

North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources State Historic Preservation Office

Michael F. Easley, Governor Lisbeth C. Evans, Secretary Jeffrey J. Crow, Deputy Secretary Office of Archives and History

Division of Historical Resources David L. S. Brook, Director

April 7, 2004

MEMORANDUM

TO: Greg Thorpe, Ph.D., Director Project Development and Environmental Analysis Branch NCDOT Division of Highways

David Brook Befor David Brook

FROM:

SUBJECT: Historic Architectural Resources Survey Report, Replace Bridge No. 44 on NC 19E over North Toe River, B-3608, Avery County, ER03-2337

Thank you for your letter of March 11, 2004, transmitting the survey report by Jennifer Cathey.

The following property is determined not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places:

Erwin's Store and Floral Gift Shop

Erwin's Store and Floral Gift Shop, northeast side of the intersection of US 19E and Powder Mill Road, is not eligible for the National Register under any criteria. Although an example of roadside commercial architecture, the building does not contain special architectural distinction or historical association to warrant its eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places.

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, contact Renee Gledhill-Earley, environmental review coordinator, at 919/733-4763. In all future communication concerning this project, please cite the above referenced tracking number.

cc: Mary Pope Furr

#### www.hpo.dcr.state.nc.us

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bc: VSouthern/McBride 106 County



# STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

MICHAEL F. EASLEY GOVERNOR LYNDO TIPPETT Secretary

March 11, 2004

Ref. #ER03-2337 S Due 4/13

Mr. David L. S. Brook Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources 4617 Mail Service Center Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-4617

Dear Mr. Brook:

RE: B-3608, Replace Bridge No. 44 on NC 19E over the North Toe River, Avery County. State Project # 8.1721101, Federal Aid #BRSTP-019E9(3).

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) is conducting planning studies for the abovereferenced project. Please find attached two copies of the Historic Architectural Resources Survey Report, which meets the guidelines for survey procedures for NCDOT and the National Park Service. This report concludes that there are no properties eligible for the National Register of Historic Places in the Area of Potential Effects (APE).

Please review the survey report and provide us with your comments. If you have any questions concerning the accompanying information, please contact Jennifer Cathey, Historic Architecture Section, (919) 715-1516.

Sincerely,

Mary Pope Furr, Supervisor Historic Architecture Section Office of Human Environment

MPF/jac Attachment cc: Vince Rhea, P.E., Consultant Engineer, PDEA R Cc: John F. Sullivan, III, Division Administrator, Federal Highway Administration

MAR 2 5 2004

MAILING ADDRESS: NC DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION OFFICE OF HUMAN ENVIRONMENT 1583 MAIL SERVICE CENTER RALEIGH NC 27699-1583 TELEPHONE: 919-715-1500 FAX: 919-715-1522 LOCATION: Parker Lincoln Building 2728 Capital Boulevard, Suite 168 Raleigh, NC 27604

WEBSITE: WWW.NCDOT.ORG

# HISTORIC ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES SURVEY REPORT FINAL IDENTIFICATION & EVALUATION

Replace Bridge #44 on NC 19E over the North Toe River Avery County, North Carolina

> TIP #B-3608 State Project No. 8.1721101 Federal Aid No. BRSTP-019E(3)



Jennifer Cathey Architectural Historian North Carolina Department of Transportation

March 2004

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Jennifer Cathey Architectural Historian North Carolina Department of Transportation

March 2004

in Carl

March 5, 2004 Date

Principal Investigator Historic Architecture Section North Carolina Department of Transportation

<u>ch 5,2004</u> Date

Supervisor Historic Architecture Section North Carolina Department of Transportation

## MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) proposes to replace Bridge No. 44 on NC 19E over the North Toe River. NCDOT Bridge Maintenance Unit records indicate that the bridge has a sufficiency rating of 49.2 out of a possible 100, and it is considered structurally deficient. Traffic will be maintained on US 19E since the road is listed as a Rural Major Collector in the Statewide Classification System. The project is Federally funded, FA# BRSTP-019E9(3), and state funded, WO# 8.1721101.

NCDOT consulting engineers supplied NCDOT architectural historians with photographs of structures in the Area of Potential Effects (APE). Of the seven structures in the APE, six were determined Not Eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places at a meeting between NCDOT and the State Historic Preservation Office (HPO) on September 30, 2003. HPO requested that one building, Erwin's Store and Floral Gift Shop, be evaluated for National Register eligibility. This report is prepared as an evaluation of the Erwin's Store and Floral Gift Shop's historical and architectural significance. The building is determined Not Eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

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## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) proposes to replace Bridge No. 44 on NC 19E over the North Toe River in western Avery County (*Figure 1*). NCDOT Bridge Maintenance Unit records indicate that the bridge has a sufficiency rating of 49.2 out of a possible 100, and it is considered structurally deficient. Traffic will be maintained on US 19E since the road is listed as a Rural Major Collector in the Statewide Classification System. The exact location of the new bridge has not yet been determined, but the possibilities include replacement upstream, downstream, or beside the current bridge using phased construction. The project is Federally funded, FA# BRSTP-019E9(3), and state funded, WO# 8.1721101.

#### **PURPOSE OF SURVEY & REPORT**

NCDOT conducted a survey and complied this report in order to identify historic architectural resources located within the Area of Potential Effects (APE) as part of the environmental studies performed by NCDOT and documented by a Categorical Exclusion (CE). This report is prepared in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 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 and is 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 CFR 44716); 36 CFR Part 800; 36 CFR Part 60; and Survey Procedures and Report Guidelines for Historic Architectural Resources by NCDOT (October 2003). This survey and report meet the guidelines of NCDOT and the National Park Service.

NCDOT conducted a Final Identification and Evaluation 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.

NCDOT Survey Report, B-3608, Avery County Jennifer Cathey, March 2004

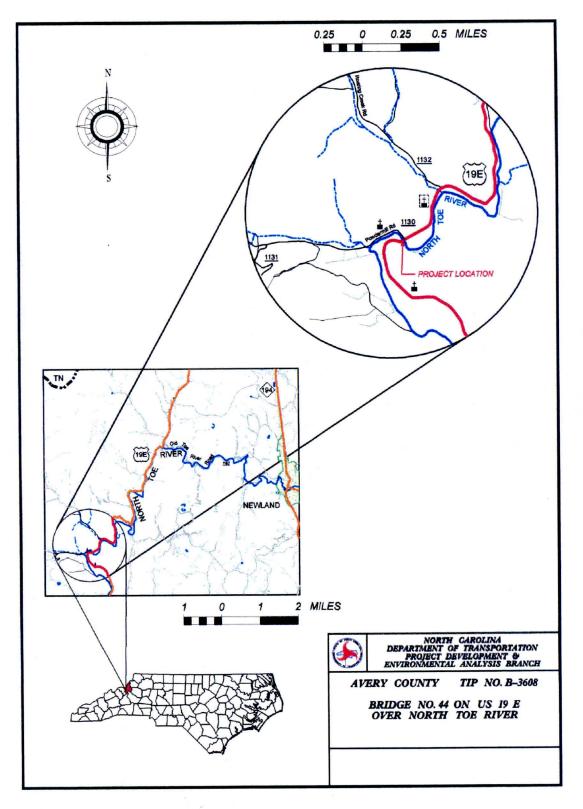


Figure 1. Project location.

2

A NCDOT project engineer and architectural historian delineated the APE for historic architectural resources (*Figure 2*). NCDOT consulting engineers photographed all structures in the APE. NCDOT architectural historians and representatives of the HPO reviewed the photographs on September 30, 2003. The HPO requested that building #1, Erwin's Store and Floral Gift Shop, be evaluated for National Register eligibility. Buildings #2 through #7 were determined ineligible during consultation. A concurrence form and photographs of the ineligible properties are located in the Appendix of this report.

Survey methodology for Erwin's Store and Floral Gift Shop consisted of field examination of the building and historical background research of the building and project area. The survey was conducted on October 8, 2003. Resources for background research included survey maps and files located at the Raleigh and Asheville offices of the HPO, published histories of Avery County and western North Carolina, and public records at the Avery County Courthouse in Newland.

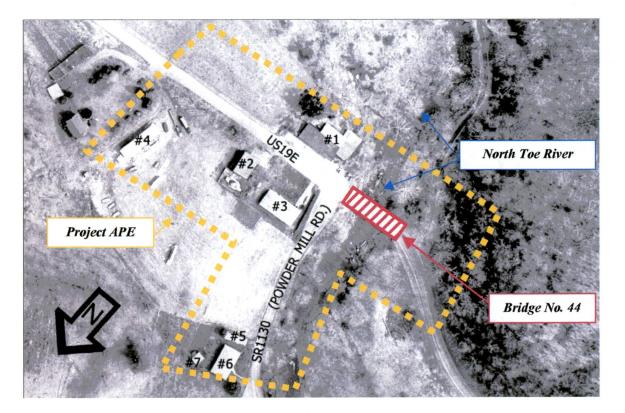


Figure 2. Aerial view of project area showing project APE and evaluated properties (not to scale).

### SUMMARY FINDINGS

Bridge No. 44 spans the North Toe River in the community of Roaring Creek in western Avery County, North Carolina. The steel I-beam bridge with asphalt decking and metal railings is not individually eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. As a result of consultation on September 30, 2003, the HPO requested that one building in the APE be evaluated for National Register eligibility, Erwin's Store and Floral Gift Shop. Six other properties in the APE (listed in the Appendix) were determined ineligible for the National Register during consultation.

Properties Listed on the National Register: none

Properties Listed on the North Carolina State Study List: none

Properties Considered Eligible for the National Register: none

Properties Considered Not Eligible for the National Register: Erwin's Store and Floral Gift Shop

Properties Determined Not Eligible for the National Register and Not Worthy of Further Evaluation: **Properties 2 - 7** 

# PROPERTY EVALUATION ERWIN'S STORE & FLORAL GIFT SHOP

# **Physical Description**

Erwin's Store and Floral Gift Shop occupies a small commercial lot on the northeast side of the intersection of US 19E and Powder Mill Road in the community of Roaring Creek (*Figure 3*). Roaring Creek is composed of a cluster of mid-to-late-twentieth-century houses built on small lots close to the highway, early-to-mid-twentieth-century farms located in the Toe River valley, and two roadside commercial buildings. (In addition to Erwin's, there is an abandoned concrete block gas station/convenience store.) Erwin's is set back approximately twenty feet from US 19E, and is aligned with the junction of Powder Mill Road on the opposite side of the highway. The southwestern end of the store building sits near the bank of the North Toe River, which bends sharply at Roaring Creek before running roughly south-southwest to meet the French Broad River in Tennessee.

Erwin's Store and Floral Gift Shop is composed of three sections constructed in at least three stages. The oldest section is a one-story, log structure with a shallow, side-gabled roof. The northern end of this section, a single-pen log structure, appears to have been the first built (*Figures 3 and 4*). It features round, peeled, saddle-notched logs that are scarred and weathered in appearance. The logs are chinked with river stone covered with cement, and the log ends exposed at the corners of the pen are painted white. The front elevation of this section is three bays wide, with two doors and a four-paned oversized window.



Figure 3. Northwest perspective of Erwin's building looking southeast, showing shed-roofed concrete block building at north end of original log building.

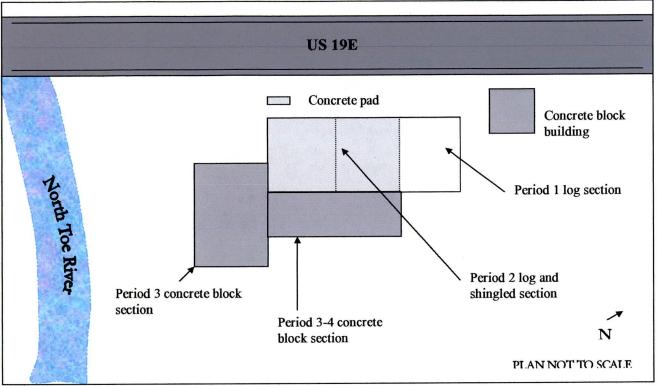


Figure 4. Plan of Erwin's building, showing periodization.

The southern end of the log section is constructed to match the northern end (*Figures 4 and 5*). It is saddle-notched, and the log ends are painted white. However, the logs appear to have been treated, resulting in a darker, less weathered appearance. The texture and color of the logs, as well as the cement chinking (no river stone), suggests this pen resulted from a second period of construction. This section is three bays wide, with a plate-glass, double-leaf door flanked by oversized plate-glass windows. A two-bay section, the front wall of which is covered with wood shingles, joins the two log pens. It is unknown whether this section is structurally a part of first-or second-period pen. The shingled exterior treatment gives the illusion of enclosing the space between the two log pens, suggesting a dogtrot plan.

The roof of the log building is masked from view from the road by a shingled, false-pent roof. L-shaped wood brackets support the overhanging eaves of the roof. A poured-concrete pad, approximately five feet long by two feet wide, is located on the gravel drive in front of the southern pen of the log building. It is outfitted with a modern light pole, and its placement suggests that that it might have been the location of a gas pump.

The southern end of Erwin's Store is built out of concrete block, and appears to represent a third period of construction dating to the 1960s or 1970s (*Figures 4 and 6*). This section has a high roofline on the front elevation that gives the building the appearance of being two stories, when it is actually one story with a steeply pitched shed roof. The four-bay façade features two modern, metal-casement windows and two doors. The upper part of the front elevation is faced with weatherboard, and a shingled pent roof divides the lower story from the false upper story.

NCDOT Survey Report, B-3608, Avery County Jennifer Cathey, March 2004



Figure 5. Southwest perspective of Erwin's building showing log section, concrete pad, and light pole.



Figure 6. Southwest perspective of Erwin's building showing concrete-block section at south end of log section.

A concrete-block shed-roofed addition runs along the rear elevation of the log building, adjoining the concrete-block section (*Figures 4 and 7*). This addition may be contemporary to the weatherboarded block section, or may represent a fourth period of construction. The interior of Erwin's Store & Floral Gift Shop was not accessible at the time of this survey. It appears that the log section may have been used as a general store and gas station, and that the concrete-block section was added to house the Erwin's flower and gift business. An approximately ten-by-ten foot concrete-block, flat-roofed building is located at the northern end of the lot (*figures 3 and 4*).

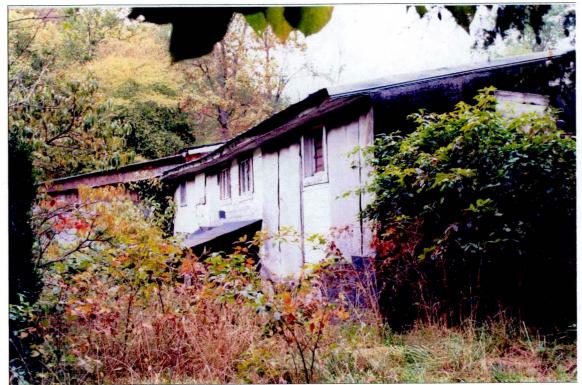


Figure 7. Northeast perspective of Erwin's building showing rear concrete block addition.

# Historic & Architectural Context

Erwin's Store and Floral Gift Shop is a commercial building located in Roaring Creek, a crossroads community in rural western Avery County. Roaring Creek takes its name from a tributary that runs from the Roan Mountain Ridge that forms the North Carolina-Tennessee border to the North Toe River. Present-day US 19E runs along the base of this ridge, forming a major north-south route in the mountainous far west of the state. It runs along the same route of an eighteenth-century path known as the Yellow Mountain Road. Patriot militiamen marching from North Carolina's western territories (now Tennessee) crossed the Roan Mountains, marched southeast along Roaring Creek, and followed the Yellow Mountain Road south on their way to the Battle of King's Mountain in 1780.<sup>1</sup>

Avery County is one of the youngest counties in the state, formed from Mitchell, Caldwell, and Watauga Counties in 1911. Earliest settlement in the territory that became Avery occurred during the early nineteenth century in the vicinity of Ingalls and Linville Falls, now the southernmost tip of the county.<sup>2</sup> As settlement spread northward along the creek and river valleys, a number of small towns developed around the mineral extraction industry. Plumtree and Cranberry, both located on US 19E near the project area, have early-to-mid nineteenth-century origins as mining towns associated with iron and mica extraction and processing. Buildings of this period are primarily of half-dovetail log construction, with two-or-three-pen, and occasionally dogtrot plans.<sup>3</sup>

A second generation of building is represented by larger structures constructed of a combination of hewn and milled components, or entirely of milled lumber. Single-and-double-pen plans gave way to more complex floor plans, and exteriors were often decorated with millwork.<sup>4</sup> At least two commercial buildings survive from this period, the I. V. Reece Store in Beech Creek and the C. W. Burleson Store in Plumtree. The Burleson Store features a distinctive stepped parapet façade.<sup>5</sup>

Construction of a railroad line from Tennessee to Cranberry in the early 1880s spurred the timber industry in the region.<sup>6</sup> Northern lumber companies purchased massive woodland tracts in the area, many of which were later transferred to the Federal government as part of the Pisgah National Forest. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, wealthy vacationers from piedmont and eastern North Carolina and across the South developed the town of Linville as a resort community. Vacationers and developers in Linville and Banner Elk, home of Lees McRae College in northern Avery County, commissioned houses and institutional buildings in the rustic style, characterized by the use of round and hewn logs, shingles, and local stone.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> National Park Service, "Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail" and "A Travelogue on the OVNHT in North Carolina from Tennessee Line to Morganton," n.d., accessed 3 Feb. 2004, < http://www.nps.gov/ovvi/>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Elizabeth Stevens, "Avery County Final Essay," n.d., Asheville Office, North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office, 1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Stevens and Catherine Bishir et al., A Guide to the Historic Architecture of Western North Carolina (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 1999) 24, 228-229.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Stevens, 2-3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Stevens, 3-4; Bishir 229.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Bishir 223,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Stevens, 6; Bishir 224-225, 230.

Avery's major resort areas and tourist attractions were concentrated in the eastern part of the county, not only a result of topography, but also due to design. The same group of investors that developed the resort community at Linville also transformed Grandfather Mountain, the highest peak in the Blue Ridge, into a privately owned roadside attraction. The Blue Ridge Parkway links Linville and Grandfather Mountain as it passes through southeastern Avery County. Separated from these attractions by the Tennessee Divide (the ridge dividing the Blue Ridge watershed), the old Yellow Mountain Road, now known as US 19E, remained the principal north-south route through western Avery County.

The Erwin family likely began construction of their circa-1960 building approximately fifty years after the peak development of the western Avery mining towns and thirty years after that of Linville and the Blue Ridge Parkway. The lot on which the Erwin's building stands was once part of a 130-acre tract called the "Cal Lay Place," which was acquired by the Hall Family of Avery County in 1915. The heirs of Mrs. M. L. Hall sold approximately one third of an acre to the Tri-County Oil Company of Spruce Pine, Mitchell County in 1958. In addition to selling the lot, the Hall heirs also conveyed easements for sewer pipes to run across their land from the subdivided lot to the North Toe River.<sup>8</sup> The following year, Marlin and Ruth Erwin of Avery County purchased the lot from The Tri-County Oil Company. The heirs of Marlin Erwin currently own the property.<sup>9</sup>

The Erwin family was not available to comment on the history of the commercial building on their lot at the time of this evaluation. Based on the documentary evidence, it is likely that either Tri-County Oil Company or the Erwins constructed the building as a gas station between 1958 and 1960. The setback of the building from the road and the concrete island and light pole located in front of the building also suggest use as a gas station, although there are no gas pumps at the site today. The store would have attracted members of the Roaring Creek community, as well as travelers on US 19E between Peachtree and Cranberry.

# **Evaluation**

Erwin's Store and Floral Gift Shop is not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Based on documentary sources, the building appears to be forty-six years old, just under the age requirement of fifty years set forth by the National Register. The building does not meet National Register Criteria Consideration G, exceptional significance for structures under fifty years of age. However, since it is nearing the fifty-year mark, the building was evaluated for National Register eligibility as though it was already were fifty years old. The evaluation is outlined in the following paragraphs.

Erwin's Store and Floral Gift Shop is not eligible under Criterion A for association with events that have contributed to broad patterns of American history. The building is an interesting example of mid twentieth-century roadside commercial architecture. However, it does not have a strong association with any specific event or trend related to business or tourism

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Avery County Register of Deeds, 559/387.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Avery County Register of Deeds, 67/43.

in Avery County or Western North Carolina. Due to its mid-twentieth-century construction date, Erwin's does not relate to the tourist boom represented by the late-nineteenth and earlytwentieth-century development at Linville, Grandfather Mountain, and the Blue Ridge Parkway.

**Erwin's Store and Floral Gift Shop is not eligible under Criterion B** for association with significant persons. The building is not associated with any individual important in a local, state, or national context.

**Erwin's Store and Floral Gift Shop is not eligible under Criterion C for design and construction**. As demonstrated by comparison to other log structures and commercial buildings extant in Avery County, Erwin's does not possess any special architectural distinction. The designer or builder of Erwin's appears to have been familiar with the general shape, form, and materials of nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century log buildings. The twentieth-century rustic log and stone buildings in Linville and Banner Elk may have even inspired him. Yet the building does not accurately reproduce the defining characteristics of either settlement era log buildings or more modern rustic-style buildings. The original log pen at the north end of the structure comes closest to emulating rustic log construction, with its rough-peeled logs and generally accurate proportions. However, size and placement of doors and windows and the roof shape and materials do not evoke any historic precedent. Additions to the original pen made in pressure-treated log, shingle, and concrete block further detract from clear references to historic building types, and render the original pen unworthy of consideration for historic significance.

Erwin's Floral Store and Gift Shop is not eligible for the National Register of Historic **Places under criterion D**, potential to yield information. The construction of the building is not likely to yield information important to the history of building technology or design.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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- \_\_\_\_\_. Deed Book 67, page 43 [Tri-County Oil Company > Marlin and Ruth Erwin, Deed, 25 Sep. 1959].
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*Federal Aid* # BRSTP-019E(3)

*TIP* # B-3608

## <u>CONCURRENCE FORM FOR PROPERTIES NOT ELIGIBLE FOR</u> <u>THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES</u>

Project Description: Replace Bridge No. 44 on US 19E over Toe River

On 09/30/2003, representatives of the

North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office (HPO) Other

Reviewed the subject project at

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 Scoping meeting Historic architectural resources photograph review session/consultation Other

All parties present agreed

There are no properties over fifty years old within the project's area of potential effects.

There are no properties less than fifty years old which are considered to meet Criteria Consideration G within the project's area of potential effects.

There are properties over fifty years old within the project's Area of Potential Effects (APE), but based on the historical information available and the photographs of each property, the property identified as 2 - 7is considered not eligible for the National

Register and no further evaluation of it is necessary.

There are no National Register-listed or Study Listed properties within the project's area of potential effects.

All properties greater than 50 years of age located in the APE have been considered at this consultation, and based upon the above concurrence, all compliance for historic architecture with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and GS 121-12(a) has been completed for this project.

There are no historic properties affected by this project. (Attach any notes or documents as needed)

Signed:

Representative. NCL

FHWA, for the Division Administrator, or other Federal Agency

un sentative, HPC Repre

Date

, 30

State Historic Preservation Officer

If a survey report is prepared, a final copy of this form and the attached list will be included.

will evaluate Prop #1

# APPENDIX

# Properties Determined Not Eligible for the National Register and Not Worthy of Further Evaluation



Property #2



Property #3



Property #4



Property #5



**Property #6** 



Property #7