



## Historic Property Report

**Historic Name:** Rutter Parkway Stone Structures

Property ID: 706402

### Location



**Address:** W Rutter Pkwy, Spokane, Washington, USA

**GeographicAreas:** Spokane, Spokane County, T26R42E03, DARTFORD Quadrangle

### Information

#### Construction Dates:

Construction Type	Year	Circa
Built Date	1936	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Number of stories:** N/A

#### Historic Use:

Category	Subcategory
Transportation	Transportation - Road-Related (vehicular)

**Historic Context:** Architecture

#### Architect/Engineer:

Category	Name or Company
Builder	Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC)

### Photos



SRS-19a.JPG



SRS-19g.JPG



SRS-19f.JPG



SRS-19e.JPG



SRS-19d.JPG



SRS-19c.JPG



## Historic Property Report

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SRS-19b.JPG



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### Inventory Details - 7/16/2016

**Common name:** Ritter Parkway Stone Structures  
**Date recorded:** 7/16/2016  
**Field Recorder:** Stephen Emerson  
**Field Site number:** SRS-19  
**SHPO Determination**

### Detail Information

#### Characteristics:

Category	Item
Foundation	Stone
Form Type	
Cladding	Stone - Rubble
Structural System	Masonry - Stone

### Surveyor Opinion

**Property appears to meet criteria for the National Register of Historic Places:** Yes  
**Property is located in a potential historic district (National and/or local):** No  
**Property potentially contributes to a historic district (National and/or local):** No

## Historic Property Report

**Significance narrative:** Soon after Washington Water Power completed its efforts on the Nine Mile Hydroelectric Power Plant in 1930, construction of another type began to the east of the dam, along a former one-lane dirt road. This narrow passage had been three “stub” roads known as the Sturnan, the Keenan, and the Dorset roads. It appears that they may not have provided a throughway from one main road to another. Instead, these stub roads were so narrow that turnouts were available where one car was required to back in so that another car could pass. Late in the 1930s, a project was begun to widen this road, straighten some of its curves, and ensure that it linked the road north to Colville from Spokane, the properties around the Spokane Country Club, and the road alongside the power plant, present-day SR 291. This project was undertaken as a Works Progress Administration (WPA) effort. The WPA was a part of President Roosevelt’s New Deal. The intent of the executive order, signed in 1935, was to put those in need of economic relief to work on public projects. Local agencies or communities applied for a project’s approval, and after receiving approval, work could begin using materials supplied by the applying organization. Salaries were provided by the WPA. Much of the labor on WPA projects was conducted by the Civilian Conservation Corps, a quasi-military organization that employed mostly jobless young men. Spokane County and the Five Mile Township joined with the WPA for this road project, which was approximately five and three-quarters miles long. County equipment could be used for some aspects of the work. However, private individuals also supplied some vehicular equipment and materials for the project as the township had no funds. Due to this lack of capital, some materials had to be improvised. Local quarry owners donated rock for retaining walls where slopes were steep, and large granite pieces to be placed upright as posts along outer curves to mark the road edges. R.L. Rutter, who had a country home near the road, donated trees, shrubs, and vines to be planted beside the road and on the slopes. He was a Spokane businessman active in several investment and commercial ventures, including banking and life insurance. Rutter’s civic involvement in the road project extended beyond the contribution of trees and vines. He spent a great deal of time supervising the road crews and actively monitoring the work. In recognition of his unfailing efforts, the county commissioners named the road Rutter Parkway in 1937. The Parkway designation meant that speed limits could be imposed on the road, and it was in keeping with similar titles on roads following along the Spokane River. Subsequently, Rutter Parkway was declared a state secondary highway making gasoline tax monies eligible to be used for oiling the road. It has since been paved. Rutter Parkway is eligible for placement on the National Register of Historic Places, under Criterion C, as an excellent example of stonework conducted to enhance roadbuilding, and under Criterion A, for its association with Depression Era projects conducted by federal agencies like the WPA and the CCC.

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**Physical description:**

The Rutter Parkway is an automobile route between Waikiki Road, to the east, and Nine Mile Road, to the west. It meanders along the Little Spokane River, crossing it on a bridge at about the mid-point. There are two types of stones structures along the route, all consisting of granite. One type consists of unusual narrow and long broken pieces placed in the ground on the margins of the road to serve as guard barriers, but without rails. They are placed along steep banks and at curves. The appearance of half-circular drill holes at the edges of these rocks indicated that they were created by hand using the feather and wedge method. This calls for drilling a number of holes along a straight line and inserting two metal feathers into each drilled hole. These have flared ear-like flanges that are at the top when the feathers are placed into the hole. Then a tapered wedge is inserted between the two feathers. The stonemason repeatedly pounds the wedge in each hole with a mason's hammer. In a remarkably short time, the stone fractures along the line of the drilled holes, and the piece falls away, displaying random faces. Another method is the placement of granite retaining walls, battered against slopes at the road shoulders, a more traditional use of the rock. These walls are mostly dry stacked.

**Bibliography:**

Emerson, Stephen. A Historic Property Inventory of Rock Structures in Spokane County, Washington. Archisto Enterprises, 2016.