



5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- x private
public-local
public-State
public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- building(s)
district
site
x structure
object

Number of Resources within Property

Table with 2 columns: Contributing, Noncontributing. Rows for buildings, sites, structures, objects, Total.

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: TRANSPORTATION Sub: Rail-related

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: NOT IN USE Sub:

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: Pratt Truss

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE
walls N/A
roof N/A
other METAL: steel

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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)

- \_x\_ 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 a grave.
\_\_ D a cemetery.
\_\_ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
\_\_ F a commemorative property.
\_\_ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION

Period of Significance 1854-1945

Significant Dates 1854, 1865, 1899

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
previously listed in the National Register
previously determined eligible by the National Register
designated a National Historic Landmark
recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary Location of Additional Data

- \_X\_ State Historic Preservation Office
Other State agency
Federal agency
Local government
University
Other

Name of repository:

Norfolk Southern Six Mile Bridge No. 58 Amherst and Campbell Counties, Virginia

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10. Geographical Data  
=====

Acreage of Property less than one acre

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	17	671460	4140040	2	17	671715 4140065
3	17	671720	4140025	4	17	671475 4139985

     See continuation sheet.

**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

=====  
11. Form Prepared By  
=====

name/title Bernard C. Proctor, P. E.; Consulting Engineer  
organization Mount Athos Regional Museum and Information Center, Inc. date 03-30-95  
street & number 101 Claymont Drive telephone 804-385-7548  
city or town Lynchburg state VA zip code 24502

=====  
Additional Documentation  
=====

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

- A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

**Additional items**

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

=====  
Property Owner  
=====

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name/title Mount Athos Regional Museum and Information Center, Inc.  
street & number Route 8, Box 137A telephone                       
city or town Lynchburg state VA zip code 24504

=====  
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. 470 et seq.).  
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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### Norfolk Southern Six Mile Bridge #58

#### SUMMARY

Norfolk Southern Railway's Six Mile Bridge #58 facilitated rail service through the Lynchburg area for numerous railroad companies for more than one hundred years. The bridge, originally constructed around 1853, was rebuilt or modified in 1866, 1870, 1886, 1899, 1920, 1934, and 1957 to accommodate ever-increasing rail traffic and heavier loads, keeping pace with the increasing importance of rail transportation for commerce in Virginia and surrounding states. Six Mile Bridge, known as Norfolk Southern #58, provided rail service between 1853 and 1972. The structure was transferred to Robert R. Feagans Sr. in 1992 and he transferred the property to the Mount Athos Regional Museum and Information Center, Inc., in 1993. The historical significance of Six Mile Bridge as an integral part of commerce and the history of rail transportation in this area, and its relevance to historical events of national significance that occurred in this regional area are the basis of the merit of this structure for national recognition.

#### NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

Six Mile Bridge, Norfolk Southern's Bridge #58, spans the James River at a location approximately six miles east of the City of Lynchburg. The original bridge of six spans with five (5) piers for a total length of approximately 605 feet was constructed around 1853 with masonry foundations and timber trusses. The original piers of approximately 20 foot height were constructed to provide approximately 15 feet of clearance between the "ordinary water surface" and the top of the pier. The

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original stonework of the piers, except for the east abutment and first eastern pier which have been replaced, is still intact and a number of mason's marks are visible. The four (4) piers in the river were constructed to bedrock using coffer dam construction techniques.

In 1870 the height of the masonry piers was increased by approximately twenty (20) feet and the length was increased by approximately 44 feet for a total length of 654 feet. Wrought iron trusses, approximately 112 feet per span, of the Fink truss design were also installed. In 1886 two additional Fink trusses were added to each span for increased load carrying capacity.

In the 1890's an additional pier was installed on the east bank of the James River and a new shorter Fink truss and a plate girder span were added. In 1899 the Fink trusses were replaced with two laterally braced Pratt style trusses across each span and the Fink truss and plate girder spans on span two and one, respectively, were replaced with heavier plate girder spans. In 1920 an additional Pratt truss was installed between the two installed in 1899 and the easternmost span was raised to provide greater track clearance. The three truss per span superstructure remains in place today. In 1934 concrete footings 28 feet long, 14 feet wide and 10 feet deep were installed at the base of each pier in the river to provide increased bearing support for heavier train loading. In 1958 the length of span 1 was increased by approximately 25'-6" feet to permit construction of State Route 726.

Route 726 was constructed to provide access to the Babcox and Wilcox Commercial and Naval Nuclear Fuel Facility and Lynchburg Foundry at Archer Creek from Route 460. Span 1, increased from

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46'-6" in length to approximately 72'-0", required a new plate girder span and a new eastern abutment and the overall length of the bridge increased to approximately 680 feet.

Six Mile Bridge with a length of 680<sup>±</sup> now has seven (7) spans, six (6) piers and two (2) end abutments. Five of the spans consist of three, riveted Pratt style steel trusses, each approximately 112 feet in length with a 14 foot depth of section. Two of the spans are constructed of steel plate girders with one span of 48'-6" (span 2) and one section (span 1) of 72'-0" spanning the CSX rail line and Route 726. On the top of the new concrete abutment on the east side of the bridge is a U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey Bench Mark showing an elevation of 523.62 feet above sea level.

The rails have long since been removed from the bridge and the bridge deck of standard wooden railroad ties has deteriorated. The superstructure, however, remains in good structural condition and well above any flooding to date in this century. The stone masonry of the bridge piers retain their point and the piers have not been damaged. Erosion has begun to affect the western abutment but there does not appear to be any structural threat to the integrity of the bridge at this time.

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### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

#### SUMMARY

The Norfolk Southern Six Mile Bridge No. 58 spans the James River downstream from Lynchburg, Virginia, linking Amherst and Campbell counties. The bridge is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its significance in the history of transportation in Virginia. An evolved structure, the bridge was built of wooden trusses on stone piers and completed in 1854. Soon after its destruction during the Civil War, the bridge was rebuilt twice: first in wood, and again about 1870, when the height of the piers was increased and an innovative wrought-iron Fink truss bridge was constructed. The bridge was strengthened in 1886 and again about 1901 using a riveted-steel Pratt truss design. From its creation in 1854 until the railroad abandoned it in 1972, the bridge carried both freight and passenger traffic. The Six Mile Bridge continues to represent well the antebellum and postwar eras in Virginia rail transportation history.

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### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Prior to the development of the railroads, Lynchburg and the Central Virginia area were dependent on the James River and poor dirt roads for transportation. Bateaux traffic on the James River facilitated commerce between Richmond and Lynchburg from the mid-1700s until the opening of the James River and Kanawha Canal between Richmond and Lynchburg in 1840. In the 1820s several Lynchburg toll road companies had been started and these companies provided somewhat better roads. As early as 1831 Lynchburg attempted unsuccessfully to organize a consortium to construct a railroad westward but it wasn't until 1850 that construction of the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad from Lynchburg, Virginia to Bristol, Tennessee finally began.

Late in 1849 concurrent with the construction of the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad, a line which was completed in 1856, work on a rail link between Petersburg and Lynchburg, Virginia for the South Side Railroad began in Petersburg, Virginia. The South Side Railroad already had a railroad line between Petersburg and Richmond and the extension to Lynchburg.

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Work on the South Side Railroad line between Petersburg and Lynchburg proceeded rapidly and by late 1854 the line was providing rail service to Lynchburg. In 1854 work had begun by the Norfolk and Petersburg Railroad on a line between Norfolk and Petersburg, Virginia and this line was completed in 1858. When completed, these three railroad lines (the Norfolk-Petersburg Railroad, the Petersburg-Lynchburg Railroad and the Virginia Tennessee Railroad) would provide a rail line across Virginia from Norfolk, Virginia via Richmond and Lynchburg, Virginia to Bristol, Tennessee, to provide service to the Mississippi River at Memphis.

There were four major bridges on the Petersburg to Lynchburg line, including Six Mile Bridge. One notable structure on this line was the famous High Bridge just east of Farnville, Virginia. High Bridge is 3,400 feet long and 125 feet high. The first and major structure over the James River, however, was located near Lynchburg and it was known as the "First Crossing of the James", a reference noted in the South Side Railroad company records. The bridge is located approximately six miles below Lynchburg, crossing from the east side of the James River in Campbell County to the west side of the James River into Amherst County. This "First Crossing of the James" is currently referred to locally and oncurrent U.S.

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Geological Survey Maps as the Six Mile Bridge. Two other bridges cross the James River west of Six Mile Bridge toward Lynchburg. These remaining bridges are similar construction but shorter span. These smaller bridges carried the rail line from the north bank of the James River in Amherst County over the James River to the lower end of Percivals Island and from the upper end of the island into Lynchburg, respectively, where the line was joined with the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad. A railroad depot was located at the upper end of Percivals Island with a wagon bridge connecting it to the town (Lynchburg) at Washington Street.

Other sites of historic merit are located near Six Mile Bridge. At the east end of Six Mile Bridge, then known as Bridge No. 1 (across the James River), lies the confluence of Archer Creek and the James River. Archer Creek borders the west end of a small ridge along the James River and this ridge is known as Mount Athos. The massive stone ruins of a house named Nount Athos, built around 1800 by William Lewis, stand atop this ridge. Mount Athos was later owned by Judge John Robertson, older brother of Virginia governor Wyndham Robertson. The ruins were named to the Virginia Landmarks and the National Register of Historic Places several years ago.

The South Side Railroad line between Petersburg and Lynchburg, Virginia opened late in 1854, but Six Mile Bridge, the two small bridges at Percival's Island and the wagon bridge from the Percival Island Depot into Lynchburg were not completed until the spring of 1855. Until their completion, passengers and freight were transferred to canal boats at Six Mile Bridge for passage into Lynchburg. Near the east end of Bridge No. 1 was a small transfer station known as Mount Athos Depot. Close by on Archer Creek was

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the stone Fredonian Mill, constructed about 1807 as a part of the Mount Athos plantation. The walls of this mill are still standing. Just above the mill on the east bank of the creek is a stone quarry which provided the stone used in nearby canal structures and stone from this quarry was probably used for the stone work of Six Mile Bridge.

The masonry contract for Bridge No. 1 (now Six Mile Bridge) was awarded to William Moore on March 1, 1853. The bridge foundations consisted of four (4) tall, slender stone piers of approximately 20 feet in height, 15 feet above the water service level in the river and one short 14 foot pier on the east bank plus large stone abutments on both ends of the bridge. The original stonework, except for the original east abutment and first eastern pier, which were replaced later to accommodate longer bridge spans, is still intact and a number of mason's marks are visible.

The contract for the initial wooden truss superstructure was awarded later. The five spans over the river were about 112 feet each in length and the span on the east end was about 48 feet long. The James River and Kanawha Canal passed under this last span on the east side of the James River.

The opening of the Petersburg to Lynchburg rail line drew considerable trade from the canal, causing the canal to reduce its tolls as a result. The canal in the meantime, however, had also been extended to Buchanan in 1851 and a branch canal line to Lexington, Virginia, on the North River (now the Maury) was completed in 1860.

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Six Mile Bridge carried all through-traffic on its single track throughout the Civil War. Sometime during the Civil War a fortification was built downstream of the bridge on top of a ridge on the west bank of the James River overlooking Six Mile Bridge. This fortification consisted of a sizable square redoubt with outlying trenches and two cannon emplacements, obviously constructed to protect the bridge and the rail approach to Lynchburg. The redoubt, now called Fort Riverview, has been listed in the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places.

The railroad between Richmond and Lynchburg and points west served as a strategic asset for Confederate forces during the Civil War and protection of the bridge was a high priority. The significant military value of the bridge is evidenced by the fact that the operating control of such rail facilities was taken over by the Confederate government between 1861 and 1865 since the system provided the main artery for supply and communication between the armies of (Northern) Virginia, the seat of the Confederate government in Richmond, Virginia, and Confederate forces throughout the South. The redoubt and gun emplacements stands as a testimony to the early significance of this site and bridge.

Confederate major general Lunsford L. Lomax who served in Lynchburg in 1865, ordered the bridge burned along with several others between South Side Railroad Bridge No. 1 and the City of Lynchburg to protect the city from federal forces. Immediately following the surrender of the Confederate forces of General Robert E. Lee at Appomattox, the remnant of the bridge was returned to its owners, the South Side Railroad. The bridge was then rebuilt with wooden trusses similar in design to the original trusses using timber provided from Waverly, Virginia.

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In the fall of 1865 the Petersburg-Lynchburg rail line, which had sustained serious damage, had been adequately repaired to reopen. Replacement of the bridge superstructure at the location of Six Mile Bridge was well under way in December 1865 when an unfortunate accident resulted in the collapse of two of the trusses. The trusses had apparently been set in place but not secured when a severe wind storm toppled them into the river. Mr. Garrison, the contractor from Petersburg, and a Mr. Barry were killed and 18 workmen were injured. Work, however, continued and full service to Lynchburg was restored by February, 1866. In the meantime rail traffic again had resorted to use of canal boats to connect from Mount Athos to Lynchburg.

Good structural timber to replace the trusses was scarce in 1866 and green timber of inferior quality, cut and sawn at the mill, had to be used for construction. Records between 1868-1869 show that the timber had deteriorated and rendered the bridges unsafe for the heavier trains and increased traffic. Concern for the safety of the traveling public prompted the Southside Railroad to suspend passenger service while steps were taken to replace the trusses. By early 1870 the wooden trusses on the two bridges at Percivals Island had been replaced with Fink style wrought iron suspended trusses and replacement trusses of the same style were planned for Six Mile Bridge.

In September 1870, however, a disastrous flood washed out the new wrought iron trusses on the two upper bridges near Percivals Island and the remaining wooden trusses on Six Mile Bridge. The chief cause of the collapse of the wooden trusses on Six Mile Bridge was due to buildings, canal boats, and other

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floating debris which lodged against the relatively low bridges, creating more lateral force than the superstructure could withstand. Orders were rushed to the Baltimore Bridge Company for new Fink trusses for all three bridges.

The Baltimore Bridge Company had been formed in 1866 as a steel fabricator and operated until 1880 or later. At this same time the Baltimore Bridge Company also furnished similar Fink trusses for the High Bridge near Farmville. An advertisement of the period shows several bridges for which they had supplied trusses of similar design with specific mention of the High Bridge, a bridge containing 21 spans of 112 feet each with the deck Fink truss over its length spanning the Appomattox River.

While waiting for the Fink trusses, the stone piers and abutments of Six Mile Bridge were nearly doubled in height to about 40 feet to avoid future flooding problems. These extensions are clearly discernible in the piers, with different color stone above the original cap stones. A similar flood in 1877 caused no damage to the higher Six Mile Bridge though the two, newer iron bridges at Lynchburg's Percival Island were again lost.

On November 12, 1870, the three separate railroads described previously were combined into the Atlantic, Mississippi and Ohio Railroad, connecting Norfolk, Virginia with Bristol, Tennessee. Former Confederate Major William Mahone was appointed as its president. Some time after this consolidation, the renovation of the bridge using the Fink trusses was completed. It seems likely that canal boats were again used to make the connection with Lynchburg while these three bridges were being rebuilt.

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Financial problems put the Atlantic, Mississippi and Ohio in receivership in 1876. On February 10, 1881, it was taken over by northern interests and renamed the Norfolk and Western Railroad. During the 1880's cotton shipments were the major revenue producer for the line. Beginning about 1890 the rapidly developing coal trade became the railroads major source of revenue. In the meantime the canal authorities failed financially and the canal facilities were taken over in 1880 by the newly formed Richmond and Allegheny Railroad which built a new rail line on the original canal towpath.

During the early development of rail systems the railroads throughout the country had been operating with various track gauges. The original rail lines between Norfolk and Bristol had been constructed with a five foot gauge. This design feature made the transfer of cars between lines difficult. In 1886 agreement was reached to change all track gauges to the 4 foot, 8 1/2 inch standard gauge. In June 1886 with crews in readiness, rail traffic was shut down and the rail gauge of all lines were changed to the standard gauge.

As trains became heavier and rail traffic increased, it became necessary to strengthen Six Mile Bridge again. The wrought iron superstructure installed in the early 1870's on Six Mile Bridge each consisted of two parallel Fink trusses tied together on 12-foot centers. Large 14"-deep wooden ties, spaced close together, had been placed between the trusses to carry the rails of the single track. It was decided in 1886 to add two additional Fink trusses between the two outer trusses on each span with all trusses tied together with cross bracing 2 1/2 foot centers to strengthen the bridge.

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The Norfolk Southern has turned over their complete file on Six Mile Bridge to the Mt. Athos Regional Museum and Information Center, Inc. These documents include a historical sketch plus elevations, plans, and detailed steel drawings dating from 1870 to the present. An 1870 profile shows the six original raised piers for the Fink trusses with the canal under the eastern span.

An 1886 drawing by Norfolk & Western engineer J.R. Schick shows a detail of the two reinforcing Fink trusses added for reinforcement. These elevations show the piers, the Fink truss spans, and the new Richmond & Allegheny Railroad track under the east span, replacing the canal tow path that the Richmond & Allegheny Railroad had taken over in 1880. The canal towpath had been used for the alignment of its rail line. This line had originally been placed close to original Pier No. 1 to gain the required clearance under the Fink trusses. The alignment resulted in a curve in the track with insufficient radius for the rated speed of newer trains and an excessive grade. To correct these deficiencies it was decided in 1886 to divide the easternmost span of Six Mile Bridge into two sections with a new pier in the center and to install a plate girder span from the new pier to the abutment and a shorter Fink truss with the additional lateral reinforcing for the new, shorter second span. The Richmond & Allegheny Railroad agreed to furnish the new pier and the plate girder span over its new track location under the new first span in order to straighten the track and eliminate the grade. The new Fink trusses were furnished by a different company since the Baltimore Bridge Company had ceased operation prior to 1886.

In 1890 the Richmond & Allegheny Railroad was taken over by the Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad and became its James River Division. The Richmond-Allegheny rail line under the east span had the best

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rail grade to the Tidewater area and this newly acquired line replaced their old main line for through-freight hauling and such hauling under Six Mile Bridge continues on the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad line to this day.

During the early 1890's the Norfolk & Western had also made ambitious expansions and mergers but its financial crisis of 1893, however, put the line in jeopardy and the N & W railroad was placed in receivership on February 6, 1895. On September 30, 1896, the company was reorganized as the Norfolk & Western Railway. Its successful growth continued until its 1981 merger with other lines to become the present-day Norfolk-Southern Corporation.

Trains continued to grow in size and weight and in 1899 the Norfolk & Western Railway Company determined that it was necessary to strengthen the bridge again. The Pennsylvania Steel Company was contracted for this bridge upgrade. The Pennsylvania Steel Company was formed in 1867 in Steelton, Pennsylvania, to produce steel and it began steel fabrication about 1891. The company went out of operation in 1901 soon after completing the Six Mile Bridge job. The company's drawings of the bridge give full details of the design and construction, including the wooden falswork needed to erect the spans. The design selected for the upgrade consisted of two, heavy framed, open style Pratt-type suspended trusses on 9-foot 3-inch centers, 14 feet deep and laterally braced. The two short spans on the east end of the bridge were designed as elevated, plate type girders as they remain today.

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By this time the railroad had started a numbering system for its bridges and Six Mile Bridge became Norfolk and Western's Bridge No. 58, a designation continued until the present. Sometime after 1900 the original No. 1 stone pier on the east bank was either encased in concrete or replaced with a reinforced concrete pier, probably the latter. By 1920 it was felt necessary to strengthen the bridge again. The American Bridge Company, of Ambridge, Pennsylvania, furnished a single center Pratt truss placed halfway between the two outer trusses and laterally braced. It also furnished a heavier plate girder-type truss for the short first span between the eastern abutment and the first eastern pier. The first span was also raised. This division of U.S. Steel was by far the largest steel fabricator in the country.

About this time the Norfolk Western Railway Company decided to by-pass Lynchburg and shorten the distance to Norfolk, Virginia. This realignment began west of Lynchburg at Forest, Virginia and skirted the southeast edge of the City of Lynchburg and rejoined the old rail line alignment at Concord. The realignment is practically level and eliminated the long winding downgrade from Forest into the congested downtown Lynchburg riverfront area and the subsequent long upgrade from Six Mile Bridge to Concord. This realignment eliminated the heavy freight off the line across Six Mile Bridge No. 58, but the bridge continued to carry all scheduled passenger traffic and local freight.

In 1934 it was found that the mortar in the four stone piers was failing below the waterline. To correct this deficiency the Company chose to encase the bases in concrete, reinforced with old railroad rails. Cofferdams were used to insure getting down to bedrock and pouring solid concrete in place. These piers being 40 feet tall and only five feet wide at the top were considered slender for the loads being carried.

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The concrete bases were extended approximately three feet above the waterline. The foundation improvements were also designed to allow the pier to be fully encased with concrete for their full height if deemed necessary later, but these pier improvements were never accomplished.

Except for some minor repairs, no further changes were made to Bridge No. 58 until 1956 when the Babcock & Wilcox Mount Athos Nuclear Fuel Plant located on the east side of the James River a mile downstream of Six Mile Bridge. To improve the road under the bridge leading to the new industrial facility, it was necessary to cut back the hillside on the east end, relocate the abutment and increase the first span from 46'-6" to 72 feet. Again the American Bridge Company furnished the longer, heavier plate girder span from its Roanoke, Virginia, plant. The Virginia Department of Transportation arranged for all the road improvements.

About 1972 most rail through traffic on the old main rail line between Concord and Forest via Six Mile Bridge and Lynchburg line had been abandoned, and the railroad considered abandonment of this section of rail line. One mile east of this bridge, on the east side of Mount Athos, is the large Rockydale Quarry which has been active for many years. The quarry continued to use the railroad line to haul stone for some years until it switched all of its hauling to trucks. This use of truck hauling for stone led to the final decision to abandon the bridge and most of the line between Lynchburg to Concord. After the 1985 flood, the rail line from Lynchburg downstream to Six Mile Bridge was abandoned, including the rail line on Percivals Island and the two bridges serving it.

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By a letter of October 5, 1992, the Norfolk Southern Corporation advised Robert R. Feagans, Sr., President of the Mount Athos Regional Museum and Information Center, Inc. and owner of the property on the west end of Six Mile Bridge that the bridge would be donated to the Museum. This action followed months of negotiation between the property owner and Norfolk-Southern Corporation on the disposition of the bridge and the abandoned rail line bed right of way.

Adjoining this historic railroad bridge are a number of other historic structures in addition to the Mount Athos Plantation previously referenced. Several canal locks, culverts, an aqueduct, and other works; the now deconsecrated Mount Athos Episcopal Church, now serving the headquarters of the Mount Athos Regional Museum and Information Center, Inc.; the pre-Revolutionary Oxford Iron Furnace and two later furnaces; the early-1900s Piedmont Manganese Mining Company; and the former Lynchburg and Concord Turnpike.

Six Mile Bridge has been a local landmark since 1854. Its history not only typifies the development of railroad bridges from early wooden structures to modern, heavy duty steel structures, but this structure was an important part of the only significant early transportation system connecting eastern and western Virginia with other markets west and south of Virginia to the Mississippi River.

Six Mile Bridge is undoubtedly the most familiar local bridge other than Natural Bridge, known to the area citizens. Except for its rails, which were removed when the line was abandoned in 1972, Six Mile Bridge stands today basically the same as when it was rebuilt in 1899, and the existing structure still rests

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on its original 1854 stone piers. It has withstood the many major floods since that time, including the flood of 1985. The 1985 flood far exceeded any previous recorded flood reaching nearly to the bottom of the trusses a distance of 25 feet or more above normal water level.

It is interesting to note that for many years the coal trains of the two largest coal-hauling railroads in this country, the Norfolk & Western and the Chesapeake & Ohio, crossed at this point on their way to the Tidewater area. It is also interesting that the Chesapeake & Ohio, now CSX, has a bridge three miles below Six Mile Bridge, crossing the James River and also on the Mount Athos Plantation lands. This bridge was built originally by the Richmond & Allegheny in 1880-81 and has been known as Nine Mile Bridge over the years for its distance below Lynchburg. It is now being rebuilt for the heavy traffic it continues to carry.

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Additional Items - Bibliography

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2. Richmond & Allegheny Railroad 1887 Annual Report  
American Association of Railroad Library, Washington, D.C.
3. Lynchburg Newspapers - 1854-1855, 1860 - 1865, 1870 - 1871
4. The Norfolk and Western; A History E.F. Pat Striplin; Copyright 1981  
The Norfolk and Western Railway Company, 8 North Jefferson Street, Roanoke, Virginia 24042
5. Detailed drawings donated by Norfolk - Southern Railway; Drawings donated to the Virginia  
Polytechnic Institute and State University Library.

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### VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Six Mile Bridge spans the James River at a location of approximately six miles of the City of Lynchburg. The western abutment lies in Amherst County, Virginia on property owned by Robert R. Feagans, Sr. and others. The eastern abutment lies in Campbell County, Virginia. The bridge spans the James River, the historic Kanawha Canal, State Route 726 and a single track rail line of the Chesapeake and Ohio railroad. The original span of 670 feet, now approximately 697 feet, is approximately ten (10) feet wide.

The approach to the west end of the bridge is on the former railbed right of way which is now the property of Riverview Farms, Inc., a sole proprietorship. Access to the east end of the bridge is facilitated by an easement approximately 80 feet wide (former railway right of way width) by 50 feet in length beyond the end of the bridge for connection to State Route 726.

The bridge begins on its east end at Norfolk-Western Railway 10273+56 on bearing N87 26' W to its retaining wall abutment on the west end at Norfolk-Western Railway Sta. 10280+56. See Plat #RB-910024 dated March 27, 1991, of bridge to be conveyed to the Mounth Athos Regional Museum and Information Center, Inc.

### BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundaries of Six Mile Bridge, Norfolk and Western Railway Company, Bridge #58 are clearly those associated with the structure only. The property should be defined between its abutments with

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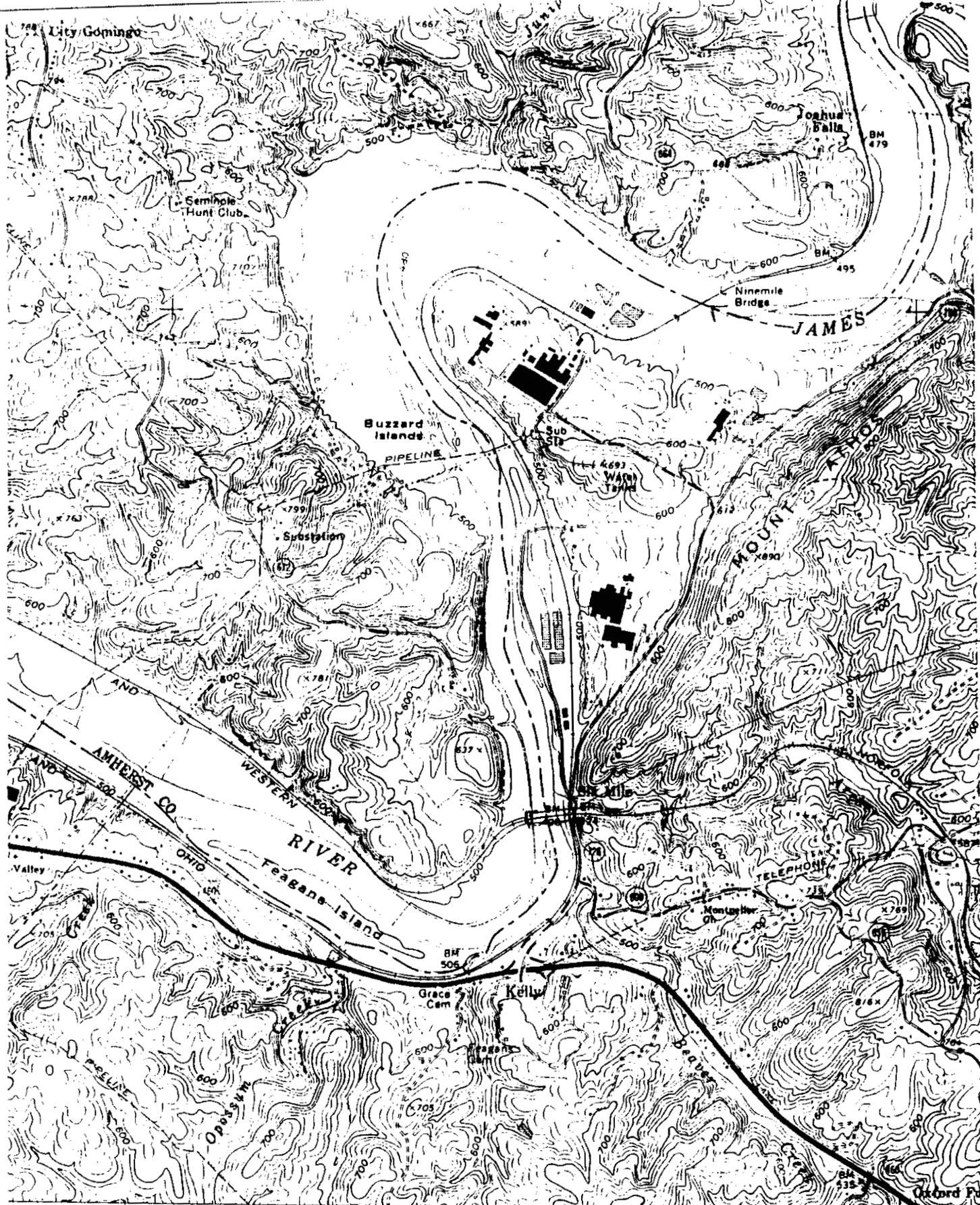
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abutment access. Plat of donation prepared by Norfolk and Western clearly defines the limits of Bridge #58 and justifies this boundary description.

REPORT IX X'



DELIVERED