Old River Bridge is an excellent example of a pin-connected Pratt through truss, a common nineteenth-century bridge type. The bridge consists of two 130-foot Pratt trusses with six panels each and a single lane for traffic. The bridge was constructed by the Youngstown Bridge Company of Youngstown, Ohio, a significant bridge-building company between 1878 and 1900, for the amount of $7000. The bridge crosses the Saline River on the Old Military Road which followed the route of the Southwest Trail between Cape Girardeau, Missouri and the United States/Mexico border on the Red River in the Arkansas Territory.

The Pratt truss was popular well into the twentieth century for spans of about 80 to 120 feet. It is one of only a few surviving metal truss bridges from the period of bridge building prior to the development of the Arkansas State Highway Commission, when counties built and maintained hundreds of metal truss bridges that have all but disappeared in recent decades.

The Historic Bridge Laser Scan Recording Project was a special project initiated by the Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department (AHTD) to test the viability of developing measured drawings acceptable for Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) Level I mitigation from laser scans of abandoned historic bridges. The project was cosponsored in the spring of 2008 by the Arkansas Transportation Research Council and AHTD, Dan Flowers, Director of Highways and Robert W. Scoggin, Historic Resources Coordinator, Environmental Division.