

**MNDOT HISTORIC ROADSIDE DEVELOPMENT
STRUCTURES INVENTORY**

CK-UOG-045
CS 1602
Spruce Creek Culvert (Bridge 8292)

Historic Name Other Name	Spruce Creek Culvert (Bridge 8292)	CS # SHPO Inv #	1602 CK-UOG-045
Location	TH 61 at Spruce Creek	Hwy District Reference	TH 61 1A 97
City/Township County Twp Rng Sec USGS Quad UTM	Unorganized Territory Cook 60N 2W Sec 10 Deer Yard Lake Z15 E682360 N5284270	Acres Rest Area Class	NA
Designer	Nichols, A R, Consult Land Arch	SP #	61-1-45-2
Builder	Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Minn Dept of Highways (MHD)	SHPO Review #	
Historic Use Present Use	Bridge/ Culvert/ Dam Bridge/ Culvert/ Dam	MHS Photo #	013543.18-25 013544.01-03
Yr of Landscape Design	1935	MnDOT Historic Photo Album	Nic 5.22
Overall Site Integrity	Intact/Slightly Altered		
Review Required	Yes		
National Register Status	Eligible, see Statement of Significance		
Historic Context	Roadside Development on Minnesota Trunk Highways, 1920-1960		

List of Standing Structures

Feat#	Feature Type	Year Built	Fieldwork Date
01	Bridge/Culvert	1932-35	10-11-97
			Prep by Gemini Research Dec. 98 G1. 71
			Prep for Site Development Unit Cultural Resources Unit Environmental Studies Unit
NOTE: Landscape features are not listed in this table			

Final Report	Historic Roadside Development Structures on Minnesota Trunk Highways (1998)
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■ BRIEF

The Spruce Creek Culvert (Bridge 8292) is a reinforced concrete box culvert that is faced with stone. It carries Spruce Creek under T.H. 61. The culvert is located within Cascade State Park and within the Superior National Forest.

■ STANDING STRUCTURES

Bridge 8292. Built 1932, improved in 1935 by the CCC. This concrete box culvert has stone headwalls and stone and log railings. The culvert was apparently constructed in 1932 when this portion of T.H. 61 was built, and then was improved with stonework in 1935 by the CCC. The structure is approximately 48' long. Its headwalls are built of random rubble, rockfaced, dark brownish-black gabbro with dark mortar joints. The culvert's opening is enframed by a stone arch in each headwall. The arches' radiating arch stones alternate with five larger keystones. The railings each consist of four stone piers (about 2'6" by 1'8" by 2'6" tall) that support three pair of log rails. The log rails were not smoothed or planed, but were left rough for a rustic effect. There are two iron rods, bent into right angles, extending from each end of the bridge (their purpose is not known). The Mn/DOT Bridge Unit indicates that it does not currently maintain a bridge inventory sheet on the structure because of its minimal span length.

■ OTHER LANDSCAPE FEATURES AND PLANTINGS

The culvert is located in a forested setting. There do not seem to be any plantings specifically associated with the bridge. Metal guardrails currently line both edges of the roadway separating the roadway from the bridge railings.

■ SETTING

The culvert is located in a forested area about 900' north of the shore of Lake Superior, which is not visible from the site. It is located within Cascade State Park and Superior National Forest. There is a resort called Spruce Creek Cabins located nearby to the south. The culvert is almost completely surrounded by forest.

■ INTEGRITY

Alterations

No original plans have been located that specifically address the bridge. See plans for the larger roadside development project (S.P. 61-1-45-2).

The culvert is essentially intact but the railings appear to be in fragile condition. A metal guardrail has been added to both sides of the roadway separating the roadway from the bridge railings.

The site retains integrity of location, setting, design, workmanship, materials, feeling, and association.

Notes on Condition

The stonework is in poor condition with stones missing and other repairs needed. Two of the log rails on the northern railing have rotted and fallen down.

■ HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Spruce Creek Culvert was built in 1932 as part of the construction of T.H. 61 through this location. It was improved in 1935 by the Spruce Creek Camp of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) as part of a 10.2-mile-long roadside development project, which also included construction of the Cascade River Overlook about 2.5 miles to the east (see separate inventory form) and extensive highway landscaping. Plans for the larger 10.2-mile project were drawn by the highway department, including Arthur R. Nichols (Consulting Landscape Architect) and Harold E. Olson (Engineer for Roadside Development). The plan title sheet was signed in August of 1934 by C. W. Lilly (Engineer of Plans), P. D. Mold (District Engineer), O. L. Kipp (Construction Engineer), and J. T. Ellison (Chief Engineer and Deputy Commissioner). Nichols, Olson, S. Rex Green (Right of Way Engineer), Harold K. Lathrop (Supervisor of State Parks), Reuben W. Law (Director of State Park CCC work), other state officials, and visitors such as Theodore Wirth of the Minneapolis Parks Department frequently visited the site to inspect the work of the Spruce Creek CCC Camp along T.H. 61.

Monthly narrative reports from the CCC camp superintendent to the National Park Service provide many details about the work of the Spruce Creek CCC Camp. According to excerpts from these reports, the Spruce Creek Culvert was apparently completed during the April 1-September 30, 1935. The reports include photographs of the completed structure (Hella 1935).

Spruce Creek CCC Camp

The Spruce Creek CCC Camp (Company 2702, DSP No. 5; known after 1935 as SP-13), which built the bridge, was established on July 24, 1934. Spruce Creek was one of 13 CCC camps that operated in Cook County. The first superintendent of the camp was Leo W. Donnelly (who served between July 1934 and February 14, 1935), followed by U. W. Hella (who became superintendent on February 14, 1935). (Hella later served as Director of the State Parks Division of the Minnesota Department of Conservation.) Camp Supervisory Personnel in March of 1935 were Hella (Superintendent), George Bayle (Landscape Architect), C. G. Starr (Engineer), James Clement (Engineer), Don Colton (Non-technical Foreman), Joseph Hinchcliff (Non-technical Foreman), Albert J. Skelly (Non-technical Foreman), Helmer T. Lane (Non-technical Foreman), and Carl R. Anderson (Facilitating Personnel) (Hella Mar. 30, 1935).

From July to October 1934, the CCC company's 200 enrollees lived in temporary quarters at the vacated Caribou Lake Camp (F-11), which was located a few miles west of Spruce Creek. In October of 1934 the company moved into its own quarters, the Spruce Creek CCC Camp, which was under construction about 500' east of the Cascade River. During 1934 and most of 1935, the majority of the Spruce Creek CCC Camp's enrollees were from northern Minnesota. In November of 1935, many of these men were replaced by 170

enrollees from Missouri. (See inventory form for the Cascade River Overlook for more information.)

The Spruce Creek CCC Camp was the first of four CCC camps in the state that were sponsored by the Minnesota Department of Highways. (Most of the state's other CCC camps were sponsored by agencies such as the State Parks Division (Minnesota Dept. of Conservation), the U.S. Forest Service, the Soil Conservation Service, etc.) The success of the CCC's work in the vicinity of Spruce Creek and the Cascade River inspired the establishment of three new highway department CCC camps. They were located on Mille Lacs Lake, Leech Lake, and at the Knife River on Lake Superior. Superintendent Hella's Oct. 1-Nov. 30, 1935, monthly report quotes the following newspaper article that announced the plans:

NORTH SHORE [SIC] GETS THREE NEW CCC CAMPS

The success of roadside development work accomplished by a north shore CCC camp last year under the direction of the State Highway Department has moved the Department of the Interior to establish three new camps to continue this activity in northern Minnesota.

The camps, containing 200 men each, have been located near Garrison on Mille Lacs Lake, two miles north of Walker on Leech Lake, and near Knife River on Lake Superior.

In addition, the Gooseberry River Camp on the North Shore [not a highway department camp] has been authorized to do 5,000 man-days of roadside development work and the Spruce Creek Camp between Lutsen and Grand Marais has been instructed to continue its work. It was the latter camp that decided federal authorities to expand roadside development projects (Hella Oct. 1-Nov. 30, 1935:2).

The four CCC camps sponsored by the Minnesota Department of Highways were the following:

- Lakeshore (Camp SP-19), located near Knife River on the North Shore
- Leech Lake (Camp SP-16), located near Whipholt on Leech Lake
- Mille Lacs Lake (Camp SP-15), located at Garrison on Mille Lacs Lake
- Spruce Creek (Camp SP-13), located near Cascade River on the North Shore

The four camps were established specifically for highway improvements and were supervised by the National Park Service. Each camp had approximately 200 enrollees who worked on roadside landscaping and erosion control, and constructed wayside rests, bridges, culverts, and similar highway structures.

Nine sites constructed by these camps are included in this Historic Roadside Development Structures study (see individual inventory forms):

Built by the Spruce Creek Camp
Cascade River Overlook (includes Bridge 5132)
Spruce Creek Culvert (Bridge 8292)

Built by the Mille Lacs Lake Camp
Garrison Concourse
Garrison Creek Culvert (Bridge 5266)
Garrison Pedestrian Underpass (Bridge 5265)
Garrison Rest Area

Kenney Lake Overlook
T.H. 169 Culvert at St. Alban's Bay
Whitefish Creek Bridge (Bridge 3355)

No works by the Lakeshore or Leech Lake CCC camps are included in this study. One of the principal accomplishments of the Lakeshore Camp is the elaborate Knife River Historical Marker on old Highway 61 several miles northeast of Duluth. The site is intact but in fragile condition. It is now within the jurisdiction of St. Louis County Highway Department. No standing structures built by the Leech Lake CCC Camp, which only operated for six months, are known to be extant.

Cascade Wayside (now Cascade State Park)

The Spruce Creek Culvert is located within a highway wayside park that was originally known as the Cascade Wayside (now Cascade State Park). The highway department purchased 2,300 acres adjacent to T.H. 61 in 1934 and Cascade became the largest of the department's "waysides". It was intended that the park be eventually turned over to the Department of Conservation's State Park Division. This finally occurred in 1957 when Cascade was designated by the state legislature as an official state park. In 1954-55, plans for improvements to the park were developed by landscape architect Arthur R. Nichols (who was this time consulting for the State Parks Division of the Department of Conservation). Cascade State Park now covers 2,813 acres with 12 miles of Lake Superior shoreline. Located within the boundaries of the park are the Sawtooth Mountain range, the Cascade River, and nine streams including Spruce Creek, Babeneau Creek, and Black Point Creek.

■ PREVIOUS SHPO REVIEWS

There have apparently been no previous cultural resource reviews of this property.

■ STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Spruce Creek Culvert (Bridge 8292), built in 1932 and improved in 1935 by the CCC, is one of seven stone-faced bridges in this inventory. It is one of 14 sites in the inventory known, or suspected, to have been built by the CCC. It is one of more than 60 sites that were designed by, or whose design is attributed to, Arthur R. Nichols.

This property has been evaluated within the historic context "Roadside Development on Minnesota Trunk Highways, 1920-1960." It is recommended that the Spruce Creek Culvert is ELIGIBLE for the National Register under this historic context because it meets the following registration requirements:

Significant to the History of Roadside Development. The Spruce Creek Culvert is one of nine properties in this inventory that were built by the four CCC camps in Minnesota that were sponsored by the MHD. (All four camps were dedicated to roadside development.) The MHD-sponsored CCC camps improved many miles of trunk highway, as well as constructing 9 of the 68 Depression-era properties in this inventory. The nine properties are testimony to the success of the partnership between the MHD, the National Park Service, and the CCC. This collaboration produced functional, long-lasting, and aesthetically-superior roadside amenities that continue to enhance the experience of the traveling public today. These New Deal-era

sites represent the MHD's first large-scale effort to construct roadside development facilities in the state. Spruce Creek is an excellent example of the distinctive and well-constructed public facilities, built by the MHD in partnership with federal relief agencies, that met the objectives of roadside development while providing essential work and job training to the nation's unemployed during the Depression. (National Register Criterion A.)

Significant to Transportation History. The Spruce Creek Culvert is one of few remaining roadside development facilities on T.H. 61 that date from the MHD's early construction and improvement of the highway (which was known until 1934 as T.H. 1). T.H. 1/T.H. 61, designed primarily as a scenic highway to carry tourists along the pristine North Shore of Lake Superior, is significant within the development of the state's trunk highway system. (National Register Criterion A.)

Design Significance. The Spruce Creek Culvert is an excellent example of the application of the "National Park Service Rustic Style" to a small highway bridge. The bridge is one of only two sites in the inventory that retain rare log rails. The Spruce Creek Culvert displays the special labor-intensive construction techniques and distinctive use of indigenous materials that characterize both the Rustic style and federal relief construction in Minnesota. Furthermore, Spruce Creek is an important example of the roadside development work of prominent landscape architect A. R. Nichols. (National Register Criterion C.)

Bridge 8292 was not included in the Mn/DOT Historic Bridge Inventory.

The property may also be associated with the following historic contexts: "Federal Relief Construction, 1933-1943," "Tourism and Recreation in the Lake Regions, 1870-1945," "Minnesota State Park Development, 1889-1943," and "Reinforced Concrete Highway Bridges, 1900-1945."

■ OTHER COMMENTS

This property may require further evaluation for potential archaeological resources.

T.H. 61 past this site is very busy during the summer months.

The only other site in this inventory with extant log rails is the overlook wall at the Orr Roadside Parking Area.

■ REFERENCES

Anderson, Rolf T. "Federal Relief Construction in Minnesota, 1933-1941." National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form. Oct. 9, 1990, amended Aug. 30, 1993.

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Donnelly, Leo W. (CCC Camp Superintendent). Narrative reports to the Division of State Parks, National Park Service, Washington, D.C. Aug. 1, 1934, Aug. 31, 1934, Oct. 2, 1934, Nov. 1, 1934, Dec. 1, 1934, and Feb. 2, 1935. [In National Archives, copy in SHPO files, copy in Mn/DOT Site Development Unit's Cascade River Overlook inventory file.]

Hella, U. W. (CCC Camp Superintendent). Narrative reports to the Division of State Parks, National Park Service, Washington, D.C. Mar. 31, 1935, May 31, 1935, Apr. 1-Oct. 1, 1935, and Oct. 1-No. 30, 1935. [In National Archives, copy in SHPO files, copy in Mn/DOT Site Development Unit's Cascade River Overlook inventory file.]

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McClelland, Linda Flint. *Presenting Nature: The Historic Landscape Design of the National Park Service, 1916-1942*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Dept. of the Interior, National Park Service, 1993.

Meyer, Roy W. *Everyone's Country Estate. A History of Minnesota's State Parks*. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1991.

Rose, Nancy E. *Put To Work. Relief Programs in the Great Depression*. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1994.

Thiel, George A. and Carl E. Dutton. *The Architectural, Structural, and Monumental Stones of Minnesota*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1935.

Tweton, Jerome D. *The New Deal at the Grass Roots. Programs for the People in Otter Tail County, Minnesota*. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1988.

■ ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Spruce Creek

Spruce Creek is one of nine streams located within Cascade State Park. The creek drains Deer Yard Lake and flows southeastward into Lake Superior. In 1868 a copper mine, operated by Henry Mayhew of Grand Marais, was located in Township 60 along Lake Superior at the mouth of Spruce Creek. Approximately 1,500 pounds of copper were shipped from this mine.

Superior National Forest

The Spruce Creek Culvert and Cascade State Park lie within the Superior National Forest, which was established in 1909 when 36,000 acres were set aside for preservation, and has been enlarged considerably since. Today the forest covers nearly 3 million acres. Its northern border parallels the Canadian boundary for 150 miles. Approximately 1,250,000 acres of the forest are within a State game refuge. The forest contains over 5,000 lakes.

Local Stone

The gabbro used to construct the bridge was probably quarried locally. Duluth gabbro is an igneous rock that differs from granite because it has feldspar that gives it its green, dark gray, or black color. The stone is commercially referred to as "green granite," "black granite," and "trap rock." As early as 1896, gabbro was quarried in and around Duluth. There were many quarries in the Arrowhead Region including quarries in the Superior National Forest 18 miles southeast of Ely, an Arrowhead Granite Company quarry near Cook, and the McDonald Quarry near Angora. Gabbro was used to construct dozens of retaining walls, bridges, overlooks, and state park structures along Lake Superior, as well as many historic buildings, bridges, and other structures in Duluth.

Lake Superior and T.H. 61

Lake Superior is the largest body of fresh water in the world. The lake is 383 miles long, 160 miles wide, and is 489' to 1,400' deep. The Ojibwe called the Lake "Kitchigumi," meaning "Great Water." The early French traders called the lake "Lac Supérieur" because it was located at the head of the Great Lakes. By the early 1920s, Duluth and the North Shore area had become a mecca for tourists.

Trunk Highway 1 along the North Shore was built during the 1920s and 1930s and named the "Lake Superior International Highway" by the highway department in 1926. Its number was changed from 1 to 61 in 1934. The highway was the only thoroughfare to serve North Shore towns in Minnesota and to provide access to the Canadian North Shore from the state. It was specifically designed (and in some places, realigned) to provide outstanding views of the lake. Between Duluth and the Canadian border, T.H. 61 travels approximately 165 miles through three counties: St. Louis, Lake, and Cook. With the completion of the highway, recreation and tourism became important components of the North Shore economy.