

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 Arsenal Access Road Bridge #2280

Other names/site number: JE0927, Pine Bluff Arsenal Access Road Bridge #M2572, Bridge Reference #02288, Caney Creek Bridge

Name of related multiple property listing:

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

2. Location

Street & number: AR256 over Caney Creek

City or town: White Hall State: Arkansas County: Jefferson

Not For Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐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 X 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 X 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 X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A B C D

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official:

Date

Title :

State or Federal agency/bureau
or Tribal Government

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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 ☐

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

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

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing

Noncontributing

buildings

sites

1

structures

objects

1

0

Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register _____

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.)

No Style

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Concrete;

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 Arsenal Access Road Bridge #2280, along the current alignment of State Highway 256 or E. Hoadley Road is a two-lane reinforced concrete deck girder bridge constructed under the National Defense Highway Act of 1941. It follows a straight alignment from the southwest to northeast, off Arkansas 365, formerly US 65, to the intersection of the Union Pacific Railroad line, formerly the Missouri Pacific Railroad. The bridge retains its original 1942 concrete pavement and overall design throughout, while retaining its original width. Scattered homes and a small area of woods surround the area of the bridge.

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Narrative Description

Bridge

The Pine Bluff Arsenal Access Road Bridge #2280 was constructed in 1942 using National Defense Highway Act Funds. The bridge is approximately 152' long, or .029 miles, and begins at Station 31/79 and extends to Station 33/31. The Pine Bluff Arsenal Access Road Bridge #2280 consists of 28 of feet clear roadway with four-foot sidewalls. The bridge's deck is constructed out of reinforced concrete and is supported in the middle by a reinforced-concrete pier. In addition, four cast-concrete piers support each of the five section of bridge decking. Each of the piers consists of four, cast-concrete, 16" octagonal pilings. The guardrails on the bridge consists of evenly-spaced concrete uprights connected by two rows of horizontal concrete beams. A metal plaque at each end of the bridge list the major players involved in the construction process. The plaque has the following information: Caney Creek/ Graves Bros. Contractor/ 1942/Bridge No. #####.¹

INTEGRITY

No structural alterations have been made to the bridge to compromise its integrity. Its location remains rural, and its setting remains pristine. The bridge still illustrates its original design and materials. In addition, the bridge is still used for vehicular travel.

¹ No bridge number was etched into the metal plate.

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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.)

Military

Transportation

Period of Significance

1942-1943

Significant Dates

1943

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Graves Brothers; Contractor

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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.)

Summary

The 1942 Pine Bluff Arsenal Access Road Bridge #2280 in White Hall, Arkansas, is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places with local significance under **Criterion A** for its significance in the areas of Transportation and Military. The 1942 Pine Bluff Arsenal Access Road Bridge #2280² is a well-preserved example of a National Defense Highway Act of 1941 bridge in White Hall, Arkansas. It was constructed as part of a national movement to construct adequate motor-truck transportation routes for the defense and military industries to adequately move goods, people and materials from location to location in the case of the United States' entrance into war. With World War II already raging in much of Europe, the United States was already planning defense strategies as early as the late 1930s. As part of these national defense strategies, the United States was watching and learning from the successes and failures associated with Britain's involvement on the ongoing war. One of the successes that the United States rushed to capitalize on was the use of the road system to best move materials and personnel from place to place. Though the ability to move supplies, materials and personnel throughout the country is not a new idea, the National Defense Highway Act of 1941 was used to bolster the highway system and other methods of motor-vehicle transportation during this trying time surrounding the advancement into World War II.³ Yet, it cannot be understated that these roads were essential to the security of the military installations that military supplies, materials and personnel moved to and from on a daily basis between 1942 and 1945. This idea about how critical the roadways were to security is clearly illustrated by Charles Quattlebaum, who wrote an article for the publication *Military Affairs*, where he opened by saying...

The present war, emphasizing mobility of movement through the wide employment of mechanized and motorized forces, once again has demonstrated the significance of military highways in the conduct of war. Today, as in the past, a good commercial thoroughfare in peacetime may become a military highway of

² Original Bridge Number was 2280, it was later changed to M2752. (Memo from C.T. Nitteberg, Sr. Highway Bridge Engineer, 7 March 1942, microfilm, Arkansas Department of Transportation- Records Management, Microfilm roll C.23, Division 2 Construction Job Files 2314-2327, Job #2326.)

³ Though the National Defense Highway Act of 1941 helped strengthen the motor vehicle transportation routes in the United States, this would not be the last time the Defense Highway Act would be revised and extensively used. In 1956, revisions were made to the National Defense Highway Act to better meet the needs of the Cold War.

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great strategical importance in wartime.⁴

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Though the Pine Bluff Arsenal Access Road Bridge #2280 may never become, what Quattlebaum calls a good commercial thoroughfare, it has and can continue to illustrate the need for the buildup of infrastructure in advance of a potential entrance into World War II and during the mobilization effort.

Elaboration

“Transportation provides time and place utility to goods by placing them where, and when, they are needed. Conversely, lack of adequate transportation can reduce or eliminate the effective utility of an item by making it unavailable where and when it is needed.”⁵

It is in these words that one can hear and see the need for better transportation infrastructure to help in the movement of supplies, materials and personnel from training centers to points of embarkation. One of the main American propaganda slogans was about the faster you create weapons, the faster the war would be over. If you could not get the weapons to where they needed to be the war would continue to drag on. Therefore, infrastructure improvements like the Pine Bluff Arsenal Access Road Bridge #2280, were pushed as a necessity for the war machine, which was picking up the pace by 1941-1942. Though discussions about the preparedness of both the military and the country was an ongoing topic in both chambers of the United States Legislature, the ground work for the implementation of any such infrastructure dealing with the country's preparedness, came just months before the United States' entrance in to World War II, in legislation like the National Defense Highway Act of 1941. In the few short months after the passage of such legislation very little progress had been made in construction of such projects. It was not until the attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, that infrastructure improvements such as the Pine Bluff Arsenal Access Road Bridge #2280 and the Pine Bluff Arsenal were pushed in to action.

The National Defense Highway Act of 1941 was not first of such infrastructure improvements made in advance of large armies. For centuries the large armies and those that lead them into battle have recognized the great importance of “military highways.”⁶ It is noted in Charles Quattlebaum's article that the Carthaginians developed wonderfully constructed roadways to hold off the Greeks and Romans. The Romans then utilized the methods of road construction while pushing toward the Carthaginians in North Africa, to perfect their own road systems upon conquering land in Britain, France, parts of Northern Africa and parts of the Middle East. Due to

⁴ Charles B. Quattlebaum, “Military Highways,” *Military Affairs*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (Autumn 1944): 225.

⁵ Scott A. Maddox, “Domestic Transportation in World War II: Lessons Learned” (Thesis, Air Force Institute of Technology, School of Systems and Logistics, 1990), 1-2.

⁶ The term “military highways” in this context refers to solid transportation routes

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vast amount of land conquered by the Roman Empire and the superior nature of the roadways used by the military and thus the settlements along those roads, the need for more advanced military roads would dwindle until the advent of the Napoleonic Era. It is during the Napoleonic Era that many of the Roman military roads were reconstructed and more advance routes were added to the roadway system in order to rapidly move his army. It is also during his reign as Emperor of France that he established a "uniform system of highway administration, dividing the roads into imperial and departmental routes and fixing administrative responsibilities upon the Federal Government."⁷

Following the construction of the vast roadways constructed under Napoleon as early as 1811, foot and horse travel drastically declined due to the evolution of the train and its ability to move supplies, materials and personnel faster to a location. Though foot and horse travel never faded out entirely until the early 1900s, this method of transportation began to wane from this point forward. Though the method of travel changed, the need for roadways did not change and only grew to be more important through the creation of the motorized automobile in the early 1900s.

Though railroad transportation was hitting its stride for use by the military in the late 1800s and early 1900s, Germany and the Third Reich were resurrecting the use of roadways for military purposes in 1933. It is at this time that Adolf Hitler and the Third Reich proposed the Autobahn highway. In the original plan, the Autobahn would cover 4,300 miles of roadway, but it was later expanded to take in 6,250 miles instead.⁸ The Autobahn would be designed for fast military transportation purposes.⁹ "As developed by the Genius of the German Engineer Fritz Todt, the Autobahn system enables motor vehicles to travel at high speed from north, south, east and west across Germany without passing through a single village or meeting at a crossroads."¹⁰

Though these Empires, Countries, and Political Organizations have been highly idealized in creating these military roadways because of their success and failure of using them, the United States has also used similar road building processes long before the National Defense Highway Act of 1941. Many of the early American roadways were carved in to the countryside for use during the American Revolution, followed by the Cumberland Road in the early 19th century. Still it was the Army Engineers, or current day Army Corps of Engineers, who were responsible for road construction. By the outset of the American Civil War and the Great War (World War I) the military was using existing roads and very few new military roads were constructed until the entrance into World War II. Even with the use of pre-existing roadways, Arkansas was able to have experienced its boom of military roads pre- American Civil War. The military roads that were constructed included routes between Memphis, Tennessee, and Little Rock, Arkansas, and then Little Rock, Arkansas, to Fort Gibson, Oklahoma, going through Fort Smith, Arkansas, a

⁷ Quattlebaum, 226.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Ibid.*, 227.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

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key military installation on the western frontier. Other military roads located in Arkansas included the Southwest Trail.

Following the end of World War I, the United States military went through a drastic demobilization. At the same time, “during the late 1920s and 1930s, the State Highway Commission embarked on a large-scale campaign to upgrade Arkansas’s roads. As a result, many miles of roads were paved or rebuilt and many bridges were built.”¹¹ This new building campaign was largely brought on by the use of New Deal-era funding for infrastructure projects throughout the United States, especially Arkansas, as roadways were in bad shape, and it is illustrated in the Arkansas Highway Commission Biennial Reports for this period. However, the advancement of foreign hostilities in Europe created both a slowdown in highway projects not associated with military infrastructure while increasing highway construction project near new air fields, training bases, ammunition depots, armories, and arsenals to allow for quicker transportation of troops and materials throughout the United States. As Arkansas became a central location of military training, ammunition depots, ammunition material extraction, and ordnance plants and storage, the Arkansas Highway Commission became a key component in constructing highways and access roads to these types of facilities.

The facilities themselves were largely neglected during the interwar years as well leading to materials and machinery needing to be replaced as technology and manufacturing changed during this period. “The United States on the outbreak of entering World War II, the military had its sights set on a wartime force of 4 million troops. However, in order for the United States to be substantially ready for the possibility of war, it would require two years from the time money was available to construct manufacturing plants, depots and military post construction reported Major General Wesson. With the military’s mobilization coming into full operation by early 1941,”¹² Arkansas was already becoming a vital location for ammunition materials, plants and storage.

Until mid-1939, the United States made a conscious decision that it would maintain its neutrality as Germany began to rearm itself for what would be the occupation of Czechoslovakia in March of 1939 and then attack on Poland in September of 1939. Between September 1939 and March 1940, the United States government was already beginning to “[anticipate] a major emergency, [and began] to [press] for further rearmament.”¹³ It is also at this time, that troop preparation, training was beginning to increase as more military training and industrial sites were beginning to be built and put into operation.

¹¹ Ralph Wilcox, *Old U.S. 79, Kingsland Segment* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places, 2005), 8-2.

¹² Travis Ratermann, *MacLean Hall* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places, 2017), 8-13.

¹³ Lenore Fine and Jesse A. Remington, *The Corps of Engineers: Construction in the United States* (Washington D.C.: Center for Military History, U.S. Army, 2003), 108.

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As seen above, the lag in military preparedness caused the United States to go in to a flurry of activity between 1939 and 1941 in order to meet the demands of a potential entrance into what would become World War II. Yet, while the military branches began to “gradually accelerate during the pre-Pearl Harbor period,” so did the Ordnance Department. Even with the escalation of military munitions, personnel, and supplies, it took two more years for essential infrastructure to be built to move these items to the newly constructed base camps, mustering stations and training facilities, which rose out of the passage of the National Defense Highway Act of 1941.

Yet, it was not until 1929 that the lack of funding being put towards creating an adequate ammunition supply chain was again expressed. In 1929, a “special survey” was completed for the Office of the Chief of Ordnance that stated that it took a year longer to arm fighting men than it took to train them to fight. It then went on to state that if global war broke out again, there was a “wide gap between the exhaustion of the present reserve and the receipt of munitions from new production.”¹⁴ This would remain a serious problem until it was again looked at through further studies that advocated for future ammunition facilities to be located according to “proximity to strategic raw materials, transportation facilities to probable theaters of war, economy of operation and climate.”¹⁵ These criteria would largely be part of the driving force in Arkansas’s growing role in munition production during World War II.

Although World War II began for the United States in December of 1941, Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Department of War had been preparing for war since early 1939, but the initial proposal to start industrial mobilization began in 1937, though Congress rejected the initial proposal.¹⁶ It would take two more years before “the first substantial ordnance program... was projected over three years with deliveries beginning September 1940,” which was just months before the passage of the National Defense Highway Act of 1941. A number of factors dictated why the transportation of military munitions, personnel, and supplies would become a critical focal point if the United States were to enter the war in Europe.

The immensity of scale and rapidity of completion of WWII facilities nationwide is very difficult to overstate. All over the nation, land was acquired for the construction of industrial, military and support facilities meant to train and arm a vast armed force necessary to fight a land, sea and air war on two fronts. The construction of Ordnance Plants and Depots illustrates the spectacular feat of construction and organization on the American home front.

¹⁴ US Army Joint Munitions Command. *History of the Ammunition Industrial Base* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2010), 10.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Logistics in World War II: Final Report of the Army Service Forces; a Report to the Under Secretary of War and the Chief of Staff by the Director of the Service, Supply, and Procurement Division, War Department General Staff* (Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History, United States Army, 1993), 1.

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With the passage of the National Defense Highway Act in 1941, and the quick selection of sites for new military camps and training facilities, the Arkansas Highway Department¹⁷ began being asked to provide access roads into and out of each of the previously selected military locations. This included ammunition depots, arsenals and other industries feeding into the war machine as mobilization began to increase. In most cases, these depot and arsenals were "off the beaten path, so to speak, and existing road networks [would] doubtless[ly] have to be improved and supplemented."¹⁸ In the case of the Pine Bluff Arsenal, it was located away from US 65 in a lowland swampy area, prone to frequent flooding, therefore it would need an adequate access road to enter the installation.

Though transportation funds had been very limited through the 1930s and into the 1940s, the new National Defense Highways Act of 1941 provided the funding for things specifically noted in the report given to the Senate Committee entitled *Highways for the National Defense: A Report to the Administrator, Federal Works Agency, Mr. John M. Carmody by the Public Roads Administration*. The report grouped highways of national defense into two categories: road programs primarily required for defense operations, ie: access roads, and road programs used to improve inadequate sections of the strategic network, ie: large roadways connecting large metropolitan areas.¹⁹ It is also noted in the report that "our highways and streets are inadequate for the national defense in definite particulars."²⁰ Access roads were given a very high priority in the report to on Highways for the National Defense. As noted in the report, an access road ...

include[s] numerous roads, each of short mileage, that are required to give local access from main highways, railroads and waterways, to Army and Navy reservations, and industrial plants engaged in the defense-production program. Also included are certain roads and streets that connect with rail terminals and airports and that may be used to a considerable extent by traffic generated by the defense program. In many cases, the usage of this class of roads by normal civil traffic is small and the necessary improvements are required primarily by defense usage.²¹

¹⁷ The Arkansas Highway Department officially changed its name to the Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department in February 1977 by Arkansas Act 192. (Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department, *Historical Review: Arkansas State Highway Commission and Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department Vol. 2, 1913-2003* (Little Rock: Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department, 2004), 108.)

¹⁸ United States: Public Roads Administration, *Highways For The National Defense: A Report to the Administrator, Federal Works Agency. Mr. John M. Carmody* (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1941), 3.

¹⁹ Richard F. Weingroff, "Clearly Vicious as a Matter of Policy: The Flight Against Federal- Aid," United States Department of Transportation, Federal Highways Administration.

<https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/infrastructure/hwyhist06d.cfm> (accessed January 11, 2016).

²⁰ United States: Public Roads Administration, 5.

²¹ *Ibid*, 8.

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The report also states that the access roads that are presented in the report are dynamic in nature because of the growing need "from day to day as the general defense programs mature"²² and expand to include new facilities. It further states that due to the new installations or "reservations" that are being established due to the escalation of war tensions, are being located "on land previously occupied by very small populations."²³

With the federal government able to supply funding through the authorization of the National Defense Highway Act on November 19, 1941²⁴, the Arkansas Highway Commission in February 1942 "approved a tentative \$2,500,000 highway building program consisting of regular and secondary Federal aid funds, strategic highway funds and access roads to defense areas."²⁵ This was done in order to supply access roads to and from military manufacturing locations throughout Arkansas including the arsenals and ammunition depots. With the highway program approved by the Arkansas Highway Commission, it needed to be approved by the Federal Works Administration (FWA) and the War Department (WD) before taking effect.

Upon the approval of the highway program by both the FWA and the WD, the access roads into the camps and training facilities was added to the list of awaiting roads that would be constructed through the use of the Defense Highway Act funds. Yet, in order to even be added to the list of Defense Highway fund projects, "one of the three major defense agencies- the Army, the Navy, and the Advisory Commission to the Council of National Defense,"²⁶ had to have designated the projects in the report entitled *Highways for the National Defense: A Report to the Administrator, Federal Works Agency, Mr. John M. Carmody by the Public Roads Administration*. Of all of the Defense Highway Funds that were authorized between 1942 and 1946, the majority of the funds went toward adding access roads to the Army Air Corps training facilities and auxiliary fields found throughout the state during this period. The Pine Bluff Arsenal Access Road would also be held to a high standard in receiving funds because of the dire circumstances surrounding the supplying of soldiers once the United States entered the war.

The Pine Bluff Arsenal was established November 3, 1941, by the War Departments' Chemical Warfare Service.²⁷ Only a month and four days later, the Pine Bluff Arsenal planning and

²² *Ibid*, 10.

²³ *Ibid*.

²⁴ "Funds at the Disposal of the Highway Department," microfilm, Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department, Records Management, Microfilm roll C.28, Department Office Engineer, Construction Job Files 10260-10268.

²⁵ "50-Mile Limit Made Permanent," *Blytheville Courier News*, 6 February 1942, 1.

²⁶ United States: Public Roads Administration, *Highways For The National Defense: A Report to the Administrator, Federal Works Agency, Mr. John M. Carmody* (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1941), 7.

²⁷ United States Army, "AMC Installation and Activity Brochure," Pine Bluff Arsenal, Public Relations, Box 38 of 121, 870-SBTP, Folder: Installation/Activities History of PBA 1940s, Annual History Review: 1941-1954.

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construction would be rushed into an accelerated state. By January 1942, the Arkansas Highway Department had received notice that certain areas were being designated as National Defense Areas, which would include the Pine Bluff Arsenal.²⁸ It is stated in the letter that the State Highway Department...

"assumed the responsibility for making the necessary preliminary surveys and the preparation of detailed plans for each of the access road projects....[and] full cooperation may be expected in making surveys and plans, securing right-of-way, and placing access roads under construction. Reimbursement for the actual cost of the surveys and plans for the several projects may be claimed by the State Highway Department in the event the said projects are certified and constructed, in whole or in part with Access Road funds authorized under the Defense Highway Act of 1941."²⁹

The Pine Bluff Arsenal access road was given an Arkansas Highway Department project #2326, and Federal Aid project number DA-WI-3. It is requested in the same letter the priority be given to Fort Chaffee (Camp Chaffee)³⁰ and then the Pine Bluff Arsenal, followed by the two aluminum plants in the state.³¹

When describing the need for the access road and the traffic services that would be provided by the access road, a memo states...

The proposed project provided access to the main entrance of the Pine Bluff Arsenal from U.S. Highway No. 65. U.S. Highway No. 65 is the fifth priority route of the strategic military network in Arkansas and is the route for traffic between Pine Bluff Arsenal, Pine Bluff, and Little Rock. This project connects with the road network within the arsenal area and is the logical route for the movement of traffic between U.S. Highway No. 65 and the arsenal, which is estimated at 3000 vehicles per day. The existing local road is inadequate for the

²⁸ Other Access roads deemed necessary within the letter include: Camp Robinson, Fort Chaffee, Southwest Proving Ground, Arkansas Ordnance Plant, Maumelle Ordnance Plant, Aluminum Manufacturing Plant in Bauxite, and Aluminum Manufacturing Plant at Remmel's Dam. (J.M. Page, to W.W. Zass, 12 January 1942, "Federal Works Agency Public Roads Administration District Six- Access Road Projects- General, Arkansas Department of Transportation- Records, Microfilm roll C.23, Division 2 Construction Job Files 2314-2327, Job #2326.)

²⁹ J.M. Page, to W.W. Zass, 12 January 1942, "Federal Works Agency Public Roads Administration District Six- Access Road Projects- General, Arkansas Department of Transportation- Records, Microfilm roll C.23, Division 2 Construction Job Files 2314-2327, Job #2326.

³⁰ Camp Chaffee was not designated a "Fort" until 1956, between 1942 and 1956, the installation was classified as a "Camp." ("Chaffee Goes Into Fort Class; It's Permanent," *Arkansas Gazette*, 22 March 1956, 1B.)

³¹ J.M. Page, Senior Highway Engineer, to W.W. Zass, Chief Engineer, 12 January 1942, "Federal Works Agency Public Roads Administration District Six- Access Road Projects- General, microfilm, Arkansas Department of Transportation- Records Management, Microfilm roll C.23, Division 2 Construction Job Files 2314-2327, Job #2326.

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movement of the traffic and the proposed location affords a more direct route to Pine Bluff, which will be the origin and destination of the principal portion of the traffic using the project. The proposed project is necessary in order to provide satisfactory access to the arsenal.³²

By February 1, 1942, the Arkansas Highway Department was sending formal plans, specifications, and estimates for consideration and approval, to the Federal District Engineer J.A. Elliott that cited the first reference to the only bridge along the access road, as being a single reinforced-concrete-deck girder bridge. It is in this letter that it also states that future work on project #2326 would only last 120 days, while the County Judge has already agreed to make the right-of-way accessible for the project.³³ It would take less than two weeks for the right-of-way to be obtained through a court order by the Jefferson County Court, which was dated February 13, 1942. Only three days after the right-of-way was obtained, of J.A. Elliott, District Engineer, that the State Highway Department was able to get permission to advertise for the job, which is stated in a February 16, 1942 letter.³⁴ Shortly after this letter it was stated by the Arkansas Highway Department that "highway construction in 1942 will be restricted to strategic highways and access roads for defense plants, unless regulations are modified,"³⁵ striking a tone throughout the State of Arkansas that no other highway projects would be constructed unless authorized for national defense.³⁶

Though the State Highway Department was given permission to advertise for the job, the plans for the bridge, which is located at Station 32/55, were not complete yet. The plans though incomplete at the time of the formal announcement to advertise of project, it was stated that the plans for the bridge "shall be submitted before construction of the bridge is started."³⁷ A Bridge Memorandum supplemented the original letter discussing the Pine Bluff Arsenal Access Road Bridge #2280. In this memo, it states that the bridge would be located at "Sta. 31-79 to Sta. 33-31 - 5-30' RCD girder spans with 28' clear roadway and 2-4' sidewalks, on driven precast pile

³² "Present Necessity of Proposed Work," page no. 2, microfilm, Arkansas Department of Transportation-Records Management, Microfilm roll C.23, Division 2 Construction Job Files 2314-2327, Job #2326.

³³ W.W. Zass, Chief Engineer, to J. A. Elliott, District Engineer, February 1, 1942, microfilm, Arkansas Department of Transportation- Records Management, Microfilm roll C.23, Division 2 Construction Job Files 2314-2327, Job #2326.

³⁴ J. A. Elliott, District Engineer, to W.W. Zass, Chief Engineer, February 16, 1942, microfilm, Arkansas Department of Transportation- Records Management, Microfilm roll C.23, Division 2 Construction Job Files 2314-2327, Job #2326.

³⁵ "Capitol News in Brief," *The Journal- Advance*, 19 February 1942, 1.

³⁶ This same discussion would be later restated by Governor Homer Adkins when talking about the extension of Highway 65 through Chicot County. He stated that highway construction would be dedicated by national defense needs. ("Roads Depend On War Needs," *Blytheville Courier*, 19 March 1942, 1.)

³⁷ J. A. Elliott, District Engineer, to W.W. Zass, Chief Engineer, February 16, 1942, microfilm, Arkansas Department of Transportation- Records Management, Microfilm roll C.23, Division 2 Construction Job Files 2314-2327, Job #2326.

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bents; length 152.0'.³⁸ The Highway Bridge Engineer gave these specifications knowing that the bridge would have to be at least 120' long, in order to cross Caney Creek. But he also noted that field work on this site to garner accurate information was not complete yet, which caused the delay in providing detailed drawings for the bridge prior to advertising for bids. He also concedes that given the urgent nature of the project this information was suitable for the bidding process. With the information provided the original cost estimate for the entire access road project, was stated to be \$77,073.00.³⁹ With the contract out to bid, the proposal were set to be opened March 3, 1942.

With the arrival of March 3, 1942, the contracts were read publicly, with the Graves Brothers of Hamburg, Arkansas, winning the contract with the low bid of \$94,518.35. The next closest bids came in at \$95,715.38 and \$101,188.15, by Gregory- Hogan of Little Rock, Arkansas, and Reynolds and Sutton of Tyler, Texas.⁴⁰ With the bids formally accepted more design problems arose between the official reading of the bids and the start of construction, and all dealt with the size and load bearing capacity of the pilings. Internal discussions between engineers at the highway department indicate that the Chief Engineer highly recommended using a larger 18" octagonal pile, while Senior Highway Engineers stood hard in reducing materials and pushed for the use of 16" octagonal piles, and won. However, even with ongoing discussions still taking place regarding the reinforced-concrete bridge the office pushed the project to go ahead, the official documents allowing for the contract to be approved on March 20, 1942, with a 120 day completion deadline starting on March 30, 1942.⁴¹

The job started ten days late because of harsh wet conditions. Though the ground was still saturated, work finally began on March 30, 1942, with the clearing of working station 45 to the entrance to the arsenal. It is also at this time that the bridge crew began building the forms of the pilings near the site of Caney Creek. The crews working the access road and bridge would continue clearing the path, while the bridge crew continued to build the form for the pile, until April 4. Though ground clearing continued on, there was little to no grading that could take place due to the wet weather. The bridge crew continued to work on building forms and tying piling

³⁸ G.S. Vincent, Highway Bridge Engineer, to Arkansas Highway Department, February 16, 1942, microfilm, Arkansas Department of Transportation- Records Management, Microfilm roll C.23, Division 2 Construction Job Files 2314-2327, Job #2326.

³⁹ By February 23, 1942, the estimate had gone up to \$82,000, due to price increases in the market. (J. A. Elliott, District Engineer, to W.W. Zass, Chief Engineer, February 16, 1942, microfilm, Arkansas Department of Transportation- Records Management, Microfilm roll C.23, Division 2 Construction Job Files 2314-2327, Job #2326.; W.W. Zass, Chief Engineer, to J. M. Page, Senior Highway Engineer, February 23, 1942, microfilm, Arkansas Department of Transportation- Records Management, Microfilm roll C.23, Division 2 Construction Job Files 2314-2327, Job #2326.

⁴⁰ W.W. Zass, "March 3, 1942: Job No. 2326," microfilm, Arkansas Department of Transportation, Records Management, Microfilm roll C.23, Division 2 Construction Job Files 2314-2327, Job #2326.)

⁴¹ W.W. Zass, Chief Engineer, to Mr. J.M. Page, Senior Highway Engineer, Little Rock, Arkansas, April 4, 1942, microfilm, Arkansas Department of Transportation- Records Management, Microfilm roll C.23, Division 2 Construction Job Files 2314-2327, Job #2326.

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steel through the middle of April. They were then taken off the job to help in the creation of another road to the bridge site due to the first road being impassable from April 13 to April 20, 1942.

By April 21, 1942, Senior Highway Engineer, J.M. Page, arrived on the site to inspect the ongoing progress. Mr. Page was not happy about the progress being made and wrote adamantly about it in a letter to Chief Engineer W.W. Zass. He stated that he was "disturbed at the evident lack of organization, management and directing for force back of the contractor's efforts."⁴² Mr. Page's real argument stemmed from the lack of clearing and grubbing, and a lack of grading that had taken place since the project began. He states that progress could be moving faster if ditches had been cut to increase drainage of the area.⁴³ This he states would allow for an increase in grading and would allow the bridge crew to start casting concrete piles.

Though this suggestion is given, the construction crew did try to cut temporary ditches in to the landscape, but it was too no avail. Following Mr. Page's inspection of the project, the bridge crew continued setting piling forms for another two days. By April 23, 1942, the weather was improving and allowed the bridge crew to begin pouring five pilings at 28' long and used fifty-four sacks of cement to begin this process. With the concrete cured, the bridge crew began taking down the pilings and creating a mat for the forms. It is also at this time, that the bridge crew began rubbing⁴⁴ the concrete pilings.⁴⁵ Over the next six days, between the weekend and the rain, the bridge crew was again unable to do any work at the bridge site. By April 28, 1942, there was so much rain, that it caused Caney Creek to overflow its banks. It would take two days before Caney Creek would recede enough to allow the crew to work at the site again.

Following the overflowing of Caney Creek, there would be very few stoppages for the bridge or road crew. Starting April 30, 1942, the bridge crew began hauling more material to the bridge site, so that they could begin pouring more pilings and setting more forms, the next day. Over the next five days, the bridge crew continued pouring pilings and preparing forms. This was finally completed by July 5, 1942, when the crew began making handrail post and pouring the headwalls. The pouring of the headwall took five days to complete. Once the headwall was poured and cured, the crew began pouring the rail post on July 11 and had the entire hand rail poured and completed by July 15. The final step in the completion of the bridge was the final rubbing of the concrete to give it a nicer finish. The final rubbing of the concrete began on July 15, and was completed by July 22, 1942, which also happened to be the same date that the

⁴² J.M. Page, Senior Highway Engineer, to W.W. Zass, Chief Engineer, April 21, 1942, microfilm, Arkansas Department of Transportation- Records Management, Microfilm roll C.23, Division 2 Construction Job Files 2314-2327, Job #2326.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ Rubbing is a thin, long-lasting finish applied to the concrete. When you rub out concrete you are applying a thin coat of Portland cement and literally rubbing it with a sponge float to create an attractive and durable finish.

⁴⁵ "Diary: State Job No. 2326," microfilm, Arkansas Department of Transportation- Records Management, Microfilm roll C.23, Division 2 Construction Job Files 2314-2327, Job #2326.

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pavement crews were able to get started, though mechanical difficulty caused a long delay before work could begin again on the paving of the roadway.⁴⁶ The bridge crew's final day was July 25, 1942, when they continued to clean up around the bridge site.⁴⁷

With the bridge complete, the paving crew continued to push on with grading and paving through August and September. The roughly mile-long roadway was finally completed October 1, 1942, and accepted by the State of Arkansas the next day.⁴⁸ Though the project was officially complete, continual maintenance on the access road was just beginning. Only months after the completion of the access road and bridge, the highway department was completing coring test to determine whether the specifications were met for the final payment of the project. During the coring of the pavement, it was found that there was a slight deficiency in the thickness of the concrete. The thickness was off by no more than a half an inch in any location tested. This deficiency caused the Graves Brothers to lose approximately \$300, due to price adjustments in the initial contract. The Graves Brothers were given an opportunity to counter the core test, but there is no evidence to suggestion the Graves Brothers took the opportunity to counter the claims of being off by a half-inch.

Though the Pine Bluff Arsenal Access Road Bridge # 2280 was not completed until October 1942, work inside the arsenal was already active only months after orders were given to locate in Pine Bluff. "The incendiary program was in production within three and a half months after plans were given to the Chemical Warfare Service in 1941."⁴⁹ By the time the road and bridge were completed, the amount of munition being produced at the Pine Bluff Arsenal steadily increased. In ten days in 1942, the arsenal produced 10,000 heavy bombs. At this same time, the arsenal was producing 4.2" chemical mortar shells constructed of white phosphorous and other high explosives. To put the production progress into bombardment terms, in a single fire bomb raid on Hamburg, Germany, the amount of ammunition dropped was equivalent to one and three-quarters days of work at the arsenal during production at that time period.⁵⁰ It is also stated that by 1944, the "arsenal has 'never missed a ship,'" meaning it never missed a requested shipment of munitions, meant for the battlefield. The ability to move munitions and materials into and out of the Pine Bluff Arsenal using the access road and bridge would become more important as the

⁴⁶ Initial agreements between Graves Brothers and the Acting Engineers state that paving would start on July 13, but paving did not start for another two weeks. (E.E. Mashburn, Senior Highway Engineer, to W.W. Zass, Chief Engineer, April 21, 1942, microfilm, Arkansas Department of Transportation- Records Management, Microfilm roll C.23, Division 2 Construction Job Files 2314-2327, Job #2326.

⁴⁷ "Diary: State Job No. 2326," microfilm, Arkansas Department of Transportation- Records Management, Microfilm roll C.23, Division 2 Construction Job Files 2314-2327, Job #2326.

⁴⁸ Glenn Cotham, Resident Engineer, to District Engineer- Public Roads Administration, October 3, 1942, microfilm, Arkansas Department of Transportation- Records Management, Microfilm roll C.23, Division 2 Construction Job Files 2314-2327, Job #2326.

⁴⁹ "Nature Of Explosives Made At Pine Bluff Arsenal Disclosed," *Northwest Arkansas Times*, 17 January 1944, 4.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

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war continued on. This is shown in the amount of civilian personnel moving through the Pine Bluff Arsenal security check point gates. By March 1942, the arsenal was trying to recruit more and more civilian men and women, usually by the hundreds, to work at the arsenal and promote the war effort. By 1943, the access road and bridge would gain more daily use, as the arsenal provided 800 housing units for families of civilian workers. By providing housing, the arsenal was able to increase production again while adding to the workload the new access road and bridge would be put through until the end of the war. As the war production spiked in 1943-1944, the Arsenal held strong even as some worried the Arsenal would be shut down following the end of the war on September 2, 1945. However, the United States Government put those fears aside by stating that the Pine Bluff Arsenal would not be considered War Surplus, and that it would retain it for standby operations.

The Pine Bluff Arsenal has remained in operation through the present day. Though there were multiple entrance gates into and out of the Arsenal over its seventy-six years, the Pine Bluff Arsenal Access Road Bridge #2280 has remained a central thoroughfare into the Arsenal. This bridge has seen munitions created through World War II, Korea, Vietnam, and every military engagement up to the present day. Though the bridge has been a part of more military engagements than anything or anyone in the United States military, the National Defense Highway Act of 1941 funds used to construct the bridge have been a great investment in American defense and have outlasted more high-tech investment in other areas since its creation. Therefore, the Pine Bluff Arsenal Access Road Bridge # 2280 is one of very few surviving original bridges associated with the National Defense Highway Act of 1941 in the State of Arkansas and stands as a proud reminder of the significant role Pine Bluff and the Pine Bluff Arsenal played in arming American military members in Europe and in the Pacific. These access road and access bridges provided the ability to freely move materials, products and people throughout the United States, which was "the main requirements of the defense program."⁵¹ These access roads were crucial in "provid[ing] adequate highway connections for the reservations and industrial areas with nearby main highways and railroads or other transportation services, and from neighboring towns and cities."⁵² The Pine Bluff Arsenal Access Road Bridge # 2280 and other access roads and bridges on other military properties associated with the defense program between 1941-1945, played an integral role in contributing "greatly to the elimination of serious traffic congestion... handicapping the defense operations in these areas. Between 1941 and 1945, the funding for projects associated with the National Defense Highway Act of 1941 was used on twenty-four other defense related projects in the State of Arkansas. Of those with bridge projects, the Pine Bluff Arsenal Access Road Bridge # 2280 contains the most integrity that the State Historic Preservation Office is aware of at this time, and is therefore being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places with local significance under **Criterion A** for its association with military history in Arkansas and transportation.

⁵¹ United States: Public Roads Administration, 6.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 10.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

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- _____ 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 # _____
 _____ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

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): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property <1 Acre

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84:

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|--------------|------------|
| 1. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

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Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐ NAD 1927 or ☒ NAD 1983

1. Zone: 15	Easting: 583193	Northing: 3795343
2. Zone:	Easting:	Northing:
3. Zone:	Easting:	Northing:
4. Zone:	Easting :	Northing:

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

Beginning at UTM Point 15/583178/3795363, proceed easterly along the centerline of U.S. 64 for 151 feet to UTM point 15/583209/3795363. The boundary includes 20 feet on either side of the AR 256 centerline.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary contains all of bridge #2280 associated with the Pine Bluff Arsenal Army Access Road.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Travis Ratermann
organization: Arkansas Historic Preservation Program
street & number: 1100 North Street
city or town: Little Rock state: Arkansas zip code: 72201
e-mail: travis.ratermann@arkansas.gov
telephone: 501-324-9874
date: 11-15-2018

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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.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, 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 Arsenal Access Road Bridge #2280

City or Vicinity: White Hall

County: Jefferson

State: Arkansas

Photographer: Travis Ratermann

Date Photographed: October 29, 2018

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

Photo #1 (AR_JeffersonCounty_ Pine Bluff Arsenal Access Road Bridge #2280 _0001)
Street view of the Pine Bluff Arsenal Access Road Bridge #2280 looking at the southwest terminus of the bridge. Camera facing Northeast.

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Photo #2 (AR_JeffersonCounty_Pine Bluff Arsenal Access Road Bridge #2280_0002)

Photo of the bridge plaque. Notice the bridge number is not etched into the metal plate.
Camera facing Northeast.

Photo #3 (AR_JeffersonCounty_Pine Bluff Arsenal Access Road Bridge #2280_0003)

Bridge profile photo, showing the structure of the bridge. Camera facing Southwest.

Photo #4 (AR_JeffersonCounty_Pine Bluff Arsenal Access Road Bridge #2280_0004)

Profile of the bridge guardrails. Camera facing South.

Photo #5 (AR_JeffersonCounty_Pine Bluff Arsenal Access Road Bridge #2280_0005)

Photo looking down the bridge guardrail. Camera facing Northeast.

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 Arsenal Access Road Bridge #2280,
Whitehall, Jefferson County, Arkansas**

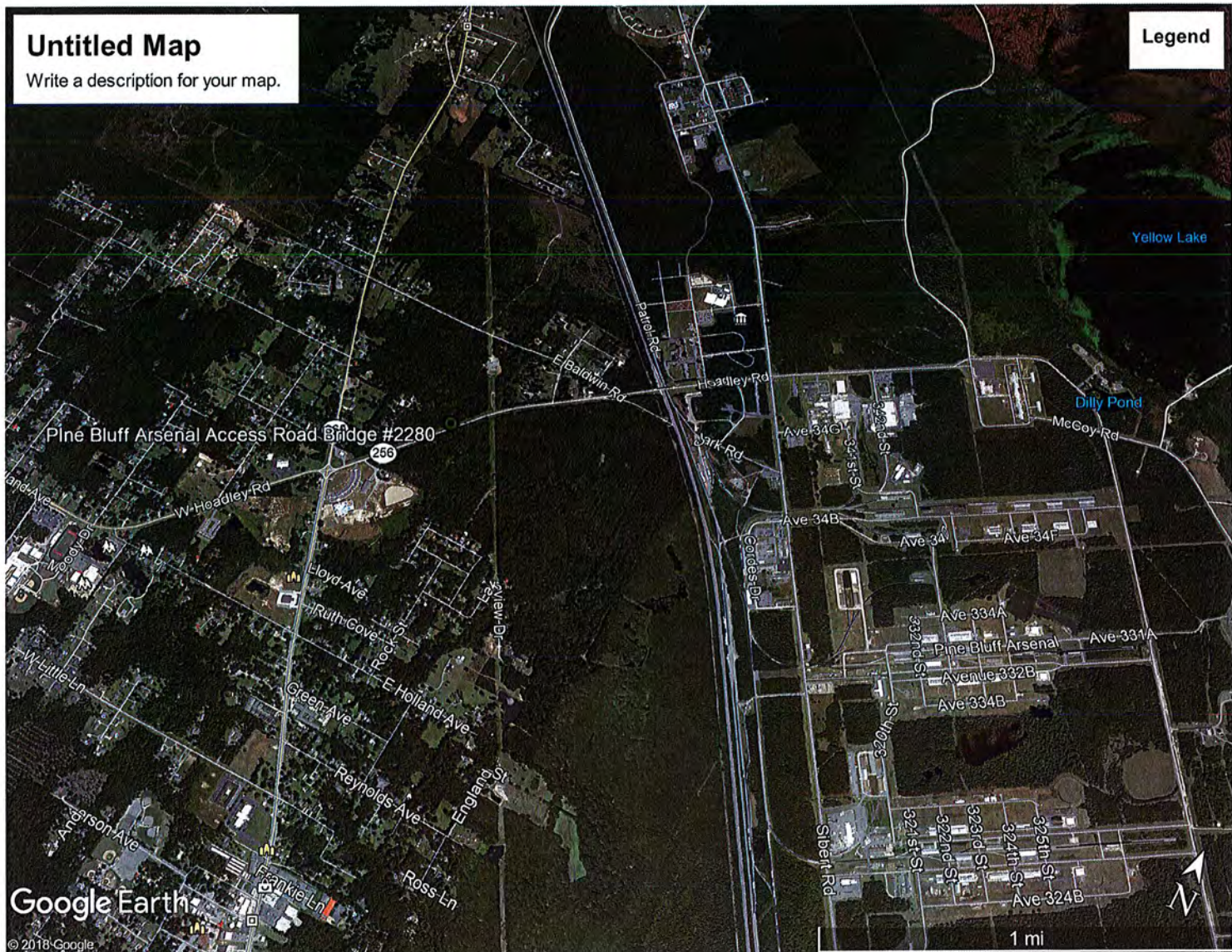


UTM

15 583201 3795347

NAD 83

**Pine Bluff Arsenal Access Road Bridge #2280,
Whitehall, Jefferson County, Arkansas**



UTM

15 583201 3795347

NAD 83

CANEY CREEK

GRAVES BROS.
CONTRACTOR.

1942

BRIDGE NO. 1







