

Historic Architectural Resources Survey Report
Phase II

Replace Bridge No. 17 on SR 1516 over Pacolet River
Polk County, North Carolina
TIP No. B-3018
State Project No. 8.2980401
Federal Aid No. BRZ-1516(1)

North Carolina Department of Transportation
Report Prepared by Clay Griffith

October 2, 1996

Clay Griffith

Principal Investigator
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October 2, 1996

Date

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North Carolina Department of Transportation

October 3, 1996

Date

Replace Bridge No. 17 on SR 1516 over Pacolet River
Polk County, North Carolina
TIP No. B-3018

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) proposes to replace Bridge No. 17 on SR 1516 over Pacolet River in Polk County with a new structure on a new alignment south (downstream) of the existing structure. The proposed bridge will carry two travel lanes.

Bridge No. 17 is a 42-foot, single-span Warren Pony truss bridge. The bridge, which is supported on stone masonry abutments, was probably constructed between 1920 and 1930. This bridge was evaluated in October 1995 as part of the re-evaluation study of North Carolina's metal truss bridges conducted by NCDOT, Federal Highway Administration and the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office. Bridge No. 17 was determined to be not eligible for the National Register (see Appendix).

The area of potential effect (APE) for historic architectural resources was delineated by a NCDOT staff architectural historian and reviewed in the field. The APE boundary is shown on the attached map.

PURPOSE OF SURVEY AND REPORT

NCDOT conducted a survey and compiled this report in order to identify historic architectural resources located within the APE as part of the environmental studies performed by NCDOT and documented by a Categorical Exclusion (CE). This report is prepared as a technical appendix to the CE and as part of the documentation of compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966, as amended. Section 106 of the NHPA requires that if a federally funded, licensed, or permitted project has an effect on a property listed in or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation be given an opportunity to comment. This report is on file at NCDOT and available for review by the public.

METHODOLOGY

NCDOT conducted the survey and prepared this report in accordance with the provisions of FHWA Technical Advisory T 6640.8A (Guidance for Preparing and Processing Environmental and Section 4(f) Documents); the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archaeological and Historic Preservation (48 FR 44716); 36 CFR Part 800; 36 CFR Part 60; and Survey Procedures and Report Guidelines for Historic Architectural Resources by NCDOT. This survey and report meet the guidelines of NCDOT and the National Park Service.

NCDOT conducted a Phase II survey with the following goals: (1) to determine the APE, defined as the geographic area or areas within which a project may cause changes in the character or use of historic properties, if any such properties exist; (2) to identify all significant resources within the APE; and (3) to evaluate these resources according to the National Register of Historic Places criteria.

The survey methodology consisted of a field survey and background research on the project area. A NCDOT staff architectural historian conducted a field survey in May 1996,

by car and on foot. All structures over fifty years of age in the APE were photographed and keyed to a aerial map. No interiors were examined, but one property owner was interviewed.

Background research was conducted at the Polk County Courthouse, Polk County Public Library, Lanier Library in Tryon, the Western Office of the Division of Archives and History in Asheville, and the North Carolina State Library in Raleigh. Polk County has not been comprehensively surveyed for historic architectural resources. A reconnaissance survey was conducted by Ted Alexander in 1985, and the survey maps and files were searched for any pertinent information.

SUMMARY FINDINGS OF THE SURVEY

Two (2) properties over fifty years of age were identified within the area of potential effect (APE) during the survey for historic architectural resources. No properties listed on either the National Register or State Study List are located within the APE for the subject project. Bridge No. 17, probably erected between 1920 and 1930, is located on an unpaved road in the heart of Polk County's "hunting country." The property to the west of the bridge is a modern horse farm with pastures surrounding the main house and extending to the Pacolet River. River House, built as early as ca. 1870 and located east of the bridge, consists of the main house atop a promontory north of SR 1516 and a small stable and riding ring located south of the road.

Properties Listed on the National Register or North Carolina State Study List:

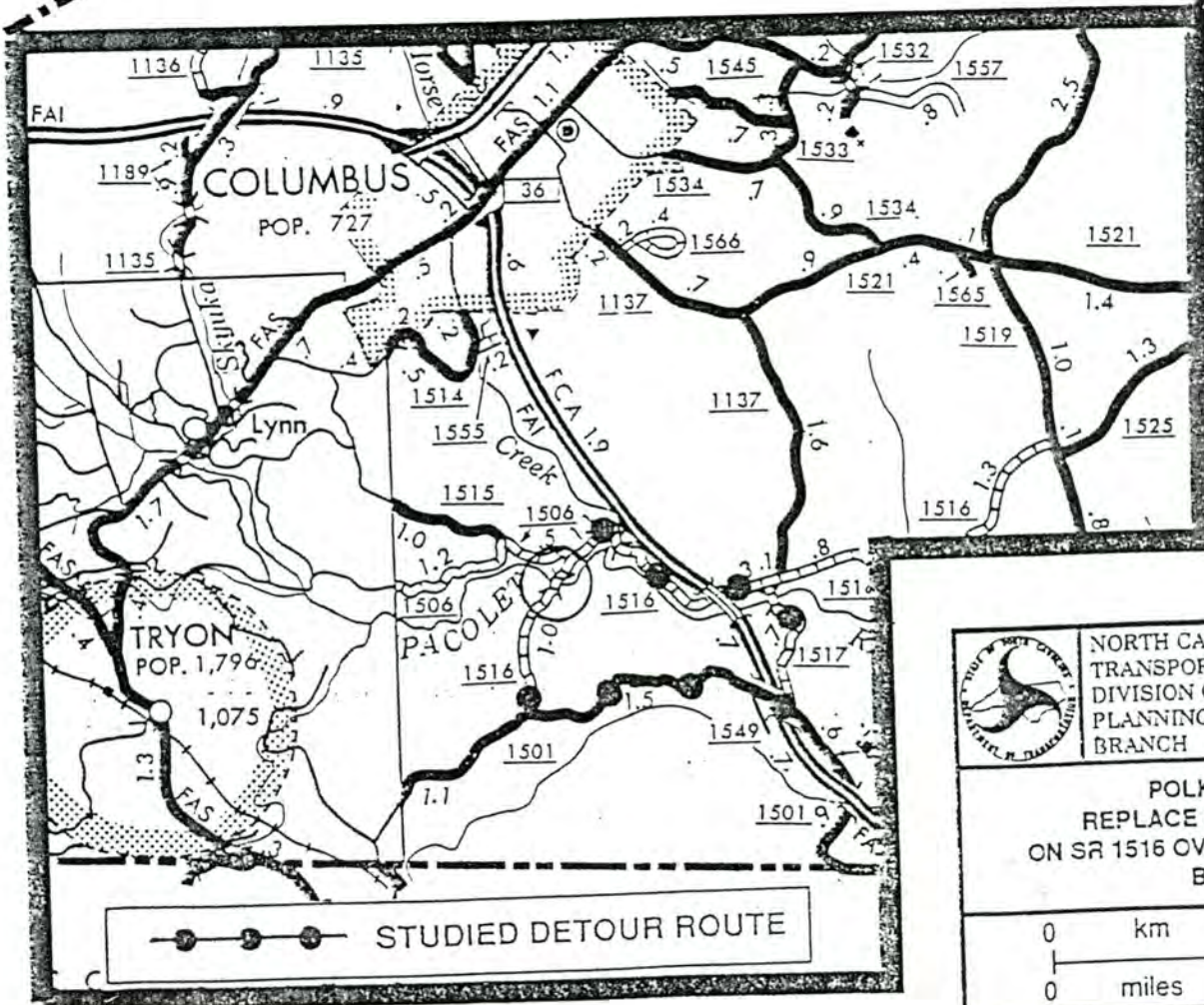
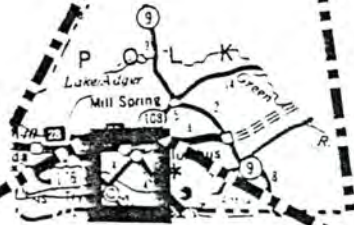
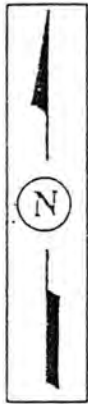
None


Properties Evaluated and Considered Eligible for the National Register:

River House.

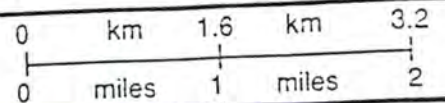
Properties Evaluated and Considered Not Eligible for the National Register:

Bridge No. 17.



 NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION
DIVISION OF HIGHWAYS
PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL
BRANCH

POLK COUNTY
REPLACE BRIDGE NO. 17
ON SR 1516 OVER PACOLET RIVER
B - 3018



Historic Contexts and Background Information

In the third quarter of the eighteenth century, Mecklenburg County encompassed the area of present Polk County, and the early settlers of this region pushed their farmlands further west against the boundary of the Cherokee nation. Governor Tryon traveled to the area in 1767 to meet with the Cherokees and establish a new line. A new county, Tryon, was formed in 1768 from Mecklenburg and its prominent peak was also named for the governor. Traders from Charleston traveled to the Block House, south of the present town of Tryon, to trade hides and furs with the Indians. During the Revolution, the British defeated the forces of General Joseph McDowell in Tryon County, and Cherokees joined Tories in raiding frontier farms. Captain Thomas Howard and his militia were led by an Indian guide, Skyuka, through a secret pass in the Blue Ridge Mountains (now known as Howard's Gap), defeated the Cherokees and drove them back into the Smoky Mountains. Tryon County was abolished in 1779. (Sharpe, p. 1535, and Patton, pp. 1-2, 7-8)

Following the Revolution, speculation syndicates acquired land confiscated from the Tories and additional land was made available by the state to compensate veterans of the war. Tench Coxe of Philadelphia accumulated the largest holding of speculation lands by 1796, amassing nearly 500,000 acres. Coxe sold his land to Augusta Sackett of New York, who became the first in a long line real estate promoters for the area. Sackett advertised widely and attracted steady flow of settlers who found the Pacolet and Green River valleys well-suited for agriculture. The Legislature of North Carolina created Polk County from Henderson and Rutherford Counties in 1846, but the location of the new courthouse could not be agreed upon. The Legislature repealed its act in 1849, but created the county again in 1855 after Columbus was decided on as the courthouse site. Polk County has the distinction of being the only county in North Carolina created twice. (Sharpe, p. 1536, and Patton, pp. 11-12)

Polk County is relatively small in area, covering only 237 square miles, and ranges in elevation from 750 feet above sea level in the south to 3238 feet above sea level in the northwest. The crest of Blue Ridge Mountains forms the northern boundary, and the county is drained by the Pacolet and Green Rivers. Laying on the southern slopes of the Blue Ridge, Polk enjoys characteristics of both the mountains and the piedmont. Thermal belts are also found in Polk County and provide frost free areas that farmers took advantage of with their plantings. The variety and influence of geography in Polk is manifested in the towns of Tryon, which was a winter resort, and Saluda, a summer resort only eight miles away. (Sharpe, pp. 1536-38)

Polk County did not recover from the Civil War until the railroad reached Tryon from Spartanburg, South Carolina, in 1877. The line was eventually completed to Hendersonville in 1877 and Asheville in 1885. The grade between Tryon and Saluda, known as the Saluda Grade, is the steepest for standard gauge railroads in the United States. Travelers from the low county, especially Charleston, discovered early on the pleasing climate of Polk County and established a summer colony along the crest of the Blue Ridge. Additional publicity in the 1880s print media promoted the area and attracted a number of professional writers and other well-educated visitors. A renewed interest in equestrian events also drew numerous visitors and ultimately property owners to the region. The railroad also brought new industry, primarily textile manufacturing, to the county. (Sharpe, pp. 1540-41)

After World War I, a shift towards an older, more stable population was noticeable, and the vacation resorts gave way to more seasonal cottages and year-round residences. Carter P. Brown founded the Tryon Riding and Hunt Club in 1925, and promoted horse-related activities such as fox hunting, riding trails, shows, and a steeplechase. Today a network of

several hundred miles of bridle paths emanates from Tryon. The horse events have drawn a well-to-do class of individuals to settle in Polk County. (Sharpe, pp. 1541-44; and Polk County Historical Association, p. 325)

The architectural character of Polk County was likewise influenced by topography and climate. In the fertile river valleys and lower elevations, the early settlers, mostly English, established large farms and built their houses in Federal and Greek Revival styles prevalent in the eastern part of the state. The subsistence farmers, traders, and frontier families who settled in the higher elevations of the mountains built log houses unaffected by architectural refinement. Log construction persisted in these remote areas until the turn of the century. The railroad brought an influx of new architectural ideas popular on a national level and shifted development from the large farms to the corridor between Tryon and Saluda. Tourism also brought changes in architectural style to Polk County including Gothic Revival, Queen Anne, and Colonial Revival resorts and cottages (Alexander, n.p.).

PROPERTY INVENTORY AND EVALUATIONS

RIVER HOUSE.

Location. Both sides of SR 1516 (South River Road), north and west of Pacolet River, and south of junction with SR 1506.

Description. The River House sits atop a promontory overlooking the Pacolet River as it meanders through the hunting country of Polk County. The River House, as it is known, is an imposing, two-and-one-half story, gable-front, frame dwelling. The original rectangular plan of the house has been extended by a one-story, shed-roof addition running the full width of the rear facade. A partially-enclosed, shed-roof porch extends beyond the rear addition. Reportedly, the house has undergone a number of changes including the removal of a double-tier porch across the front gable end. Intact exterior features of the house include exposed and rounded rafter tails; single-shoulder, exterior, stone chimneys; and six-over-six and one-over-one double-hung sash windows. A second-story, polygonal balcony supported by large sawn brackets projects from the front gable end of the house. Directly beneath the balcony is a set of double doors set within a round-arched surround behind similar, round-arched screen doors all set within a flat-arched architrave. These first-story doors open onto a recently constructed wood deck.

The interior of the house was not accessed. The principal investigator was able to glimpse the central hall, however, through the rear door. The interior does not appear to be much altered from the photographs taken during the 1985 survey by Ted Alexander. The center hall appears to retain the original stairs, sheathed wainscot, wood floors, door surrounds, and hardware. Alexander recorded in 1985 that the interior may have been altered in the 1950s by a previous owner, but the extent of these changes was not specified.

The River House is approached from the rear along a driveway that provides access to SR 1506. The driveway splits at its entrance with the southern fork curving upward to the parking area at the rear of the house. A modern, detached garage stands removed from the house. The northern fork of the driveway winds around the property downslope of the house and connects to a network of terraced lanes on the property. The terraces are formed by fieldstone retaining walls. The slope of the property east of the house is planted with mature deciduous trees and various shrubs and hedges, mostly boxwoods, which are arranged in both clearly defined rows and seemingly random patterns. At the bottom of the hill along SR 1516, a double row of boxwoods stands behind a lower, single row of smaller and more widely spaced boxwoods.

The portion of the property on the east side of SR 1516 is bound by a meander in the Pacolet River. Most of this flat, low-lying area has been made into a riding ring and is surrounded by a split-rail fence. A small stable and shed are located at the north end of the ring. Much of the landscaping around the house and the riding ring were added by the current owners in the 1970s.

Background Information. For a structure of such obvious size and prominence, the history of the River House is uncertain and highly speculative. According to research done by the current owners, Wolfgang and Joan Lonnes, the house was once the center of a 2000-acre plantation owned by Charles Lynch, a wealthy Charlestonian. The property is variously referred to as Lynch's or the Lynch Plantation, and in the county deeds the present South River Road (SR 1516) is

called Lynch Road. Deed research conducted by the principal investigator led to two references to tracts of 550 or more acres conveyed by Charles Lynch, indicating that his land holdings were quite substantial. One tract of 549.5 acres was conveyed by Lynch to Cuyler Adams, out of whose estate came the present nineteen acre tract surrounding the River House. Although the property is associated with Lynch, the date of house is unknown. According to Mr. Lonnes, the house was built 130 years ago, immediately following the Civil War.

According to the current owners the property was owned by the National Farm School in the early twentieth century. The National Farm School, based in Doylestown, Pennsylvania, was chartered in 1896 by Joseph Krauskopf, a Jewish rabbi from Philadelphia. Krauskopf served as the first president of the school until his death in 1923. The school was organized to train city boys of limited means, mostly Jewish, for careers in farming or other agricultural occupations. By the early 1940s the National Farm School had produced nearly 1200 graduates of which approximately 500 were employed in agricultural occupations (Stimson and Lathrop, p. 407). Other than the reported ownership, the association between the National Farm School and this property is unknown.

River House is thought to have been won and lost as a gambling wager in the 1940s based on two recorded real estate transactions between the same two parties. James and Betsy Getz of Lake Forest, Illinois, acquired the property, encompassing 174.3 acres, from the Cuyler Adams estate in 1938. On January 4, 1944, the Getzes did "convey and quit claim" the entire 174.3 acre tract to Bruce and Margaret Hightower of Chicago. The following day, January 5, 1944, the Hightowers did "convey and quit claim" the same property back to James and Betsy Getz (Polk County Deed Book 80, pages 138-39). The notion that the property was lost through gambling arose, perhaps, since the property was transferred without any remuneration.

In 1952, James and Betsy Getz sold 35 acres including the River House to Carter and Marion Brown (Polk County Deed Book 95, page 322). Carter Brown, known affectionately as "Mr. Tryon," was prominent for his involvement in promoting equestrian activities in Polk County and restoring historically important properties. Brown founded the Tryon Riding and Hunt Club in 1925 and promoted such activities and events as fox hunts, a steeplechase, horse shows, and a network riding trails. During his ownership, Brown restored the Block House and River House, as well as restoring and operating the Pine Crest Inn. Brown rescued the River House from neglect and vandalism. He probably remodeled some of the interior, added the kitchen and small side bay window, and landscaped the grounds (Polk County Historical Association, pp. 240-41 and 335, and Sharpe, p. 1544).

The present owners, Wolfgang and Joan Lonnes, purchased the house in 1969 and reside there throughout the year. The Lonnes' changed the landscaping shortly after purchasing the property and also built the Sand Ring, which is located on the east side of SR 1516.

Evaluation. For purposes of compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, NCDOT considers the River House in Polk County to be eligible for the National Register under Criterion C for architecture. The River House is a good example of the large nineteenth-century dwellings built by the planter families in the fertile river valleys of Polk County. Although not as early as Green Spring, Mills Spring, or Mills-Screven Plantation, the River House is one of few substantial dwellings from the late-nineteenth century remaining. The

property conveys the architectural refinement typical of the planter-class residences despite its many vernacular elements. The River House is clearly distinct in style from the log dwellings found at the higher elevations and the resort architecture of the early twentieth century. Although the house has undergone some alteration through the years, the property retains sufficient integrity to be eligible for the National Register under Criterion C. The River House retains its original massing and plan with later rear additions, location, setting, and numerous interior and exterior details. The removal of the two-story porch appears to be the only significant alteration to the structure.

Based on the information available at this time, the River House is not considered eligible under Criterion A since it is not associated with significant events or the broad patterns of history. The property is not considered eligible under Criterion B since it is not associated with the lives of significant individuals. Moreover, the architectural component of the property is not likely to yield information in the history of building technology and therefore is not eligible for the National Register under Criterion D in that respect.

Boundaries. The proposed eligible boundaries for the River House begin in the center of the Pacolet River at a point on the north side of Bridge No. 17. The proposed boundaries follow the river to the west (upstream) and turn south at a bend in the river before heading west along the tree line on the north side of a power line cut. Where the power line crosses the driveway, the boundaries follow the south side of the driveway west to the back of the ditch on the east side of SR 1506. The boundaries follow the back of this ditch north and east to the intersection with SR 1516, and then the boundaries continue on the south and west side of SR 1516 to the beginning.



RIVER HOUSE, view to west



RIVER HOUSE



RIVER HOUSE



RIVER HOUSE, north elevation



RIVER HOUSE, rear elevation



RIVER HOUSE, terraced driveway



RIVER HOUSE, landscaping, view to south along SR 1516



RIVER HOUSE, view to north along SR 1516



RIVER HOUSE, stable



RIVER HOUSE, shed



SR 1506

SR 1515

Pacolet River

SR 1506

SR 1516

River House

Proposed Eligible Boundaries

SR 1516

Pacolet River

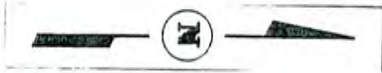
Bridge No. 17

Area of Potential Effect

SR 1516

Sand Ring

	<p>NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION DIVISION OF HIGHWAYS PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL BRANCH</p>
<p>Replace Bridge No. 17 on SR 1516 over Pacolet River Polk County TIP No. B-3018</p>	
<p>Area of Potential Effect Map</p>	



WOODED

WOODED

SR 1506

SR 1506

PROPOSED ELIGIBLE BOUNDARIES

WOODED

WOODED

PASTURE

SR 1516

BRIDGE No. 17

RIVER HOUSE

SITE PLAN — NOT TO SCALE



APPENDIX

In March 1995 a committee consisting of representatives from NCDOT, Federal Highway Administration, and North Carolina SHPO was appointed to update the 1979 survey of metal truss bridges in North Carolina and re-evaluate the surviving bridges. The committee has completed the final draft of the re-evaluation study report and has begun evaluating the surviving bridges. Bridge No. 17 was evaluated in October 1995 and was determined to be not eligible for the National Register. A copy of the evaluation form and a letter from SHPO, dated November 30, 1995, concurring with the determination that the bridge is not eligible are attached.

METAL TRUSS BRIDGE EVALUATION

TIP NO. *B-3018* COUNTY *Polk*
 LOCATION *On SR 1516 over Pacolet River*

BRIDGE NO. *17*
 SPAN(S) *Warren Pony*

I. CRITERION A

To be eligible under Criterion A, a bridge must fall into one or more of the following categories:

- A bridge that pre-dates the State Highway Commission (established in 1915) and was built on one of the state's major transportation corridors. *No.*
- The first bridge at a crossing to serve traffic on one of the routes designated as state highways in 1921. *No.*
- A bridge built at a critical crossing on one of the state's major transportation corridors. *No.*
- A bridge that is specifically associated with significant residential, commercial, or industrial development or expansion. *No.*

Integrity. Does the bridge possess sufficient integrity to support its significance under Criterion A?

II. CRITERION C

To be eligible under Criterion C, a bridge must score four (4) or more points.

<u>Category</u>	<u>Max. Points</u>	<u>Score</u>
A. Builder and/or Designer		
1. Known, important in evolution of truss technology	3	
2. Known, prolific builder or NC company	2	
3. Known	1	
4. Unknown	0	0
B. Geometry/Configuration (Statewide significance)		
1. Range: 1-6 remaining	2	
2. Range: 7-15 remaining	1	
3. Range: 16 or more	0	0
C. Geometry/Configuration (Local significance)		
1. Range: 1-2 remaining	2	2
2. Range: 3-5 remaining	1	
3. Range: 6 or more	0	
D. Technological features	2	0
E. Decorative features	1	0
TOTAL POINTS	10	2 pts.

Integrity. Does the bridge possess sufficient integrity to support its significance under Criterion C? *Yes.*

III. SUMMARY

Bridge #17 was built probably between 1920 and 1930. No bridge or crossing appears at this location on the 1907 Saluda quad map. The 1930 county road map shows Class B graded county roads in the vicinity of the present crossing but no direct correlation is evident. The bridge is not located at a critical crossing and is not part of a major transportation route. The stone abutments supporting the trusses probably date from the construction of the bridge. Bridge #17 is surrounded by horse pastures and wooded areas.

Twenty-one Warren Pony truss bridges remain standing on the state system. Two Warren Pony truss bridges remain in Polk County, but none of this type are located in Henderson and Rutherford Counties. Bridge #17 is a good example of a typical Warren Pony truss bridge and retains its overall integrity.

IV. RECOMMENDATION: *Not Eligible*

Date of Evaluation: *October 13, 1995*



BRIDGE NO. 17 on SR 1516 over Pacolet River



BRIDGE NO. 17



North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources

James B. Hunt, Jr., Governor
Betty Ray McCain, Secretary

Division of Archives and History
William S. Price, Jr., Director

November 30, 1995

Nicholas L. Graf
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
Department of Transportation
310 New Bern Avenue
Raleigh, N.C. 27601-1442

Re: Metal Truss Bridge Evaluations, ER 96-7884
Davidson #257, B-2540
Henderson #61, B-2575
McDowell #175, B-2586
McDowell #70, B-2587
Polk #47, B-2604
Polk #105, B-2605
Polk #44, B-2606
Polk #17, B-3018
Polk #19, B-3019
Rutherford #273, B-3041

Dear Mr. Graf:

Thank you for your letter of November 9, 1995, transmitting the metal truss bridge evaluations for the above projects.

For purposes of compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, we concur that the following properties are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under the criteria cited:

Davidson #257. Bridge #257 is eligible under Criterion A for its association with the development of the Carolina Aluminum Company power plant at High Rock Lake, and under Criterion C because it was manufactured by the prolific Virginia Bridge and Iron Company and is one of only two Pratt through truss bridges left in Davidson and the surrounding counties.

Henderson #61. Bridge #61, a Pratt through truss bridge, is eligible under Criterion A for its association with the expansion of the Tuxedo Hydroelectric Plant under Duke Power's ownership.

Polk #47. Polk #47 is eligible under Criterion C because it is one of only five Parker truss bridges remaining on the state system.

Polk #105. Polk #105 is eligible under Criterion C because it is one of only five Parker truss bridges remaining on the state system.

Rutherford #273. Rutherford #273 is eligible under Criterion C because it was manufactured by the prolific Champion Bridge Company and is one of only five Camelback truss bridges remaining on the state system.

The following properties were determined not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places:

McDowell #175. McDowell #175 is an example of the relatively common Pratt pony truss bridge, and lacks special historical significance.

McDowell #70 and Polk #44. These bridges are examples of the relatively common Pratt through truss bridge, and lack special historical significance.

Polk #17 and Polk #19. These bridges are examples of the relatively common, though locally rare, Warren pony truss bridge and lack special historical significance.

In general, the evaluations meet our office's guidelines and those of the Secretary of the Interior.

The above comments are made pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's Regulations for Compliance with Section 106 codified at 36 CFR Part 800.

Thank you for your cooperation and consideration. If you have questions concerning the above comment, please contact Renee Gledhill-Earley, environmental review coordinator, at 919/733-4763.

Sincerely,



David Brook
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

DB:slw

cc: H. F. Vick
B. Church

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