

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. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Brown's Canyon Bridge
other names/site number Stone Bridge, 5CF.414

2. Location

street & number County Road 191 crossing the Arkansas River, 6.4 miles NW of Salida

n/a
X

 not for publication
city or town Salida vicinity
state Colorado code CO county Chaffee code 015 zip code 81201

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,
I hereby certify that this X 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 X 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 X local

Signature of certifying official/Title _____ 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 _____

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 _____

Brown's Canyon Bridge, Highway Bridges in
Colorado MPS
Name of Property

Chaffee County, Colorado
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.)

- 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

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Transportation: Road-related

Transportation: Road-related

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Other: Concrete slab and girder bridge

foundation: _____

walls: _____

roof: _____

other: Concrete

Brown's Canyon Bridge, Highway Bridges in
Colorado MPS
Name of Property

Chaffee County, Colorado
County and State

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 Brown's Canyon Bridge spans the Arkansas River near the south end of Brown's Canyon, located in southern Chaffee County. The bridge, which is currently on County Road 191, was completed in 1908 to serve State Primary Road 17 connecting the cities of Salida, Buena Vista and Leadville. The bridge is an early example of a concrete slab and girder bridge in Colorado and is one of two surviving early bridges of this type that remain intact. The 86' long bridge is comprised of two 40' spans, supported by one concrete center pier and two concrete end abutments. The concrete roadway is 18' in width. The *Highway Bridges in Colorado* Multiple Property Documentation Form notes the bridge as the most architecturally sophisticated of the early reinforced concrete slab and girder bridges in Colorado. It exhibits curved springers, an articulated balustrade, and two dedication plaques.

Narrative Description

Setting

The Brown's Canyon Bridge, locally known as the Stone Bridge, lies adjacent the Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area State Park. The recreation area includes parking areas for kayakers and rafters with a river access on the downstream, or south, side of the bridge. Boaters either "take out" on a ramp or continue trips down the Arkansas River. Primary use of the area is by recreational boaters who float down the Arkansas and under the bridge; in 2012 nearly 40,000 people passed under the bridge in rafts or kayaks.¹ The east side of the bridge is surrounded by fenced, irrigated and non-irrigated pasture lands along with a private ranch house and support buildings. Both sides of the riverbank are heavily treed with cottonwoods. The unused tracks of the Denver & Rio Grande Railway lie east and south-east of the property.

The major north-south road in Chaffee County (County Road 291) was rerouted by 1963; public vehicular traffic access is blocked on the east side of the bridge by a closed gate. The structure currently serves an adjacent property owner located east of the Arkansas River and provides access to an irrigation ditch (outside of the boundary). Chaffee County retains ownership of the bridge, which has had little if any maintenance. Deterioration consists primarily of spalling on the balustrades, road surface and abutments with some degradation of the center pier and abutments below water line.²

Description

As described in the Colorado Historic Bridge Inventory by Clayton B. Fraser in March 2000: "For the Brown's Cañon Bridge, Jaycox [State Engineer] used a standard concrete deck girder structure, with two 40-foot spans and an 18-foot roadway flanked by concrete post-and-beam guardrails. The girders feature arched haunches and were supported by integrally poured, reinforced concrete abutments and pier."³ The bridge decking is earth fill over concrete floor. The guardrails are comprised of square concrete balusters and a simple rectangular guardrail featuring massive rectangular bulkheads with beveled copings.

Integrity

Overall, the Brown's Canyon Bridge retains good integrity. The integrity of location is maintained. The area surrounding the bridge is still semi-rural and retains excellent integrity of setting. Although the condition of the bridge is somewhat deteriorated due to spalling, the integrity of design, workmanship, and material is readily apparent and the bridge retains good integrity. The feeling and association of the bridge to the road is evident and integrity of both is excellent.

¹ Numbers provided by Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area at a Chaffee County Commissioners'Work Session, Jan 14, 2013.

² Santec Consulting, Inc., "Chaffee County Bridge CHA191-01.57, Rehabilitation Assessment," December 11, 2008.

³ Clayton Fraser, "Historic Bridge Inventory." On file with the Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, History Colorado, Site File No. 5CF.414, 31 March 2000.

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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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Engineering

Period of Significance

1908

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Thomas W. Jaycox, Colorado State Engineer
Pueblo Bridge Company

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.

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance for Brown's Canyon Bridge is the year of construction, 1908.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary) N/A

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The Brown's Canyon Bridge is eligible at the local level under Criterion C in the area of engineering for the year of its construction, 1908. It is an intact early example of a reinforced concrete slab and girder bridge. With a design provided by the State Engineer's Office, bridge completion preceded the formal development of the highway commission in Colorado in 1909. Brown's Canyon Bridge meets the registration requirements of the "concrete slab and girder bridges" property type as discussed in the *Highway Bridges in Colorado* Multiple Property Documentation Form.

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

The *Highway Bridges in Colorado* Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) specifically calls out the Brown's Canyon Bridge as an excellent example of the concrete slab and girder property type. This bridge is significant for its engineering as an early and still extant example:

Between 1905 and 1911 the State Engineer's Office erected several concrete girder structures from standard designs, two of which--the Brown's Canyon Bridge in Chaffee County and the Capulin Bridge in Conejos County—are still in place as the oldest examples of their type in the state. Distinguished as one of the few state bridges still in use, one of the earliest examples of its structural type, and a well-preserved remnant of Colorado's early highway system (...).⁴

The MPDF states regarding this property type: "Concrete slab and deck girder bridges are sufficiently common in Colorado that to be considered eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion C, structures from these property types must have definitive historical documentation and some superlative feature that distinguish them from their peers. Some examples of this are notably early construction date, exceptionally long span length, unusually high span number, or well-executed architectural design."⁵ The Brown's Canyon Bridge is both early, in that it dates to before 1920, and well-executed in terms of design as a representative example of concrete through girder, in addition to its now relative rarity as a type.

The bridge was included as part of the original 1984 historic bridge inventory for nomination to the National Register as a thematic resource nomination for Colorado Vehicular Bridges. This bridge was pulled from consideration at the request of the then sitting Chaffee County Board of Commissioners.⁶ It is noteworthy that the current Board of Commissioners are in full support of this nomination.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

Regarding the property type, Fraser noted: "The first reinforced concrete girder bridge was built in France in 1893. Spans of up to 85 feet appeared by 1904 in Europe, the leader in this design, and in America concrete girders began to receive acceptance for highway use between 1900 and 1910."⁷

The Brown's Canyon Bridge was built during the early years of automobile travel in Colorado, prior to the establishment of the State Highway Commission in 1909 by Governor Shafrath. Although the county was served by rail travel via the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad from Salida, it was imperative to provide a good road system between the major railroad town of Salida and the county seat of Buena Vista. State Highway 17 provided that access, and the Brown's Canyon Bridge served as a safe crossing over the Arkansas River for early motorists and horse-drawn vehicles between the two cities.

⁴ Fraser, 5CF.414 File 2.

⁵ Clayton Fraser, *Highway Bridges in Colorado* Multiple Property Documentation Form, F71

⁶ Letter, Barbara Sudler, State Historic Preservation Officer, to Carol Shull, Chief of Registration, National Park Service, dated 9 January 1985. On file with the Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, History Colorado. .

⁷ Fraser, 5CF.414 File 2.

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Automobile travel in Colorado was not widespread in 1908 when the bridge was completed, but enthusiasts noted the importance of good roads for local travel and automobile tourism development. Good Roads clubs and automobile owners began lobbying the state legislature as early as the turn of the century for a comprehensive improvement plan for roadways within the state. Road and bridge improvements were typically funded through the Internal Improvement Fund by the General Assembly and successful funding of projects reflected the political prowess of legislators, rather than an overall plan for road development. Oversight for bridge construction came under the auspices of the State Engineer's Office prior to the establishment of the State Highway Commission. In the first decade of the twentieth-century, the State of Colorado constructed multiple concrete girder bridges, two remain extant.

Instrumental in the construction of this bridge was Thomas J. Ehrhart, local rancher and State Senator representing Park and Chaffee Counties. Senator Ehrhart had a long history of representing the people of Chaffee County during two separate terms as County Commissioner (1885 and 1899), one term as state representative (1896), and two terms as State Senator (1898 and 1906).⁸ While serving as a member of the State Senate Finance Committee in 1907, funding of \$4,000 via SB 122 was awarded for construction of this bridge.⁹ The bridge design was developed by the State Engineer's Office, with Thomas W. Jaycox serving as State Engineer, and the Board of Commissioners and the State Engineer in turn serving as the Board of Construction.¹⁰ Fraser further described the construction project: "In May 1908 competitive bids to build the bridge were received from Charles G. Sheely and the Levy Construction Company of Denver and the Pueblo Bridge Company of Pueblo. Low bidder at \$4200, Pueblo received the contract, with the stipulation that the contractor would complete the bridge by November 1. A construction crew began work on the abutments late in May. After several delays that summer, Pueblo Bridge completed the structure on October 6, 1908."¹¹

In 1909, one year after the construction of the Brown's Canyon Bridge, Governor Shafroth signed a bill to create the state's first Highway Commission. Three individuals were named to the Commission and tasked with overseeing development of state road systems. Named to the commission were Thomas Tully, Charles Allen and William Wiley. Although this early commission showed enthusiasm for road development, lobbying efforts sought to form a highway commission with permanent funding that would have representation throughout the state. In 1913, Governor Ammons signed legislation to establish a new highway commissioner with representatives from five districts from across the state and \$800,000 in funding.¹² Senator Ehrhart from Chaffee County was named as the first State Highway Commissioner under the new legislation and would continue in that capacity during two terms, ending in 1921.¹³

Regarding the history of the road system itself through this area, Fraser noted: "When the State Highway Commission established the state primary road system in the early 1910s, the road through Brown's Cañon was incorporated into State Primary Road 17, a 74-mile route up the Arkansas River between Buena Vista and Leadville. The road was renumbered State Highway 15 in 1922, and U.S. Highway 650 three years later. The Brown's Cañon stretch of highway has more recently been relegated to county road status with a re-alignment of the route (...)."¹⁴

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Autobee, Robert. "Somebody Else's Horizon, The Road Trips of Colorado's First Highway Commissioners." *Colorado Heritage* (July-August, 2010).

⁸ Wilbur Fisk Stone, ed., *History of Colorado*, Vol. II (S.J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1918) 212, 214.

⁹ *Fourteenth Biennial Report of the State Engineer to the Governor of Colorado 1907-1908* (Denver: Smith-Brooks Printing Co., 1909).

¹⁰ See dedication plaque: "1908 State Bridge Under an Act of the 16th General Assembly Thomas J. Ehrhart Senator, Board of Construction T.W. Jaycox, State Engineer. Contractor, the Pueblo Bridge Company."

¹¹ Fraser, 5CF.414 File 2.

¹² Robert Autobee, "Somebody Else's Horizon, The Road Trips of Colorado's First Highway Commissioners," *Colorado Heritage* (Jul-Aug 2010) 20.

¹³ Stone, ed, *History of Colorado*, p. 212, 214.

¹⁴ Fraser, 5CF.414 File, 2.

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Colorado Department of Transportation. *Spanning Generations: The Historic Bridges of Colorado*. Denver: CDOT, 2004.

Fourteenth Biennial Report of the State Engineer to the Governor of Colorado 1907-1908. Denver: Smith-Brooks Printing Co., 1909.

Fraser, Clayton. *Highway Bridges in Colorado National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form*. On file with the Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, History Colorado. Loveland: March 2000.

Fraser, Clayton. "Historic Bridge Inventory." On file with the Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, History Colorado. Site File No. 5CF.414. 31 March 2000.

Santec Consulting, Inc. "Chaffee County Bridge CHA191-01.57. Rehabilitation Assessment" Chaffee County. December 11, 2008.

Stone, Wilbur Fisk, ed. *History of Colorado*. Vol. II. S.J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1918.Ehrhart.

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: History Colorado

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): 5CF.414

10. Geographical Data

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

The UTM reference point was derived from heads up digitization on Digital Raster Graphic (DRG) maps provided to OAHP by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management.

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.) NAD83

1	<u>13</u> Zone	<u>407588</u> Easting	<u>4274340</u> Northing	3	<u>13</u> Zone	<u>407620</u> Easting	<u>4274335</u> Northing
2	<u>13</u> Zone	<u>407623</u> Easting	<u>4274315</u> Northing	4	<u>13</u> Zone	<u>407583</u> Easting	<u>4274335</u> Northing

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

The bridge is located on County Road 191 at milepost 30. The boundary consists of a rectangle of land 15 feet out from the footprint of the bridge, as corresponds to the legally recorded boundary in the Warranty Deed recorded March 30,

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1994: "[the] right of way for County Road No. 191 as disclosed by road map of Chaffee County, prepared for Chaffee County Commissioners and further disclosed by plat prepared by Biglow Land Surveyors, July, 1983."

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 Melanie Roth, Chair, with assistance from Fay Golson, Board Member (for property owner)
organization Chaffee County Heritage Area date 1-29-2013
street & number PO Box 1522 telephone 719-221-1340
city or town Salida state CO zip code 81236
e-mail mudd@chaffeeco.net

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) 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.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

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: Brown's Canyon Bridge

City or Vicinity: Salida

County: Chaffee

State: Colorado

Photographer: Fay Golson

Date Photographed: 19 January 2013

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

CO_Chaffee County_Brown's Canyon Bridge_0001: West end looking east
CO_Chaffee County_Brown's Canyon Bridge_0002: East end looking west
CO_Chaffee County_Brown's Canyon Bridge_0003: South elevation looking north

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- CO_Chaffee County_ Brown's Canyon Bridge_0004: South elevation detail
- CO_Chaffee County_ Brown's Canyon Bridge_0005: North elevation looking southeast
- CO_Chaffee County_ Brown's Canyon Bridge_0006: North elevation looking southwest
- CO_Chaffee County_ Brown's Canyon Bridge_0007: East end of bridge, interior plaque
- CO_Chaffee County_ Brown's Canyon Bridge_0008: East end detail, interior of north railing
- CO_Chaffee County_ Brown's Canyon Bridge_0009: East end detail, interior of south railing
- CO_Chaffee County_ Brown's Canyon Bridge_0010: South railing, exterior detail
- CO_Chaffee County_ Brown's Canyon Bridge_0011: West end of bridge, interior plaque
- CO_Chaffee County_ Brown's Canyon Bridge_0012: West approach to bridge

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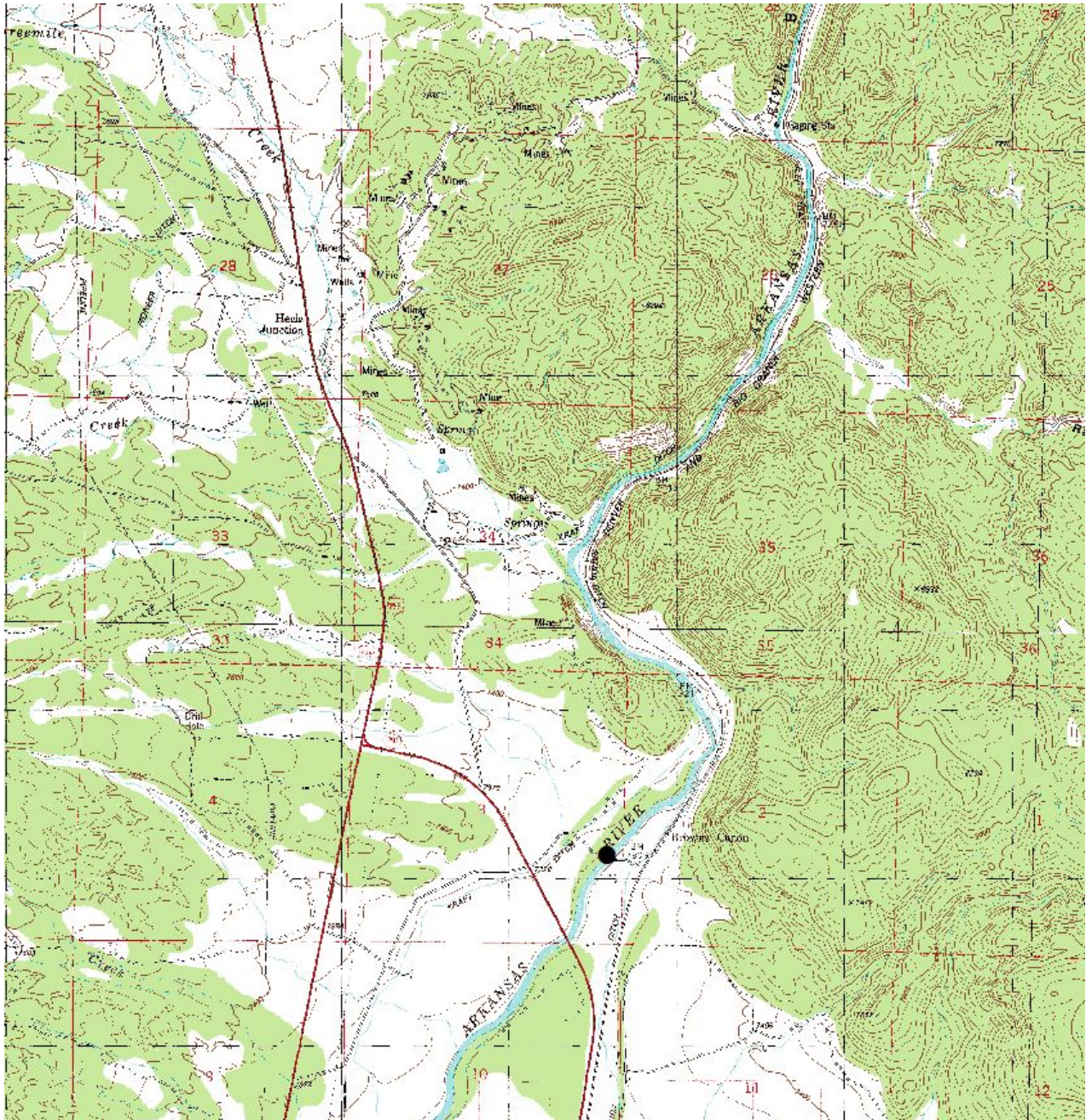
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USGS TOPOGRAPHIC MAP

Salida West Quadrangle, Colorado
7.5 Minute Series

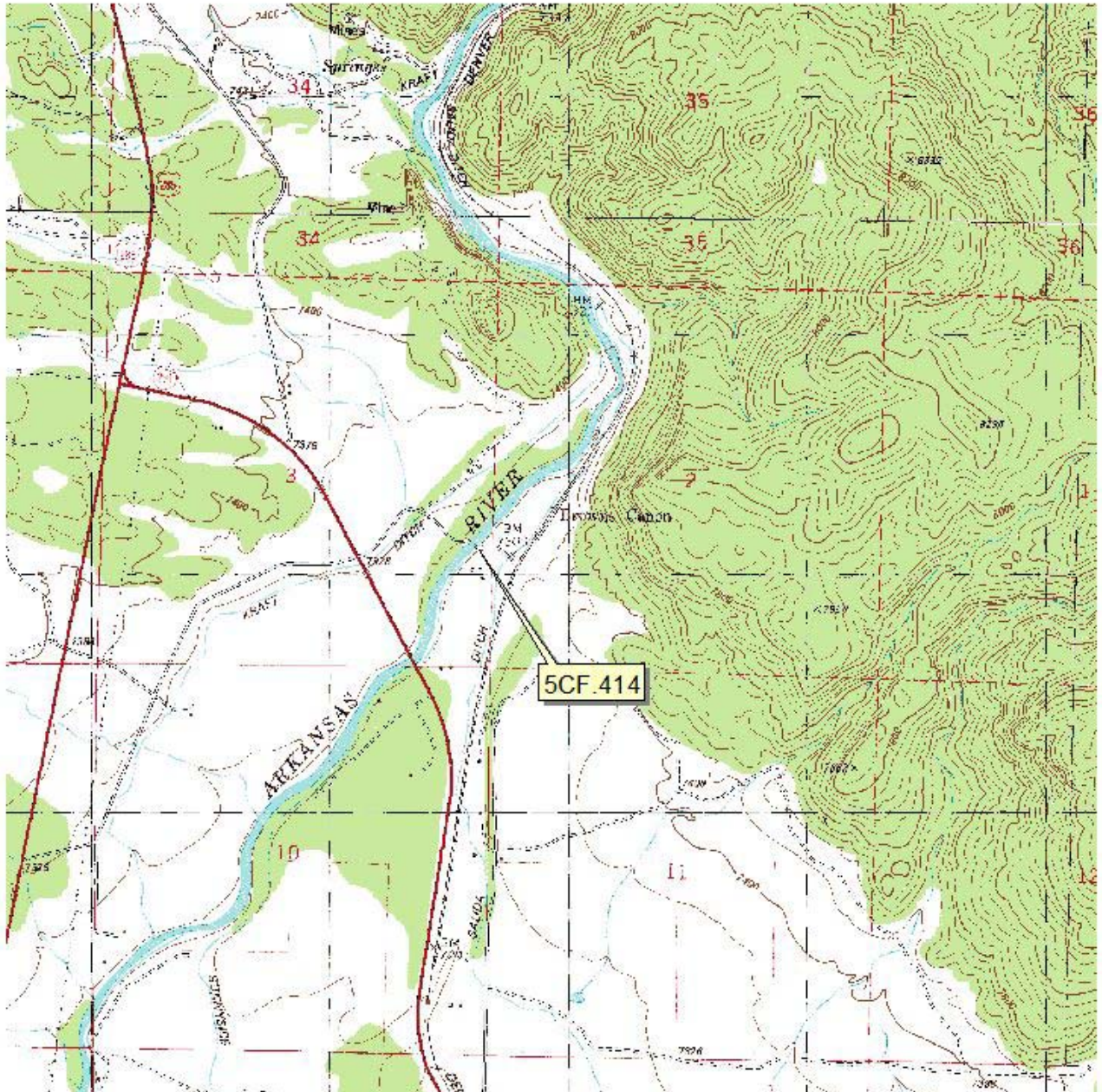
UTM: Zone 13; 407588 mE; 4274340 mN
13; 407623 mE; 4274315 mN
13; 407620 mE; 4274335 mN
13; 407583 mE; 4274335 mN(NAD 83)

SS: 6th PM, T50N, R8E, Sec. 3 E $\frac{1}{4}$, SE $\frac{1}{4}$, NE $\frac{1}{4}$, SE $\frac{1}{4}$
Elevation 7280'



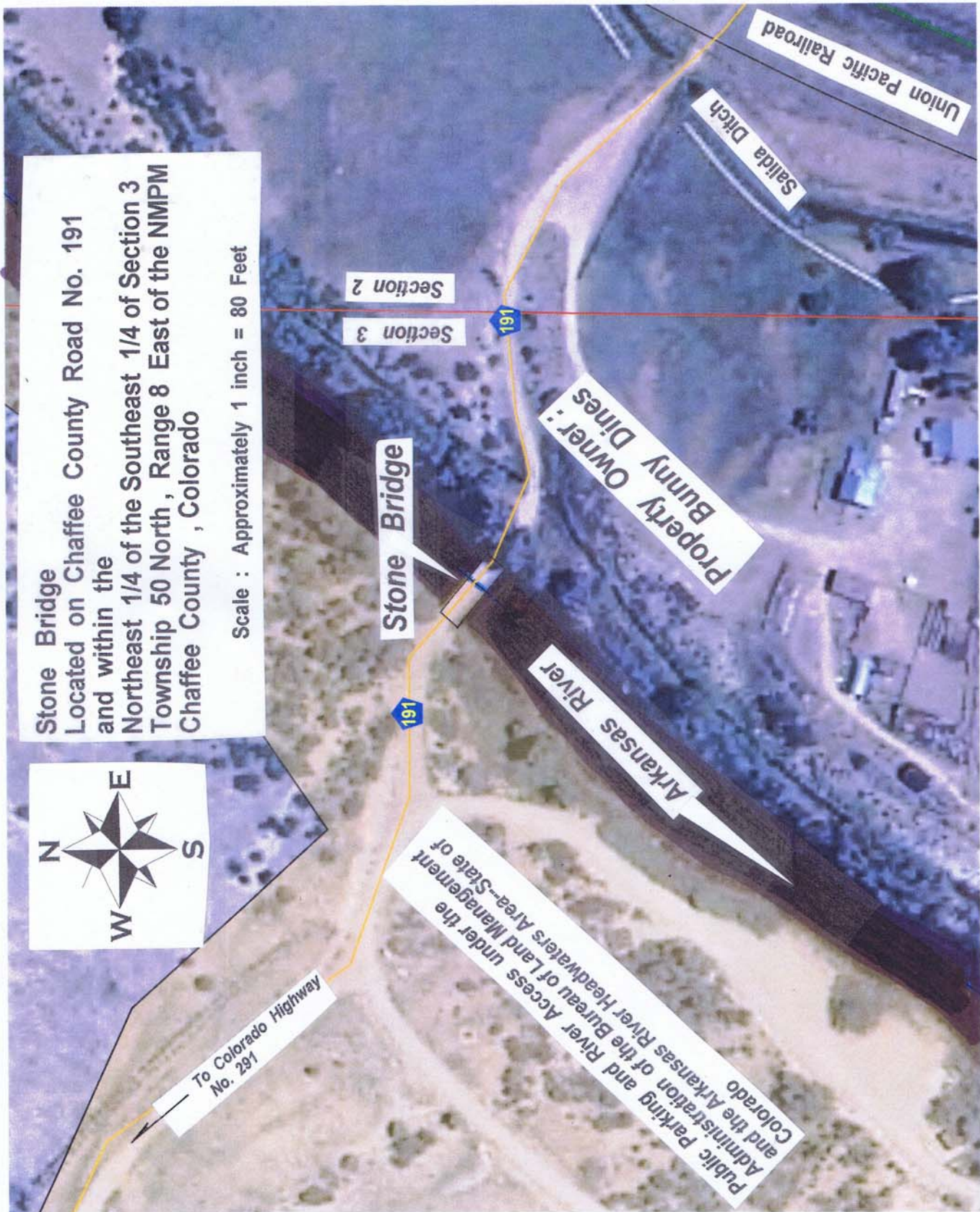
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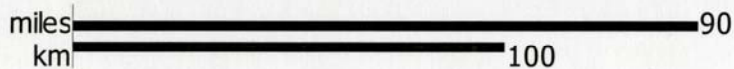


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Google earth



Coordinates

- A 38.612944
-106.062054
- B 38.612641
-106.061642
- C 38.612565
-106.061782
- D 38.612813
-106.062171

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Property Owner:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Chaffee County, Chaffee County Commissioners
street & number PO Box 699 telephone 719-539-2218
city or town Salida state CO zip code 81201

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.