

**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: Edna Collings 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 450 North over Little Walnut Creek.

City or town: Clinton Falls 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Not For Publication: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>_____  <b>Signature of certifying official/Title:</b>  <u>Indiana DNR-Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology</u>  <b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b></p>	<p>_____  <b>Date</b></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>_____  <b>Signature of commenting official:</b></p>	<p>_____  <b>Date</b></p>
<p>_____  <b>Title :</b></p>	<p>_____  <b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b></p>

Edna Collings Covered Bridge  
Name of Property

Putnam County, IN  
County and State

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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:) \_\_\_\_\_

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Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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#### 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

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**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 Burr arch-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.)

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### Summary Paragraph

The Edna Collings Covered Bridge, built in 1922 in Clinton Township, Putnam County, has a clear span of 80 feet over Little Walnut Creek. The single-span Burr arch sets atop concrete abutments. The bridge has board-and-batten siding and features a metal roof. The bridge continues to carry vehicular traffic on West County Road 450 North.

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## Narrative Description

The Edna Collings Covered Bridge (photo 01) was built in 1922 by Charles Hendrix. The single-span bridge has an 80 foot free span Burr arch truss (photo 02) that rests on concrete abutments rising above Little Walnut Creek below (photos 05-06). The total length is 93' from face-to-face of portal. The bridge is approximately 20'-7" wide with a portal approximately 17'-8" wide. The bridge is 19'-6" tall from the deck to the ridge. The bridge is positioned in an east/west alignment over Little Walnut Creek and carries Putnam County Road 450 North just west of its intersection with County Road 690 West. The general terrain around the bridge is wooded with some agricultural land to the west and low-flowing creek below the bridge. 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 that support the bridge are likely original and are approximately 9' tall and feature tapered wing walls.

The heavy oak timber frame is composed of sawn lumber with the Burr arches spliced together (photo 02). Nine panels of oak timber X-bracing are below the bridge deck and overhead (photo 02, 06). Floor boards composing the bridge deck are perpendicular with the flow of traffic. Wood runners, parallel with the flow of traffic, form a wide lane atop the deck boards. A wood rail is attached to the braces in the walls about two feet above the deck. The bridge's sides are covered with boards and narrow battens, painted red (photos 04, 05). The top of the walls are left open for ventilation. Each end wall that forms the portal for the bridge has a gabled wall and shaped portal with clipped outside corners (photos 01, 03). The end walls are also covered with boards and battens. Rafters and spaced boards form the understructure of the roof on which the metal roof is installed. This is a modern rehabilitation feature. The bridge remains open to vehicular traffic on County Road 450 North.

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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**

1922-1932

**Significant Dates**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person (last name, first name)**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder (last name, first name)**

Hendrix, Charles

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### Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance begins when the covered bridge was constructed in 1922. While the bridge continues to be used for local vehicular traffic, the period of significance ends in 1932, the year that Highway 36 was substantially improved across the north part of Putnam County. This likely lessened the use of the Edna Collings 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 Edna Collings Covered Bridge, 1922, is a fine example of a wooden Burr arch bridge and is one of nine covered bridges extant in Putnam County. The Edna Collings 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 Little Walnut Creek in Clinton Township, embodies the importance bridges served to the development of transportation in the county. Criterion C is applicable with engineering as an area of significance. The bridge represents the development of the Burr arch in wood form, relatively late in its period of construction, while the use of steel or concrete for bridge construction had been in full development. The relative rarity of surviving examples of covered bridges further establishes the significance of the Edna Collings Covered Bridge.

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

#### ENGINEERING & TRANSPORTATION

The Edna Collings Covered Bridge is an example of the Burr arch with a free span of 80 feet above Little Walnut Creek (photos 02, 05). The Burr arch was the invention of Theodore Burr (1771-1822), an inventor-engineer from Connecticut, who patented the design on April 4, 1817 (patent no. 2769). The Burr arch functions in tandem with king post trusses for rigidity in the span. While there is some debate as to which member functions for loading versus providing rigidity, the arch or king truss, it is understood that the members must function together. The arch is generally capable of the span and load, but not without failure if not compensated with additional members for rigidity. The bridge type was used in the developing western part of the country and enjoyed significant use in Indiana.



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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.<sup>1</sup> 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, the Edna Collings Covered Bridge, was built over Little Walnut Creek.<sup>2</sup> While generally thought of as a mid-19<sup>th</sup> century method for bridge construction, Putnam County Commissioners continued to commission covered bridges into the first two decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> 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 Collings 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

The Edna Collings Covered Bridge was the last, and shortest, of those 20<sup>th</sup> century constructs. The bridge was built in 1922 by Charles Hendrix. It appears to have been an important, early 20<sup>th</sup> century crossing in the northwest part of the county over Little Walnut Creek. While no crossing appears on the 1879 plat of Clinton Township, a bridge likely predated this bridge in advance of its construction in 1922. The bridge is the only covered bridge built in the state known to have been named for a woman.<sup>3</sup>

Edna Collings (this is sometimes spelled Collins) was the daughter of early Clinton Township pioneers James and Sally (Newgent) Collings. Edna Collings lived on the farm in the first house west of the bridge.<sup>4</sup> A 1910 history of Putnam County states that Edna was the youngest child and has "passed her life on the place where she was born and in which vicinity she is well known and has a host of personal friends."<sup>5</sup> Both the Newgent and Collings families held property in the vicinity of the crossing. A blacksmith and wagon shop were located on the Collings farm immediately west of the crossing in 1879. Township District School No. 4 was west of the

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<sup>1</sup> Romine, pg. 5

<sup>2</sup> Romine, pg. 6

<sup>3</sup> Romine, pg. 33

<sup>4</sup> Romine, pg. 65

<sup>5</sup> Weik, pg. 435

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blacksmith shop between lands owned by the Collings and Newgent families. The bridge allowed a crossing on County Road 450 North from the west part of the county, over Little Walnut Creek, to County Road 625 West that generally runs along the east side of Little Walnut Creek to the village of Clinton Falls just south of the bridge. This route was part of the Greencastle-Portland Mills Road. The post office in Clinton Falls was discontinued in 1901.<sup>6</sup> It could be interpreted that a well-traversed north/south county road at the west end of County Road 450 North allowed for an alternate route from the northwest part of the county to the main road leading into Greencastle if a crossing existed over Little Walnut Creek, therefore the need for the Edna Collings Covered Bridge became apparent. However, by 1922, Highway 36 which would connect the north part of the county with Highway 231 into Greencastle had already been adopted into the state highway network in 1919. Highway 36 would have been substantially improved by 1932, potentially lessening the use of the bridge, though it still serves as a crossing for a minor collector road today.

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.

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### **Developmental History/Additional historic context information**

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<sup>6</sup> Weik, pg. 162

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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

archINform (website accessed January 23, 2023) Burr arch truss:  
<https://www.archinform.net/stich/2683.htm>

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, 1932.

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.

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### 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

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- 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):** HB-2013

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**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: | Easting:  | Northing: |
| 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 south and north 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 450 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 450 North alignment that features approaches to the bridge.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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

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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.)
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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: Edna Collings Covered Bridge

City or Vicinity: Clinton Falls

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 west at east portal

1 of 6.

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

2 of 6.

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

3 of 6.

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

4 of 6.

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

5 of 6.

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

6 of 6.

**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.).

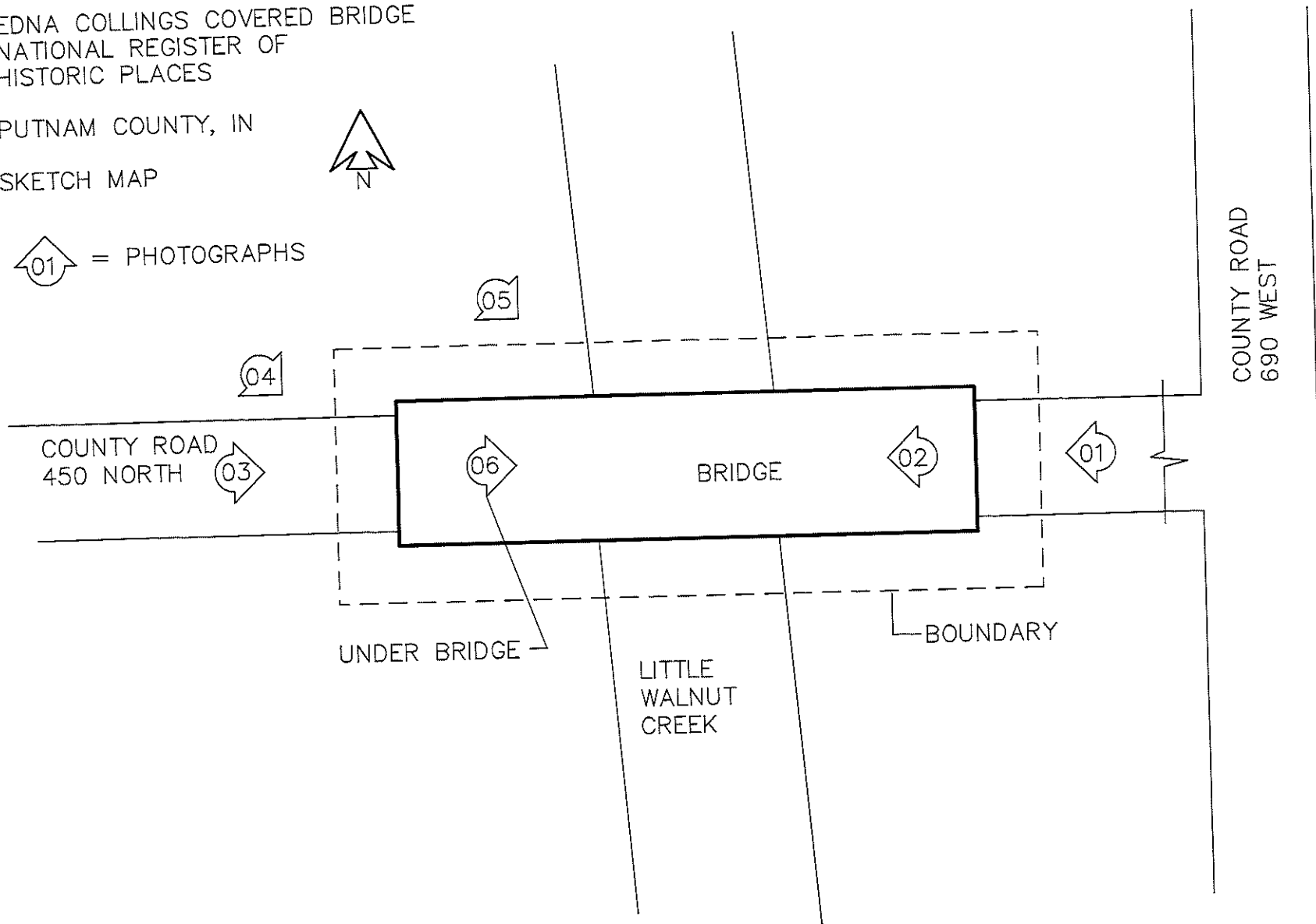
**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form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

EDNA COLLINGS COVERED BRIDGE  
NATIONAL REGISTER OF  
HISTORIC PLACES

PUTNAM COUNTY, IN  
SKETCH MAP



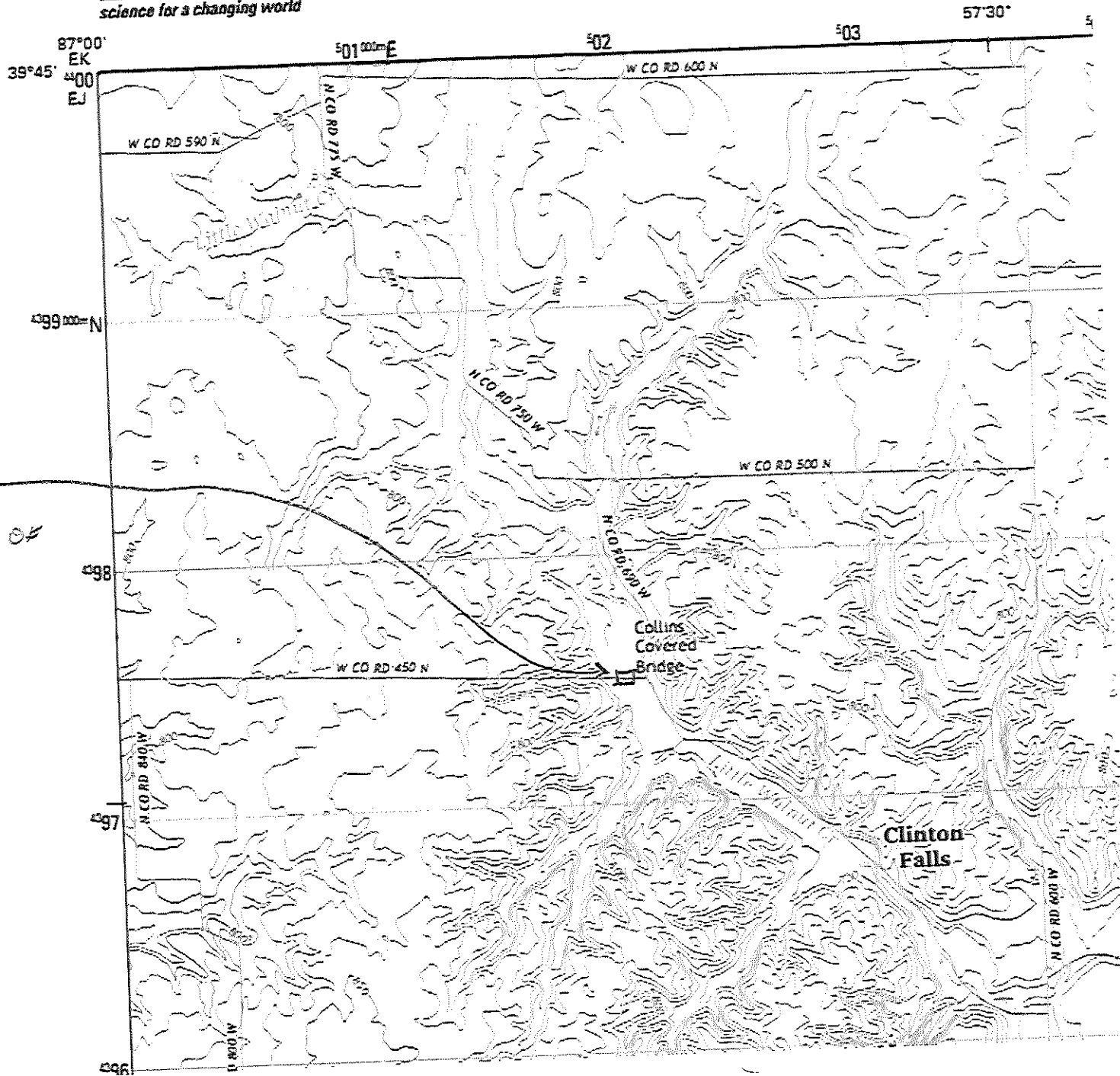
◀01 = PHOTOGRAPHS







U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY



EDNA COLLINGS  
COVERED BRIDGE  
NATIONAL REGISTER OF  
HISTORIC PLACES  
PUTNAM CO. IN

E165 502034  
N165 4397500



IN\_PutnamCounty\_EdnaCollingsCoveredBridge\_0002



IN\_PutnamCounty\_EdnaCollingsCoveredBridge\_0003



IN\_PutnamCounty\_EdnaCollingsCoveredBridge\_0004



IN\_PutnamCounty\_EdnaCollingsCoveredBridge\_0006