

**MNDOT HISTORIC ROADSIDE DEVELOPMENT
STRUCTURES INVENTORY**

CK-UOG-047
CS 1601
Cross River Rest Area

Historic Name Other Name	Cross River Rest Area	CS # SHPO Inv #	1601 CK-UOG-047
Location	Both sides of TH 61 at the Cross River	Hwy District Reference	TH 61 1A 79
City/Township County Twp Rng Sec USGS Quad UTM	Schroeder Township Cook 59N 5W Sec 36 58N 5W Sec 1 Schroeder Z15 E658260 N5267540	Acres Rest Area Class	4
Designer	Nichols, A R, Attributed Minn Dept of Highways (MHD) (bridge)	SP #	61-1-45-2 1601-01
Builder	Minn Dept of Highways (MHD) CCC, Suspected Guthrie, A., Co.	SHPO Review #	96-2433
Historic Use Present Use	Roadside Parking Area Bridge/ Culvert/ Dam Roadside Parking Area Bridge/ Culvert/ Dam	MHS Photo #	013539.01-19
Yr of Landscape Design	Ca. 1936	MnDOT Historic Photo Album	Ols 1.42 Ols 1.43
Overall Site Integrity	Very Altered		
Review Required	Yes		
National Register Status	Not Eligible, see Statement of Significance Partly or fully razed; remains ineligible		
Historic Context			
List of Standing Structures			
Feat#	Feature Type	Year Built	Fieldwork Date
01	Bridge/Culvert	1931	10-10-97
02	Trail Steps	Ca. 1936	
03	Marker	Ca. 1936	
NOTE: Landscape features are not listed in this table			Prep by Gemini Research Dec. 98 G1. 16
			Prep for Site Development Unit Cultural Resources Unit Environmental Studies Unit
Final Report	Historic Roadside Development Structures on Minnesota Trunk Highways (1998)		

■ BRIEF

The Cross River Rest Area is located on both sides of T.H. 61 at the Cross River within the unincorporated settlement of Schroeder. The highway rest area is located within (or adjacent to) the southeastern corner of the Cross River State Scenic Wayside and is managed as part of Temperance State Park. It is within Finland State Forest.

■ STANDING STRUCTURES

Bridge 5087. Built 1931 by A. Guthrie and Co. of St. Paul. The bridge plate reads: "Minnesota Highway Department Bridge No. 5087 1931."

Bridge 5087 is concrete arch bridge, with a single 50' span, which carries T.H. 61 over the Cross River. The 53'-long bridge originally had metal lattice railings but was otherwise relatively unornamented. It was designed to allow pedestrians to look over the Cross River's falls via two viewing platforms that were constructed at a lower elevation than the T.H. 61 roadway. The platforms were accessed via four sets of poured concrete steps with pipe railings. Stone veneer was added to the viewing platforms, steps, and walkways in circa 1936. The most intact remnant of these steps is located at the western end of the bridge on the northern side of the highway. (See below the River Boulder Stairway.) These steps are about 4'6" wide, and only remnants of the stone veneer remain. West of the steps is a short remnant of the low, stone retaining wall that lined the walkways.

Historic photos show that there was originally a timber and cable guardrail on either side of T.H. 61 across the bridge. The bridge now has simple metal railings, and timber and metal guardrails. A short segment of chain-link fence now leads westward from the northern bridge railing. The steps at the eastern end of the bridge are barely visible. The two sets of steps on the southern side of the highway are gone. The footpath over the northern viewing platform is now gravel and is blocked at the eastern end of the bridge. The footpath over the southern viewing platform is covered with asphalt and has recently been supported by red rocks piled along the roadway. The eastern end of the southern viewing platform is now closed.

The bridge, its viewing platforms, walkways, and river boulder stairway are very similar in design to Bridge 5088 over the Temperance River, located a few miles away. (See inventory form for Temperance River Roadside Parking Area.)

River Boulder Stairway. Built circa 1936, probably by the CCC. Near the northwestern corner of the bridge is a 10'-long stairway that was built of mortared stones, probably river boulders. The steps are aligned north and south and are located in the woods along a dirt footpath that leads from T.H. 61 northward along the western bank of the river. They were probably once linked to the bridge's viewing platforms by stone-lined paths. There are nine steps in the stairway, with 4'-wide risers and treads, and the stairway's sidewalls are covered with stone. The stones vary from the size of grapefruits to the size of small watermelons. Most of the stones are pink and various shades of gray.

Concrete and Stone Marker. Built circa 1936, probably by the CCC. Standing at the western end of the bridge, very close to the guardrail that lines the roadway, is a free-standing lectern-style marker. It is about the size of a podium and was built of poured concrete

poured over a fieldstone core. The edges of the marker are lined with round stones. The rocks that line the four vertical edges are about the size of grapefruits and the rocks that line the four horizontal top edges are about the size of potatoes. Covering the marker's slanted top is a small rectangular metal plaque with raised lettering. The text of the plaque addresses Father Baraga's crossing of the river. (See marker text at the end of this document.)

■ OTHER LANDSCAPE FEATURES AND PLANTINGS

The site covers an approximately 400'-long stretch of T.H. 61 located at the Cross River. The river crashes in a waterfall through a dramatic rocky gorge beneath the bridge.

On the northern side of T.H. 61 west of Bridge 5087 is a rectangular, asphalt-paved, curbless parking area. A narrow, grassy island separates the parking area from T.H. 61. The northern edge of the parking area is lined with a natural rock ledge. A wooded hillside rises north of the ledge. The parking area measures about 215' long (east to west) and about 40' wide (north to south). The parking area is linked to the bridge via a gravel footpath.

A gravel walking path also leads southward from the western end of the bridge along the southern bank of the river. There was a set of trail steps along this path that were still in place in 1967 but are now gone. A pipe railing, which extends south and then west from the bridge's southwestern wing wall, runs along the eastern side of the former steps and provides an overlook from which to view the river gorge and waterfall. Additional trails extend from the bridge into Cross River State Scenic Wayside.

On the southern side of T.H. 61 at the western end of the bridge is a small, possibly triangular-shaped, asphalt-paved parking area that may also be owned by Mn/DOT.

The site is rocky, hilly, and forested. There do not appear to be any roadside plantings specifically associated with the site.

■ SETTING

The Cross River Rest Area is located in the unincorporated village of Schroeder, which is located within a generally forested setting within Finland State Forest. The site is surrounded by mixed deciduous and evergreen forests that include pines, birch, and aspen. The site is surrounded by commercial development to the east and west (including gas stations and a couple of small stores) and forests to the north and south. CSAH 1 angles to the northwest from T.H. 61 near the western boundary of the site. The bridge is about .2 mile from the shore of Lake Superior, which is not visible from the highway at this point. There are five waterfalls in the Cross River, including the one visible at this site. See discussion of Cross River State Scenic Wayside under Historical Background below.

■ INTEGRITY

Alterations

An original plan has not been located.

Most of the stonework that lined the viewing platforms and walkways has been removed. The four sets of concrete and stone steps that led from the roadway to the platforms have been removed (only a remnant of the northwestern set remains and the locations of the other three sets are barely visible). The stone steps south of the roadway on the western side of the river have been removed. Timber and metal guardrails have been installed. A short segment of chain-link fence now leads westward from the northern bridge railing.

The site retains integrity of location, setting, and association. Its integrity of design, materials, workmanship, and feeling has been compromised by the alterations listed above.

Notes on Condition

The bridge, stone stairway, and marker are in poor condition. The concrete has deteriorated, stones are exposed, and stones are missing, etc.

■ HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In 1843 Missionary Father Baraga erected a wooden cross at the mouth of the river after a perilous crossing of Lake Superior. This wooden cross was eventually replaced with the current granite cross that stands on the lakeshore near the river's mouth, south of the current T.H. 61 bridge. The granite cross was not considered by this study to be part of this site. (See further information on Father Baraga at the end of this document.)

During the early 1930s, a 3' by 5' white steel marker with black lettering was erected near the highway shoulder at this site. It had been erected by the first joint trunk highway marking program that was established by the Minnesota Historical Society and the Minnesota Department of Highways in 1929. The text of the steel sign was similar to the text of the current concrete and stone marker, and the seals of the Minnesota Historical Society and the Minnesota Department of Highways were located at the bottom of the sign.

Bridge 5087 was built in 1931 by A. Guthrie and Co. of St. Paul. (Guthrie also built Bridge 5088 at the Temperance River and Bridge 5089 at the Poplar River.) The bridge was designed by the Minnesota Department of Highways.

The stonework along the bridge's viewing platforms, the River Boulder Stairway, and the stone and concrete marker were probably built about 1936, probably by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) (which was established in the spring of 1933). This stonework is very similar to work at the Temperance River, and was probably built at the same time. (See form for Temperance River Roadside Parking Area for further information.) The stonework may have been designed by Arthur R. Nichols, who was Consulting Landscape Architect for the Department in the 1930s. One historic photo showing the stonework on the bridge is labeled "Showing the finished railing above highway bridge at Temperance River, Lake shore side. S.P. 61-1-45-1. Photo by Rex Green. Taken 4-13-37."

Mn/DOT site development unit files indicate that in 1979 this site had a historic marker, overlook, picnic tables, and parking for 16 cars.

Cross River State Scenic Wayside

The Cross River State Scenic Wayside was established by the 1961 legislature. State park historian Roy W. Meyer writes:

The law establishing the wayside authorized the conservation commissioner to acquire by gift or purchase, 'as funds are available,' four sections of land on the lower river. If it had all been acquired -- all 2,560 acres of it -- the wayside would have been larger than most of the units classified as state parks (Meyer 1991:208-209).

By 1964 only 640 acres had been acquired. Plans for picnic areas and campgrounds had been drawn, but no development occurred other than a small parking area (Meyer 1991:209). In 1977 the boundaries of the wayside were revised to exclude 40 acres in the southeastern corner because they included residences and a cafe (Meyer 1991:328). The excluded parcel may include the site that is the subject of this study. By 1991 the Cross River State Scenic Wayside encompassed 2,520 acres (Meyer 1991:289). The site is currently managed as part of Temperance State Park.

■ PREVIOUS SHPO REVIEWS

A Section 106 review of Bridge 5087 was conducted in 1996 in preparation for the proposed replacement of the bridge (SHPO review #96-2433). As part of the review, and in association with the Mn/DOT Historic Bridge Inventory, consultant Hess-Roise and Co. evaluated the National Register eligibility of the bridge and determined that it does not meet National Register eligibility criteria due to loss of integrity (Hess-Roise 1996). In a letter to Dick McAtee (Mn/DOT) dated June 11, 1996, Britta L. Bloomberg of the Minnesota Historical Society concurred with the determination (Bloomberg 1996). The file that chronicles this Section 106 review contains several items of correspondence and the findings of the Hess-Roise evaluation.

Another Section 106 review was conducted in 1996 in association with the proposed reconstruction of T.H. 61 through Schroeder (SHPO review #97-0050). The Cross River Rest Area is included within the project's Area of Potential Effect but is not specifically addressed in the review documentation.

■ STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Cross River Rest Area was built circa 1936, probably by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). 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. It is one of 68 Depression-era roadside development facilities believed to have been built in partnership with federal relief agencies. It is also associated with the building of the scenic highway T.H. 1 (now T.H. 61) along the North Shore.

This property has been evaluated within the historic context "Roadside Development on Minnesota Trunk Highways, 1920-1960." Despite the factors listed above, it is recommended that the property is NOT ELIGIBLE for the National Register under this historic context due to loss of integrity.

Bridge 5087 was determined to be ineligible for the National Register in 1996. (See Previous SHPO Reviews above.)

■ 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 site is located very close to the moving traffic which feels disruptive and dangerous. Crossing the highway that separates the marker from the parking area is difficult because of the traffic.

The Father Baraga marker is standing uncomfortably close to the guardrail on the southern side of T.H. 61.

The text of the Baraga marker mentions "the lakeshore below this marker." The text is not specifically associated with the site of the wayside rest.

■ REFERENCES

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Guide to Historic Markers Erected by the State Highway Department, Cooperating with the Minnesota Historical Society. Prepared by the Minnesota Historic Records Survey, Division of Professional And Service Projects, Work Projects Administration. St. Paul: May 1940.

Hess-Roisse Co. "DOEs for Bridge Nos. 4770, 5087, 5088, 5359, 6344, 6747, L7224." Submitted to Mn/DOT. April 1996.

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

Raff, Willis H. *Pioneers in the Wilderness*. Grand Marais: Cook County Historical Society, 1981.

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

Site Plans. Minnesota Department of Transportation, St. Paul.

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

■ ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND MARKER TEXT

Father Baraga

The Ojibwe called the Cross River "Tchibaiatigo zibi," which means "Wood-of-the-soul-or-spirit river." Apparently the name was used after a wooden cross was erected by Father Baraga in 1843 at the mouth of the river after a perilous crossing of Lake Superior. This wooden

cross was eventually replaced with the current granite cross that stands on the lakeshore near the river's mouth. Father Frederick Baraga (1797-1868), referred to as the "Apostle of the Ojibwe," was a missionary to the Ojibwe in the Lake Superior region. He was a linguist who published a catechism and book of prayers in the Ojibwe language in 1832, followed by Ojibwe language dictionaries and grammar books. In 1835 he established a mission at La Pointe, Wisconsin, from which he traveled to various areas to minister to the Ojibwe. It was on one of these expeditions in 1843, while crossing Lake Superior in a canoe, that he encountered a dangerous storm. Surviving the crossing, he nailed a wooden cross to a tree near the mouth of the river (later was known as Cross River). Written in pencil on this cross was: "In commemoration of the goodness of Almighty God in granting to the Reverend F. R. Baraga, Missionary, a safe traverse from La Pointe to this place, August, 1843." In 1857 Father Baraga was named bishop of Sault Ste. Marie.

Schroeder

Schroeder was established when the Schroeder Lumber Company of Wisconsin began logging operations in the area in 1895. (Prior to the arrival of the lumber company, the small community was known as Redmyer for the area's first settlers, the Henry Redmyer family who homesteaded on the west bank of Cross River during the 1880s. The Redmyer Post Office was established on March 23, 1888.) The lumber company employed more than 1,000 men by 1904. For more than ten years, Schroeder was a booming lumber town. It had two saloons, a sporting-house, hotel, bunkhouse, Superintendent's home, a store, and large warehouse. The Redmyer Post Office had been discontinued in 1891 and mail was delivered to Lutsen. The Schroeder Post Office was established on January 3, 1901, and the Superintendent of the logging company was appointed postmaster. In 1905, the Schroeder Lumber Company was sold to the Alger-Smith Company.

Superior National Forest

The Superior National Forest was established in 1909 when 36,000 acres were set aside for preservation. Today the forest covers nearly 3 million acres. On the north the forest 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.

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 Superieur" 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.

Text of Metal Plaque on Concrete and Stone Marker

"Father Fredrick Baraga, pioneer missionary to the Chippewa, and his Indian guide were swept across Lake Superior in their canoe to the mouth of this river during a storm in October 1846 (known since as Cross River). The granite cross on the lakeshore below this marker replaces the wooden cross erected on that site by the intrepid missionary in thanksgiving for his providential rescue."