

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Pine Bluff Covered Bridge

Other names/site number: _____

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: County Road 900 North over Big Walnut Creek.

City or town: Bainbridge State: IN County: Putnam

Not For Publication:

Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A B C D

<p>_____ Signature of certifying official/Title: <u>Indiana DNR-Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology</u> State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>	<p>_____ Date</p>
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<p>In my opinion, the property <input type="checkbox"/> meets <input type="checkbox"/> does not meet the National Register criteria.</p>	
<p>_____ Signature of commenting official:</p>	<p>_____ Date</p>
<p>_____ Title :</p>	<p>_____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>

Pine Bluff Covered Bridge
Name of Property

Putnam County, IN
County and State

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

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Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

TRANSPORTATION: road-related

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

TRANSPORTATION: road-related

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

OTHER: Covered Howe truss

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: CONCRETE
walls: WOOD: Weatherboard

roof: METAL
other:

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Pine Bluff Covered Bridge, built in 1886 in Jackson Township, Putnam County, is 211 feet long. The double-span Howe truss is supported by concrete abutments and center pier. The bridge has board-and-batten siding and features a metal roof. The bridge continues to carry vehicular traffic at the convergence of Putnam County Roads 900 and 950 North high above Big Walnut Creek.

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Narrative Description

The Pine Bluff Covered Bridge (photo 01) was once an important part of Putnam County's transportation network. The bridge has a 211 feet double-span Howe truss that rests on concrete abutments and pier (photos 07, 08, formerly cut stone). The total length is over 220 feet from overhangs at each portal. The bridge is approximately 20-4" wide and 19' tall from the deck to the ridge. The bridge is positioned in a northeast/southwest alignment over Big Walnut Creek and carries Putnam County Road 900 North as it turns and becomes 950 North east of the bridge. The general terrain around the bridge is wooded hills with wide creek banks below. Modern metal guardrails are installed to each side of the road in front of the portals. The road approaches to the bridge are asphalt. The concrete abutments and pier that support the bridge are nearly 25 feet tall (from span to river).

The heavy oak timber frame is composed of sawn lumber. Ten panels of heavy oak timber X-bracing connect the trusses below the bridge deck and overhead in each span (photos 03, 05). Pairs of iron rods that allow for tightening are placed between each panel (photo 04). Wide floor boards composing the bridge deck run perpendicular with the flow of traffic. Wood runners, parallel with the flow of traffic, fully cover the top the deck boards. A wood rail is attached to braces in the walls about two feet above the deck. The bridge's sides are covered with boards and narrow battens, painted red (photos 06-08). The top of the walls are left open for ventilation. A pair of openings, centered roughly over the waterway on each side of the bridge, are covered by a simple pent roof supported by braces (photo 04). The pent roofs are covered with metal. Each end wall that forms the portal for the bridge has a gabled wall and shaped portal with arched outside corners (photos 01, 02). The end walls are also covered with board and batten including the inside, finished wall of the portal. Rafters and spaced boards form the understructure of the roof on which the metal roof is installed; this work was completed during rehabilitation of the structure.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ENGINEERING

TRANSPORTATION

Period of Significance

1886-1919

Significant Dates

Significant Person (last name, first name)

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder (last name, first name)

Britton, J. A.

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Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance begins when the covered bridge was constructed in 1886. While the bridge continues to be used for local vehicular traffic, the period of significance ends in 1919, the year that State Highway 36 nearby was named part of the state highway system. This was the same year nearby New Maysville's post office closed. These events lessened the use of the Pine Bluff Covered Bridge.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Pine Bluff Covered Bridge, 1886, is a fine example of a Howe truss bridge and is one of nine covered bridges extant in the county. Pine Bluff Covered Bridge is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places based on two criteria. Criterion A is applicable under transportation as an area of significance. The bridge, which created an important crossing over Big Walnut Creek in Jackson Township, embodies the importance bridges served to the early development of transportation in the county. Criterion C is applicable with engineering as an area of significance. The bridge represents the development of the Howe truss in wood form prior to the use of steel or concrete for bridge construction. The relative rarity of surviving examples of covered bridges further establishes the significance of the Pine Bluff Covered Bridge.

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

ENGINEERING & TRANSPORTATION

The Pine Bluff Covered Bridge's superstructure is an example of the Howe truss, a series of vertical and cross-members that function together and are partially held in tension by metal rods (photos 03, 05). The Howe Truss was invented by William H. Howe, born in 1803, who was a millwright by occupation and patented the truss in 1840. The incorporation of iron bars and turnbuckles allowed tension to be regulated in the bridge and hold the top and bottom cords together. Other all-wood bridges encountered separation from the main cords, but the introduction of the iron assemblies resolved this problem. Howe patented a second truss system in 1846 as he continued to fine-tune his trademark invention. Howe's truss went on to be a popular choice for all-steel bridge construction for railroads that carried a great deal more weight than the forerunning wood bridges. The wood X-brace members are in compression and the iron tie rods form the equalizing tension (photo 04).

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The oldest extant covered bridge in Indiana is thought to be the Ramp Creek Bridge that crosses Raccoon Creek at the entrance to Brown County State Park. The Burr arch bridge was built between 1836 and 1838 in Putnam County and moved to the park in 1932. This was one of two dual-lane bridges thought to be the first covered bridges constructed in Putnam County with public funds. The bridges were located on the New Albany-Crawfordsville Turnpike which is modern-day U.S. 231. The Ramp Creek Bridge spanned Ramp Creek near Fincastle near the Putnam-Montgomery County Line while the other bridge spanned Big Raccoon Creek near the small village of Raccoon.¹ There are estimated to have been 31 covered bridges constructed in Putnam County from the time the dual-lane bridges were constructed until 1922 when the last one was built over Little Walnut Creek.² While generally thought of as a mid-19th century method for bridge construction, Putnam County Commissioners continued to use covered bridges into the first two decades of the 20th century. Today, the county retains nine of its historic covered bridges that date from 1880 to 1922.

These are the following:

Cornstalk Covered Bridge (1917), Burr arch truss by J. A. Britton
Pine Bluff Covered Bridge (1886), Howe truss by J. A. Britton
Rolling Stone Covered Bridge (1915), Burr arch truss by J. A. Britton
Baker's Camp Covered Bridge (1901), Burr arch truss by J. J. Daniels
Edna Collins Covered Bridge (1922), Burr arch truss by Charles Hendrix
Dunbar Covered Bridge (1880), Burr arch truss by J. J. Daniels
Oakalla Covered Bridge (1898), Burr arch truss by J. J. Daniels
Houck Covered Bridge (1880), Howe truss by Massillon Bridge Company
Dick Huffman Covered Bridge (1880), Howe truss by E. Anderson & Sons

Pine Bluff Covered Bridge was one of about a half dozen crossings over Big Walnut Creek in Jackson Township during the 19th century. The bridge was located on a road that led directly into the village of New Maysville to the east and to an important north/south road that connected the communities of Roachdale and Bainbridge to the west. New Maysville was an early platted town in Putnam County, dating to 1832, but realized competition from towns better connected to railroads into the early 20th century. The New Maysville Post Office closed in 1919.³ The decline of New Maysville was occurring as road infrastructure was improving, particularly state roads in the 1920s through 1930s. A primary route leading south out of New Maysville (today North County Roads 665 and 675 East) easily connected to State Road 36 (then Route 31) when it was established by the Indiana State Highway Commission in 1919. While the crossing over Big Walnut Creek remained locally important for residents, the structure served a less prominent role in overall connectivity within Putnam County.

¹ Romine, pg. 5

² Romine, pg. 6

³ Weik, pg. 152-153

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The Pine Bluff Covered Bridge was constructed by Joseph Albert Britton (1839-1929), a native of Parke County, Indiana who constructed approximately forty covered bridges in a three-county area that included Parke, Vermillion, and Putnam Counties. Britton was the son of a carpenter who enlisted for military service during the Civil War. While he was admitted to the bar as an attorney in Indiana and Kansas, he returned to the carpenter's trade in Indiana and constructed his first bridge in 1882, known as the Narrows Bridge at today's Turkey Run State Park.⁴

Prior to 1855, most bridges in Indiana were either privately built by landowners or were constructed by private companies who may have required the payment of tolls. The state legislature authorized county governments to construct or financially assist with the construction of bridges in 1855. By 1870, county governments had the sole responsibility for constructing bridges, which is essentially still in place today. Crossing waterways up to this point was done either by fords or ferries. Eventually, open wood structures were built, then later, contractors built wood bridges on stone abutments. Stone arched bridges were being introduced at the same time.

Indiana's wood bridge builders often favored the Burr arch truss which combined king post trusses with a stiffening double wood arch. J. J. Daniels, active in Parke County, and the Kennedy Brothers, active in Rush County, both favored Burr arch trusses. The majority of surviving wood truss bridges in Indiana are Burr arch designs. The Howe Truss concept is more determinate in that specific members act in either compression or tension, while for the Burr arch, the arches have a role that is difficult to determine, even today. Both truss types offered viable solutions to spanning Indiana's waterways before iron or concrete became the most sought after solutions.

Indiana has the third highest number of covered bridges in the nation. Between 1820 and 1922, it was estimated that 600 covered bridges were constructed of various truss patterns. By 1977, 102 were extant, which dwindled to 98 extant covered bridges by the early 1990s. The first covered bridge in Indiana was constructed around 1820 at Mooresville (now Floyd's Knob); several more followed through the late 1830s. Several covered bridges were constructed during this early time across the National Road (Richmond to Terre Haute) and then the Michigan Road (Madison to Michigan City). A litany of internal infrastructure improvements during the 1830s was brought to a halt during financial woes the state faced in the 1840s.

Developmental History/Additional historic context information

⁴ Felkner, Charles. *Parke County Covered Bridges Thematic Resource National Register of Historic Places form* (1978).

Pine Bluff Covered Bridge
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9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Allen, Richard S. Covered Bridges of the Middle West. Bonanza Books, New York: 1970

Atlas of Putnam County, Indiana. J. H. Beers & Co. Publishers, Chicago: 1879.

Black, Archibald. The Story of Bridges. McGraw-Hill Book Co., New York: 1936.

Boykin, Linda L. *The Wooden Age of Indiana's Covered Bridges*, Butler University Thesis, 1986.

Felkner, Charles. *Parke County Covered Bridges Thematic Resource National Register of Historic Places form* (1978).

Gould, George E. Indiana Covered Bridges Thru the Years. Indiana Covered Bridge Society, Indianapolis: 1977.

Indiana State Highway Maps: 1919, 1926.

Ketcham, Bryan. Covered Bridges on the Byways of Indiana. Oxford Printing Co., Oxford, Ohio: 1949.

Reed, Robert. Indiana's Covered Bridges. Arcadia Publishing, Chicago: 2004.

Romine, Malcolm S. The Covered Bridges of Putnam County, Indiana. Mitchell Fleming Printing, Knightstown, IN: 2021.

Weik, Jesse W. Weik's History of Putnam County, Indiana. B. F. Bowen & Co., Indianapolis: 1910.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested

previously listed in the National Register

previously determined eligible by the National Register

designated a National Historic Landmark

recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # IN-103

recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

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Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): HB-2011

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property Less than one acre

Use the UTM system

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- | | | |
|--------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. Zone: 16S | Easting: 519387 | Northing: 4404833 |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

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

The southeast and northwest boundaries are lines parallel to and 10 feet south and north of the edge of the bridge and extend along the right-of-way for County Road 900 North which is approximately 40 feet wide. Similarly, the east and west boundaries are lines parallel to and 10 feet east and west of the edge of the portals. Nothing in this boundary description should be construed as intent to include adjacent private property.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary described includes the outer extents of the covered bridge, its abutments, all parts of the wooden bridge, and the portion of County Road 900 North alignment that features approaches to the bridge.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Kurt West Garner
organization: Putnam County Heritage Preservation Society, Inc.
street & number: 12954 6th Road
city or town: Plymouth state: IN zip code: 46563
e-mail: kwgarner@kwgarner.com
telephone: 574-780-1423
date: February 1, 2023

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)
-

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Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 3000x2000 at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Pine Bluff Covered Bridge
City or Vicinity: Bainbridge
County: Putnam State: Indiana
Photographer: Kurt West Garner
Date Photographed: July 18, 2022

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking southwest at bridge from east side of crossing

1 of 8.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking northeast at west portal

2 of 8.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking southwest through bridge from east side

3 of 8.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking south at opening detail

4 of 8.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking northeast through bridge from west side

5 of 8.

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Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking northwest at bridge from east bank of creek

6 of 8.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking southwest toward center pier from east bank of creek

7 of 8.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking south at bridge from east bank of creek

8 of 8.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

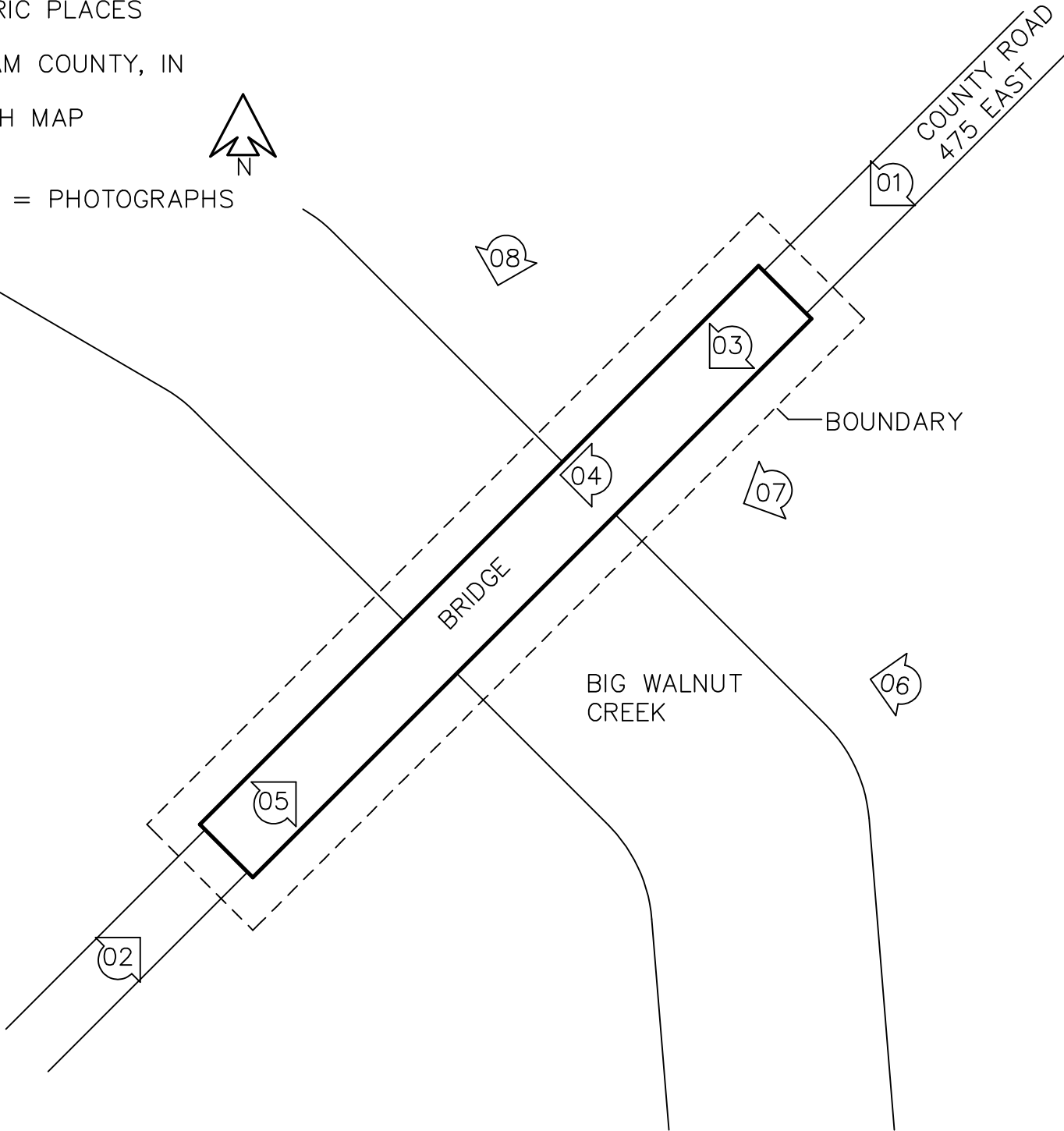
PINE BLUFF COVERED BRIDGE
NATIONAL REGISTER OF
HISTORIC PLACES

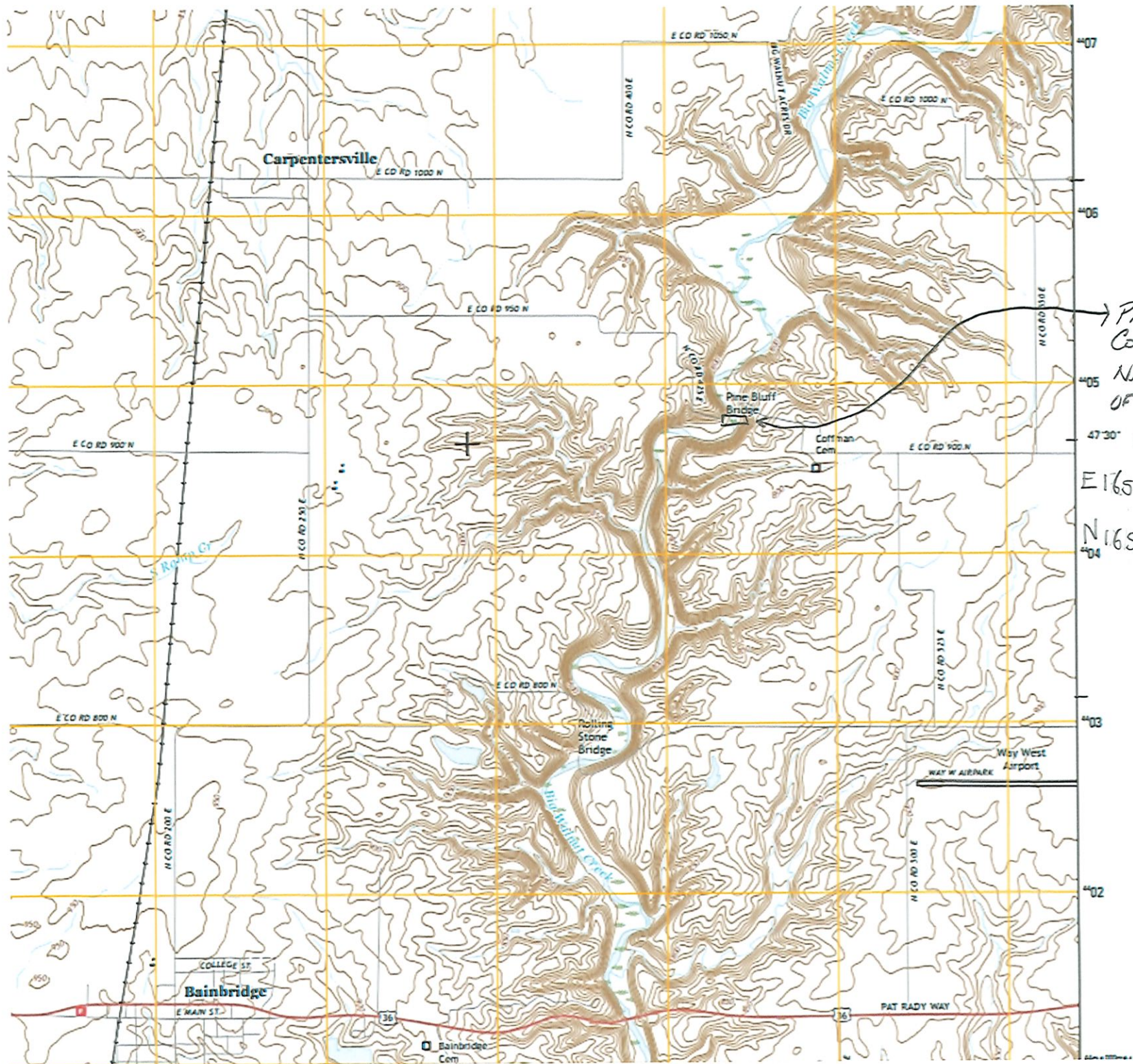
PUTNAM COUNTY, IN

SKETCH MAP



01 = PHOTOGRAPHS







IN_PutnamCounty_PineBluffCoveredBridge_0001



IN_PutnamCounty_PineBluffCoveredBridge_0005



IN_PutnamCounty_PineBluffCoveredBridge_0006



IN_PutnamCounty_PineBluffCoveredBridge_0007