

RD LOG NO. 11/30/80 Pats

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

MAR 20 1980

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Boulder Bridge and Ross Drive Bridge

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Rock Creek Park

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Washington

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

District of Columbia

VICINITY OF

CODE

11

COUNTY

CODE

001

3 CLASSIFICATION**CATEGORY**☐ DISTRICT☐ BUILDING(S)☒ STRUCTURES☐ SITE☐ OBJECT**OWNERSHIP**☒ PUBLIC☐ PRIVATE☐ BOTH**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**☐ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED**STATUS**☐ OCCUPIED☐ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS**ACCESSIBLE**☐ YES: RESTRICTED☒ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ NO**PRESENT USE**☐ AGRICULTURE☐ COMMERCIAL☐ EDUCATIONAL☐ ENTERTAINMENT☐ GOVERNMENT☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ MILITARY☐ MUSEUM☒ PARK☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ RELIGIOUS☐ SCIENTIFIC☒ TRANSPORTATION☐ OTHER**4 AGENCY**

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)

National Park Service, National Capital Region

STREET & NUMBER

1100 Ohio Drive, S.W.

CITY, TOWN

Washington

STATE

D.C. 20242

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

D.C. Recorder of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER

501 Indiana Avenue, N.W.

CITY, TOWN

Washington

STATE

D.C.

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

List of Classified Structures

DATE

September 10, 1976

☒ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR

SURVEY RECORDS National Capital Region, National Park Service

CITY, TOWN

Washington

STATE

D.C.

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

☐ EXCELLENT
☒ GOOD
☐ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED
☐ RUINS
☐ UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

☒ UNALTERED (Boulder)
☒ ALTERED (Ross Dr.)

CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE
☐ MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Boulder Bridge (1902) carries Beach Drive over Rock Creek approximately one-half mile northeast of the intersection of Beach Drive and Broad Branch Road. The bridge is a single segmental concrete arch of Melan construction, in which steel I-beams serve as reinforcing ribs within the concrete. It is faced with large irregular stones, presenting a highly rustic, naturalistic appearance. The largest and flattest, as much as 7 feet high and weighing half a ton, are placed at the opening of the arch as voussoirs. Smaller stones fill the space between them and the flat boulders used as capstones atop the sidewalls. The stones are mounted so as to show no tool marks and very little mortar at the joints. The bridge is 27 feet wide, 12 feet high, and spans 80 feet. Except for necessary repaving of the road surface, the structure is unaltered.

The Ross Drive Bridge (1907) carries Ross Drive over a ravine approximately one-half mile northeast of the intersection of Ross Drive and Glover Road. The 3-hinged, concrete, single-arch span supports the roadway above open spandrels and is wholly unornamented. It was built 168 feet long, 45 feet high, and 18 feet wide. In the mid-1960s a wider 2-lane deck replaced the original one-lane roadway; it cantilevers out on either side of the understructure and is edged by contemporary guardrails. At the same time a gunnite coating was applied over the concrete, then spalling. Although the superstructure has been altered, the essential nature of the supporting structure is unchanged.

Both bridges remain in regular use.

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similarly honored on tablets in exedra form. The World War II extension on the west, designed by Cass Gilbert, Jr., was added in 1957; the matching Vietnam extension on the east was added in 1977. All funding was provided by the Memorial Association of the First Division.

The Butt-Millet Memorial Fountain was erected in the angle between E Street and the western portion of Ellipse Drive in 1913. An eight-foot marble shaft rises from an octagonal basin and bears two low relief panels representing Art and Military Valor, the former for the artist Francis Millet, the latter for Major Archibald W. Butt, military aide to Presidents Theodore Roosevelt and William H. Taft. The octagonal base of the shaft is decorated with 16 carved rosette panels and is surmounted by a circular fountain dish with a memorial inscription on its rim. The socially prominent Butt and Millet lost their lives on the Titanic in 1912, after which their friends joined to contribute this memorial. The sculptor was Daniel Chester French; the architect was Thomas Hastings.

The Second Division Memorial was erected by that division's memorial association in 1936 on Constitution Avenue between 16th and 17th Streets. A great open portal is flanked by wings on which are inscribed the names of the division's battles during the First World War. Rising before the portal is an 18-foot flaming sword of gilded bronze clasped in a fist. The hilt bears the division insignia. The sculptor was James Earle Fraser; the architect was John Russell Pope. Two additional low wings topped by flagpoles were dedicated in 1962 in commemoration of the division's dead in World War II and Korea.

The Zero Milestone was placed by the Lee Highway Association in 1923 on the sidewalk at the north edge of the Ellipse. The four-foot shaft of pink North Carolina granite is the official starting point for the measurement of highway distances from Washington. Inscriptions on the sides attest to this role and commemorate the starting point of the first and second transcontinental motor convoys in 1919-20. Atop the shaft is a bronze compass. Horace Peaslee was the architect.

The Original Patentees of the District of Columbia Memorial stands at the edge of the sidewalk on 15th Street midway between Constitution Avenue and E Street. Designed by Delos Smith, it was erected in 1936 by the National Society, Daughters of the American Colonists. The Indiana granite base, 2-1/2 feet high and 3 feet square, bears the names of the 18 original patentees of land prior to 1700. Above it rises a granite shaft 4-1/2 feet high and 2 feet square on which are relief panels of corn, tobacco, a turkey, and a fish carved by Carl Mose symbolizing the livelihood of the early settlers.

(continued)

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The Boy Scout Commemorative Tribute, by sculptor Donald DeLue and architect William Henry Deacy, is located just west of the Original Patentees Memorial. Atop a six-foot hexagonal granite pedestal, a seven-foot bronze Boy Scout strides forward under the inspiration of larger classically draped bronze figures representing Manhood and Womanhood. In front of the pedestal is a sunken 40-foot-long oval pool surrounded by a commemorative inscription and 12 wooden benches. The work, financed by the contributions of Boy Scouts and their leaders, was dedicated in 1964.

The Haupt Fountains stand at either side of the small segment of 16th Street between the Ellipse and Constitution Avenue. Each is an enormous slab of Minnesota rainbow granite 18 feet square, nearly a foot thick, and weighing 55 tons. Gordon Newell carved into their polished top surfaces large dishes from which shoot jets of water. The fountains are not memorials, but landscape beautification features framing a formal south entrance to the President's Park. They were donated by Enid Annenberg Haupt, editor of Seventeen Magazine, and erected in 1968 by the First Lady's Committee for a More Beautiful Capital. Nathaniel Owings was the architect.

The National Christmas Tree has been a seasonal feature of the Ellipse since 1923. Until 1973 a large freshly cut tree was erected each year and removed afterward. In that year a tree was planted at the north edge of the Ellipse just east of the north-south axis through the White House. It and a subsequent "permanent" tree did not survive. The present attempt at a permanent tree, a 30-foot Colorado blue spruce, was planted in the same location in 1978. A low stone wall rings its base and a bronze plaque identifies it.

The Bulfinch Gatehouses, located on the west grounds of the U.S. Capitol from 1828 to 1874, were moved to the President's Park South in 1880. The two gatehouses stand at the corners of 15th and Constitution and 17th and Constitution. (They are on the National Register individually in the U.S. Capitol Gatehouses and Gateposts listing, where they are described in full.)

The President's Park South experiences heavy public use as a staging area for daily tours of the White House. Semi-permanent covered bleachers are installed on the east side of the Ellipse during the spring and summer to accommodate the waiting crowds. The park is also used for local athletic games; its sports facilities include a baseball diamond on the west side of the Ellipse and a volleyball court between the Ellipse and 17th Street.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
☐ PREHISTORIC	☐ ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	☐ COMMUNITY PLANNING	☐ LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	☐ RELIGION
☐ 1400-1499	☐ ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	☐ CONSERVATION	☐ LAW	☐ SCIENCE
☐ 1500-1599	☐ AGRICULTURE	☐ ECONOMICS	☐ LITERATURE	☐ SCULPTURE
☐ 1600-1699	☐ ARCHITECTURE	☐ EDUCATION	☐ MILITARY	☐ SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
☐ 1700-1799	☐ ART	☒ ENGINEERING	☐ MUSIC	☐ THEATER
☐ 1800-1899	☐ COMMERCE	☐ EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	☐ PHILOSOPHY	☐ TRANSPORTATION
☒ 1900-	☐ COMMUNICATIONS	☐ INDUSTRY	☐ POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	☐ OTHER (SPECIFY)
		☐ INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1902; 1907

BUILDER/ARCHITECT U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Boulder Bridge and Ross Drive Bridge illustrate two very different but highly successful solutions to the design problem posed by early road construction in Rock Creek Park. This major urban natural area, authorized by Congress in 1890, began to be developed for public access in 1897 under supervision of the Army Corps of Engineers. Fortunately, the engineer officers responsible for this development displayed considerable sensitivity to the natural environment of the park. The two structures addressed here, the earliest extant road bridges within the present jurisdiction of the park, are distinguished by both attractiveness and environmental compatibility. Each is significant as a specimen of historic engineering design.

Boulder Bridge blends thoroughly into its rocky surroundings, presenting an appearance at once unobtrusive and delightful. It exemplifies the best in early rustic "parkitecture," marked by the use of rough natural materials for construction in natural park settings. Designed by W. J. Douglas, this span was built in 1902 at a cost of \$17,636.

The Ross Drive Bridge, constructed five years later at a cost of \$4,754, represents a remarkably contemporary approach. Unlike the Boulder Bridge, whose facings play no structural role, it is all function. In his Bridges and the City of Washington, Donald B. Myer captures its importance: "The bridge carrying Ross Drive over a Rock Creek tributary ravine is significant for its early engineering distinction of being an open-spandrel concrete arch with no pretense at ornamentation other than its organic structural shape. Though built in between the periods of Taft Bridge and Key Bridge and akin to them structurally, the Ross Drive structure is similar to European bridges by Maillart twenty years later and Washington's own Spout Run Bridge built fifty years later" (p. 78).

The natural setting of both bridges, essentially unchanged from the time of their construction, figured importantly in their design and continues as a vital quality for the appreciation of their significance.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Board of Control of Rock Creek Park, Report of the Secretary. Washington, 1907, 1912.
- Donald B. Myer. Bridges and the City of Washington. Washington: U.S. Commission of Fine Arts, 1974.
- Zack Spratt. "Rock Creek's Bridges." Records of the Columbia Historical Society, vol. 53-56 (1953-56), pp. 101-34.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

UTM NOT VERIFIED

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 2

UTM REFERENCES

Boulder Bridge:

A | 1 | 8 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 7 | 7 | 0 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 8 | 0 | 0 |
ZONE EASTING NORTHING
C | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Ross Drive Bridge:

B | 1 | 8 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 7 | 0 |
ZONE EASTING NORTHING
D | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The National Register boundary for each bridge is a circle centered on the midpoint of the bridge with a radius of 115 feet, encompassing approximately one acre.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Barry Mackintosh, Regional Historian

ORGANIZATION

National Capital Region, National Park Service

STREET & NUMBER

1100 Ohio Drive, S.W.

CITY OR TOWN

Washington

DATE

9/25/79

TELEPHONE

426-6660

STATE

D.C. 20242

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES ☒

NO ☐

NONE ☐

[Signature]

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is National ☒ National ☐ State ☐ Local

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

[Signature]

TITLE

Assistant Director,
Cultural Resources

DATE

12-14-79

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

3/20/80

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

March 18, 1980

ATTEST:

[Signature]

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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The President's Park South evolved in the 20th century as the setting for several monuments and memorials, as described in the preceding section. These were held to its periphery, leaving open the expanse of the Ellipse. The Sherman Monument and the First Division Monument in particular are significant as expressions of the memorial art of their time. Of special importance is the open vista from the White House south through the Ellipse to the Jefferson Memorial, listed separately on the Register.

(Note: The "President's Park North," better known as Lafayette Park, is separately listed in the National Register as part of the Lafayette Square Historic District and thus is not addressed here.)



Wash, Dc

Rock Creek Park

NPS

10/MAR

DOE

20/1980

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3



Ross Drive Bridge
Rock Creek Park
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Wash, DC

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20

2 of 3

DEC 28 1979



Wash, D C

Ross Drive Bridge

Rock Creek Park

NPS

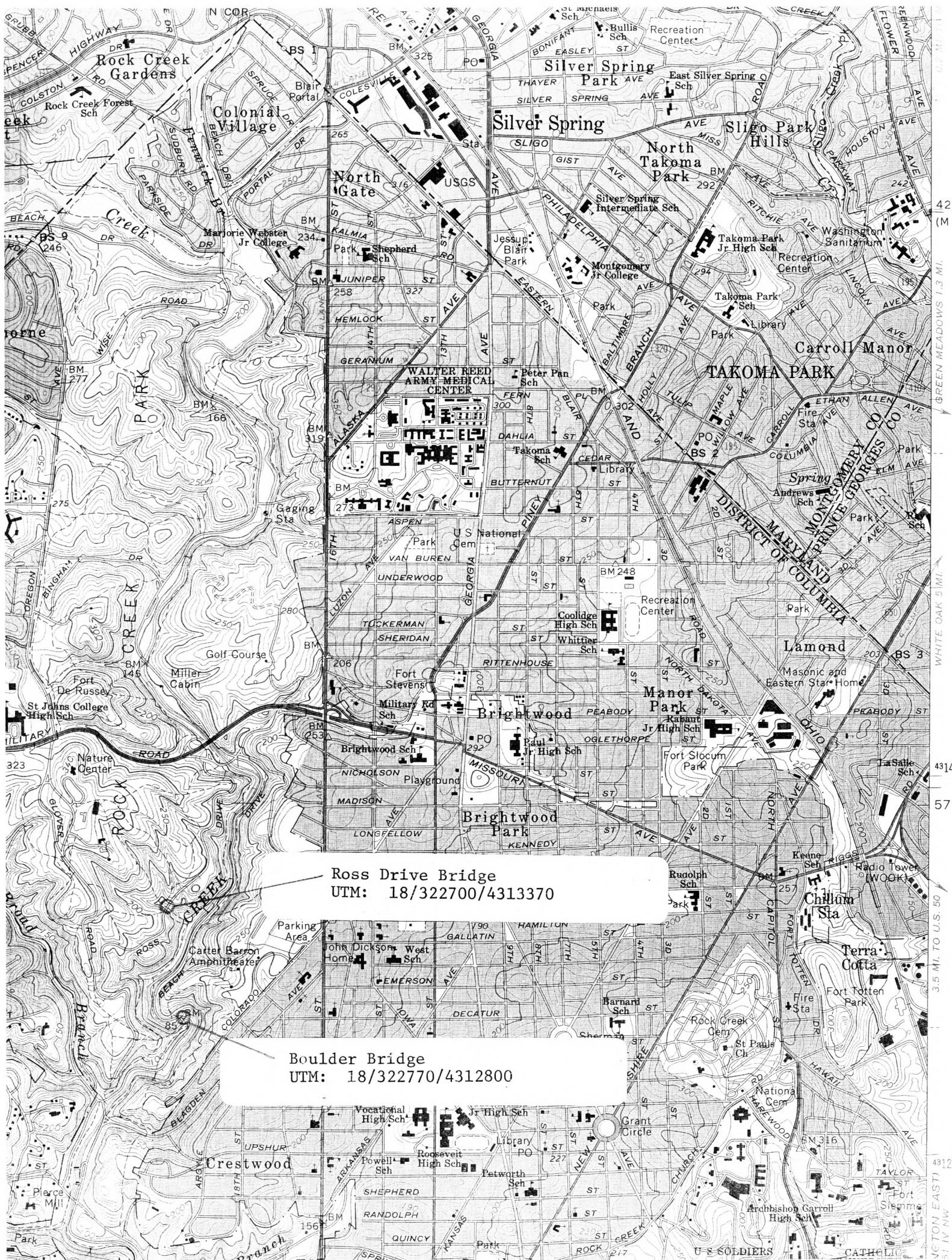
10/79

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20

4/11



Ross Drive Bridge
UTM: 18/322700/4313370

Boulder Bridge
UTM: 18/322770/4312800