

HISTORIC RESOURCES

Residents agree to landmark status for bridge

Covered Bridges

Paradise Park
bridge one of few
left in the country

By JASON HOPPIN

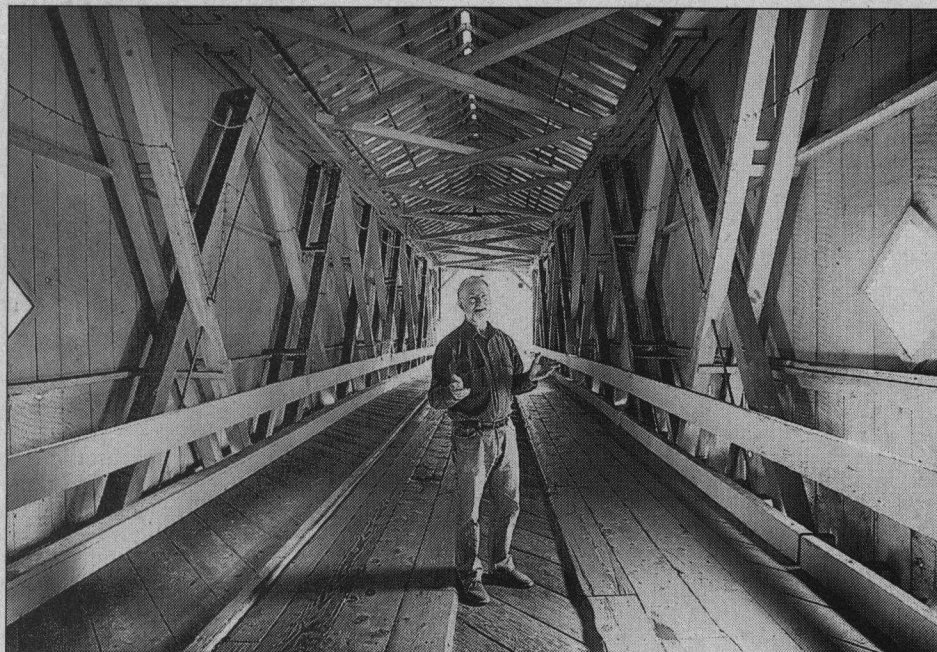
jhoppin@santacruzsentinel.com

✓ PARADISE PARK — The Paradise Park Masonic Board voted without dissent this weekend to support turning the county's oldest working bridge into a National Historic Landmark.

The 4-0 vote clears the way for the National Park Service to formally consider Paradise Park's Powder Works Bridge for listing among the nation's formally recognized landmarks. In Santa Cruz County, only the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk's Looft Carousel and Giant Dipper rollercoaster are on the list.

"Everybody seemed very pleased by the prospect of it becoming a national landmark," said Barry Brown, a Paradise Park historian who supports the designation.

Saturday's vote followed a



DAN COYRO/SENTINEL FILE

Local historian and Paradise Park resident Barry Brown stands inside the California Powder Works Bridge in Paradise Park last month.

Friday meeting attended by about 60 park residents. It was attended by the Elaine Jackson-Retondo, a National Historic Landmark program

manager for the National Park Service.

Brown said residents wanted assurances that the federal government would

not assume control of the bridge, which it would not. But the designation would make the bridge eligible for restoration funding, some-

2-18-14
thing the 400 residents of Paradise Park would have trouble coming up with.

Built in 1872 by the Pacific Bridge Co., the 180-foot crossing is one of 23 remaining examples of a wooden Smith truss, including the only one on the West Coast and the only one still in regular operation — Paradise Park residents on the east bank of the San Lorenzo River depend on it.

"Powder Works Bridge ... retains an uncommonly high level of integrity in location, setting, design, material, workmanship, feeling and association," a National Parks Service assessment asserts.

The bridge originally was built to service the Powder Works, the Paradise Park precursor established by 19th century businessmen looking for a West Coast supply of gunpowder during the Civil War era.

Follow Sentinel reporter Jason Hoppin at [Twitter.com/scnewsdude](https://twitter.com/scnewsdude)