NPS Form 10-900
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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received MAY 27 1987
date entered AUG 3 1987

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Sumpter Valley Railway Historic District

and/or common Same

2. Location

street & number Historic right-of-way of the Sumpter Valley Railway and its major spurs through the Blue Mountains between Baker and Prairie City in Baker and Grant Counties, Oregon (Nominated area does not start or end at Baker and Prairie City) N/A not for publication

city, town Sumpter N/A vicinity of Second Congressional District

state Oregon code 41 county Baker 001, Grant code 023

Number of contributing features: 18 (main line roadbed; 4 spur roadbeds, 6 station sites, 2 mill sites, 4 items of historic rolling stock, 1 water tower
Number of noncontributing features: 2

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
X district	___ public	___ occupied	X agriculture	___ museum
___ building(s)	___ private	X unoccupied	___ commercial	X park
___ structure	X both	___ work in progress	___ educational	___ private residence
___ site	**Public Acquisition**	**Accessible**	___ entertainment	___ religious
___ object	N/A in process	X yes: restricted	___ government	___ scientific
	N/A being considered	___ yes: unrestricted	___ industrial	___ transportation
		___ no	___ military	X other: recreation

4. Owner of Property

name see continuation sheets, item 4

street & number N/A

city, town N/ ___ vicinity of state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Baker County Courthouse; Grant County Courthouse

street & number Courthouse; Courthouse

city, town Baker, OR 97814; Canyon City, OR 97820 state

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Statewide Inventory of Historic Properties has this property been determined eligible? ___ yes X no

date 1982 ___ federal X state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records State Historic Preservation Office, 525 Trade Street, S.E.

city, town Salem state OR 97310

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
___ excellent	___ deteriorated	___ unaltered	_X_ original site
_X_ good	___ ruins	_X_ altered	___ moved date N/A
___ fair	___ unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The linear historic district includes portions of the Sumpter Valley Railway main line roadbed from the vicinity of McEwen, Oregon, to a point near Austin, Oregon, and a portion of the line in the area of Dixie Pass. Of the original 80.1 miles of main line, 39.6 miles are proposed for inclusion in the linear district. The general condition of the proposed segments of the main line roadbed is good, with segments in which the original ties are still in place alternating with segments in which the surface of the roadbed has been altered but the earthwork remains unchanged. For 6.7 miles of the railway between McEwen and Sumpter, the roadbed has been restored to its original condition and new rails laid for the Sumpter Valley RailroadRestoration, Inc., which operates an excursion train during summer months. In addition to the main line, the proposed district also includes portions of four of the original seven permanent spur systems. These portions of the railway were used for logging and constitute an integral part of the railway. Condition of the permanent spurs is equivalent to the condition of the main line. In addition to the main line and spur lines, six railway station sites, and two sawmill sites are included in the nomination. The station sites at McEwen, Larch, Whitney, Tipton, White Pine, and Dixie were developed by the railway to serve shippers and residents along the main line. Saw mills at White Pine and Whitney cut logs into lumber carried by the railway to the Union Pacific at Baker for shipments throughout the United States. The communities of McEwen, Sumpter, Whitney, and Austin--all of which lie adjacent to the proposed district--grew up to serve the lumber, mining, and stock-raising industries that the railway made possible in the Blue Mountains region. The total acreage in the district is 1,223.77 acres, of which 1,201.65 are in the linear confines, and 22.12 acres in the associated sites. Width of the district follows the original Sumpter Valley Railway right-of-way, i.e. 100' in patented land and 200' on Federal forest lands.

Contributing resources within the proposed district include the main line roadbed; the roadbeds of the Dean Creek spur, the Trout Creek spur, the Whitney Mill spur, and the White Pine Mill spur; the station sites at Larch, Whitney, White Pine, Tipton, and Dixie; the mill site at Whitney, and the mill site at White Pine. Since the proposed district is comprised of the roadbed and the features mentioned above, there are no non-contributing features except two non-historic buildings erected at the Dredge Depot Park site by the Sumpter Valley Railroad Restoration, Inc.: the Dredge Depot, or excursion passenger station, and an equipment building.

Continued

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below				
___ prehistoric	___ archeology-prehistoric	___ community planning	___ landscape architecture	___ religion	
___ 1400–1499	___ archeology-historic	___ conservation	___ law	___ science	
___ 1500–1599	___ agriculture	___ economics	___ literature	___ sculpture	
___ 1600–1699	___ architecture	___ education	___ military	___ social/ humanitarian	
___ 1700–1799	___ art	___ engineering	___ music	___ theater	
X 1800–1899	X commerce	___ exploration/settlement	___ philosophy	X transportation	
X 1900–	___ communications	X industry	___ politics/government	___ other (specify)	
		___ invention			

Specific dates 1890-1939 **Builder/Architect** Joseph A. West

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Sumpter Valley Railway was historically significant in the development of the Blue Mountains region, an area of over 7,500 square miles encompassing some of the most rugged and sparsely populated country in the Pacific Northwest. Built between 1890 and 1910, the railway ran 80.1 miles from Baker, Oregon, to Prairie City, Oregon, touching the communities of McEwen, Sumpter, Whitney, Austin, and Bates enroute. During most of its period of operation from 1890 to 1947, the railway provided the only means of mechanical transportation to these communities. Industries dependent upon the railway included logging and lumber, gold mining, and stock raising. On the national level, the railway is representative of the industrialization of the mountain west. Development of the forest, range, and mineral resources of the Blue Mountains followed the railway; as these resources dwindled, the railway and the communities it served diminished to the point that the railway corridor contains today less than 10% of the population it held in 1900. Historic personages associated with the railway include its founder, David Eccles (1849-1912) of Salt Lake City, who was one of the great capitalists of the American frontier. His son, Marriner Eccles, worked on the railway prior to his career in national politics as advisor to President F. D. Roosevelt and the chairman of the Federal Reserve. The civil engineer responsible for the railway's design and construction was Joseph A. West, a prominent railroad engineer in Salt Lake City. Currently, the Sumpter Valley Railway is one of the four or five best remembered narrow gauge railroads in the far west. Subject of a popular history that has remained in print since 1967, the railway is noted for its longevity, the beauty of its setting, and its association with the fabled gold mines of the Blue Mountains.

The Sumpter Valley Railway meets National Register criterion A in its association with the broad pattern of events in the regional history of the Pacific Northwest. It is of interest also in its association with David Eccles and Marriner Eccles, both of whom were prominent personages on the regional and national scenes. The period of significance has been cited as 1890 to 1939 to correspond with its construction, peak operation, and the last episode of major repair. The railway operated,however, until its final abandonment in 1961.

Also contributing to the significance of the district are four items of historic rolling stock associated with the Sumpter Valley Railway and the W. H. Eccles Lumber Company. These items are in use or temporarily stored as exhibit items on the McEwen-Sumpter segment restored by the Sumpter Valley Railroad Restoration, Inc. Locomotive No. 3 is believed the only historic wood-burning, narrow gauge locomotive still in operation in the American West.

Continued

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheets, item 4

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 1,223.77 acres

Quadrangle name Phillips Lake, Sumpter, Whitney, Greenhorn, Austin, Oregon Bates, Oregon **Quadrangle scale** 1:24000 1.62500

UTM References

A See continuation sheets, item 10 Zone Easting Northing

B Zone Easting Northing

C D

E F

G H

Verbal boundary description and justification The Sumpter Valley Railway Historic District is comprised of 39.6 miles of historic main line right-of-way corridor, 100 feet in width on patented land and 200 feet in width on Federal Forest lands; also portions of four permanent spur systems, six station sites, two saw mill sites, and four items of historic rolling stock, encompassing in all 1,223.77 acres. The district is described below

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	Oregon	code 41	county	Baker	code 001
state	Oregon	code 41	county	Grant	code 023

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Ward Tonsfeldt		
organization	Ward Tonsfeldt Consulting	date	8-15-85
street & number	1363 Harmon Blvd.	telephone	503-389-7965
city or town	Bend	state	Oregon 97701

Processing was delayed to evaluate the effect o an August 1986 forest fi

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

___ national ___ state X local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer **date** May 14, 1987

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

William B. Bushong **date** 8/3/87

for **Keeper of the National Register**

Attest: **date**

Chief of Registration

GPO 911-399

LANDOWNERS

Landowners in Nomination Section 1 - Sumpter Valley Railway: McEwen to Sumpter

Baker County Assessors Map Number	Tax Lot	Owner
T10s R38e	TL 3400	State of Oregon Dept. of Transportation
	TL 3802	State of Oregon Dept. of Transportation
	TL 2900	Warnock Ranches Rt. 1, Box 16a Baker, OR 97814
	TL 3200	Baker County Courthouse Baker, OR 97814
	TL 3100	Warnock Ranches
T10s R38e 18B	TL 480	State of Oregon Dept. of Transportation
T10s R37e	TL 1400	Baker County
	TL 1800	Hines Lumber Co. P. O. Box 557 Hines, OR 97738
T10s R37e 3	TL 2600	Baker County
	TL 2200	Hines Lumber Co.
T10s R37e 4	TL 900	Vernon Tittsworth Rt. 2, Box 1700 Sulphur, LA 70663
	TL 400	Hines Lumber Co.
	TL 402	Hines Lumber Co.
T9s R37e 33CC	TL 4700	Hines Lumber Co.
T9s R37e 32	TL 1300	Sumpter Valley Railroad Restoration, Inc. P. O. Box 654 Baker, OR 97814

	TL 1104	Howard Logston 3100 Grandview Drive Baker, OR 97814
	TL 1380	Sumpter Valley Railroad Restoration, Inc.

Landowners in Nomination Section 2 - Sumpter Valley Railway: S-wye to Austin

Baker County Assessors Map Number	Tax Lot	Owner
T10s R37e 4	TL 601	Richard Haynes 2950 Grandview Drive Baker, OR 97814
T10s R37e	TL 900	Wallowa-Whitman National Forest
	TL 900M1	Hines Lumber Co.
	TL 1000	Rosemary Mitchell 1725 C St. Baker, OR 97814
	TL 1004	Rosemary Mitchell
	TL 1005	Rosemary Mitchell
	TL 1006	Wayne Ro gers 800 Valley Ave. Baker, OR 97814
T10s R36e	TL 100	Wallowa-Whitman National Forest
	TL 100M1	Hines Lumber Co.
	TL 1600	John Rouse et al Star Route West Box 169 Hereford, OR 97837
	TL 1700	Baker County
	TL 1800	Hines Lumber Company
	TL 1900	Bernard Hutcheon General Delivery Hereford, OR 97837

T10s R35 1/2e	TL 100	Wallowa-Whitman National Forest

Landowners in Nomination Section 3 - Sumpter Valley Railway-Dixie Pass

Grant County Assessors Map Number	Tax Lot	Owner
T21s R34e	TL 100	Malheur National Forest
	TL 600	Nicholas Vidondo 42 S. Broadway Burns, OR 97720
	TL 1000	Floyd Lape PO Box 635 Prairie City, OR 97869

Landowners in Nomination Section 4 - Dean Creek Spur

Baker County Assessors Map Number	Tax Lot	Owner
T10s R38e	TL 3800	US Bureau of Reclamation
	TL 106	Wallowa-Whitman National Forest
	TL 4700	R. D. Rasmussen 613 MacArthur San Mateo, CA 94402
T11s R38e	TL 100	Wallowa-Whitman National Forest
	TL 200	R. D. Rasmussen
	TL 300	R. D. Rasmussen
T11s R37e	TL 100	Wallowa-Whitman National Forest
T10s R37e	TL 900	Wallowa-Whitman National Forest

Landowners in Nomination Section 5 - Trout Creek Spur

Baker County Assessors Map Number	Tax Lot	Owner
T10s R37e	TL 900	Wallowa-Whitman National Forest

Landowners in Nomination Section 6 - Whitney Mill Spur

Baker County Assessors Map Number	Tax Lot	Owner
T10s R36e	TL 1600	John Rouse et al

Landowners in Nomination Section 7 - White Pine Mill Spur

Grant County Assessors Map Number	Tax Lot	Owner
T11s R35e	TL 100	Malheur National Forest

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GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE SUMPTER VALLEY RAILWAY MAIN LINE

The Sumpter Valley Railway was built from Baker, Oregon to Prairie City, Oregon between 1890 and 1910. It originally served the mills, mines, ranches, and communities of the Blue Mountain region. Portions of the line operated until 1961. As the map in figure 1 shows, the railway follows the route of the Powder River from Baker through the Bowen Valley, up the Powder River gorge to the Sumpter valley, and on to the town of Sumpter. From Sumpter it enters the Blue Mountains, climbing to an altitude of 5,094 feet at Larch Summit and then descending to Whitney. There, it crosses the North Fork of Burnt River and climbs to a second pass of 5,097 feet at Tipton. From Tipton, it descends to Austin on the Middle Fork of the John Day River. Crossing the Middle Fork of the John Day, it follows Bridge Creek up to a 5,238 foot pass at Dixie, from which it descends to the John Day Valley at Prairie City. Near its terminus at Prairie City, it crosses the John day River, the fourth major stream on the route.

The Sumpter Valley Railway was a narrow gauge line, with its rails set 36" apart rather than the conventional 56.5". Its greatest length was 80.1 miles of track between Baker and Prairie City. After a partial abandonment in 1933, it ran 57 miles from Baker to Bates, a mill site near Austin. A second abandonment in 1947 reduced the line to a 1.5 mile section within Baker connecting the lumber mills in South Baker with the Union Pacific railroad in the center of town. This final section was abandoned in 1961.

ENGINEERING FEATURES

Joseph A. West, the engineer responsible for the railway's design and construction, was influenced by three factors: a) the mountainous terrain the railway was to cross, b) the narrow gauge, which permitted tighter curves than standard gauge, and c) the special requirements of the lumber companies who were to be the railway's largest shippers.

A. Roadbed

The roadbed is the most enduring part of a railroad. Because roadbeds for main line use must maintain even grades no greater than 5%, designing the roadbed in mountainous areas is a significant engineering challenge. Like other mountain railroads, the Sumpter Valley maintained its grade through a continuous series of cuts and fills, the cuts removing material from the high places and the fills depositing it in the low places. Taken together, cuts and fills are often called "earthwork." Curves on the roadbed need to have as long a radius as possible to minimize the resistance to the trains passing over them. Since curves are essential to maintain an even grade, however, railroad builders had to trade off between curves and gradients to reach an optimum.

Railroad engineers generally concede that narrow gauge offered an advantage in difficult terrain since curves on a narrow gauge road could have shorter radii than curves on a broad gauge road (Brown, 1934). On extreme grades--such as the descent from Tipton to Austin--the engineers resorted to horseshoe curves which turned the roadbed 180 degrees to reduce the steepness. Another spectacular expedient is the switchback found on Dixie Pass. Here the trains climbed to a point where they stopped, opened a switch behind them, and backed onto a siding at a higher altitude. They then switched back onto the main line at a still higher altitude and proceeded over the pass.

B. Trestles, Bridges, and Fills

Canyons and watercourses along the Sumpter Valley railway were crossed by picturesque wooden trestles in some cases, but more commonly by earthwork fills and culverts. Culverts in the original construction were wooden and were built in the shape of a long rectangular box. In later construction conventional steel culverts were used, and on many fills wooden culverts were replaced with steel ones. Bridges over watercourses followed a variety of designs including simple wooden girder spans, steel truss spans, and one photogenic 111' Howe truss across the Powder River at Boulder Gorge.

C. Spurs

Along the Sumpter Valley main line, various lumber companies built logging spurs to accommodate their log trains. These spurs varied in length from short spurs a mile or two long to the Oregon Lumber Company spur which ran twenty miles down the Middle Fork of the John Day River. Although the spurs were designed, built, and maintained by the lumber companies that operated them, they conformed to Sumpter Valley Railway standards of gauge and track. Major spurs were built by the Oregon Lumber Company, the Nibley Hilgard Lumber Company, the Stoddard Lumber Company, the Baker White Pine Lumber Company, and the W. H. Eccles Lumber Company.

D. Sidings

Sidings, which are sections of track laid parallel to the main line, were located at strategic places so that trains could pass one another or so that cars could be loaded or unloaded. Major sidings included Salisbury, Bennett's, Lockhart, Thompson's, Boulder Gorge, Hershal, Dean Siding, McCoy, and Carroll Siding.

E. Stations

Stations were located at settlements, mill sites, passes, and points where construction was temporarily suspended. Stations included sidings and platforms, depots or station houses, and wyes or loops. A wye is a triangular configuration of track shaped like the letter "Y" but closed at the top. Wyes allow locomotives to turn around by advancing over the first portion, backing over the second portion, and then advancing over the third portion past their starting point. Simpler means of achieving the same result were loops, which--as the name suggests--were simply circles of track allowing the locomotive to complete a 360 degree turn. Important stations on the line were Baker, McEwen, Sumpter, Larch, Whitney, Tipton, White Pine, Austin, Dixie, and Prairie City.

F. Other Engineering Features

Where the railway crossed fence lines, the builders provided wooden cattle guards. These were bridge-like structures built over excavations in the roadbed. Wooden water tanks were another feature. These made water available to locomotives at several points along the line.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF SPUR LINES ASSOCIATED WITH THE SUMPTER VALLEY RAILROAD

An extensive system of logging spurs was an integral part of the Sumpter Valley Railway. Although the spurs were built and maintained by the timber companies that operated them, they conformed to main line standards of gauge and rail. The traffic that they provided sustained the railway from its origin in 1890 through its final years.

Field investigations by the Wallowa-Whitman and Malheur National Forests have located over 100 spurs. Historical investigations from documentary sources suggest an additional 50 spur lines. For the purposes of our survey, we have considered the spurs to be of two types. Permanent, major spurs are those which operated for longer than five years and displayed some of the engineering characteristics of main line construction. Temporary spurs are shorter lines built to remove timber from a specific tract and then to be dismantled. The following matrix clarifies some of the characteristics of each type:

Main Line	Permanent Spurs	Temporary Spurs
connect station points	connect to minor spurs	end at logging site
80.1 miles	2 miles or more	less than 2 miles
raised roadbed 6'-8' at crown, 15'-35' at base	raised roadbed 6'-8' at crown, 10'-15' at base	roadbed not raised ties laid on depressed or slight roadbed
cuts and fills greater than 6'	cuts and fills greater than 6'	cuts and fills less than 6'
grade less than 5%	grade less than 5%	grade greater than 5%
rock roadbed	rock roadbed	soil roadbed often incorporating logs in the fills
ties ballasted	ties ballasted	no ballast
ties sawn and treated	ties sawn	roundwood ties
wyes, sidings, water tanks	wyes and water tanks	no wyes or tanks
trestles use vertical bents, members in compression	trestles use vertical bents, or horizontal members in deflection	trestles use horizontal members only

Generally, the permanent spurs were built to last long enough to recoup their cost, while the temporary spurs were not built to last beyond the time it took to remove the timber they reached. This logic is apparent in most of the engineering aspects.

For example, on main line Sumpter Valley Railway construction, the preferred method of crossing a watercourse was to fill the watercourse to the grade level with rocks and to provide a culvert for the stream to go through. This method required expensive earthwork, but it was permanent and the resulting structure required little maintenance beyond cleaning the culvert each year. Most of these fills are still in place on the main line with only a few (20%) damaged by washouts. The second choice on the mainline was to build a trestle, which is a timber bridge across the watercourse. Trestles were less expensive

initially, but they required continual maintenance, since the timber they are made from is vulnerable to rot and insect damage, fire, and stress. On the portions proposed for nomination, the main line had only three trestles, but many fills and culverts. Significantly, all the main line trestles are now gone.

On the spurs, trestling was the common solution to watercourse crossings. Major spur trestles, like main line trestles, were built from a series of vertical frames called bents. Each bent is shaped like a letter "A", with legs on the ground and the top designed to accommodate the track. This kind of construction lets the builders place the bents on concrete pads so they do not contact the soil and to keep the timbers vertical, so they do not soak up as much rainwater. Both of these design features prolong the life of the timbers. The major timbers in this kind of trestle are compressed by the weight of the trains. Since compression loads are the easiest for timbers to bear, they are likely to retain their strength as they age.

Vertical trestling of this type, however, is expensive to build. It must be designed carefully, and it requires good timbers, metal hardware, concrete foundations, and other costly items. A less expensive alternative is to build the trestle from logs laid across one another in a horizontal pattern. Brown (1934) calls this "crib" trestling. For this kind of trestle, engineering expertise is unnecessary, the material is close at hand, and the construction time is minimal. The resulting trestle, however, is short lived. Since it contacts the soil, it rots, and since the logs must bear the weight of the trains by deflection rather than compression, it does not retain its strength.

On the main line, then, we find fills and culverts and some vertical trestling. On the major spurs we find vertical trestling and some horizontal trestling. On the minor spurs, we find almost exclusively horizontal trestling.

LANDSCAPE AND SETTING

The Sumpter Valley Railway crosses a section of eastern Oregon renowned for its scenery, remoteness, and historic associations.

The Blue Mountains are complex mountains formed by uparching of late Cenozoic faults. The resulting terrain is rugged, with the major drainages running from northwest to southeast. Each drainage provides a green alpine valley along the river, and the ridges separating the valleys provide scenic forests and spectacular mountain passes.

From Baker, on the floor of the Powder River valley at 3400', the Elkhorn Mountians rise to 8900' only 13 miles west of the city. The Powder River, which doubles back on itself to drain both the east and west slopes of the Elkhorns, runs in a southeasterly course from its headwaters near Sumpter to Salisbury junction. This twenty mile portion of the Powder River drainage forms Sumpter Valley at its upper end and the Powder River gorge at its lower end. The railway's course takes it through the Powder River gorge and up the Sumpter River valley to the town of Sumpter. This was the center of commerce for the extensive gold mining operations in the Elkhorn range. Although the valley is now defaced by tailings piles from the gold dredges, much of it remains a lush, grassy mountain valley of exceptional beauty.

From Sumpter at the head of the valley, the railway runs south to climb the 600' to Larch Summit. Ascending this ridge takes the railway into the ponderosa pine forest that attracted lumber producers to the area as early as the 1890's. Most of the pine forest is now second growth, with trees averaging 40' to 60' in height. Beneath the trees, a variety of grasses contribute to the scenic character of the forest.

Descending from Larch, the railway enters the drainage of the North Fork of Burnt River. This river--which runs roughly parallel to the upper reach of the Powder River--offers along its course a second valley parallel to the Sumpter Valley. The town of Whitney, at the center of the valley, was originally a mill town and center for logging activities in the area. It is now a classic ghost town with many of its original buildings still standing.

From this second valley, the railway climbs 800' to a second pass at Tipton, seven miles to the west. Here again, the scenery changes from the grassy valley floor to a forest. The forest type at Tipton is a mixed coniferous forest, with ponderosa pine, lodgepole pine, true firs, and larch all represented. To the north of Tipton, the peaks of the Blue Mountains rise to over 8000', providing a spectacular background to the pass.

Descending from Tipton on a southwesterly course, the railway passes into a third drainage--the Middle Fork of the John Day River--and enters a third mountain valley. Here the communities of Austin and Bates, both former mill sites, offered the railway its greatest freight and passenger traffic. The open grasslands around Austin also offered summer grazing to the sheep and cattle ranches that constituted the railway's third industrial base after lumber and mining.

From Austin, the railway climbs nearly 1000' to its final pass at Dixie. This route continues to the southwest up Bridge Creek gorge, which is a narrow (100-150') densely-timbered passage up a ridge of the Blue Mountains that rises to 7500'. Here again, the railway enters a forest, with stands of ponderosa giving way to mixed coniferous stands as the altitude increases.

From Dixie, the railway descends along Dads Creek from forest to range land characterized by grassy slopes and mixed stands of pine and juniper. Finally, it reaches the extensive grasslands of the John Day valley at Prairie City. Behind Prairie City, the Strawberry Range rises to 8000', continuing the alternation of valley and range to the west.

Although the landscape along the railway has all the characteristics associated with the natural beauty of western mountain scenery, it is also an industrial landscape. The forests have been logged and the old growth trees replaced by second growth, now in many stands approaching 100 years old. The meadows have been grazed and the native grasses cut for hay. Gold mining, which drew the first settlers to the Blue Mountains, has left the hills scarred and the valleys clogged with debris from the gold dredges. As the sole source of mechanical transportation for most of this area, the Sumpter Valley railway played a central role in its industrialization. Understanding the landscape requires an understanding of the relationship between the natural resources which constitute the landscape, the railway which provided access to those resources, and the pattern of human habitation which followed.

CONDITION OF THE MAIN LINE

At the time of its major abandonment in 1947, the Sumpter Valley Railway was suffering from several years of deferred maintenance (PUC, 1946). The cuts had not been cleaned, the sidings were in poor condition, and the fencing was in disrepair. Rails and many of the ties had been replaced in 1937-1939, but the accumulated effects of the long depression during the 1930's and the manpower shortages of WW II had taken their toll. Since the rails on the main line had been leased rather than purchased, they had to be removed to be returned to their owners, the Union Pacific Railroad. Ties, however, were too small to be used by standard gauge lines, so they were left in place. The process of abandonment, then, left the railway bereft of its rails and unmaintained.

Without regular maintenance, the railway began to deteriorate in a predictable fashion. Trestles and bridges built of timber weakened and washed out during the spring runoff. Culverts plugged and the fills

washed out around them. Ballast between the ties washed out. Cuts filled with rocks and dirt and fills eroded to a fraction of their original size. Grasses in the meadows grew over the roadbed, and in the forest trees grew on it.

Human forces contributed to the deterioration as well. Buildings were torn down or moved, ties were lugged off for fire wood, and water tanks were attractive targets for vandals. The roadbed in one place has become part of an irrigation ditch; in another, it is a garbage dump. Most often, the roadbed was recognized for was it was--i.e., a well built route between points--and was modified for motor vehicle use.

Considering the hazards it has been exposed to, the Sumpter Valley Railway is in remarkably good condition. For discussion purposes, we will establish here five categories to mark the major gradations in the railway's current condition.

Condition A

This condition offers the roadbed undisturbed and the ties in place. Fragile engineering structures like trestles or bridges may be missing, but the earthwork features are well preserved. Vegetation will have grown up on the roadbed, with grasses overgrowing it in meadows and trees up to 8" in diameter displacing the ties. Game trails or human trails may follow the roadbed, but it will not be used for motor vehicle traffic. "A" condition roadbed is indicated on USGS 7.5 series maps as "old railroad grade."

Condition B

In condition B, the surface of the roadbed has been altered to accommodate motor vehicles, but the major roadbed features are still intact. Cuts, grades, and fills are preserved in their original form. Bridges and culverts may have been replaced and the earthwork modified slightly, but the essential design of the railway is clearly visible. Ties are usually visible where they have been pushed to one side of the roadbed. Other artifacts, including spikes and fish-plate bolts are visible along the route. In the two national forests, stretches of B condition roadbed are numbered as forest roads.

Condition C

On condition C stretches, the route of the railway may be deduced, but nothing remains beyond the engineers' choice of route. In mountainous terrain, however, this choice is a significant achievement. Condition C prevails on the railway where the route has been chosen by

modern highway engineers. Their practice in building over the railway has been to use the railway right-of-way, so short portions of the road may be visible. Examples of this condition include the Bowen Valley near Baker, the Powder River gorge, and the Bridge Creek gorge. Condition C portions of the railway are designated as city streets or carry federal, state, or county road numbers.

Condition D

Condition D designates those sections of the railway which are completely obscured so that the original route is no longer discernible. In most cases, this means that something else has been built over the route. Construction that obliterates the route includes buildings in Baker, a landfill in Baker, industrial activity at the Bates mill site, and cultivated fields near Prairie City. In each of these cases, excavation would probably reveal features or artifacts associated with the railway. Condition D also describes those portions inundated by Phillips Lake.

Condition E

This final category describes those portions of the railway which have been restored by the Sumpter Valley Railway Restoration, Inc. The restoration is presently confined to a portion of the mainline between Dredge Loop Road in T10s R38e S17 and Baker County road 564 in T10s R37e S12. The restoration consists of repairing the original grade with rock fill material, replacing ties, and replacing the rails. All replacement materials conform to original Sumpter Valley Railway specifications.

CONDITION OF THE SPURS

The current condition of the spurs reflects the facts of their construction and their use. The major spurs have not fared as well as the main line in the war with the elements, but some are in respectable shape. The Dean Creek system, for example, is in good condition for most of its length. The minor spurs, predictably, have fared less well. On the Patrick Meadow system, for example, the ties were laid on the ground with little roadbed beneath them. Many of the ties are still in place, but they have rotted down to a thickness of less than two inches. Other natural forces including washouts, erosion, and vegetation have also damaged the minor spurs.

One unfortunate feature of minor spur construction is the use of logs to hold the roadbed. On the raised portions, logs were laid parallel to the direction of the track, and earth was heaped over them to provide a base for the ties. As these logs rot out, whole sections

of the roadbed may be missing. Since the ties were removed from most of the minor spurs so they could be reused, and the roadbed itself was built of wood and soil, the phenomenon of the disappearing spur is rather common.

A final factor contributing to the spurs' poor condition is the conversion from rail to truck logging. As the lumber industry revived in the late 1930's, activity in the woods increased tempo. The older lumber firms throughout the Pacific Northwest continued their railroad operations, but the newer firms used logging trucks. Gradually, the railroad operations began to use the cheaper truck logging technology to meet the competition. The major spurs that had access to highways could easily be converted to truck roads by simply removing the steel and the ties and widening them out. The resulting conversion effectively obliterates all evidence of the railway. Since roadbed features such as fills and cuts were not well pronounced on the spurs to begin with, they did not survive the conversion. Evidence of conversion from rail to truck logging is apparent in the Black Mountain system, the Crawford Creek system, the Upper Middle Fork of the John Day system, and very recently on the Whitney South system with the construction of Forest Road 1040.

ARTIFACTS

Artifacts associated with the railway itself--as opposed to those associated with other activities such as logging, telegraphy, or camp life/settlement--fall into three categories. The first category is ties and timbers. These are by far the most common artifacts to be found along the roadbed. The second group is the fastenings used to secure the rails to the ties (spikes) or to each other (fish plate bolts). These are also quite well distributed. The third category consists of rail and rail-related devices. These are quite rare.

Ties and Timbers

Ties for the Sumpter Valley Railway mainline and spurs were cut 74" long. This is noticeably shorter than conventional 8' ties for standard gauge lines. The effects of using shorter ties were two: a) they could not be re-used by other railroads after the abandonment of the line so they were left in place on the roadbed, b) they could not be used for fence posts by ranchers after the abandonment so they have tended to remain in place on those portions of the railway not converted to motor vehicle use.

Material for the ties were indigenous softwoods, especially fir. The Oregon Lumber Company had began its business by cutting ties for the standard gauge lines--especially the Union Pacific--so sawn ties

were in good supply for the Sumpter Valley Railway. On the spurs, however, the supply of sawn ties was liberally supplemented with hewn ties made from 8' to 10' logs at the site.

At switches, the 74" ties were replaced with 8' to 10' ties that were long enough to accommodate both sets of rails.

Fastenings

Spikes on the Sumpter Valley Railway came in a variety of sizes. For mainline use, spikes were 6" long and 1/2" square. Another common size on the mainline was the 5 3/8" spike, which was also 1/2" square. These sizes were used on the major spurs as well as the mainline and probably represent a standard spike for the railway system. Smaller spikes, used on spurs, sidings, and other peripheral tracks were 7/16" square and included 5" and 4 1/2" lengths. There seems to be no clear distinction between the importance of the spur line and the size of the spikes. On the White Pine Station wye, for example, the spikes were the 7/16" X 4 1/2" model, the smallest on the line.

Rails were held together by fish plates--steel straps bolted to each rail at the joint. Although the fish plates themselves are relatively rare along the right of way, the distinctive bolts used on the fish plates are quite common. The fish plate bolts are 4 1/2" long and 3/4" in diameter. The tread is 3/4 X 10, which is ASME standard coarse for 3/4" bolts. The head of the bolts is rounded like a carriage bolt head, but it is thicker and more nearly hemispherical than a carriage bolt head. The heads are 1 1/4" in diameter. Beneath the head is an oval collar, 5/16" thick, 3/4" at the narrow part of the oval, and 1" at the broad part. This oval collar fits neatly into a recess in the fish plate, holding the bolt from turning as it is tightened or loosened. Nuts for the fish plate bolts are either square or hexagonal, apparently used interchangeably.

Rail

Unlike ties, rail was valuable during the railway's life and afterwards. As a consequence, the rails were removed by the company at the time of abandonment, and any that were overlooked were removed by others. Beyond their value as steel scrap, the light 40 lb. rail was convenient for mining use, fencing, or concrete reinforcement. What little rail remains is confined to the remoter spurs. On the mainline, there is some rail left on the Austin to Prairie City stretch, but it is on private property and unlikely to be disturbed.

Steel fish plates surface occasionally along the right of way. These are steel forgings c. 1/2" X 2" X 18" with holes bored in each end to fit the fish plate bolts. Less common than the fish plates are steel tie plates, which went beneath the rail on the tie. Evidence available (and rather unscientifically gathered) suggests that these may have been confined to the mainline. They are not common on any part the railway, but they were not found on any of the spurs during our survey.

HISTORIC DISTRICT BOUNDARIES CRITERIA

The Sumpter Valley Railway system originally consisted of 126.8 miles of main line and permanent spurs. Selecting portions of the railway appropriate for nomination as a historical district followed two initial considerations and a complete end-to-end survey.

The initial considerations were these:

1. The portions nominated for the district must be a recognized part of the Sumpter Valley system. The long spur down the Middle Fork of the John Day River from Bates to a point near Susanville is usually referred to as the Oregon Lumber Company Railway and seen as a separate though related line (Ferrell, 1967). Although the OLC Railway conformed to Sumpter Valley Railway standards of gauge and rail, it was designed to terminate all shipments at the Oregon Lumber Company Mill at Bates rather than to contribute to mainline shipping activity. In this sense, the OLC Railway was a true "logging railroad" whose sole purpose was to bring logs to the mill. Since it did not contribute to main line shipping, except in an indirect way when the lumber milled from the logs was shipped by the Sumter Valley line down to Baker, it was not a spur or extension of the Sumpter Valley Railway. For this reason, the 20 miles of permanent roadbed on the Lower Middle Fork were excluded from consideration at the outset.

2. The spur systems to be included must be major and permanent. This determination followed the general characteristics outlined on the matrix in the "General Description of Spurs" section. Applying the standards chosen for permanent spur selection led us to exclude 73 minor spurs.

Following these initial considerations, the end-to-end survey led to these additional criteria:

Sections to be nominated must display:

1. Integrity of the roadbed. This characteristic is obviously paramount to the formation of a linear district. On the main line, roadbed integrity is most often threatened by highway construction; on the spurs, logging road construction has the same effect.

2. Sections to be nominated should display associations with communities. Historic places along the route of the railway such as McEwen, Sumpter, Whitney, and Dixie are an important part of the railway's significance.

3. Sections to be nominated should display a concentration of engineering features characteristic of Sumpter Valley Railway construction. These features are outlined in "General Description of the Main Line" section.

4. Sections nominated should display features associated with the industries that the railway served. These include logging and lumber manufacturing, mining, and ranching. These industries are represented by inclusion of the logging spurs and millsites, the gold dredging areas and the Sumpter Smelter site, and Dixie.

5. Sections chosen should display associations with nationally recognized figures involved in the railway's construction or operation. The portions of the system completed before David Eccles' death in 1912 were built under his leadership and reflect his ambitions for the line. The Austin-to-Prairie City portion was built under the personal direction to Marriner S. Eccles, who later became an architect of Roosevelt's New Deal administration and chairman of the Federal Reserve during the 1930's. All of the main line displays the surveying and civil engineering work of Joseph A. West, railroad builder from Salt Lake City.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE HISTORIC DISTRICT

The linear district proposed for nomination consists of those portions of the Sumter Valley Railway main line and spurs which retain their integrity and contain features of historical significance. Of the original 80.1 miles of the Sumpter Valley Railway main line, 34.7 are still intact in condition A (with ties remaining) or B (with engineering features remaining). The balance of the main line is

obscured by highway construction (condition C) or has been completely obliterated (condition D). A small portion of the main line within the section proposed for nomination has been restored to operating condition by the Sumpter Valley Railway Restoration, Inc. The three sections of the main line proposed for nomination constitute 39.6 miles or 49.4% of the original route.

Of the original permanent spur systems, four retain all or part of their linear integrity. These are proposed for nomination. The remaining spur systems have had their permanent portions--i.e., the part that connects the logging sites with the main line--destroyed by road construction or recent logging activity.

The proposed district contains those portions of the railway associated with industries that it served. Logging and lumber manufacturing are represented by the logging spurs and the mill sites at Whitney and White Pine. The mining industry is represented by the upper Sumpter Valley, including the dredging sites along the Powder River and the Sumpter Smelter site. The livestock industry is represented by the Dixie Station site and McEwen. The principal communities that the railway served between the two terminii are also well represented. Sumpter is represented by the Sumpter wye, Austin is represented by the valley of the Middle Fork of the John Day River, and the communities of Whitney and McEwen are represented in the proposed district as station sites.

The proposed district has been divided into seven sections on the basis of geographic and thematic integrity.

Section One - Sumpter Valley Railway Main Line from McEwen to Sumpter

Section Two - Sumpter Valley Main Line from Sumpter Wye to Austin

Section Three - Sumpter Valley Main Line through Dixie Pass

Section Four - Dean Creek Spur System

Section Five - Trout Creek Spur System

Section Six - Whitney South Spur

Section Seven - White Pine Spur

Sites associated with the railway and proposed for nomination include the station sites at McEwen, Larch, Whitney, Tipton, White Pine, and Dixie. Mill sites proposed for nomination are Whitney and

White Pine. The railway station at Prairie City, former western terminus of the Sumpter Valley Railway, was earlier listed in the National Register of Historic Places, and the Middle Fork Spur has been nominated separately.

The width of the linear district follows the railway's original practice in determining its right-of-way. In timbered areas of government land within what was then the Blue Mountain Forest Reserve East Range, the right-of-way was set at two hundred feet--one hundred feet on either side of the center of the track. For its right-of-way through patented land, the railway took one hundred feet, again centered on the track.

The total area of the district is 1,223.77 acres, all but 22.12 acres within the linear confines of the main line and spur corridors.

There are 17 property owners within the proposed district. Public landowners include the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest and the Malheur National Forest, the Oregon State Department of Transportation, the US Bureau of Reclamation, and Baker County. There are 9 private owners, two industrial firms owning land, and one non-profit corporation, the Sumpter Valley Railroad Restoration, Inc.

NOMINATION SECTION 1 - McEwen to Sumpter

Overview of Section 1

Length of section 1	6.3 miles	
USGS map references	Phillips Lake Sumpter	
Area within section		
railway	76.36 acres	
associated features	.68 acres	
Condition of the railway		
A (all features intact)	1.52 miles	24%
B (engineering features)	0	0
C (route visible)	0	0
D (route obscured)	0	0
E (railway restored)	4.76 miles	76%
Dates of construction	1891-1895	
Extant features	McEwen site T10s R38e S17 1941 relocation T10s R37e S11, 12 Sumpter Valley Railroad Restoration, Inc., restored segment T10s R37 S11, 12	
Notable features destroyed	Sumpter wye T9s R37e S32	
Ownership of section		
Public owners		
State of Oregon	T10s R38e TL3400 T10s R38e TL3802 T10s R38e TL480	
Baker County	T10s R38e TL3200 T10s R37e TL1400 T10s R37e TL2600	

Private owners

Warnock Ranches	T10s R38e TL2900 T10s R38e TL3100
Hines Lumber Company	T10 R37e TL1800 T10s R37e TL2200 T10s R37e TL400 T10s R37e TL402 T9s R37e TL4700
Sumpter Valley Railway Restoration, Inc.	T9s R37e TL1300 T9s R37e TL1380
Howard Logston	T9s R37e TL1104
Vernon Titsworth	T10s R37e TL 900

Description of Section 1

This first nomination district takes the main line of the Sumpter Valley Railway from milepost 21.5 near McEwen to the outskirts of Sumpter. The eastern terminus of the section is the junction of the railway and Baker County Road 667, also known as the Clear Creek Road. The western terminus is the junction of the railway and Baker County Road 523, which is also called the Sawmill Gulch Road. The inclusive mileage of this section is 6.28 miles; 1.5 miles of the section have some of the original ties in place, and the remaining 4.8 miles have been restored by the Sumpter Valley Railway Restoration, Inc. Approximately 1 mile of the restored roadbed has ties and rails in place.

McEwen was the original center of the upper Sumpter Valley. The tracks reached the town in October, 1891, after the first building year had pushed the railway as far as Dean Siding, 19 miles from Baker. In 1890 McEwen was an agricultural community. Public Utility Commission records indicate that hay cut from the rich valley grasslands was shipped out by rail as late as 1893. After the advent of the railway, McEwen became a timber community as the staging area and railhead for logging operations up Deer Creek on the north side of the Powder River and up Clear Creek on the south side. The Stoddard Brothers, associates of the Eccles interests who built the railway, built a small mill near McEwen on Clear Creek. The Stoddards logged the south side of the valley while the Oregon Lumber Company logged the north side to supply its mill in Baker.

While McEwen was a railroad terminus, it was also terminus for the west bound stage line that connected Baker with the John Day Valley and points west. The town was in fact named for Thomas McEwen, operator of the stage and freight line. The 1909 inventory of Sumpter Valley Railway property lists a station and a hand car house at McEwen. The town also included two stores, two blacksmith shops, one saloon, and a Baptist church (Ferrell, 1967). Only a church remains in the community now.

In 1896, the railway built on into Sumpter, which was enjoying a period of rapid growth from the gold mines on Cracker Creek above the town. At the entrance to Sumpter, the railway built an elevated wye on Powder River. The tail of the wye ran into Sumpter as a mile long spur from the main line. A sawmill and the Sumpter Smelter was located near the wye. In its heyday from 1899 until c 1912, Sumpter was a typical mining town with frenzied activity and a bustling population of miners and fellow travellers. In 1917, the town burned and was not rebuilt.

In 1913 gold dredging began on the Powder River. This process removed all soil and stone down to bedrock to wash out the alluvial gold. The result was the destruction of the upper end of the valley as the meadow land was turned into heaps of naked rock. In 1941, the dredge had progressed nearly as far as McEwen, and the railway right-of-way was relocated onto the dredge tailings so that the original right-of-way could be dredged up. This section of the line--referred to on the railway's engineering plans as the "1941 relocation"--extends from mile post 22.5 to mile post 25.8.

Condition of Section 1

The 1.5 miles of roadbed on this section that are not part of the restoration are in reasonably good condition with many ties intact. Near the eastern terminus of the section, the meadow vegetation has covered the ties in some places, but they are discernible from their outline on the grass. The roadbed itself is low in this part, elevated only 2.5' above the surrounding ground.

The McEwen station area has well-preserved roadbed, with evidence of the station siding still visible, along with debris associated with the railway. The wye is no longer visible, however.

The roadbed on the restored part of the section is built from dredge tailings. This is the material that was available for roadbed construction on the 1941 relocation. Since the terrain is flat, the roadbed consists of tailings piled up into a roadbed raised 3' above the ground. The restoration will replace original trestlings over a slough in the NW 1/4 of T10s R37e S4 and will need to build a level crossing on Baker County Road 564 in the SE 1/4 of T10s R37e S4.

Features of Section 1 - Including six separately counted contributing features

McEwen Station site (NW¼ S18 T10s R38e), within r/w corridor - Contributing

The 1941 relocation of the track to accommodate gold dredging on the original roadbed is significant in its association with the mining theme that is integral to the railway's history.

The Sumpter Valley Railroad Restoration, Inc. is a non-profit corporation engaged in restoring a portion of the original railway to operate its excursion trains. The present installation consists of 2.8 miles of restored track and 1.9 miles of restored roadbed. At the intersection of the railway and Baker County Road 564, Dredge Lane Loop, the restoration has built a passenger station and a water tank as well as a storage yard to hold various pieces of railroad equipment and two locomotives awaiting restoration. The locomotive currently operating is a Heisler geared locomotive that originally was used by the W. H. Eccles Lumber Company on the Upper Middle Fork of the John Day River spur system to supply the mill in Austin.

The district corridor is expanded at Dredge Depot Park by a southerly extending parcel to encompass the wye, or siding constructed by the Sumpter Valley Railroad Restoration, Inc. as a storage site for historic Sumpter Valley Railway rolling stock. Each of four items of historic rolling stock, described in the following passages, is counted as a separately-contributing feature, as is the reconstructed wooden water tank tower within the main line right of way at the Dredge Depot site. The water tower originally stood on the main line near Bates. The area thus added to the corridor is 0.68 acres.

Non-contributing features at Dredge Depot Park site are the excursion passenger station within main line right of way and the equipment building in the storage yard, both non-historic buildings erected by the Sumpter Valley Restoration, Inc.

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Locomotive No. 3 - contributing feature

Locomotive No. 3 was constructed in 1914 for William H. Eccles Lumber Company by the Heisler Locomotive Works in Pennsylvania. It operated out of Austin. In 1926, the entire W. H. Eccles Company was moved to Cascase, Idaho and ultimately sold to Hallock and Howard Lumber Company. In 1938, No. 3 was retired and placed in a shed at the Cascade mill where it was used occasionally for auxiliary steam. In 1971, locomotive No. 3 was purchased from the Boise Cascade Corporation and returned to Sumpter for restoration. It was made operational by June, 1976, and placed on the line on July 4, 1976. When No. 3 was returned to the Sumpter Valley Railroad Restoration, it still wore its original W. H. Eccles lettering. The present lettering and paint scheme is an exact restoration of the original. Locomotive No. 3 has been in constant use since its restoration. It is believed the only historic wood burning, narrow gauge locomotive still in operation in the American West.

Specifications:

Year of Construction	1914
Construction number	1306
Design weight	80,000 lbs (40 tons)
Present working weight	84,000 lbs (42 tons)
Cylinders	14" x 12" (bore and stroke)
Boiler pressure	Original 180 PSI, Present 150 PSI
Drivers	36"
Tractive effort	21,700 lbs
Tank capacity	water - 1,400 gallons
	wood - 1½ cords

Locomotive No. 19 - contributing feature

Mikado Type 2-8-2 wheel arrangement and was constructed for the Sumpter Valley Railroad by the American Locomotive Company of Schenectady, NY in 1920. These were the last locomotives purchased new by the Oregon Lumber Company. Until the advent of the Uintah Mallets, these "Mikes" were the largest locomotives built. When the articulated mallets were purchased in 1939, No. 19 was retired and later sold to the White Pass and Yukon Railway of Skagway, Alaska in 1940. It was used on that line until 1958 and was retired and placed in dead storage at Skagway. The Sumpter Valley Railroad Restoration, Inc. was originally established for the purpose of procuring and returning to Sumpter Valley this locomotive. However, logistics problems prevented acquisition at that time. In April, 1977, the White Pass and Yukon offered to donate it with the stipulation it be removed from Skagway by July 1, 1977. The deadline was met through concerted community participation and assistance and the locomotive was returned to Sumpter in June, 1977. Presently, the locomotive is in dead storage at Sumpter Dredge overhaul station shop. Plans to overhaul and restore it are presently underway.

Specifications:

Year of construction	1920
Construction numbers	19-61981

Design weight with tender	202,000 lbs. (101 tons)
Estimated working weight after restoration	115 - 130 tons
Cylinders	19" x 20" (bore and stroke)
Boiler pressure	170 PSI
Drivers	44"
Tractive effort	23,700 lbs
Tender Capacity	water 4,200 gallons fuel (oil) 2,500 gallons

Locomotive No. 20 - contributing feature

Mikado Type 2-8-2 wheel arrangement and was constructed for the Sumpter Valley Railroad by the American Locomotive Company of Schenectady, NY in 1920. These were the last locomotives purchased new by the Oregon Lumber Company. Until the advent of the Uintah Mallets, these "Mikes" were the largest locomotives built. When the articulated mallets were purchased in 1939, No. 20 was retired and later sold to the White Pass and Yukon Railway of Skagway, Alaska in 1940. It was used on that line until 1958 and was retired and placed in dead storage at Skagway. The Sumpter Valley Railroad Restoration, Inc. was originally established for the purpose of procuring and returning to Sumpter Valley this locomotive. However, logistics problems prevented acquisition at that time. In April, 1977, the White Pass and Yukon offered to donate it with the stipulation it be removed from Skagway by July 1, 1977. The deadline was met through concerted community participation and assistance and the locomotive was returned to Sumpter in June, 1977. Presently, the locomotive is in dead storage at Sumpter Dredge overhaul station shop. Plans to overhaul and restore it are presently underway.

Specifications:

Year of Construction	1920
Construction numbers	20-61980
Design weight with tender	202,000 lbs. (101 tons)
Estimated working weight after restoration	115 - 130 tons
Cylinders	19" x 20" (bore and stroke)
Boiler pressure	170 PSI
Drivers	44"
Tractive effort	23,700 lbs.
Tender capacity	water 4,200 gallons fuel (oil) 2,500 gallons

Caboose No. 5 - contributing feature

Constructed October, 1926 in the South Baker shops of the Sumpter Valley Railroad, this car was rebuilt from parts obtained from the Utah and Northern Line at that time. This railroad car was used to transport luggage of passengers and to sort mail which was delivered along the route. From the cupola of this car, crew members could observe the forward cars and were always on watch for possible danger.

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The car was painted grey with black trim around the windows. The running gear, wheels and bed have been removed and must be replaced with similar equipment to make it operable. The caboose has been transported to the Sumpter Dredge station work shops for restoration and rehabilitation and will become an integral part of the running stock. In all other respects, the car is in fair condition and will require a minimum amount of rehabilitation to make it operable.

NOMINATION SECTION 2 - Sumpter Valley Railway Main Line from Sumpter Wye to Austin

Overview of Section 2

Length of section	27.8 miles
USGS map references	Sumpter Whitney Greenhorn Austin
Area within section	
railway	647.7 acres
associated features	Larch Station 1.6 acres Whitney Station 3.6 acres Tipton Station 6.0 acres White Pine Station 3.36 acres
Condition of the railway	
A (roadbed intact)	13.6 miles 49%
B (engineering features)	14.28 miles 51%
C (route visible)	trace at road crossings
D (route obscured)	0
E (railway restored)	0
Dates of construction	1901-1905
Extant features	Sumpter smelter spur T10s R37e S5 Larch station T10s R37e S21 McCoy siding T10s R36e S23 Whitney T10s R36e S34 Carroll siding T10s R36e S31 Tipton T10s R35 1/2e S3 Horseshoe curves T11s R35 1/2e S4 White Pine station T11s R36e S12

Notable features destroyed	Alder Springs Trestle T10s R37e S18
Ownership of section	
Public owners	
Wallowa Whitman NF	T10s R37e TL900 T10s R36e TL100 T10s R35 1/2e TL100
Malheur NF	T10s R35e TL100 T11s R35e TL100
Baker County	T10s R36e TL1700
Private owners	
Hines Lumber Co.	T10s R37e TL900M1 T10s R36e TL100M1 T10s R36e TL1800
Richard Haynes	T10s R37e TL601
Rosemary Mitchell	T10s R37e TL1000 T10s R37e TL1004 T10s R37e TL1005
Wayne Rodgers	T10s R37e TL1006
Bernard Hutcheon	T10s R36e TL1900
John Rouse et. al.	T10s R36e TL1600

Description of Section 2

Section two takes the railway into the "timber belt" of the Blue Mountains and over the first two of its three passes. The scenery in this section is especially notable, as is the historic connection with the lumber and logging operations. This portion of the route is what people refer to when they call the Sumpter Valley Railway a logging railroad.

Although the railway was used for many purposes other than logging, nomination section two was built with logging in mind. On this part of the railway the Oregon Lumber Company, Stoddard Lumber Company, Nibley Hilgard Lumber Company, and Baker White Pine Lumber Company built their logging spurs to tap the timber resource adjacent to the main line. From Whitney, a mill town that is the central feature of this section, major logging spurs radiated out to the north and south. In addition, spurs were built along ridges and up drainages as the main line crossed them. Major sidings at McCoy and Carroll helped handle the logging traffic.

The Sumpter wye turned the railway from its westerly course up the Powder River almost 90 degrees to a southerly course up Huckleberry Mountain. The wye was the site of the Oregon Smelting and Refining Company smelter, built in 1903. A spur line from the railway served the smelter.

From the Sumpter wye, the railway begins its climb to Larch through a series of S curves up the flank of Huckleberry Mountain. The rate of climb is 600' in 4.3 miles or 142 feet/mile. As the altitude increases, the curves follow watercourses, requiring a near-horseshoe curve in NE 1/4 of S8 and another substantial turn at Spruce Gulch in NE 1/4 of S17. The greatest grade on this section is 4% immediately below Larch. Near Larch a spur known as Johnson's Jumpoff left the main line to the south, presumably to serve the Trout Creek complex.

From Larch down to Whitney, the railway descended the west slope of Huckleberry Mountain more gently than its ascent on the east slope. The 800' of elevation from Larch to Whitney was dissipated in 8.6 miles. In T10s R37e S18, the railway crosses the gulch at Alder Springs which was the site of the Alder Springs trestle, a gracefully curving structure spanning the gulch 30' above the spring. In T10s R36e S13, the railway enters Three Cent Gulch, which it follows down to the valley of the North Fork of Burnt River at Whitney. At the upper end of the gulch, Oregon Lumber Company spurs leave the main line to the north and south. McCoy Siding, located in T10s R36e S23, served as a siding and transshipping point in this area.

Once it enters the Burnt River Valley, the railway pursues a straight course to Whitney, a community built in the center of the valley in 1901. The town is largely abandoned now, but many of the original buildings are standing, including the Oregon Lumber Comapny mill south of town. The Nibley Hilgard Lumber Company mill burned in 1915. Sidings and a wye at Whitney provided railroad marshaling services. In T10s R36e S29, the railway leaves the valley and begins the ascent to Tipton.

The 800' of elevation separating Whitney and Tipton is gained in less than six miles, making the ascent rather steep. Features include the siding at Carroll, in T10s R36e S31, and a watertank in T10s R35 1/2e S36. Spurs in this area leave the main line to the south at Carroll and to the north at Patrick Meadow. Another spur ran east from the NE 1/4 of T10x R35 1/2e S 35.

This scenic and well-preserved portion of the railway continues west from Tipton to the town and mill site of Austin. Leaving Tipton to descend into the valley of the Middle Fork of the John Day River, the railway loses 900' of altitude in little more than 8 miles. The

resulting rate of descent required the construction of two horseshoe bends at the upper end of the Crawford Creek drainage. These curves required deep cuts and extensive fills to keep the grade manageable for main line locomotives.

From the mixed coniferous forest at Tipton, the railway passes into ponderosa pine stands near White Pine. This is the site of a station, wye, and a logging spur used by the Baker White Pine Lumber Company to serve its "Camp 2" operations in the nearby woods. This firm was active in the 1920's, operating two logging railroads to supply its mill in Baker. Near White Pine station is the original White Pine mill site.

One and a half miles west of White Pine, the railway leaves the timber entirely and enters Taylor's Flat. West of that, the railway traverses another timbered section and then enters the grassy valley of the Middle Fork.

Austin was the western terminus of the railway for most of its history. During the building period, Austin ended the line from 1905 until the extension to Prairie City was completed in 1910. After the 1933 abandonment, Austin (with Bates) again served as a terminus until the 1946 abandonment. Austin was named for the first settlers there, Minot Austin and his wife, who ran a hotel when the railway came in. Stories about Mrs. Austin's culinary prowess provides some of the most authentic folklore about the railway.

Condition of Section 2

Generally, the condition of the railway in survey section 3 is very good, with sections of A and B conditions alternating. Condition C occurs only at isolated portions of the line crossing highways at Larch, near Whitney, and at Tipton.

From the Sumpter wye, the railway is numbered 055 by the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest. This portion has had the ties removed to accommodate motor vehicles, but the roadbed features of grade, cuts, and fills are preserved. In T10s R37e S8, the roadbed crosses FR 1085 and continues south in condition A, with ties in place. On the patented land beginning in section 8, it has been modified for vehicle use in places but continues to have the engineering features well preserved to the WWNF boundary in the SE 1/4 of section 17. Here it continues south in condition A with the ties in place to Larch, where it is obscured by Highway 7 for c. 150 yards.

Leaving Larch as FR 1075, the railway continues west in B condition , with the grade preserved, but the surfce modified. It continues as FR 020 to Telephone Spring (SW 1/4 T10s R37e S18) where it continues west in its original condition with ties in place.

The railway descends Three Cent Gulch, passing McCoy and crossing Highway 7 in A condition, with only isolated patches of B condition. Shortly after crossing Highway 7 in T10s R36e S 26, it becomes FR 500, but retains the original grade and fills well enough to qualify as condition B. It then becomes FR 529 for .50 miles to the Whitney station site in the NW 1/4 of S34.

At Whitney, the railway returns to condition A through the Burnt River Valley and into the timber. It then continues westward to Tipton in this condition, with ties and spikes intact. The route from Whitney to Tipton is probably the best preserved section of the entire line.

The condition of the roadbed beyond Tipton is quite good, with condition B predominant. The roadbed from Tipton to the horseshoe curves in T11s R34 1/2e S4 is in splendid condition with ties and some spikes in place. Engineering features including somes cuts deeper than 20' are well defined. This portion of the railroad, like other portions in the higher coniferous forest zone, show evidence of the pine beetle infestation that occured in the Blue Mountains in the early 1970's. As a result, many dead trees have fallen across the roadbed. This typically produces little damage to the earthwork, but is is an inconvenience to the hikers who follow the railway.

Condition A prevails through the first horseshoe curve and through part of the second one, but at the bottom of the second curve, forest contractors have used the roadbed for a logging road. The resulting grading of the roadbed has removed the ties and widened it, but not to more than the width of the original cuts can accommodate. After the timber sale, the contractors seeded the roadbed with even rows of ryegrass in the SE 1/4 of T11s R35 1/2e S4.

In the SW 1/4 of S4, the railroad becomes forest road 449. The roadbed is well preserved on the stretch, which continues west to White Pine Station in the SW 1/4 of T11s R35e S12. At White Pine Station, the roadbed becomes forest road 461, which continues into S11, where it becomes FR 449 again. The condition here is B, with grades and earthwork features preserved, but the surface modified for vehicle use.

From Taylor Flat in T11s R35e S11, the road crosses Highway 7 and then descends into the valley as FR 449. This portion is again made up of well-defined roadbed modified for motor vehicles. The gentle terrain called for no unusual engineering practices or extreme grades.

Features of Section 2 - Including four station sites counted as contributing features

The Sumpter Smelter, located at the Sumpter wye, operated for a short time after the turn of the century. The site is now overgrown with ponderosa pine trees, but some ruins and two piles of cinders are still visible.

Larch Summit originally had a wye and a 14' X 14' station building. They wye remains visible, but nothing is left of the station building. Contributing.

The Alder Springs trestle had been washed out and none of the original timbers remain in place.

McCoy siding is preserved in very good condition. On most of the sidings, the switch points and side tracks are in poor condition, but McCoy has these features intact. In addition to the siding itself, there is debris scattered around the area which suggests a logging or construction camp.

The town of Whitney is well preserved, with the railroad mainline, wye, spur s, and sidings all clearly discernible. The Whitney station is no longer standing, but ruins of the platform are available. A railroad-related structure, perhaps the hand car house listed in the 1909 PUC inventory, is still standing on the east edge of town. Ruins of a Sumpter Valley Railway boxcar remain in the station area. Contributing.

Carroll siding remains visible, but the side track is not as well preserved as the main line. Near Carroll siding in T10s R35 1/2e S36 is the only remaining water tank on the main line.

The townsite and station of Tipton is represented by the roadbed of the Tipton loop, which is in good condition, and the wreckage of a wooden structure near the station site. The original station here was 70' X 22'. Additional structures at Tipton included a hand car house (12' X 20'), a house (12' X 15'), and a toilet (6' X 12'). Contributing.

The horseshoe curves are a unique feature of the Sumpter Valley Railway. While the railway was well supplied with curves by Joseph West and his engineering associates, these are the only true 180 degree curves on the line. Their effectiveness and the cuts and fill that they required, testify to the early engineers' ability to do complicated earthwork with simple horse-powered machines.

White Pine Station wye and spur are well preserved. There is a pile of wooden debris on the site that could be associated with the railway. Contributing.

Austin looms large in the railway's history because of its conspicuous location at the end of the line. It was also the location of Oregon Lumber Company and Wiliam Eccles Lumber Company mills. The railway structures in Austin were extensive, including a depot, an engine house, a shed, a tool house, residence, a warehouse, and a barn. Major spurs ran to the Eccles mill and to the OLC mill, both located to the west of town. To the east of town, a loop ran around the railway service area.

NOMINATION SECTION 3 - Sumpter Valley Railway Main Line, Dixie Pass Area

Overview of Section 3

Length of section 3	5.5 miles	
USGS map reference	Bates	
Area within the section		
railway	133.3 acres	
associated features	-0-	
Condition of the railway		
A (roadbed features intact)	2.28 miles	41%
B (engineering features)	3.0 miles	54%
C (route visible)	.2 miles	3%
D (route obscured)	0	
E (restored)	0	
Dates of construction	1910	
Extant features	Dixie station site T12s R34e S14 Dixie switchbacks T12s R34e S10	
Notable features destroyed	Trestle T12s R34e S1 Dads Creek trestle T12 R34 S9	
Ownership		
Public		
Malheur National Forest	T12s R34e TL100	
Private		
Nicholas Vidondo	T12s R34e TL600	
Port Blakely Mill Co.	T12s R34e TL1000	

Description of Section 3

After the railway had completed construction to Austin in 1905, it remained the western terminus for five years. In 1910, the road was completed through to Prairie City to serve the ranching communities in the John Day valley. Joseph A. West faced his greatest engineering challenge on this last portion of the road, particularly in the Dixie Pass area. David Eccles' son, Marriner Eccles, served as superintendent on the construction job. This portion of the line was a considerable gamble, since the timber on Dixie Mountain was not as attractive as the timber farther east had been and the John Day valley itself was unlikely to provide much traffic. Historians agree that Eccles built west in hopes of connecting with the narrow gauge Nevada-California-Oregon Railway which was operating from Reno, Nevada to Lakeview, Oregon at this time.

After its ascent of Bridge Creek gorge, the railway enters the nomination district at the junction of FR 086, the Lunch Creek Road, in the SE 1/4 of T12s R34e S12. The ascent from the valley of the Middle Fork at Bates has forced the railway to climb over 1,000' in 7.6 miles. On the last pitch of its ascent, the railway rises above Bridge Creek, contouring along the wall of the gorge c 100' above the creek. At the Dixie station area in T21s R34e S14, the railway crosses a relatively flat pass at 5,280'. The Dixie station itself was provided with a station building and stock yards to handle the livestock from this important cattle and sheep grazing area. The 1909 inventory reports that there was also a "wood house and toilet" building on the site.

From Dixie, the railway began its descent into the John Day valley, a drop of 1,760' in 11.8 miles. The resulting grade apparently exhausted West's enthusiasm for curves and meanderings. As a result, he chose to build switchbacks immediately to the west of Dixie. These let the trains descend from 5,200' to 5,120' in relative ease, although at the price of stopping, backing, and switching their way down the grade. Below the switchback, the railway contours around a butte to enter the Dads Creek drainage, where it crossed the creek on the high trestle that ends the nomination section.

Condition of the Railway in Section 3

The condition of the roadbed from the eastern terminus of nomination section 3 at the junction of the railway and FR 086, the Lunch Creek Road, is relatively good.

After leaving the highway as FR 609 at the junction, the railway runs for a mile in B condition, and then enters a stretch of A condition with ties in place. Considering that this portion of the road was abandoned in 1933, the durability of the original ties is noteworthy.

At the crossing of FR 306, the railway is overlaid by the road for 400 yards. It then continues on the west side of FR 306 for .6 miles to a point near the junction of FR 087 and US Highway 26. This section of the route is in good condition, generally with ties in place. Here the siding and depot site of Dixie Summit are located in the SE 1/4 of T 12n R34e S10.

The railway from Dixie to the Dads Creek Trestle is generally in good condition. From the station site, it crosses FR 087 and is then overlaid by US Highway 26 for a distance of c. 500'. At the highline crossing in the SE 1/4 of S10, it reappears on the north side of the highway and runs west for c 3000' to the first switchback. It then advances to the east across US 26 to the highline again, where it stops for the second switchback. There is some logging damage at this point. Reversing direction to the west again, it crosses US 26 twice in the SW 1/4 of S10, turns to the south, and crosses US 26 for a third time in the NE 1/4 of S15. This portion of the railway is in B and C condition, with the highway obscuring the route of the railway as it crosses it.

In the NE 1/4 of S16, the railway becomes FR 403 soon after crossing the highway. This portion is B condition, with most of the original grade maintained, but the surface graded for motor vehicle use.

In the SE 1/4 of S9, the graded portion ends and the road bed is in better condition, with some ties in place on the northerly stretch to the Dads Creek trestle.

Features of Section 3 - Including one station site within r/w corridor/contributing

The trestle in T12s R34e S14 spanned an unnamed creek tributary to Bridge Creek. It has been washed out, and none of the timbers remain in place.

Dixie Station siding and station site are visible. The siding is in relatively good condition, but the depot site has been vandalized by bottle diggers. The 1909 inventory lists stock yards at Dixie, a wood house (12' X 16') and a station building (16' X 28'). No structures remain. Contributing.

The main line switchbacks near Dixie represent an unusual engineering practice in American railroad constructon. Their comparatively good condition and their attractive location add to their inherent interest. Unfortunately, they have been overlaid by US Highway 26 and a highline and the lower portion has been damaged by logging activity. The extent of the logging damage is limited to c. 50 yards, but the roadbed has been obliterated in that portion and there is a cold deck of logs remaining on the site.

The trestle and siding at the head of Dads Creek is an interesting feature. Although the trestle is gone, some timbers remain in the creekbed.

NOMINATION SECTION 4 - Dean Creek and Upper Clear Creek Spur System

Overview of Section 4

Length of section	11.23 miles	
USGS map reference	Phillips Lake Sumpter Beaverdam Creek	
Area within the section railway	272.02 acres	
associated features	-0-	
Condition of the railway		
A (roadbed features intact)	5.3 miles	45%
B (engineering features)	5.54 miles	47%
C (route visible)	.39 miles	3%
D (route obscured)	0	
E (restoration)	0	
Dates of construction	1912-1929	
Extant features		
	Dean Creek Spur T10s R38e S28,23 Upper Clear Creek Spur T11s R38e S37 China Creek Spur T11s R38e S13 Wye, water tank T11s R37e S12 T10s R38e S28	
Notable features destroyed		
	Trestle T10s R38e S28 Dean Creek Trestle T10s R38e S28 Camp Creek Trestle T11s R38e S35	

Ownership

Public owners

US Bureau of Reclamation	T10s R38e TL3800
Wallowa-Whitman NF	T10s R38e TL106 T11s R38e TL100 T11s R37e TL100 T10s R37e TL900

Private owners

R.D. Rasmussen	T10s R38e TL4700 T11s R38e TL300 T11s R38e TL200

Description of Section 4

The spur system that begins on lower Dean Creek and extends into the upper Clear Creek drainage is the best preserved spur system on the railway. Originally used by the Baker White Pine Lumber Company, the spur system was built under the direction of William Baker, logging superintendent for the firm. Baker White Pine spurs had the reputation of high construction standards, which were costly to maintain, but which allowed the firm to log through the winter when less well built spurs could not be kept free of snow.

The Dean Creek system was the second largest spur system on the Sumpter Valley Railway. From a point on the main line near Dean Siding, the spur climbed southward up the Dean Creek drainage, crossing a gulch in the NE 1/4 of T10s R38e S28 on a vertical bent trestle over 20' high. The trestle is no longer standing, but the excavations for the bents are visible along with debris of the timbers.

One hundred and thirty yards beyond the trestle site, the spur becomes FR 2220, the Shoreline Trail, until the junction of FR 2220 and FR 1160, the Dean Creek Road. At this point, it becomes the Dean Creek Road until the crossing of the highline in the SE 1/4 of S28. At this point, the spur leaves the road, running parallel to it 10 yards to the west and then rejoining it. In the SE 1/4 of S28, the spur turns westward, crossing Dean Creek on a second trestle and traversing S32 to enter the Clear Creek drainage. At the crossing of the spur and FR 1170 in the SW 1/4 of S32, the spur becomes FR 1170 and continues south through section 5, 6, and 7 of T11s R38e. At Camp Creek, in the SW 1/4 of S5, the spur crosses on a 40' high trestle which is now in ruins. In the SE 1/4 of S7, the spur crosses Clear Creek on a fill and

turns northwest to a wye at the junction of FR 1170, the Clear Creek Road, and FR 11, the Skyline Road. The permanent part of the spur then continues past the wye as FR 680 through S36 and 35 of T10s R37e and S2 of T11s R37e.

Minor spurs extend up drainages and ridges along the route of the spur system. The minor spurs extending up Dean Creek, Little Dean Creek, above Trout Creek, and above Elk Camp Meadow all have visible roadbeds remaining. The minor spur system that extends down China Creek is another extensive logging spur to the south of the main system.

Condition of Section 4

The Dean Creek spur is in A or B condition for nearly its entire length. Although much of it is used for motor vehicle traffic, the construction standards were high enough to leave the original engineering features of cuts, fills, and grades intact after its conversion. Key parts of the spur in T10s R38e S22, 28, and 32 and in T10s R37e S35 and T11s R37e S2 were not converted to motor vehicle use, so ties remain in place.

Features of Section 4 - Including no separately counted contributing features but roadbe

The minor spurs adjacent to the nomination section provide good evidence of spur construction and location on the logging sites. China Creek spur, upper Dean Creek spur, and the Elk Camp Meadow spurs are particularly good examples.

The three trestle sites on this spur are well defined, although the trestles, all of which were high vertical bent structures, have fallen. The Dean Creek trestle in the SW 1/4 of T11s R38e S5 appears to have been the highest trestle on the entire railway.

NOMINATION SECTION 5 - Trout Creek and Pole Bridge Creek Spur System

Overview of Section 5

Length of section	2.3 miles	
USGS map reference	Sumpter	
Area within section		
railway	55.75 acres	
Dates of construction	1916	
Condition of the railway		
A (roadbed features intact)	2.2 miles	95%
B (engineering features)	0	
C (route visible)	.1 mile	5%
D (route obscured)	0	
E (restoration)	0	
Extant features	Pole Bridge Creek wye T10s R37e S33	
Notable features destroyed	8 horizontal trestles 2 vertical trestles	
Ownership		
Public owners Wallowa-Whitman NF	T10s R37e TL900	

Description of Section 5

The spur system on Trout Creek and Lower Pole Bridge Creek is a well built spur system incorporating a rich concentration of features associated with railroad logging in the Blue Mountain area. According to oral source, the system was operated by the Baker White Pine Lumber Company during the 1920's. This connection would be consistent with

the quality of the roadbed construction, which incorporates deep cuts and fills, and even grade, and wyes built well above grade level. The trestling on this spur system, however, was predominantly horizontal, which is generally a characteristic of more temporary construction.

On the south slope of Huckleberry Mountain, minor spurs associated with the system served log chutes up Earmuff Spring gulch and up an unnamed gulch to the east of Earmuff Spring. These chutes ran 4,000' and 2,700' respectively up the mountain, reaching what was apparently good quality timber (to judge from the stumps) at higher elevations. The chutes were built from logs placed in a U shaped configuration.

To the east of Huckleberry Mountain, the spur system leaves Trout Creek and climbs up the Pole Bridge Creek drainage for .6 miles to a wye at the intersection of FR 11, the Skyline Road. A minor spur continues up Pole Bridge Creek from this point, eventually joining the Dean Creek system. The major part of the system descends the Pole Bridge Creek drainage east of the wye and enters the upper Trout Creek drainage, which was well provided with minor spurs. One of these also connects to the Dean Creek system to the east.

Although two minor spurs connect the Trout Creek system to the Dean Creek system, the major access to the system was probably provided by a major spur connecting Trout Creek to the Sumpter Valley Railway main line at Larch. This spur, which incorporated a high vertical bent trestle called "Johnson's Jumpoff" has been destroyed for most of its length almost immediately after its departure from the main line. Ferrell (1967) shows a fourth spur from the Trout Creek system running down Trout Creek to Whitney.

Condition of Section 5

With the exception of a .1 mile portion at the junction of the Trout Creek spur and Forest Road 11, the Skyline Road, the spur is in good condition for its full length. The Trout Creek watershed burned in a fire during August of 1986. As a result, all wooden features on the spur were destroyed.

Features of Section 5- Including no separately counted contributing features but roadbed

Taken together, the permanent spur system, the log chutes, and the minor spurs constituted the best concentration of features extant on the Sumpter Valley Railway system before the August 1986 fire in the Trout Creek watershed.

NOMINATION SECTION 6 - Whitney Mill Spur

Overview of Section 6

Length of section	.37 miles
USGS map reference	Whitney
Area within section	
railway	4.59 acres
associated features	2.29 acres additional
Dates of construction	1910, 1931
Condition	
A (roadbed features intact)	.3 miles 100%
B (engineering features)	0
C (route visible)	0
D (route obscured)	0
E (restoration)	0
Extant features	
	mill spur T10s R36e S34 mill site T10s R38e S34 mill pond T10s R38e S34
Notable features destroyed	
	permanent spur below mill T10s R36e S34
Ownership	
Private Owners	
John Rouse et.al.	T10s R36e TL1600
Hines Lumber Co.	T10s R36e TL1800

Description

In 1910, the Nibley Lumber Company built a mill at Whitney and began work on a spur line down the North Fork of Burnt River (Ferrell, 1967). The spur continued up the Mosquito Creek drainage to the upper end of Spring Gulch, and into the Patrick Creek drainage. In 1915, the Nibley mill burned, and the Oregon Lumber Company purchased the property. The mill was rebuilt in 1931, and operated through the 1930's. The Oregon Lumber Company apparently continued to operate the spur south from Whitney during this period.

From the Whitney wye on the mail line, the spur runs south to the mill site, passing the pond, and continuing on to join County Road 507. At the junction of FR 1040, the spur turned west to climb the hill to the head of Spring Gulch. From this point, the route of the permanent part of the spur can only be surmised from the topography and the route of FR 1040, which apparently obscures it. In the SW 1/4 of T10s R26e S33, the permanent spur crosses FR 1040 three times. North of the road is a well-preserved section of the spur with a switchback, a horizontal trestle, and ties intact. Steel rail is also to be found at this site, apparently dropped in the removal operation.

Condition of Section 6

The spur from the Whitney wye to the mill site is in good condition. The mill building and some associated structures are still standing, and the mill pond is filled by Camp Creek.

Beyond the mill site, the roadbed deteriorates rapidly in the boggy meadow. After its junction with CR 507, and its subsequent junction with FR 1040, few traces can be found. At the switchback site, however, the short portion of the spur that is preserved is in good condition, class A, and has an interesting association of features, since switchbacks are not common on the Sumpter Valley Railway system.

Features of Section 6 - Including Whitney Mill Site as contributing feature

The mill spur is a raised roadbed with some ties still in place. At its crossing of the Whitney wye, it went under a trestle on the wye so that trains could cross without interrupting the wye operation at this busy point on the line.

The mill building is in an advanced state of disrepair. Most of the roof sheathing is gone, exposing the rafters to the elements. The floor and bull chain structure are rotted through. The mill pond is extant.

NOMINATION SECTION 7 - The White Pine Mill Spur

Overview of Section 7

Length of the section	.49 miles
USGS map reference	Greenhorn Austin
Area within the section	
railway	11.93 acres
associated features	4.59 acres additional
Date of construction	1912
Condition of the railway	
A (roadbed features intact)	0
B (engineering features)	.21 mile 55%
C (route visible)	.17 mile 44%
D (route obscured)	0
E (restoration)	0
Extant features	
	mill spur T11s R35e S12 mill site T11s R35e S12 mill pond site T11s R35e S12
Notable features destroyed	
	permanent spur below mill T11s R35e S12
Ownership	
Public owners	
Malheur NF	T11s R35e TL100

Description of Section 7

The White Pine mill and the spur down Crawford Creek were built in 1912 by the Baker White Pine Lumber Company. A wye was provided at the junction of the White Pine spur and the Sumpter Valley Railway main line, and this point became known as White Pine station. The permanent portion of the Crawford Creek spur descended Crawford Creek 3 miles to its intersection with the Middle Fork of the John Day River. There, the Crawford Creek spur joined the more extensive spur system built up the Middle Fork from Austin.

Condition of Section 7

The wye at White Pine station and the station area are in good condition with the roadbed and debris remaining. No structure remains at the site, but the wye itself is still well defined. From the wye, the spur runs to the mill site in the SE 1/4 of section 12. The mill site contains concrete foundations, some debris, and the mill pond, which is now filled in with silt and debris. Below the mill site, the spur becomes intermittent and overlaid by Forest Road 2620.

Features of Section 7 - Including White Pine Mill Site as contributing featur

The mill site includes concrete structures located at what was apparently the head rig of the mill and a second concrete structure 21 feet to the north. This arrangement suggests mountings for the head rig or carriage machinery and the engine which drove it. Parts of the perimeter foundation are also extant.

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

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Continuation sheet Item number 8 Page 1

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SUMPTER VALLEY RAILWAY

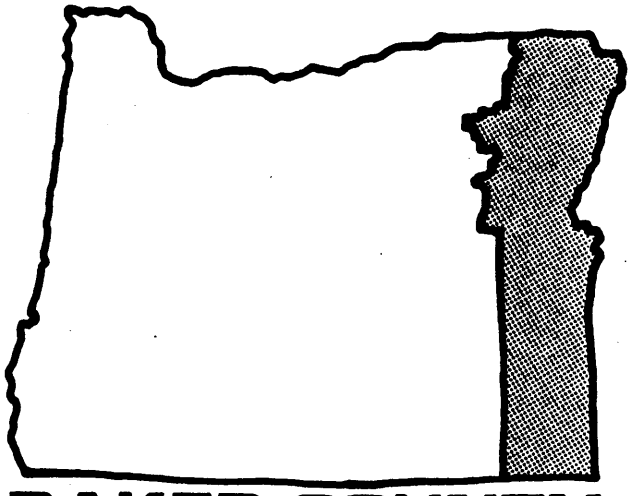
"First to operate on a grand scale in the new atmosphere of business enterprise were the American railroad men...they opened mines in Colorado, Nevada, Idaho, Montana, timberlands in Minnesota, Washington, Oregon and California where nature for countless millennia had stored prodigious wealth."

Thomas C. Cochran and William Miller, The Age of Enterprise: A Social History of Industrial America

Baker County Background, 1861-1890

Although the Sumpter Valley Railway spanned two eastern Oregon counties at its greatest extent, its primary significance lies in its connection with Baker County, a huge domain which once sprawled along the entire eastern border of Oregon from Washington to Nevada, accounting for nearly a fifth of the state's land.

Baker County, with other areas in the inland region of the Pacific Northwest, became a new frontier during the 1860's, attracting people from the settled parts of Oregon and Washington. Settlers had been arriving in the areas west of the Cascade mountains and in the Columbia corridor for two decades, but few had shown much interest in the vast semi-arid region between the Cascades and the continental divide. The western portions of Oregon and Washington were more inviting to settlement than the eastern portions, of course, but as the western valleys filled, a pattern of movement from west to east began. Obstacles to settlement in the inland region included poor soil, harsh climate, hostile natives, and abysmal transportation. But, as the anonymous author of An Illustrated History of Baker, Grant, Malheur, and Harney Counties (1902, p.138) remarks, "when ... gold was discovered ...these obstacles were soon shown not to be insurmountable, and the seeds of future development at once began to be planted."



The first gold rush in the "Inland Empire" occurred near Fort Colville in eastern Washington in 1855. Subsequent rushes occurred in British Columbia in the late 1850's and in 1860 the Orofino rush drew prospectors into Idaho (Trimble, 1913). In August of 1861, a party set out from Portland in search of the already legendary "Blue Bucket" placer discovered (and lost) by the Stephen Meek party in 1845 (Hiatt, 1893). On the evening of October 23, one member of the party--Henry Griffin-- struck "a good prospect," and the other members staked claims along what became known as Griffin Gulch. Four members of the party provisioned themselves from Walla Walla, the nearest settlement, and returned to spend the winter on their claims while the rest wintered in the Willamette Valley.

In the spring of 1862 a "numerous and varied" people accompanied them back to Griffin Gulch, and by "the fall of 1862 thousands of immigrants came to the country" (History, 1902, p. 146). During the next year, the settlement grew to c. 5000 people, who formed the town of Auburn and created Baker County, since the nearest county seat was over two hundred miles west at The Dalles. From Auburn, prospectors set out on forays that led to the discoveries of richer placers in the Boise Basin, the Owyhee mines, and important strikes in the Mormon Basin, Rye Valley, Sumpter, and Granite (Potter, 1976). As Auburn's yield diminished, its population drifted off, leaving it abandoned within a few years.

Baker City, Auburn's successor, was started in 1864 (Hiatt, 1893). By 1868 it had a stage line and a post office, and in 1868 the county seat was moved down from Auburn. During the late 1860's and early 1870's the placer mining operations suffered from a lack of water, and the level of economic activity in the county slumped. Although the population dwindled as miners and "boomers" left for better opportunities elsewhere, unlike Auburn, Baker City remained vital and became the largest city in eastern Oregon by the turn of the century (Olcott, 1913). More significantly, it became identified as the commercial and cultural center not only of Baker County, but of the vast region east of the Cascade mountains. In 1903, for example, the Catholic Church formed the Baker Diocese and included within its jurisdiction all of the Oregon counties east of the mountains--an area of over 80,000 square miles (O'Conner, 1930).

With Baker City's rise to prominence as a regional center came a predictable interest in railroads. The Northern Pacific, which was to serve the Northwest as its first transcontinental railway, was "building" during the 1870's, progressing slowly with many changes in financial and geographical plans along the way (Hedges, 1930). In 1877, rallies in Baker and other cities of the Inland Empire drummed up support for the Mitchell Bill, which was introduced in Congress--and soundly defeated--that year (History, 1902). The bill proposed to hurry the NP's progress by what amounted to a federal takeover of the road. An additional feature was construction of a Portland-Dalles-Salt Lake railroad to serve eastern Oregon. This feature was particularly appealing to the people of Baker County, of course.

The next major railway scheme to catch eastern Oregon's interest was the Seattle, Walla Walla and Baker Railroad Company, which was to have been a north-south, narrow gauge road beginning in Seattle. Although it was capitalized at a substantial sum ($2,000,000) only a short portion of the road was actually built (Fleming, 1949). Finally, in the early 1880's the Oregon Railway and Navigation Company began building south from the Columbia and the Oregon Short Line began building northwest from Granger, Wyoming, and Baker seemed to be the logical junction point for the two lines. The actual point of completion turned out to be Huntington--fourty miles south of Baker--but the result was that as of 1884, Baker was served by a transcontinental railroad (Athern, 1969).

At the time of its completion, the railroad perhaps represented more of a moral than an economic victory for Baker County. The author of the Illustrated History, writing only fifteen years after the fact, analyzes the psychological impact of the railroad in his own inimitable style:

The impetus given to industry by the anticipation of a railroad did not cease to exert its influence after the whistle of the locomotive has awakened the echoes with its unwonted sound (p. 170).

In the early 1880's Baker City had reached a period of economic stagnation or perhaps decline. The placer mining boom was over, and the succeeding industry--agriculture and stock raising-- did not offer especially attractive opportunities. Nor was the area around Baker as well suited to agriculture as other areas in the region. In 1886, however, census figures reveal that of the 3.2 million dollar gross value of taxable property in the county, cattle, at $635,517, was the largest single element (History, 1902, p. 171). As a final blow, in 1887, the more prosperous agricultural part of the county to the southeast seceded to form Malheur County. If Baker was to retain its early prosperity and leadership, then, it had to find new sources of wealth. In most peoples' minds, the railroads held the key.

The new sources of wealth that Baker County needed came in the late 1880's in the form of two industries dependent upon railroad transportation: quartz mining and lumber. Placer operations had dominated the first mining in the county. These produced gold in relatively pure form that needed little additional refining. Quartz mining, however, as it developed after the discoveries on Cracker Creek in 1887, produced ore that had to be shipped by rail to smelters in Tacoma or Denver. In 1888, the first year of production, the quartz mines on Cracker Creek and other locations shipped 500,000 pounds of ore to Denver (History, 1902).

In 1889, David Eccles and his associates from Utah incorporated the Oregon Lumber Comapny to cut the timber they had acquired in the Powder River drainage west of Baker. Prior to the O.R. & N. railroad, lumber had been cut only for local consumption, but beginning in 1887, lumber was shipped to distant markets (History, 1902). The business boom of the late 1880's continued until 1890, faltered, and then revived:

The spring of 1891 brought another business revival in Baker City and County, the result of the Seven Devils boom [in Idaho], for Baker City was the nearest railroad point to that famous camp. The section also realizes the benefit from the development of the lumbering industry incident to the construction of the Sumpter Valley Railway and the fact that the rich mining district around Sumpter were made directly tributary to it (History, 1902, p. 173).

David Eccles and the Sumpter Valley Railway, 1890-1895

For the citizens of Baker, then, the prosperity of 1889 and 1890 could be seen as the result of their railroad connection. Railroads, along with mining and timber, loomed large in the local press, and no doubt held a similar importance in the public imagination. When David Eccles and a group of his associates from Utah proposed building the Sumpter Valley Railway in the spring of 1890, the public response was positive indeed. Access to Oregon Lumber Company timber was the obvious rationale for the new railroad, but access to the new quartz mines in the Cracker Creek basin was an added factor. A third factor was the elusive prospect of a north-south narrow gauge interstate line, first proposed in the Seattle, Walla Walla and Baker Railroad scheme and then resuscicated in the Nevada-California-Oregon Railroad, which operated a narrow gauge road from Reno, Nevada to Lakeview, Oregon (Shaw et al., 1948; Arrington, 1975; Ferrell, 1967). If the Sumpter Valley road could eventually connect to another line to the north or south, Baker would become a crossing point for north-south and east-west interstate railroads; this must have seemed a very enviable position for Baker in 1890.

When C. W. Nibley, president of the Oregon Lumber Company, announced that building the Sumpter Valley line was contingent upon the citizens of Baker furnishing $50,000 capital for the venture, their response was to subscribe the stock by the middle of August (History, 1902). In the meantime, however, Nibley and Eccles and reached an agreement with Charles Francis Adams, president of the Union Pacific Railway, which controlled the Oregon Short Line and the Oregon Railway and Navigation Company. The result of this agreement was that the UP would furnish used narrow gauge equipment for the new road in exchange for bonds. Also, the UP would contract for 500,000 ties each year from the Oregon Lumber Company (Arrington, 1975). Wisely choosing debt over equity, Eccles did not take the $50,000 from the Baker County subscribers but financed the road himself.

David Eccles--financier of the railroad and its first president--was one of the great capitalist of the American West. His humble origins, colorful personality, entrepreneurial zeal, and religious background have made him a favorite figure for historians and biographers (Eccles, 1951; Arrington, 1975; Beal, 1962; Sutton, 1950; Horne, 1968).

Eccles is associated foremost with the construction industry and secondarily with lumber, railroads, sugar beet processing, and banking. The Utah Construction Company (now Utah International) was Eccles' largest and most durable venture. A close second--at least during

Eccles' lifetime--was the Oregon Lumber Company, which was an amalgam of mills Eccles purchased or built in Oregon during the 1880's and 1890's. The list of Oregon Lumber Company mill sites eventually included Baker, Hood River, Inglis, Meacham, North Powder, Pleasant Valley, Dee, Chenowith, Viento, Haynes Spur, and Little Salmon River. The mills at Chenowith and Baker each reached the capacity of 100,000 bf/day, which was respectable in the 1890's (Arrington, 1975; Cornwall, 1924).

Eccles' interest in lumber in Baker County began when he established two small mills to cut ties for the Oregon Short Line construction. The purchase of a tract of Sumpter Valley timber in 1889 led him to form the Oregon Lumber Company in 1890, and to build the large mill in Baker in 1891 (Arrington, 1975). For the next fifty years, the operations of the Oregon Lumber Company and the Sumpter Valley Railway Company were inextricably connected.

OLC Capitalists	SVRC Board
David Eccles	David Eccles
C. W. Nibley	C. W. Nibley
William Eccles	William Eccles
J. Stoddard	J. Stoddard
H. H. Spencer	F. M. Shurtliff
Thomas Dee	
George Romney	
Hyrum Young	

In July of 1890, the road was completed nearly as far as McEwen, which was to be the first terminus, twenty-five miles up the Powder River. The first car of logs reached Baker on August 1, 1890, and the remaining mileage to McEwen was completed in the summer of 1891 (History, 1902). The next extension of the line--to Sumpter--was not begun, however, until 1895. A nationwide depression hit Baker County during the years 1893-1895 and slowed the lumber business. The Oregon Lumber Company mill remained open, but Eccles himself had to advise the employees of cash-flow problems and promise to pay them when he could (Arrington, 1975). A drought in 1895 hampered placer mining operations, and the market for agricultural products was unfavorable (History, 1903). These economic reverses prolonged the railway's McEwen period.

Although Eccles and the Utah group dominated the lumber business in Baker County and the lumber business dominated the railway's traffic, as early as 1893--the first year of the "panic"--it began to exhibit signs of an economic life of its own. McEwen became a thriving community boasting "two stores, two blacksmith shops, a saloon, Odd

Fellow's Hall and a Methodist Church" (Ferrell, 1967, p. 16). Scheduled passenger service was inaugurated in 1893, and the first timetable appeared on May 31. The 1893 PUC inspection remarked that the trestle timbers on the line were already in poor condition (PUC, 1893). Financial records for the first half of 1893, filed in the Report of Railroad Commissioners for that year, show an operating deficit of $4,856.80.

More interesting than the deficit is the earnings statement, which shows freight revenues of $8,888.09 and passenger revenues of $2,406.40 (PUC, 1893). On April 14, McEwen and Daly, merchants in McEwen, complained to the commission that the freight rates of 17.5 cents per hundred were exorbitant. They had shipped 32 cars of grain and machinery to McEwen. In September of the following year, they renewed their complaint (PUC, 1894). The passenger traffic that accounted that for over 20% of the railway's revenue and its freight service to the mining region confirm its role in local commerce.

Sumpter, 1896-1901

While the gold strikes on Cracker Creek in the late 1880's increased Baker County's use of the Sumpter Valley Railway, it is almost certain that no one--the Eccles group, the citizens, or the miners themselves--anticipated the magnitude of the mining activity which was to develop there during the late 1890's. In 1897, Sumpter had a population of c. 300; by 1903, it had grown to nearly 4,000 and "Golden Sumpter" was world famous (Potter, 1976). In addition to the predictable trappings of a boom town--hotels, saloons, and three newspapers--Sumpter also had a smelter, an opera house, and a hospital--81 businesses in all and eight brick buildings. In 1902, according to a contemporary account, "though...the vices that go wherever prosperity reigns are well represented, the forces which make for morality, culture, and the highest enlightenment are also here" (History, 1902, p. 220).

The mines on Cracker Creek between Sumpter and Bourne were all deep quartz mines which produced fabulous sums for their owners but required substantial capital to operate. The largest were the Columbia, the Eureka and Excelsior, the Golconda, the North Pole, the Tabor Faction, the Bunker Hill, and the Ibex. Each of these mines figures into the folklore of the area. The Baring family of London, for example, is reported to have purchased the North Pole for $10,000 in 1895 and to have extracted over $1,000,000 from it the following year (Potter, 1976). Although estimates of the total output of the Sumpter district (or any mining district) are imprecise, Potter (1976)

suggests the figure of $20,000,000 for the years 1900-1908. This compares to Lindgren's 1901 estimate of $18,000,000 as the total production of the Blue Mountain district from 1880-1899.

Commercial activity on the scale that Sumpter offered in 1896 was welcome news to the Sumpter Valley Railway Company. Traffic soon grew to four trains each day between Baker and Sumpter (Potter, 1976). During the first years of production, shipments of concentrates to the smelters at Tacoma and Everett have been estimated at 800,000 lbs./year (Potter, 1976). However, PUC records for 1909, well after the best years for the district, show the Sumpter Valley railroad shipping 1,559 tons (3,118,000 lbs.) of ore. In addition to the ore shipped from Sumpter, some was smelted in the smelters built there in 1900 and 1903 (Potter, 1976). Neither of the two smelters was successful, however, and the largest mines continued to ship their ore to Tacoma (Ferrell, 1969; Potter, 1976; Lindgren, 1901). In addition to the ore, the railroad enjoyed the general freight and passenger traffic associated with the boom.

> It must be kept in mind that any railroad serving a mining district often carries more tonnage into the mother lode than from it. The reason for this heavy traffic was huge quantities of mine timbers, milling equipment used to extract the gold, to say nothing of the miners themselves. (Ferrell, 1969, p. 20)

In 1909, passenger traffic generated $39,788 or 29.6% of the road's traffic revenue (PUC, 1909). Manufactured and agricultural goods constituted less than 5% of the freight traffic, however. The remaining 95% of 1909's freight traffic was logs and lumber, a percentage that reveals the close connection between the Sumpter Valley Railway Company and the lumber business. At first, the railway operated as a logging railroad--i.e., one that brought logs from the timber down to the mill at Baker. Soon, however, mills were built up the Powder River from Baker. For these operations, the railway hauled logs from the forest to the mills, and then lumber from the mills to the O.R.& N. main line at Baker.

Walter Scott (1972), who was a settler in the area, reports an early mill at the mouth of Blue Canyon that antedated the railway. Loggers drove logs down the river to the mill, and the lumber was presumably hauled to market by teams. In 1902, the Stoddard Brothers Lumber Company--a firm closely associated with the Oregon Lumber Company--built a mill at Clear Creek near McEwen (Ferrell, 1969). They logged south of the Powder River, taking timber out at first with a mule-powered tram, and later with a narrow gauge railroad of their own (Ferrell, 1969; Arrington, 1975). In 1900 the mill burned (Ferrell,

1969), and they moved their operations to Sumpter, logging for the Sumpter Lumber Company mill (SM, Sept. 21, 1904), which they had purchased in 1897 (Ferrell, 1969).

Two other mills on the lower Powder River generating freight revenues for the railway were the Wisconsin-Oregon Lumber Company mill at the mouth of Stices Gulch, and the Shockley and McMurran mill at Milbridge (Scott, 1972). Shockley and McMurran sold out to the Stoddard Brothers in 1914, bringing their operations into the Stoddard Lumber Company-Oregon Lumber Company fold, but in 1897 they were angry enough at the railway to protest their rates to the Public Utility Commission (PUC, 1897).

Whitney, Tipton, and Austin, 1901-1905

Long before the 1917 fire that destroyed Sumpter, the Sumpter Valley Railway Company decided to continue building the railway beyond the immediate vicinity of its namesake. Building from the Sumpter wye (or S-wye) required more elaborate and expensive construction than the route up the Powder River, however. The first obstacle was the pass at Larch Summit, which rose to 5,094 feet. This section required deep cuts and sharp turns to maintain an even grade to Larch, where sidings and a wye were built. The Alder Springs trestle, perhaps the most photogenic spot on the line was built at this time.

Fourteen miles beyond Sumpter, the road reached the townsite of Whitney in the fall of 1901 (Shaw et al., 1949). Here was an ideal mill site, and a junction point for logging railroads operated by lumber companies cutting the surrounding timber. Whitney developed as a mill town with a population of loggers and millworkers, a weekly newspaper, stores, hotels, and "of course, the inevitable saloon" (Shaw et al., 1947, p. 74). In addition to the lumber-related activities, Whitney served as a shipping point for the mines in the area. Miners wintered in Whitney, returning to mines near Greenhorn or other points at higher elevations as the weather moderated (Potter, 1976).

To the west of Whitney along the railway's chosen route lay a second pass, this one reaching an elevation of 5,097 feet, three feet higher than Larch Summit. The road to Tipton, as the next station was named, was begun in April, 1903, but not completed until the summer of 1904 (Ferrell, 1967). Although the route was a short 7.65 miles, grades and rock work--as well as winter-- delayed completion. According to the account in the Sumpter Miner, "Railroad Day," which was celebrated on August 3, was sufficiently festive.

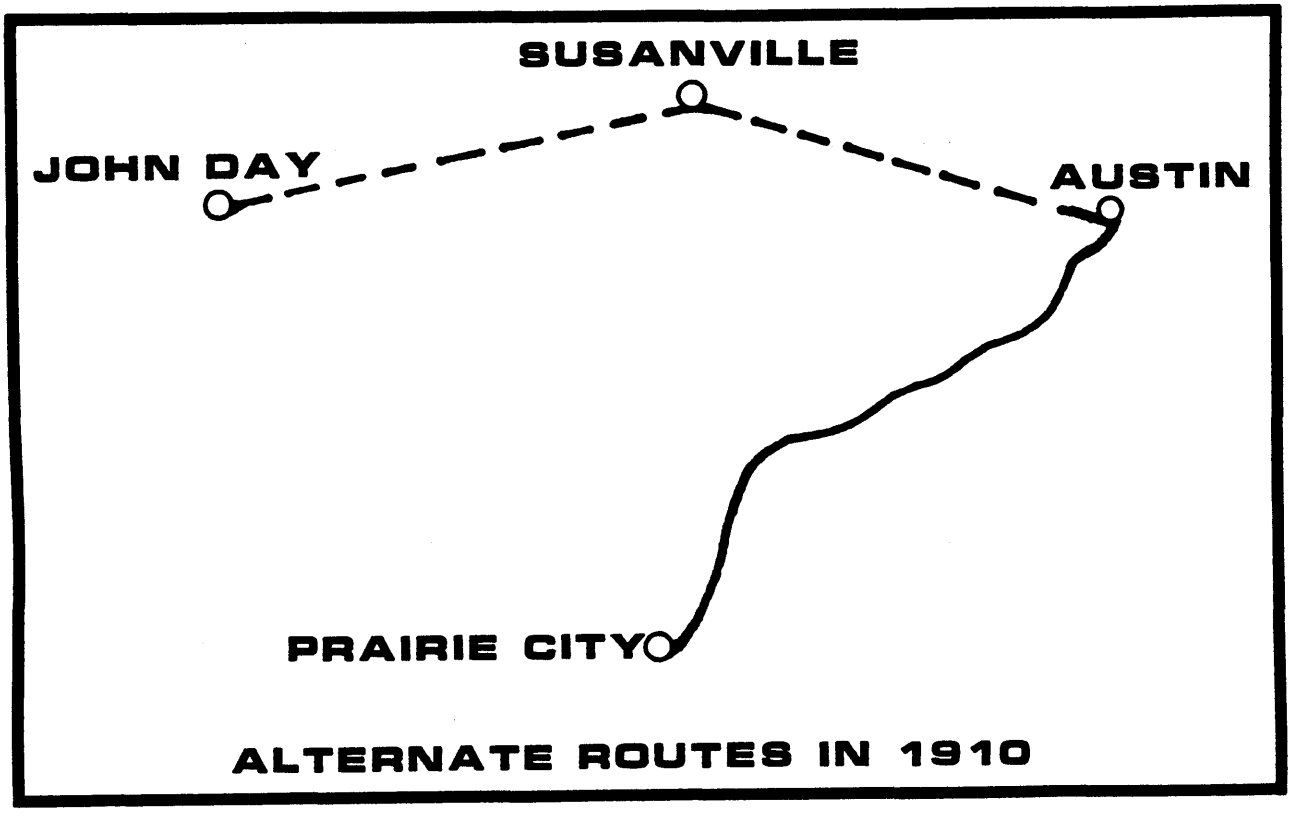
The raison-d'etre for Tipton was its proximity to the mines at Greenhorn. This mining district was experiencing a boom in 1904 and

Greenhorn City had a population of c. 600 (Potter, 1976). The Sumpter Miner announced that the Sumpter Valley Railway Company would build into Greenhorn City (July 6, 1904), but consideration of the town's elevation (6,271 feet) and the ephemeral nature of mining towns apparently restrained the firm. Descending from Tipton, the railway pushed west to Austin, completing that section in the fall of 1905 (Ferrell, 1967). On this part of the line, the engineers designed the only true horseshoe bend on the entire route. Generally, according to Shaw (1949, p. 76), "grades and curvature to Austin...were still higher than those preceding."

While the railway struggled with the practical problems presented by the mountains between the S-wye and Austin, the public concentrated its attention on less practical--if more interesting--questions of where the railway should go and how it should get there. To paraphrase the remark of one editor during the period, more tracks were laid in Baker County newspapers than on all the ground in the state. Railroads were a popular subject because of their connection in the public's imagination with prosperity, and also because they could solve some of the transportation problems that plagued industrial development. In 1905, for example, the possibility of a railroad from Sumpter to Bourne occasioned much comment in the Sumpter Miner. The road, which would have served the large mines on Cracker Creek, was never built, but the need was clearly there. In 1913, the Ben Harrison mine purchased a 100 h.p. steam tractor to drag ore carts down to Sumpter during the winter (SM, Aug. 14, 1913). However successful this expedient may have been, it points to the need for mechanical transportation in the mining area.

As early as 1903, the newspapers agreed that the Sumpter Valley Railway should serve the John Day Valley (BCH, Jan. 22, 1903). This was in keeping with the basic plan to connect with the Nevada-California-Oregon line at Lakeview (Arrington, 1975). Two different proposals for the route to the John Day were current. One proposal was the route through Prairie City, the other was a route down the Middle Fork of the John Day River to Susanville, then across the valley to the town of John Day (Shaw, 1949). In 1904, we find the railway company meeting with the citizens of Prairie City in July (SM, July 27, 1904) and then speculating publicly about the more northern route in November (SM, Nov. 23, 1904). Obviously, the railway wanted to encourage rivalry between the towns to get the best bargain it could. In Adams' analysis, the choice was a difficult one:

Practical considerations of the road's own interests would have suggested Susanville as the logical place toward which to build for two very sound reasons: First, it would have tapped considerable stands of excellent timber all along the route; second, building would have been on a downgrade along the Middle Fork of the John Day River. To build to Prairie City, on the other hand, would require the crossing and descent of another spur of the mountains and the timber was comparatively light on this line. (p. 78).



ALTERNATE ROUTES IN 1910

At any rate, the company was committed to the John Day extension. In January of 1905, Joseph West, who was the engineering superintendent, announced that the Harriman railroads were harassing the Sumpter Valley Railway by discontinuing the "courtesy rate" on shipping other railroads' steel rails across the continent. West proposed to beat Harriman by chartering vessels in Germany and shipping rails by water to Portland, a strategy he had employed on a OLC logging railroad near Mt. Hood. While it seems ironic at first

that Harriman could have felt threatened by the Sumpter Valley road, Eccles and his associates were substantial enough to rival Harriman and, as the newspaper account suggests, the rate war could be the first step in a plan "quelch the little road and later to buy in, broaden its gauge to standard, extend into the interior and make the system of value as a feeder to the main line of the O. R. & N." (SM, Jan. 4, 1905).

Logs and Lumber, 1901-1924

While the Sumpter Valley Railway was building into the forest of the Blue Mountains in the years after the turn of the century, events that would have a profound effect on the company's fortunes were unfolding across the continent in Washington D.C. In 1891, Congress had passed the Forest Reserve Act, allowing forested areas of the West to be withdrawn from public entry--which meant settlement--and managed by the federal government. On July 28, 1902, 3,053,178 acres of the Blue Mountains were withdrawn to form the Blue Mountain Forest Reserve (Hodgson, 1913). The response to this event was a good deal of confusion.

According to Hodgson (1913), the people living in the affected areas divided themselves into three groups: the cattlemen welcomed the Forest Reserve, since it would mean better grazing management and protection from itinerant sheepherders; the miners objected to the Reserve, since they feared that their timber supply would be interrupted; and the lumber companies were simply appalled at the entire idea. The Federal Forest Inspector, H. D. Langille, was equally appalled by the practices of the lumber companies. Hodgson quotes from Langille's 1906 report:

> The Oregon Lumber Company (which has recently absorbed the Grande Ronde Company) has its headquarters and mills at Baker City, and logs are brought to them over the Sumpter Valley Railway which was first built to Sumpter but has now been extended to Whitney to reach the timber belt of that section. All along the line of this road the destruction of the timber is almost complete.
>
> During the past twenty (20) years this Company has been actively engaged in acquiring title to timber lands, not only in this part of the state, but elsewhere. It is common knowledge that their employees have been supplied with funds with which to purchase lands under the Timber and Stone Act, and it is a matter of record that these claims have been transferred to the Company on the same day or the day

following receipt of patent. In this way large areas of timber land which are now included within the temporary withdrawal of the reserve are held by this Company. If these lands are retained in the reserve the timber will be stripped off and the lands relinquished for Scrip. (p.15)

For the lumber companies, the practical result of the Reserve (and the National Forest system that followed it) was that timber was no longer so easily available. As Langille's report suggests, the lumber companies had been acquiring public land by extralegal means. These included bogus claims for mining, fraudulent claims on 160-acre Timber and Stone Act tracts, illegal purchases of state school sections, and other expedients. In 1908 Stephen A. D. Puter, "king of the Oregon land fraud ring" wrote a book "from the dismal recesses of a prison cell" exposing his own and others' illegal activities. His account of the "Blue Mountain Forest Reserve Conspiracy" indicates an immensely complex scheme that began to unravel with the 1905 indictment of six conspirators and continued until the statute of limitations on the offenses ran out (Puter, 1908). In October of 1911, David Eccles and the Oregon Lumber Company were indicted for their past offenses (SM, Oct. 4, 1911). The case dragged on after Eccles' death in 1912 and was eventually settled in 1922 (Arrington, 1975).

The extensions of the Sumpter Valley Railway into the higher altitude timber of the Blue Mountains "opened up" the forest as most commentators suggest, then, but after 1902 getting the legal right to cut that timber was no longer as simple as had been the case. Lumber companies were obliged to purchase stumpage from the Forest Service, or to purchase rights from other firms, or to secure rights from firms that had acquired them before the formation of the Reserve. Each of these methods was expensive, and as the demand exceeded the supply--at least in the near term--the price went up. The last great tract in the area was the Middle Fork tract that Eccles bought in 1911 from a Wisconsin operator named Jones. Because Eccles and his Oregon Lumber Company had been enjoined not to purchase Federal timber at the time, he had to suffer the injury of a reportedly high price and the insult of buying and logging it in his brother William's name (Arrington, 1975).

The major lumber companies operating along the Sumpter Valley Railway route were the Oregon Lumber Company, the Stoddard Brothers Lumber Company, the Nibley Hilgard Lumber Company, the Baker White Pine Lumber Company, and the William Eccles Lumber Company. The following summary lists their mills, areas of operation, and dates of activity.

Oregon Lumber Company
Operations-1889-1956

Mills-Baker, Whitney, Austin, Bates

Capacity-100,000 board feet/day (1924)

Oregon Lumber Company's Baker County mills accounted for much of the production in the region. During the later years, the Baker mill dried and finished green lumber cut at other locations, especially Bates. The firm was sold to the Hines Lumber Company in 1956.

Stoddard Brothers Lumber Company

Operations-1883-1953

Mills-Baker, McEwen, Sumpter (Sumpter Lumber Company)

Capacity-50,000 board feet/day (1924)

The Stoddard family entered the lumber business in Oregon with Eccles in 1883 and formed their own firms in 1892. After 1914, the company changed its name to Stoddard Lumber Company. The firm succeeded Shockley and McMurran Lumber Company (1914), the Baker White Pine Lumber Company (1929), and the Grande Ronde Lumber Company (1929) before suspending operations in 1953.

Baker White Pine Lumber Company

Operations-1912-1929

Mills-White Pine, Baker

Capacity-150,000 board feet/day (1924)

Most commentators remark on Baker White Pine Lumber Company's reputation as a "high class" operation, with good equipment, well built logging spurs, and a modern mill. The founder, Frank Gardinier, formed Cavanough Lumber Company after the demise of Baker White Pine Lumber Company in 1929.

W. H. Eccles Lumber Company

Operations-1911-1926

Mills-Austin

Capacity-75,000 board feet/day

The W. H. Eccles Lumber Company (named for David Eccles' brother) was formed to purchase the huge tract which lay on the Middle Fork of the John Day River. The firm purchased the Baker mill of the Wisconsin and Oregon Lumber Company in 1911 and moved it to Austin. When the John Day tract was exhausted, the mill was removed.

Nibley Hilgard Lumber Company

Operations-1912-1915

Mills-Whitney

Capacity-N. A.

C. W. Nibley was first president of the Sumpter Valley Railroad and an enthusiastic capitalist. When the Whitney mill burned in 1914, the Oregon Lumber Company took over the firm, rebuilding the Whitney mill in 1928. A closely allied firm, the Nimbley-Mimnaugh Lumber Company, operated in Wallowa County until 1923 when it merged with the Stoddard Lumber Company.

(sources: Ferrell, 1969; Arrington, 1975; Baker Centennial Album, 1974; Hudspeth, 1979; SM, Sept. 20, 1904; BMA, Apr. 20, 1907)

The industrialization in the Blue Mountains, then, followed a pattern set by the progress of the railway. The main line of Sumpter Valley road furnished an artery through the mountains, getting people, supplies, and logs to the various mills, then getting their product down to Baker where it could be finished and shipped throughout the nation. While the Sumpter Valley maintained the main line, each of the lumber companies built their own railroads branching off the main line into the timber. The lumber companies cut the timber and yarded it to their own line, then loaded it onto cars and sent them to the mill via the main line. In some cases, the logging roads ran into the mills, so the main line was not necessary, but each mill required the services of the railway for lumber shipments and supplies.

The equipment favored by the lumber companies was generally gear-driven locomotives manufactured by Lima (Shay design), Climax, or Heisler. According to Ferrell (1975), the Oregon Lumber Company owned at various times six Lima Shays, three Heislers, one Climax. The Stoddard Lumber Company owned one Shay, three Climaxes,and four Heislers; the Baker White Pine Company had three Climaxes; the Nibley Lumber Company had one Heisler, and the W. C. Eccles Lumber Company had two Heislers and a Climax. These geared locomotives were popular with logging operators because they could climb steep grades and develop their tractive effort--or pulling power--at low speeds.

Unlike the lumber companies, the Sumpter Valley Railway concentrated its locomotive fleet on conventional rod-driven locomotives which were more appropriate for main line operations. During the entire history of the railway, narrow gauge lines throughout the U. S. were either re-gauging to standard gauge or abandoning their operations. As a result, the Sumpter Valley fell heir to used narrow gauge equipment that was available for bargain prices. Ferrell's painstaking analysis of the Sumpter Valley Railroad's locomotives (1969, p. 104-7) accounts for thirty-two engines owned by the line during its fifty-six years of operation. Two of the locomotives were logging Shays, purchased by the Oregon Lumber Company but originally "lettered" Sumpter Valley. The roster also included two switch engines and a White motor truck refitted for passenger service. The balance of the engines were built by the Brooks or Baldwin firms between 1878 and 1900 and acquired by the railway from their original owners. The exceptions were four Baldwins acquired new in 1915 and 1916, and two new Schenectady locomotives purchased in 1920. The most famous locomotives owned by the railway were two large articulated Baldwin 2-6-6-2T engines usually referred to as Mallets, although they had simple rather than compound engines. These came to the firm late--1940--after a decade's service with the Uintah railroad in Colorado. They were reportedly the largest narrow gauge locomotives ever built for domestic use.

While the firms followed conventional practice in their railway operations, their practice in logging was somewhat unusual. Generally, industrial logging in the western forests benefited immensely from John Dolbeer's invention of the portable logging winch in the 1882. By the first decade of the twentieth century, most logging in the west was done by rail and railroad logging technology had become nearly standardized (Koch, 1979; Brown, 1934). Timber operators west of the Cascades favored highlead yarding, which used large steam winches called donkey engines to move the logs on cables to the track where they could be loaded onto cars with loading booms also powered by donkey engines.

East of the Cascades, where the timber was less dense and the terrain gentler, the loggers favored the huge rail-mounted machines which combined the tasks of skidding or yarding the logs and then loading them onto railroad cars. Since the rail-mounted machines were more mobile than the donkey engines, they offered a considerable advantage. The most common method in pine country "railroad shows" from c. 1905 to c. 1925 involved a further refinement using horse drawn high wheels to move the logs to the track then to load them with one of the rail-mounted loaders (Lamm, 1944; Andrews, 1956; Pierre, 1979).

The most famous of the rail-mounted loaders and by far the most popular was the McGiffort machine, a mechanical monster which could pull empty cars to the logging site, load them with logs while moving them underneath itself, and pull the loaded cars back to the main line. The Clyde company, which manufactured the "McGiffort Self-Propelling Log Loader," claimed that the machine could cut logging costs by 66% and double output (Clyde Iron Works, n.d.). Even allowing for a certain amount of commercial hyperbole, the claim is probably not far from the truth. Other loading methods were limited to the slow and dangerous crosshaul method or cumbersome A-frame loaders which could not move the cars (Wackerman, 1949).

In spite of the advantages of track-mounted loaders or skidders, however, the Blue Mountain lumber companies continued to use the old methods and machinery, including some remarkable contraptions which they made themselves (Ferrell, 1975). The Timberman directory of lumber companies for 1924 lists the equipment of the Stoddard Lumber Company, the Baker White Pine Lumber Company, and the W. H. Eccles Lumber Company, and shows none of them using rail-mounted skidders or loaders (Cornwall, 1924). Photographs taken as late as 1922 show cars being loaded by steam donkeys and A-frames (Ferrell, 1969, p. 58). Whether motivated by economy, the difficulty of converting the equipment from standard gauge to narrow gauge, or considerations of the light 40 lb. rail used on the spurs, the firms clung to their old-fashioned yarding and loading equipment until the end.

However they accomplished their production, the lumber companies were relatively prosperous. The only one with serious financial problems seems to have been the Baker White Pine Company, which was bankrupted in 1929 (Ferrell, 1975). Oregon Lumber Company records for the World War I years--generally a time of prosperity in the Pacific Coast lumber industry--reveal that the Baker operations were the firm's most profitable (LDS, 1920). In 1917, the Baker operations produced a profit of $265,399, while Oregon Lumber company operations at Dee made $95,555 and the Oregon Lumber Company mill at Inglis made $120,700. The following year saw Baker profits falling to $138,056, while Dee's rose to $103,753 and Inglis's fell to $47,266. In 1919, Baker made

$127,636, Dee made $96,846, and Inglis lost $2,001. In 1920, Baker produced a solid profit of $376,271, Dee finished with $88,804, and Inglis managed $2,510. Since the mills at Dee and Baker were about the same size (100,000 bf/day) the comparison is especially revealing (Cornwall, 1924).

At the beginning of their businesses in Oregon the Eccles, Stoddard, and Nibley interests were all closely aligned. Ellen Stoddard was David Eccles' second wife--he had two in a polygamous arrangement--and C. W. Nibley was Eccles' close associate for many years. Eccles quarreled with Nibley and they divided their business interests for several years, but they soon resumed amicable relations (Arrington, 1975).

After Eccles' death in 1912, the relations between the various firms may have deteriorated to some extent. Oregon Public Service Commission reports for the period 1917-1920 show continuous litigation between the Sumpter Valley Railway, the W. H. Eccles Lumber Company (operated by Stoddards), and the Baker White Pine Company. In 1917 the railway asked for 15% increase in rates, which the lumber companies fought,and in 1919 and 1920 the Stoddard Lumber Company and the Baker White Pine Company brought rate concerns before the commission (PUC, 1917, 1919, 1920). This suggests that the separation of the railway and the lumber firms was practically complete after c. 1915. Ownerships continued to overlap, of course, but the businesses did not defer to each other's interests as much as they did during Eccles' lifetime.

As the century advanced, the railway's business continued to concentrate on lumber while showing some diversificaton. In 1914, passenger traffic produced revenues of $58,779 and freight produced $251,870--a ratio of about 1:4 which was nearly the same as the ratio in 1893 (PUC, 1914). Freight traffic during that year included the following:

Agricultural products (including hay)	2980 tons
Livestock and wool	2507 tons
Mineral products	2704 tons
Lumber and logs	176171 tons

As table 1 shows, operating income and earnings for the railway increased gradually through the first two decades of the century to reach a high point in 1922, after which they declined until the end of operations.

TABLE 1

Sumpter Valley Railway Company Financial Statements
As Reported to Oregon Public Utilities Commission

	Operating Income	Operating Expense	Tax	Operating Earnings
1893*	11,658	11,631	383	d.4,856
1909	139,452	93,135	n.a.	n.a.
1911	250,310	164,501	n.a.	n.a.
1914	316,237	239,922	9,900	66,414
1916	342,087	245,370	10,039	86,677
1917	355,984	274,397	11,275	70,309
1919	449,885	367,835	16,129	65,920
1920	496,261	384,469	19,395	43,807
1921	328,621	259,237	28,549	40,809
1922	511,536	364,049	29,946	117,540
1923	482,298	369,773	32,148	80,357
1924	491,056	398,125	31,000	61,831
1925	457,354	358,211	22,072	76,993
1926	434,704	317,986	33,879	82,789
1927	308,284	262,488	23,307	22,392
1928	259,296	231,206	23,257	4,776
1929	337,143	249,635	23,420	64,088

*Six months ending June 30, 1893.

Grant County 1910-1933

Like Baker County, its sister to the east, Grant County was settled after a gold strike in the early 1860's. Unlike Baker county, however, no transcontinental railroad appeared, so Grant County developed as a stock-raising area, with the most prosperous ranches sited in the fertile valley of the John Day River. By 1895, the county was producing over two million pounds of wool annually, as well as cattle, grain, and other agricultural products. The western fringe of the county reached into the Blue Mountains, where mills served by the Sumpter Valley Railway cut nearly one million board feet of lumber (History, 1902).

The county's three principal towns, located in the central valley, began to clamor for railroad service in the 1880's. By the end of the century, "...appearances justified the hope that the long-looked-for railway transportation was about to be an accomplished fact" (History, 1903, p. 414). The Columbia Southern Railway had completed its line seventy miles south from the Columbia River to Shaniko and was surveying a route across the valley from Prineville to Lakeview. The Nevada- California- Oregon was contemplating a narrow gauge road from Lakeview through Burns to Canyon City and last (and distinctly least in the eyes of our commentator) the Sumpter Valley Railway was poised to descend the mountains and enter Prairie City "...though that road was primarily designed, and has ever been operated as an adjunct to...lumber enterprises" (History, 1903, p. 414). Predictably perhaps, the grander projects withered and the Sumpter Valley completed the remaining miles between Austin and the valley floor in 1910.

The route from Austin to Prairie City was twenty miles long and required the extreme engineering practices on grades and curves that by this time had become a feature of the railway. Ten miles south of Austin, the line negotiated its third and highest pass--5,280' at Dixie Summit. In spite of J. A. West's plan to buy new rail for the construction into the John Day valley, used rail was employed for this section as it had been for the rest of the road. The Eccles and Harriman groups apparently patched up their differences well enough to strike a bargain on rates. Twenty-seven years later, in 1937, the condition of the original rail had become so deplorable and derailments had become so frequent, that the entire line from Baker to Bates was relayed with newer, heavier rail that had been leased from the Union Pacific (Shaw, et al., 1949). Leasing rails was an uncommon business practice, but David Eccles' principles of thrift must have been deeply enough ingrained into the railway's fiscal practices to endure twenty-five beyond his death.

At its fullest extent, the railway reached slightly over 80 miles from Baker to Prairie City. According to Shaw, this required 18,144 degrees of curvature or 224 degrees per mile of main line track (1949, p. 81). Although this much curvature was within the capacity of narrow gauge rod locomotives, it would have stretched the capacity of standard gauge rod locomotives. "This leads to the conclusion that to have operated the Sumpter Valley Railway as a standard gauge line with other than geared locomotives would not only have been expensive but highly unsatisfactory, since the uniformly heavy grade would only have increased the difficulty (Shaw et al., 1949, p. 82). At any rate, the railway was never re-gauged to conventional standards.

When the author of the Illustrated History deplored the Sumpter Valley's connection with "lumber enterprises" he missed the basic point that lumbering was the only industrial enterprise in the area capable of sustaining a railroad. By the turn of the century, the placer deposits in the John Day were marginal and the Grant County quartz mines, located in the Blue Mountains were already served by the Sumpter Valley line (Potter, 1976). Livestock, passengers, freight, and mail provided the railway with its only business in the valley. Passenger service was popular and, as we have seen, contributed c. 20% of the line's revenues, but freight and mail service was limited. In 1928, there were two small sawmills in Prairie City, but their combined capacity of 28,000 board feet per day would not have been enough to generate much income (Abbey's Register, 1928). The livestock shipping was the highpoint of the John Day valley business. During the shipping season, a cattle train left Prairie City each Saturday night to connect with a Union Pacific stock train at Baker. The railway filed the figure of $295,000 with the PUC as their cost to build the 18.83 miles of road; during that year, 2,839 tons of livestock were shipped (PUC, 1911).

Herman Oliver, who was perhaps the most prominent rancher-entrepreneur in the John Day Valley, has left us an interesting account of the Sumpter Valley Railway's role in Grant County life.

> The trains ran in the county for 23 years, but the rail road was useful to us for forty years because we could ship things in and out from Sumpter. Eventually another railroad came to the southern end of the county, from Burns to Seneca. This pulled much of the livestock south. About the same time the highways came and it was cheaper to keep a truck rolling west after it was loaded than to haul by truck to Prairie City or Bates, load on narrow gauge to Baker, reload there onto a main line, and ship to Portland (Oliver, 1961, p. 193).

The other railroad Oliver refers to was a common carrier standard gauge line built between Seneca and Burns. This road, like Sumpter Valley, was built to serve "lumber enterprises" as a condition of the Bear Valley sale, a contract between the Malheur National Forest and the Edward Hines Lumber Company which provided a direct sale of 770,000,000 board feet of Ponderosa pine and guaranteed a timber base for the new mill the Hines company built at Burns. The great irony of this huge sale is that the Forest Service took nearly ten years to find a buyer interested in it. Requirements included building a mill at Burns, building a railroad from the UP main line to Burns, and then building from the mill to the timber in the Bear Valley area. The Forest Service pressured several large lumber companies to take the sale and the Hines company was a distinctly reluctant customer (MNF, n.d.). Had the Oregon Lumber company gotten the sale, it might have had an interesting influence on the future of the Sumpter Valley Railway.

Decline, Depression, and Abandonment 1932-1946

In 1920 the Sumpter Valley Railway was entering its period of peak activity. The town of Sumpter had burned in a great fire in 1917, and the district's mining industry no longer was sufficient to rebuild it. If mining was diminishing, however, the other two legs of the railway's industrial base--lumber and livestock--were still feeling the euphoria of the World War I market for lumber, livestock, and wool. The Oregon Lumber Company mill in Baker had its record-breaking year in 1919, and the railway's operating income for 1920 was slightly more than $496,000, second highest in its history (LDS, 1920; PUC, 1920).

This peak period, however, was relatively short-lived. Timber production in the Blue Mountains is impossible to calculate accurately because of the mix of private and National Forest holdings, but Harold Coons, who was Supervisor of the Whitman National Forest during a later period estimated that 1920 was the peak year of the Blue Mountains' production (WWNF, Nov. 23, 1953). Coons' point rests on his observation that the private stumpage had been cut by this time and the lumber firms became dependent upon National Forest timber. Coincident with the peak of timber production in the Blue Mountains came a peak in livestock production in the John Day country as measured by grazing on the Malheur National Forest. In 1920, 117,461 animals grazed the forest; in 1921 the number rose to 124,413, and in 1922, it fell to 114,593 and never recovered to its former size (Mosgrove, 1980).

As the national depression approached at the end of the 1920's, the fortunes of the Sumpter Valley Railway began to sink. By 1928, operating income had fallen to $259,296 and operating earnings were

down to $4,776 (see table 1). The figures advanced and retreated during subsequent years, of course, but the economic momentum of the century's early years had been dissipated. There is also some evidence that through the 1920's and 1930's the railway offered less promise than it previously had. The equipment was nearly antique, the rails were in poor condition, and the entire concept of narrow gauge technology had fallen out of favor.

In his 1926 study of railroad development in Oregon, J. P. Newell argued for an east-west route across Oregon to serve lumber manufacturers. The proposed route would have gone from Crescent to Crane, crossing the Fort Rock Valley, the Wagontire Desert, and the least populous area of Harney County, missing Burns by twenty miles (Newell, 1926). The much shorter east-west route from Prairie City to Prineville did not seem to occur to him. This route would have offered settled country along its full length and access to the Ochoco and Malheur National Forests. Newell's map of Oregon railroads shows the Sumpter Valley as a dead end, cut off from future development.

As the national depression gained strength in the 1930's, the lumber business was seriously affected. In 1932, US lumber consumption fell to its lowest point in 90 years (MNF, n.d.). The new railroad from Burns to Seneca siphoned off much of the remaining livestock traffic from Prairie City.

> Through the Depression years, the ability to load at Seneca was a great help to stockmen. Up until 1940, the station shipped yearly around 400 cars of livestock, sheep predominating. Sheepmen could take their lambs and ewes to the mountain feed, then separate the lambs when fat, and load them fairly close to the feeding grounds (Oliver, 1961, p. 202).

In 1932, the Sumpter Valley Railway dropped its mail contract to Prairie City and filed for formal abandonment of the Bates to Prairie City line (GCJ May 19, 1932). In 1937, passenger trains were discontinued on the Baker to Bates run.

As the railway struggled through the 1930's, the pattern of business that developed centered on the Oregon Lumber Company mill at Bates. Lumber cut there was shipped green to the dry-kilns at Baker. Logs were brought to the mill by rail, but the OLC had built its own railroad to haul logs out of the Middle Fork valley, and by the later period this railway had become quite extensive. During the 1930's maintenance had been deferred, and the war years--with their shortage of materials and manpower--caused more maintenance to be deferred (PUC, 1946). As the following table shows, however, the line was still capable of generating a positive cash flow:

Table 2

SVRC Financial Statements
As Reported to the Oregon Public Utilities Commission, 1946

Year	Operating Income	Operating Expenses	Tax	Operating Earnings
1941	336,948	197,046	44,739	94,513
1942	262,948	154,836	50,947	57,165
1943	251,509	165,155	45,500	40,854
1944	243,225	145,233	50,161	47,841
1945	239,448	143,352	47,646	48,450

In 1946, the railway filed for final abandonment of the line between Baker and Bates. The Oregon Lumber Company was building dry-kilns at their Bates mills, so the green lumber tonnage that had been sustaining the railway would no longer be available. Log hauling was diminishing as truck logging replaced railroad logging nearly everywhere in the west during the post-war years. Finally, Forest Service management practices were reducing the cut of the Bates mill. Unfortunately, the Bates mill provided 99.7% of the railway's business. The railway had by this time reduced its service to one freight train making two-day round trips from Baker to Bates "when tonnage is sufficient to warrant" (PUC, 1946). Passenger service--limited to the caboose on freight runs--produced revenues of $28.00. The roadbed and tracks were "in need of considerable repair...the fills require widening and most of the cuts require cleaning" (PUC, 1946). Operating revenues for the final year were $137,074 and expenses--without catching up on the maintenance backlog--ran to $143,350 (BRC, Nov. 7, 1946).

During the Sumpter Valley's final year, 42 other US railroads filed for abandonment. In the years 1946-1953, 1,383 US railroads were to join the list of abandonment roads (Conant, 1964). In Conant's analysis (1964), most railroads abandoned between 1900 and 1920 had depleted their resource base, most abandoned between 1920 and 1943 had succumbed to competition from other modes of transportation, and those abandoned between 1943 and 1955 were the victims of route adjustment. The Sumpter Valley--as befits a road that operated from 1890 to 1946--was a victim of all three maladies. The mines and forests it served were depleted, the John Day highway between Baker and Bates was "in excellent condition and well maintained," and the railway proposed--if the ICC permitted the abandonment--to operate a truck line on the highway (PUC, 1946).

THE SUMPTER VALLEY RAILWAY TODAY

In 1985, nearly 40 years after its official demise, the railway still exhibits signs of life. In 1975, a group of people in Baker formed the Sumpter Valley Railway Restoration, which purchased some former Sumpter Valley Railway equipment and began running an excursion train on a section of restored track between McEwen and Sumpter. The excursion train has been popular with tourists, and has served as a focal point for railroad enthusiasts throughout the Northwest.

For the communities once served by the railway, it has become a source of local pride and concern. Pictures of the trains, particularly crossing Boulder Gorge bridge or Alder Springs trestle, are displayed in many businesses and homes. When logging contractors disturbed a part of the line near the Dixie switchbacks, public reaction was swift and rather heated. On virtually all of the main line grade that is not converted to motor vehicle use, a trail follows the tracks, testifying to people's habit in "walking the grade" for recreation, hunting, or nostalgia.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the railway's survival is the amount of folklore that it has generated. Stories told about the railway fall into three broad categories:

a) Stories about Eccles and his associates, with particular reference to polygamy. In these accounts, Eccles is portrayed as being eccentric, thrifty, "canny" or libidinous. In one version, he is portrayed as keeping one wife in Baker and another in Prairie City, although in fact he lived in Utah and seldom visited the railway.

b) Stories about the birth of a child on the railway. These have a basis in fact according to Ferrell (1967). In 1911, Delia Kirkland gave birth to a healthy daughter as the train passed through Salisbury. In most of these stories, conductor David Baird's role as midwife is emphasized. In a common version, Baird says to Mrs. Kirkland, "You should not have gotten on the train in your condition." She replies, "I was not in this condition when I got on the train." This is apparently a reference to the Sumpter Valley Railway's slow pace through the mountains.

c) Stories about the phantom locomotive. According to this account, there is an abandoned locomotive somewhere "up in the hills" that the railway somehow overlooked during its final years of operation. The locomotive is never portrayed as wrecked, but always as resting on a short length of track

which is no longer connected to the main line. In recent years, people have spent many hours actually searching for the locomotive.

CONCLUSION

Several years after the major abandonment in 1946, Marriner Eccles, David Eccles' son, published his memoirs, Beckoning Frontiers: Public and Personal Recollections (1951). The younger Eccles began his career with the Oregon Lumber Company and the Sumpter Valley Railway, supervising the construction of the Austin-to-Prairie City portion of the road in 1910. After his father's death in 1912, Eccles served with the Stoddard Lumber Company in Baker, and then took over family banking interests in Salt Lake City. During the depression, he apparently experienced a deep change in his convictions about laissez faire capitalism that his father had championed so well. As a result, he became an advisor to the Roosevelt administration and eventually chairman of the Federal Reserve System. While the exact nature of Eccles' political views is beyond the scope of our discussion here, one point is well worth repeating "...For almost two decades after my father's death, I was blind to the shape of the interdependent and industrialized society he and others like him helped create" (p. 114). This perception of David Eccles and his cohorts shaping the society of the region is a good place to rest our case for the railway's significance.

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Portland

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UNPUBLISHED MATERIALS

Baker, Oregon

Wallowa-Whitman National Forest (WWNF)

Site Files are survey reports made by the forest's cultural resources personnel. They contain data on SVRC sites and spur line sites (restricted).

Tucker, Gerald F. Historical Sketches of the Wallowa NF This is a scrapbook of historical information relating to the forest.

Forest maps in the forest's collection contain useful information about the railway.

Sumpter Valley Railway Restoration, Inc. (SVRRI)

Blueprints The restoration has a set of original railway blueprints in reproduced form. Additional information about train movements and operations is also on file.

Baker County Library (BCL)

The McCord Collection contains photographs of the railway operations.

La Grande, Oregon

Eastern Oregon College Library Special Collection (EOSC)

The best single collection of manuscript materials relating to the railway. Includes blueprints from 1940's, operation materials, and maps.

John Day, Oregon

Malheur National Forest (MNF)

Site Files contain survey reports of railway related sites from Tipton to Prairie City. (restricted use)

Prairie City (PCRD)

Prairie City Ranger District

An unpublished and anonymous History of the Hines Lumber Company which is useful background material.

Portland, Oregon

Oregon Historical Society (OHS)

The photographic collection in the OHS contains a Sumpter Valley Railway file as well as Baker and Grant County files. Manuscript holdings include a biographical account of Eccles by Dietrich Demling entitled The Role of the Railroad in the Development of the Grande Ronde Valley. Also important is the complete run of Western Railroader in the periodicals collections.

National Railroad Historical Society (NRHS)

The Earl Emlaw Collection contains materials relating to the railway, especially rolling stock and operations.

Multnomah County Library (MCL)

The Oregonian Index is essential to any historical research in this state.

Eugene, Oregon

The University of Oregon Manuscripts Collection (U of O)

The Thomas Neuhausen Papers have files of correspondence for the Sumpter Valley Railway and the Oregon Lumber Company for 1918. Neuhausen was a state lands commissioner early in the century. After resigning his post, he served on the board of the railway and the OLC.

Salem, Oregon

Public Utilities Commission (PUC)

PUC records include annual reports of commercial activities, the 1909 Inventory of the railway, and other documents including the railway's various Abandonment Files.

Corvallis, Oregon

Oregon State University (OSU)

The OSU archives contain extension agents reports, which give excellent information about economic and social conditions in the rural areas of the state.

The Kerr Library Map Room has the best collection of local maps, including the Sanborn Fire Maps, in the state.

Bend, Oregon

Central Oregon Community College Library (COCC)

Leo Shurtliff's Journal contains good information about the operations of the railway during the building period. Selections from the journal are currently available on tape.

Salt Lake City, Utah

LDS Church History Department (LDS)

Information about Eccles and the businesses is available here, including a revealing profit and loss statement for the lumber company.

ORAL SOURCES June - August, 1985

Babs Brainerd	SVR	Prairie City, OR
Don Christy	Bowen Valley and Powder River Gorge	Baker, OR
Jim Evans	Baker	Baker, OR
Phil Hale	Whitney	Whitney, OR
George Hardy	SVRC	Salem, OR
Ron Harr	SVRC	Eugene, OR
Brooks Hawley	McEwen	McEwen, OR
Ernest Hudspeth	Clear Creek	McEwen, OR
Pearl Jones	Baker	Baker, OR
Red Justice	Long Creek RD	Malheur National Forest
J. D. Lethlean	SVR	Baker, OR
Grace Lewis	Baker	Baker, OR
Bill Wilt	SVR Restoration	Nyssa, OR

SUMPTER VALLEY RAILWAY CHRONOLOGY

1884	First train to Baker City on the O.R.& N.
1889	Oregon Lumber Company formed
1890	SVRC chartered
1891	SVRC builds to McEwen
1897	SVRC builds to Sumpter
1901	SVRC builds to Whitney
1904	SVRC builds to Tipton
1905	SVRC builds to Austin
1910	SVRC completed to Prairie City
1911	Nibley Hilgard Lumber Company mill built in Whitney
1912	Baker White Pine Lumber Company builds its first mill
1912	W.H. Eccles Lumber Company builds its mill in Austin
1917	Sumpter burns
1919	OLC Bates mill built
1929	Baker White Pine fails
1933	Line to Prairie City abandoned
1937	Passenger service discontinued
1947	Line to Austin abandoned
1961	Line across Baker abandoned

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Sumpter Valley Railway and Associated Spurs

The proposed historic district contains the extant portions of the Sumpter Valley Railway main line and the permanent spurs associates with the railway. Because portions of the railway and its spurs have been destroyed, there are several hiatuses in the district. Generally, the district begins near the McEwen station site and continues west to the Dixie Pass area, representing the central portion of the original railway. Of the 80.1 miles in the original main line, 39.6 are nominated for inclusion in the proposed district. Of the seven original permanent spur systems, portions of four are nominated for inclusion. For convenience in describing the portions of main line and spurs, the district has been divided into seven sections.

In addition to the linear sections of the nomination district, four station sites--Larch, Whitney, Tipton, and White Pine--are proposed for nomination. These are described separately, with their boundaries set by the original railway wyes or loops that remain at the station sites. Two station sites, Dixie and McEwen, are located within the linear district boundaries, so they are not proposed as separate sites.

The width of the district is established by the original Sumpter Valley Railway right of way, which varied its width from 100' when passing through patented land to 200' when passing through the Blue Mountains Forest Reserve, East Range (now the Malheur and Wallowa-Whitman National Forests).

Section 1 Sumpter Valley Railway main line, McEwen to Sumpter

Beginning at the intersection of the railway and County Road Number 667 (the Clear Creek Road) in the SW 1/4 of Section 17, T10s R38e, the district shall continue along the railway westward to the intersection of the railway and Baker County Road Number 523 (the Sawmill Gulch road) in the SE 1/4 of Section 32, T9s R37e. The width of the district in this nomination section shall be 100', as the original railway right of way, 50' on each side of the center of the roadbed. Excluded from the nomination district shall be those portions of the railway covered by the crossings of Baker County Road Number 564 (Dredge Lane Loop) in the SE 1/4 of Section 12, T10s R37e, State Highway 7 (the Whitney-Tipton highway) in the NW 1/4 of Section 10, T10s R37e, and Baker County Road Number 564 (Dredge Shop Road) in the SE 1/4 of section 4, T10s, R37e. At the point of intersection of the restored main line and the wye constructed by the Sumpter Valley Railroad Restoration, Inc. at Dredge Depot Park, the district shall extend a perpendicular corridor 100 feet in width in a southerly direction a distance of 350 feet to encompass the storage yard used for four items of historic railroad rolling stock associated with the Sumpter Valley Railway.

The resulting area of Section 1 is 77.04 acres, more or less.

Section 2 Sumpter Valley Railway main line, Sumpter Wye to a point near Austin

Beginning at the intersection of the railway, which is numbered Forest Road 055, and a private service road along the west bank of the Powder River in the NE 1/4 of Section 5, T10s R37e, the nomination section shall continue along the railway south and west to a point of intersection between the railway now numbered Malheur National Forest Road 449 and the northern boundary of the SE 1/4 of the SE 1/4 of Section 16, T11s R35e. This quarter section line is the property boundary of TL 400 as recorded in the Grant County Assessor's Map 11 35. The width of the district in this nomination section is 200', as the original railroad right of way, 100' on each side of the center of the roadbed, except that portion of the roadbed in the Whitney station area. Here, beginning at the point of intersection of the railway, numbered Wallowa Whitman National Forest Road 500, and Baker County Road Number 529, the North Fork of Burnt River Road, and continuing west along the railway to the point of intersection of the railway and the west section line of Section 28, in the SW 1/4 of Section 28, T10s R36e, the width of the district shall be 100', 50' on each side of the center of the roadbed, as the original railway right of way.

Excluded from the nomination district in this section are those portions of the railway covered by the crossing of Oregon State Highway 7 in the NE 1/4 of Section 20, T10s R37e; the crossing of Baker County Road Number 529 in the SE 1/4 of Section 34, T10s R36e; the crossing of Oregon State Highway 7 in the NE 1/4 of Section 34, T10s R35 1/2e; and the crossing of Oregon State Highway 7 in the SW 1/4 of Section 11, T11s R35e. The resulting area is 647.7, more or less.

Inclusive of four station sites outside the confines of, but adjacent to the main line corridor (said sites being more particularly described below the total area of section 2 is 662.26, more or less.

Section 3 Sumpter Valley Railway main line, Dixie Pass

Beginning at the point of intersection of the railway and Malheur National Forest Road 089, the Lunch Creek Road, in the SE 1/4 of Section 12, T12s R34e, the district shall follow the westward course of the railway (here numbered Malheur National Forest Road 612) to the point of intersection of the railway and Dads Creek in the SW 1/4 of Section 9, T12s R34e. The width of the district in this section shall be 200', as the original railway right of way, 50' on each side of the center of the roadbed.

Excluded from the nomination district shall be those portions of the railway covered by the crossings of Malheur National Forest Road 3065 Dans Creek Road, in the NW 1/4 of Section 14, T12s R34e; the crossing of US Highway 26, the John Day Highway, at the three-way intersection of the railway, Malheur National Forest Road 087, and the highway in the SE 1/4 of Section 10, T12s R34e; and six subsequent crossings of US Highway 26 in the SW 1/4 of Section 10, T12s R34e.

The resulting area is 133.3 acres, more or less.

Section 4 The Dean Creek Spur System

Beginning at the point that the railway emerges from Phillips Lake, for practical purposes said point being approximately at the elevation of 42,000 ft in the NE 1/4 of Section 28, T10s R38e, the district shall continue south and west along the railway to a terminus at the intersection of the railway and the west line of the SE 1/4 of the NE 1/4 of Section 3, T11s R37e. The width of the district in this nomination section shall be 200', as the original railway right of way, 100' on each side of the center of the roadbed. Excluded from the nomination district shall be those portions of the railway covered by the crossings of Wallowa-Whitman National Forest Road 2220, the Shoreline Trail, in the NE 1/4 of Section 28, T10s R38e; and the crossing of Wallowa-Whitman National Forest Road 1160, the Dean Creek Road, in the NE 1/4 and SE 1/4 of Section 28, T10s R38e.

The resulting area is 272.02 acres, more or less.

Section 5 The Trout Creek Spur System

Beginning at the point of intersection of the railway and the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest Road 11, the Skyline Road, in the NW 1/4 of Section 33, T10s R37e, the district shall continue along the railway east up the Trout Creek drainage then south up Pole Bridge Creek drainage to the wye at the junction of the railway and Wallowa-Whitman National Forest Road 11, the Skyline Road, in the SE 1/4 of Section 33, T10s R37e. From the wye, the district shall follow the railway northeast on Pole Bridge Creek drainage back to the Trout Creek drainage to its terminus at the intersection of the railway and Trout Creek in the SE¼ of S34, T10s R37e of the Willamette Meridian.

The resulting area is 55.75 acres, more or less.

Section 6 The Whitney Mill Spur

Beginning at the point of intersection of the Whitney mill spur and the Sumpter Valley Railway main line in the NW 1/4 of Section 34, T10s R36e, the district will continue south along the spur 2,000 feet to the southern border of the Whitney mill pond, in the SW 1/4 of Section 34, T10s R36e. The width of the district in this nomination section shall be 100', as the original railway right of way, 50' on each side of the center of the roadbed. The area of this portion of the section is 4.59 acres, more or less.

Beginning at a point 100' north of the Whitney mill building site and continuing along the spur to the end of the mill pond, the district will increase in widthon the east side of the 100' spur line corridor an additional 200 feet to encompass the site of the Whitney mill and pond. The resulting additional area thus is 500 x 200 feet, or 2.29 acres.

The total area of section 6 will be 6.88 acres, more or less.

Section 7 The White Pine Mill Spur

Beginning at the White Pine Station wye in the SW 1/4 of T11s R35e S12, the district shall follow the spur south 1,600 feet to its intersection with Malheur National Forest Road 2626 in the NE 1/4 of T11s R35e S13. The width of the nomination district in this section shall be 200', 100' on each side of the center line of the spur as the original railway right of way.

The area of this portion of the nomination district is 7.34 acres, more or less.

At the junction of the Malheur National Forest Roads 249 and 2620, in the SE 1/4 of T11s R35e Section 12, the district shall follow Road 2620 south to a point at the junction of Road 2620 and an unnumbered logging road in the SE 1/4 of S12. The distance thus covered is 1,000 feet,

and the area widens on the east side of the 200' spur line corridor an additional 200 feet to encompass the site of the White Pine Mill and pond. The resulting area, measuring 1,000 x 400 feet, is 9.18 acres.

The total area of section 7 will be 16.52 acres, more or less.

Larch Station (Part of section 2)

Beginning at the point of intersection of the railway, here numbered Wallowa-Whitman National Forest Road 1075, and the north leg of the Larch Station wye in the NE 1/4 of Section 20, T10s R37e, the nomination section shall follow the north leg of the wye westward to its terminus and then back along the south leg of the wye to its junction with the main line, also in the NE 1/4 of Section 20,T10s R37e. The width of the section shall be 100'; 50' on each side of the center of the roadbed. The resulting nomination section is a triangle following the contour of the Larch Station wye.

The area of this nomination section is 1.6 acres, more or less.

Whitney Station (Part of section 2)

Beginning at the point of intersection of the railway and the east leg of the Whitney Station wye, the district shall follow the east leg of the wye south to its terminus in the NW 1/4 of Section 34, T10s R36e. At the terminus, the district shall follow the west leg of the wye north to its point of origin in the main line, also in the NW 1/4 of Section 34, T10s R37e. The width of this section shall be 100', measured as 50' on each side of the center of the railroad bed. The resulting nomination section is a triangle following the contour of the Whitney Station wye.

The area of this nomination section is 3.6 acres, more or less.

Tipton Station (Part of section 2)

Beginning at the point of intersection of the Tipton Station loop and the main line in the NW 1/4 of Section 34, the district shall continue north around the loop of track back to its point of intersection with the main line, still in the NW 1/4 of Section 34, T10s R37e. The width of the district shall be 100', measured as 50' on each side of the centerline of the roadbed. The resulting section is a roughly circular-shaped loop, constituting a total area of 6.0 acres, more or less.

White Pine Station (Part of section 2)

Beginning at the intersection of the main line and the east leg of the White Pine Station wye in the SW 1/4 of Section 12, T11s R35e, the district shall follow the east leg of the wye south to its terminus at its intersection of the west leg of the wye. Following the west leg of the wye, the district shall continue north to its intersection of the main line, also in the SW 1/4 of Section 12, T11s R37e. The width of the district shall be 100', measured as 50' on each side of the centerline of the roadbed.

The area of this section of the district is 3.36 acres, more or less.

SECTION 1

Phillips Lake, Oregon

A 11/413520/4949280
B 11/412620/4949900
C 11/411400/4950240
D 11/410880/4950760

Sumpter, Oregon

D 11/410880/4950760
E 11/407780/4951920
F 11/407680/4951860
G 11/406220/4952920
H 11/404920/4954260

SECTIONS 2, 6 and 7

Sumpter, Oregon

A 11/405300/4953420
B 11/405220/4952580
C 11/405380/4952380
D 11/405040/4952060
E 11/405600/4951320
F 11/405150/4951210
G 11/405460/4950580
H 11/405080/4950320
I 11/404920/4949820
J 11/405210/4949660
K 11/405550/4948100
L 11/405290/4948040
M 11/404700/4947580
N 11/404460/4948140
O 11/403580/4948400
P 11/402370/4948960
Q 11/402510/4949300
R 11/401620/4949120
S 11/401160/4949920
T 11/400960/4949720

Whitney, Oregon

T 11/400960/4949720
U 11/400680/4948780
V 11/400750/4947560
W 11/399300/4945600
X 11/398740/4944200
Y 11/397940/4945130
Z 11/398130/4944440
AA 11/397000/4945600
BB 11/395750/4946130
CC 11/395070/4945820
DD 11/394840/4945980
EE 11/394380/4945290
FF 11/393940/4945100
GG 11/393200/4945290
HH 11/392720/4945050
II 11/391640/4945580
JJ 11/390980/4945420

Greenhorn, Oregon

JJ 11/390980/4945420
KK 11/390780/4945210
LL 11/390840/4945160
MM 11/388920/4944380
NN 11/388680/4945020
OO 11/387750/4945320
PP 11/387280/4944800
QQ 11/387230/4944120
RR 11/386820/4943310
SS 11/387330/4943620
TT 11/386700/4942960
UU 11/386320/4943460
VV 11/385540/4942620
WW 11/385930/4942080

Austin, Oregon

WW 11/385930/4942080
XX 11/386160/4942060
YY 11/386210/4941750

Greenhorn, Oregon

ZZ 11/384470/4942640
a 11/383840/4942120

Austin, Oregon

a 11/383840/4942120
b 11/383740/4941780
c 11/383490/4941660

d 11/383160/4941960
e 11/382750/4941490
f 11/381920/4941790
g 11/381750/4941040
h 11/381160/4940920
i 11/381240/4940530

SECTION 3

Bates, Oregon

A 11/376450/4932400
B 11/375400/4931950
C 11/372900/4932450
D 11/371850/4931750
E 11/371650/493200
F 11/370900/4931600
G 11/370500/4931850
H 11/370950/4932400

SECTION 4

Phillips Lake, Oregon

A 11/416340/4946660
B 11/415030/4946030
C 11/416180/4945400
D 11/415640/4945680
E 11/414580/4944620
F 11/414080/4944940
G 11/413760/4944660
H 11/413500/4943700
I 11/413880/4943160
J 11/413180/4942700
K 11/413150/4941670

Beaverdam Creek, Oregon

K 11/413150/4941670
L 11/413140/4941200
M 11/412800/4941670

Phillips Lake, Oregon

M 11/412800/4941670
N 11/412680/4941820
O 11/412000/4941950
P 11/411820/4941670

Beaverdam Creek, Oregon

P 11/411820/4941670
Q 11/411730/4941540
R 11/411400/4941670

Phillips Lake, Oregon

R 11/411400/4941670
S 11/411050/4942380
T 11/411360/4943000
U 11/411120/4943780
V 11/410780/4943960

Sumpter, Oregon

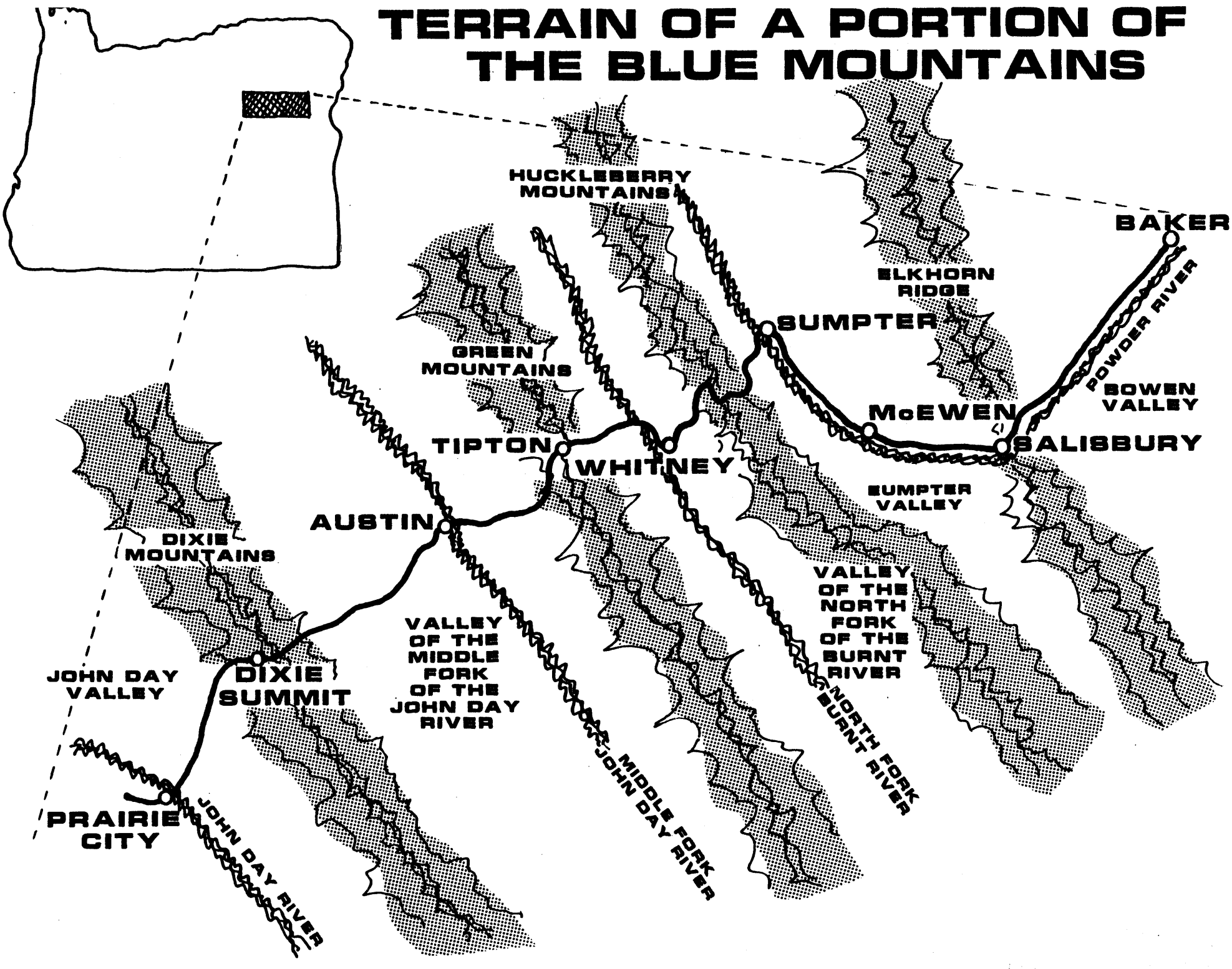
V 11/410780/4943960
W 11/410180/4944240
X 11/410000/4943420
Y 11/409500/4944030
Z 11/409520/4943420
AA 11/408910/4943740
BB 11/408610/4943320
CC 11/408380/4943480

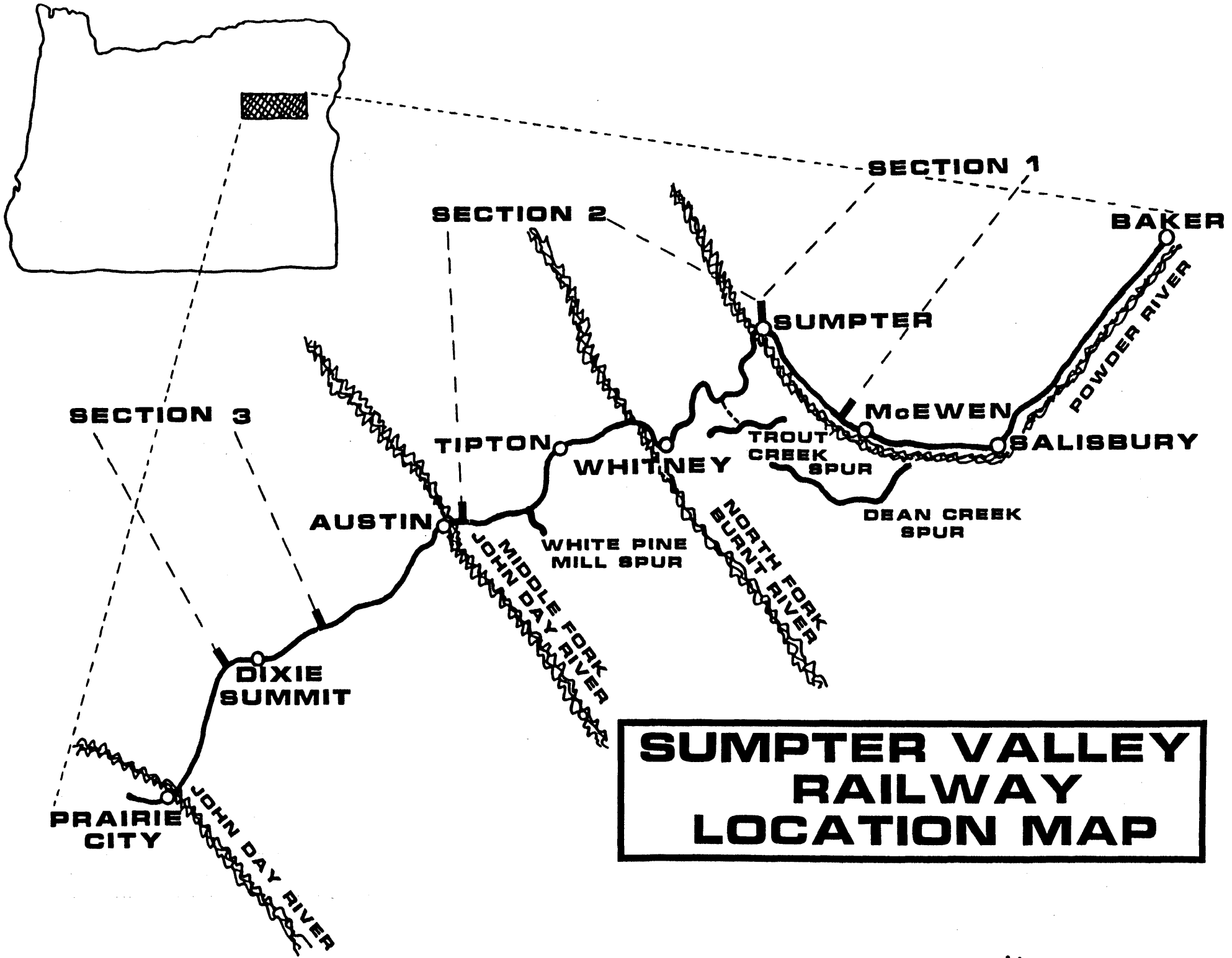
SECTION 5

Sumpter, Oregon

A 11/408420/4944200
B 11/407820/4944240
C 11/407120/4944720
D 11/407220/4944160
E 11/406700/4943880
F 11/406720/4944620
G 11/406280/4944960
H 11/405720/4944920

TERRAIN OF A PORTION OF THE BLUE MOUNTAINS





SUMPTER VALLEY RAILWAY LOCATION MAP