.)

- | | | | | | |
|---|----------|-----------|---|----------|-----------|
| 1 | _____ | _____ | 3 | _____ | _____ |
| | Latitude | Longitude | | Latitude | Longitude |
| 2 | _____ | _____ | 4 | _____ | _____ |
| | Latitude | Longitude | | Latitude | Longitude |

or

UTM References

Datum:
NAD 1927 _____ or **NAD 1983** X
(Insert additional UTM references as needed.)

- | | | | | | | | |
|---|-----------|---------------|----------------|---|-------|---------|----------|
| 1 | <u>13</u> | <u>497212</u> | <u>4312775</u> | 3 | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing | | Zone | Easting | Northing |
| 2 | _____ | _____ | _____ | 4 | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing | | Zone | Easting | Northing |

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

The bridge is located 0.6 miles north of Crystola on TC21. The boundary consists of the bridge itself and 15' on either side from the bridge's center line, all of which is owned by Teller County.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The nomination includes all the land historically associated with the bridge.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Steve Plutt, Research Volunteer
organization Ute Pass Historical Society date January 27, 2023 (revision 4)
street & number 231 Henrietta Avenue telephone (719) 686-7512
city or town Woodland Park state Colorado zip code 80827
e-mail splutt675@outlook.com

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) or **Google Earth** map indicating the property's location.
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

USGS Topographic Map

Woodland Park Quadrangle, Colorado: 7.5 Minute
Series UTM: Zone 13 497212mE; 4312775mN

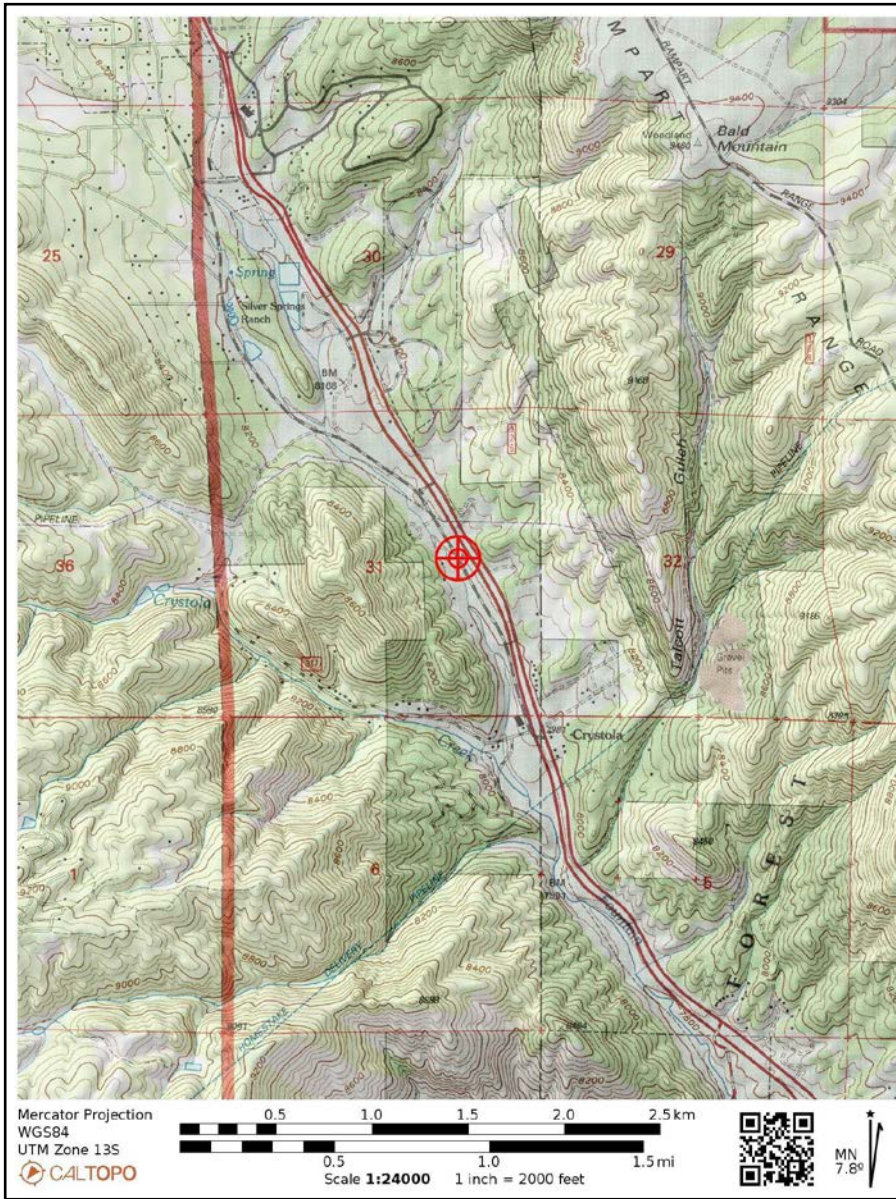
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The next two maps show the Crystola Bridge in the red circled "bullseye".

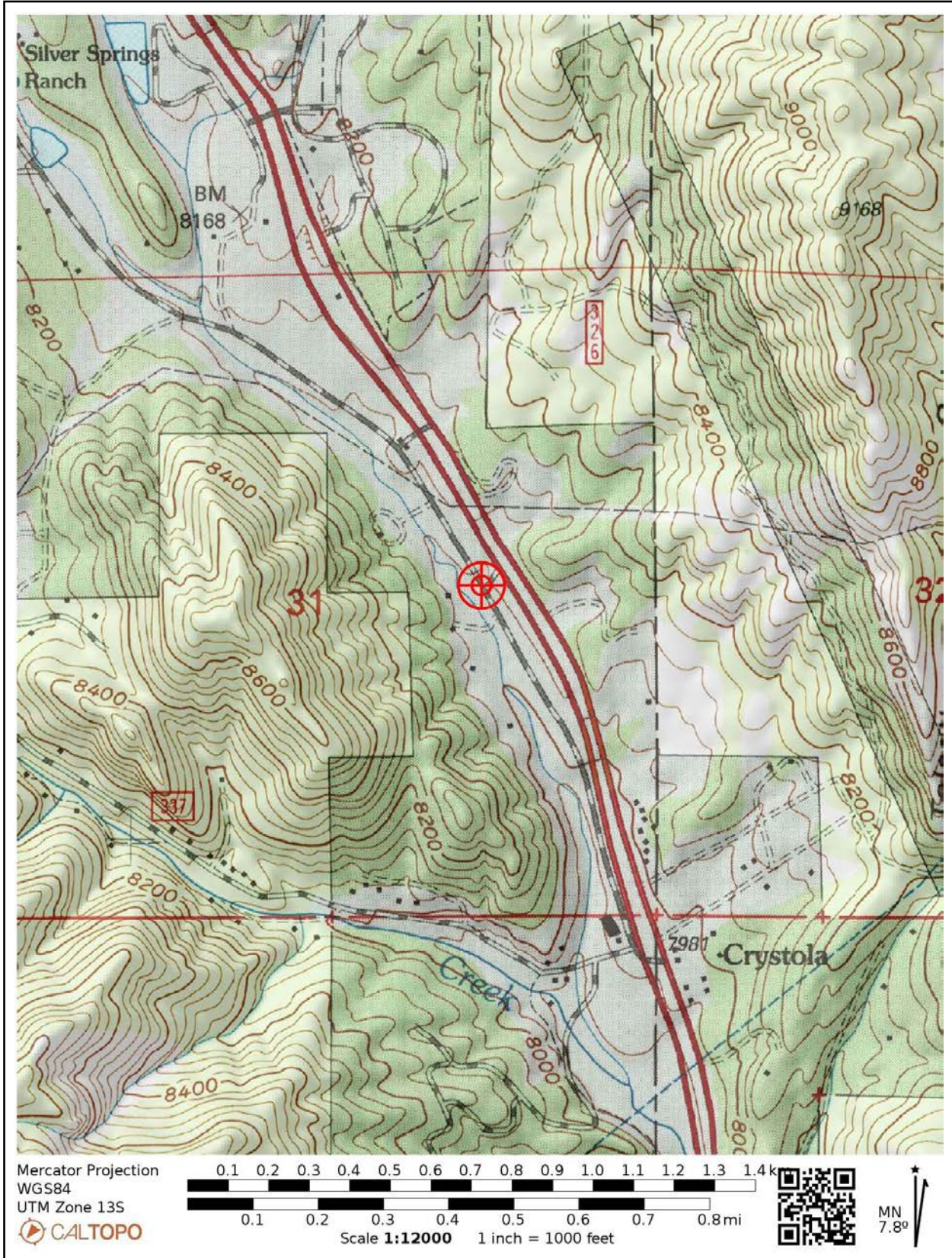


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UTM Coordinates (NAD 83): Zone 13

1: 497212mE; 4312775mN



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Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Crystola Bridge

City or Vicinity: Woodland Park/Crystola

County: Teller

State: Colorado

Photographer: Steve Plutt

Date Photographed: January 30, 2023.

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

01: Westerly exterior, looking northeast.

02: Westerly exterior, looking southeast.

03: Westerly interior looking southwest.

04: Westerly interior looking northwest

05: Easternly exterior, looking northwest.

06: Easternly exterior, looking southwest.

07: Easternly exterior, looking northeast.

08: Easternly interior looking southeast.

09: Crystola Bridge looking westerly.

10: Interior looking straight northwest towards Woodland Park.

1 of 10: Crystola Bridge westerly exterior, looking northeast.



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Photo 2 of 10: The westerly exterior, looking southeast.



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Photo 3 of 10: Westerly interior looking southwest.⁴⁴



⁴⁴ In the background is the Wishing Well Motel, built in 1957.

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Photo 4 of 10: Westerly interior looking northwest. ⁴⁵



⁴⁵ In the background is the green equestrian stable.

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Photo 5 of 10: Easternly exterior, looking northwest.



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Photo 6 of 10: Easternly exterior, looking southwest.



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Photo 7 of 10: Easternly exterior, looking northeast.⁴⁶



⁴⁶ U.S. 24 grade is a few yards up the incline, in the background.

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Photo 8 of 10: Easternly interior looking southeast.



Photo 9 of 10: Crystola Bridge looking westerly.

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Photo 10 of 10: Interior looking straight northwest towards the City of Woodland Park.⁴⁷



⁴⁷ Equestrian stable with green roof. Walmart is in the far distance with no public access or egress to TC21.

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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 18 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.