

The Dispatcher

The El Dorado Western Railroad Newsletter
July 2021



El Dorado Western's Tie Replacement Project

During May of last year, the El Dorado Western Railway Foundation participated with the County Historical Museum to fund the certification track work by H & H Engineering to meet FRA (Federal Railroad Administration) standards for the track east of El Dorado to Diamond Springs. This insures the track's integrity and is compliant to FRA for the handling of full size trains carrying the public. This is our commitment to El Dorado County.

FRA certifies track by class 1 to 5, class 1 track allows 10 mph for frightening trains(checking to see if you're reading) and 15 mph for passenger trains. The EDWR speed limit is 10 mph, so class 1 is appropriate. However, our track is in such good condition as to rail size, alignment, and tie condition (I know you are amazed, but its true), that we are close to certifying class 2 track, allowing 25 mph freight, 30 mph passenger trains! Remember that EDWR is 10 mph maximum by operating rule - we're an excursion railroad - 10 mph is a good speed to avoid derailments!

Here are the basic track structure requirements we need for class 1 certification:

Every measured 39 ft section of class 1 track must have a minimum of 5 qualifying ties for tangents, 6 ties for curves and turnouts. These ties must be spread across the 39 feet. Class 2 track must have 8 qualifying ties for tangents, 9 ties for curves and turnouts. A qualifying tie must be able to hold gauge, maintain the surface plane across the rails, maintain the desired alignment following the roadbed.

A QUALIFYING TIE is one that is not broken through under the tie plates where the tie end kicks upward outside of the tie plate, not split along its length, must have ability to hold the spikes -is not spike "killed" where the spike holes are elongated, and that the tie plate is not worn down past 40% of the tie thickness from carrying the moving weight of the train vibrating the tie plate over years of service.

So, you declare a 39 foot section, count how many qualifying ties are present given they must be spread across the section. DO NOT worry that some ties will not qualify, its all about having enough good ties to hold the rail alignment and not allow rail spread leading to derailment. Most ties existing on the EDWR are qualifying, but some spots may require several new ties.

TRACK JOINTS are special trouble spots. Class 1 or class 2 track requires one qualifying tie be present within two ft EITHER SIDE of the joint. Just one qualifying tie on one side will certify. However, having one qualifying tie on EACH SIDE of the joint is far better, it is easier on the joint bars and bolts, and decreases opportunity for derailment at the joint itself. We all agree on having good joint support, it reduces wheel wear and rail end wear, avoids a "dropped joint" banging on the wheels. Remember, this is 2 qualifying ties , one on each side of the joint, NOT two new ties at every jointer. Under the direction of our professional track supervisor. Peter and H & H Engineering determined which ties to replace to achieve certification. In over 2miles of track, 266 ties were replaced. Yes, there are ties that are not qualifying still present in the track, but far more ties that are...it's all about SPACING!

FRA could very well classify the track as class 2 compliant. Fine, safer the better, but our operating maximum speed of 10 mph, that is what keeps the crew and the passengers safe!

TRACK CERTIFICATION - a major milestone for the El Dorado Western Railroad.



On July 9th, a training and shake down operation gave volunteers a chance for some hands-on operation on the EDWR certified track.

Track Mobile 2, Boarding Ramp 0 !

By Keith Berry

A railroad is measured in mile marks on the inside of the mainline south rail, and a rail excursion program is measured in mile marker events. Each mark is symbolic of program development with a new point of service. The EDWR started with a single rail inspection car, and has evolved the use of inspection cars into a single train for passenger service.

During the past year, a focused effort has been made to initiate full size passenger excursions. A prerequisite is the removal of fire fuel along the track, crews have been dispatched including the inspection car train and the Track Mobile with a trailing railcar mounted commercial chipper. The EDWR resumed A car passenger service on Sunday's, while also running Maintenance of Way (MOW) crews during the week. Boarding platforms were relocated closer to the track.

This past spring, the MOW crew departed El Dorado Station eastbound to cut foliage, The intrepid Track Mobile Operator saw open track, but not the boarding platform, moved forward and caught the corner of the platform, creating a shorter "kit" of pieces. EDWR's Train Master took time to repair the platform. Fast forward one week, the Track Mobile operator, still confident, forgot the ramp was close to the track, and proceeded to plow through the ramp, creating a "basic kit" of random scrap lumber!

- Track Mobile 2, boarding ramps 0 !

The quick thinking MOW crew concluded we had arrived at a milestone moment. Steel ramps, easily rolled back, would be the priority with full size equipment being scheduled. The wooden boarding ramps will be retired after 10 years of service. As for the Track Mobile operator, (initials KB), well, a large placard will be placed on the dash of the Track Mobile, to be viewed and obeyed:

Relocate boarding ramps prior to departure!

Love, TRAIN MASTER!



TRACK UPDATE

By Peter Schulze, EDWR Roadmaster



The spur in El Dorado is being extended along the historic siding. The next step will be the installation of a fenced and secure yard with lighting.



Due to some unfortunate incidents of vandalism, volunteers met to discuss what to do to protect EDWR assets. While the major fencing project is underway, including extending the spur, Russ and others got the windows covered to protect against breakage.

Fast Trains and Great Cabooses!

They called it the Santa Fe, short for the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe. The Santa Fe is best known for its southwest desert transcontinental route, featuring Native American styling, and the innovative Harvey House restaurant. Railroaders called the Santa Fe a "Cowboy Road", a bit rowdy and unrestrained. But the Santa Fe was respected- "They sure could run fast trains, and their cabooses were great, clean and shiny, bright red with yellow lettering and herald.

The El Dorado Western Railroad operates on track last owned by the Southern Pacific Railway, having its own reputation and famous "Daylight" paint scheme for its fast passenger locomotives running on the west coast. The SP cabooses were workman-like in appearance, a reddish Mineral Brown with white lettering below the cupola. During the 1950's, the cabooses were repainted to include the daylight orange end walls, and a very large "Billboard" style name lettered along each sidewall.

The EDWR is very pleased to own 2 SP cupola cabooses, the #1094 and the #1188. Both were built in the 1940's war years, within 50 car orders of each other! Both cabooses were repainted to the "Daylight" scheme, and worked the SP until retired in the 1970's. The 1094 became an artists studio in Pleasant Valley, the 1188 went to Santa Rosa, then moved to the freight station at Shingle Springs.

The EDWR does not schedule fast trains, rather, slower foothill running into the gold rush country. Our schedule is the speed of the branch line through foothill towns, over streams, and through a hard rock tunnel. However, we can take a lesson from the great historical railroads- operate great looking cabooses!

A great caboose must be operational to its purpose. That is, it has the caboose interior working layout, tools and equipment, and furniture. The 1094 caboose features the conductor's desk and proper caboose chair, A working ice box- just add 300 lbs of ice, a SP caboose coal stove, and a railroaders toilet! The toilet is simple, a D and D (dump it and drop it),



(Top) SP 1094 still had its Allied trucks and original paint at Bayshore in 1947. Although Southern Pacific found the ride quality of Allied trucks fully satisfactory, they were a source of maintenance problems, as was true on other railroads which used them. All the Allied trucks on SP cabooses would be replaced with Vulcan or Barber-Bettendorf trucks between May, 1949 and July, 1950. (E.R. Mohr photo, Paul Koehler collection)

the track speed and heat takes care of everything, a vent in the wall is your friend! Storage box bunks and Brakeman's seat boxes complete the furniture, a variety of tools and signals support train movement. The 1094 will feature oil lamps, caboose marker lamps, lanterns, warning flares, and journal box lubricant, all safely displayed. Seats above in the cupola and below on the storage bunks will have proper cushions. The 1188 caboose will be outfitted to offer additional passenger seating, but retain the working end layout and equipment.

A great caboose should display its heritage paint scheme lettering. The 1094 caboose will feature the last "Billboard" style paint scheme and lettering and the large sidewall lettering - Southern Pacific. The 1188 will feature the original Mineral Red body with small white lettering below the cupola. Both cabooses featured both paint schemes while in service, we wish to display both styles in respect to the cabooses coming up the branch line in El Dorado County.

The El Dorado Western respects the heritage of our SP Cabooses. If you're going railroading, then operate trains, run on schedule, and feature authentic cabooses. The EDWR loves a great Caboose!

The SP Caboose #1094 was donated to the EDWRF after spending time as an artist studio. The donor has been following the restoration progress, and Keith Berry just provided her with an update:

This photo of the caboose as part of the excursion train being moved to allow extending the siding... nice to see the 1094 rolling along on the mainline. Work is active: note rock guards on all windows which fold back for open view, entry doors finished, new vintage correct skeleton key locks, woodworker team building final new window casings and frames with improved design - window will go up inside wall as original. Large old greystone coffee pot purchased. Air brake work and exterior authentic color paint will be last phase prior to any public ridership. KB



General Manager's Report by Mary Cory, County Museum Administrator

The El Dorado Western Railroad volunteers are planning a number of projects and events in the next few months. Currently, the high priorities are securing a fenced yard for storing the rolling stock along with extending the spur; Sunday operations; full-size train crew training; restoration projects; and maintenance of way. We also plan to participate in community events, such as the County Fair and the Christmas Parade. And stay tuned to find out about our new Holiday plans!

What makes this all possible are volunteers. If you'd like to volunteer, please let us know - its a great team to join!



Bill Fisher: blacksmith, metal fabricator, locksmith, track worker... All around EDWR volunteer!

For the latest EDWR Schedule, check the County Museum website at <http://museum.edcgv.us/el-dorado-western-railroad/>

Spotlight on RAILROAD VOLUNTEERS

The Dispatcher is published quarterly by the El Dorado County Historical Museum. Articles contributed by Keith Berry, the editor is Mary Cory. Comments can be directed to mary.cory@edcgv.us



Rich Corbell has been volunteering with the EDWR for several years, and is always willing to help with whatever needs to be done – here he is getting his back into it working with a team replacing rotten ties – thanks Rich!



Currently railroad operations are following Public Health guidelines. Face coverings are required inside for non-vaccinated visitors and volunteers
Schedule: 1st and 3rd Sundays boarding in El Dorado, at 10AM, 11AM, 12PM, 1PM. Tickets are sold on a first come, first served basis. Tickets go on sale at 9:30am. For more information, call (530) 663-3581

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