

WESTERN PACIFIC



WP 2-8-8-2 256 moving through Keddie Yard - FRRS Archives - Virgil Staff collection



2018 Historic Photo Calendar
selections from the Feather River Rail Society archives



WP F7A 924-D and sisters get serviced at the recently built Elko, NV fuel track - 1953

Western Pacific Railroad Corporate Archives / Kenneth J. Meeker Coll.

JANUARY

2018

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1 New Year's Day	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10 WP Blood Procurement car "Charles O. Sweetwood" dedicated 1951	11 WP merger with Union Pacific effective 1983	12	13 FRRS Board Meeting 1 PM - Portola
14	15 Martin Luther King Jr. Day	16	17	18	19	20
21 First run of WP's Panama-Pacific Express passenger train - 1912	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31	 <p><i>Tidewater Southern interurban combines 202 and 200 in Stockton</i></p>		



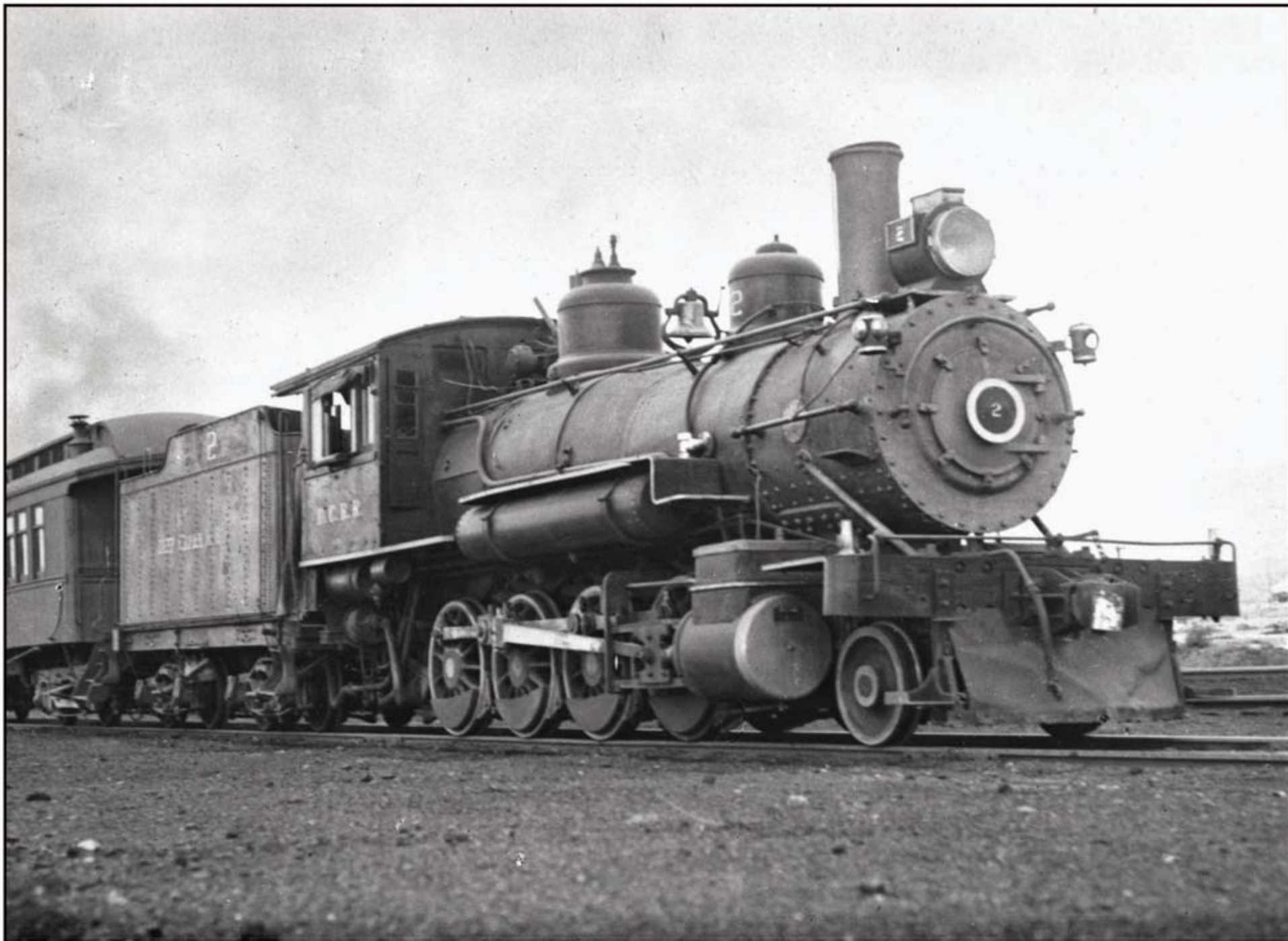
WP HyRail 3 on an Executive Inspection trip, stopped at Spring Garden - 1961

Western Pacific Railroad Corporate Archives / Kenneth J. Meeker Coll.

FEBRUARY

2018

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7 WP F7A 921-D arrives from EMD 1950	8	9	10 FRRS Board Meeting 1 PM - Portola
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19 President's Day	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28 Last Sacramento Northern train departs Oakland 1957			



Deep Creek 2-8-0 2 prepares for another journey to Gold Hill, Utah

MARCH

2018

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3
4	5	6 Western Pacific incorporated 1903	7	8	9	10 FRRS Board Meeting 1 PM - Portola
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20 First run of the <i>California Zephyr</i> 1949	21	22 Last run of the <i>California Zephyr</i> 1970	23	24 Volunteer Breakfast 9 AM - Portola Museum Work Party 10 AM-5 PM - Portola
25 Museum Work Party 10 AM-5 PM - Portola	26	27	28	29	30	31



Tidewater Southern RS1 746 gets inspected by some new railfans in Turlock, CA

APRIL

2018

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5 Museum opens to the public for 2018 Season	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14 FRRS Board Meeting 1 PM - Portola
15	16	17	18	19	20	21 2018 Western Pacific Railroad Historical Convention DoubleTree Hotel @ SLC Airport - Salt Lake City, Utah
22 Closing day of 2018 WP Convention	23	24	25	26	27	28 Final WP diesel, GP40-2 3559, shipped from EMD 1980
29	30	MUSEUM HOURS in April 2018 open Thurs - Sun 10 AM - 5 PM	 <p>WP car ferry Las Plumas out on the San Francisco Bay</p>			



Westbound *California Zephyr* rolls through the washers at Portola, CA - 1953

Western Pacific Railroad Corporate Archives / Kenneth J. Meeker Coll.



Northern Electric trackage and bridge at Front and M on Sacramento waterfront - 1912

Western Pacific Railroad Corporate Archives / Kenneth J. Meeker Coll.



Girl Scout troop boarding the *California Zephyr* in Stockton, CA - 1961

Western Pacific Railroad Corporate Archives / Kenneth J. Meeker Coll.



CCT GP18 1795, former Rock Island 1349, heads north from Stockton, CA - June 1982

FRRS Archives - W. C. Whittaker photo, Virgil Staff collection



FT set 903 receives attention at the Keddie Roundhouse - circa 1947-48



SN 70ton 202 leads an excursion special over newly rebuilt Yuba City - Marysville trestle - June 1956

WP RR Corporate Archives / Kenneth J. Meeker Coll.



Freshly painted WP GP9 728 switches the Milpitas, CA yard - winter 1973

Western Pacific Railroad Corporate Archives / Kenneth J. Meeker Coll.



The crew of Western Pacific SW9 602 pauses during switching at the Port of Stockton

Western Pacific Railroad Corporate Archives / Kenneth J. Meeker Coll.



GONE are the "good old days" when a fleeting view of the glories of nature en route might be had through clouds of steam and smoke that streamed from the engine up ahead. All accompanied by bone-shaking jerks and jolts at stopping and starting, to say nothing of dirty hands, dirty linen and an occasional cinder in the eye.



"Better trains follow General Motors Locomotives"

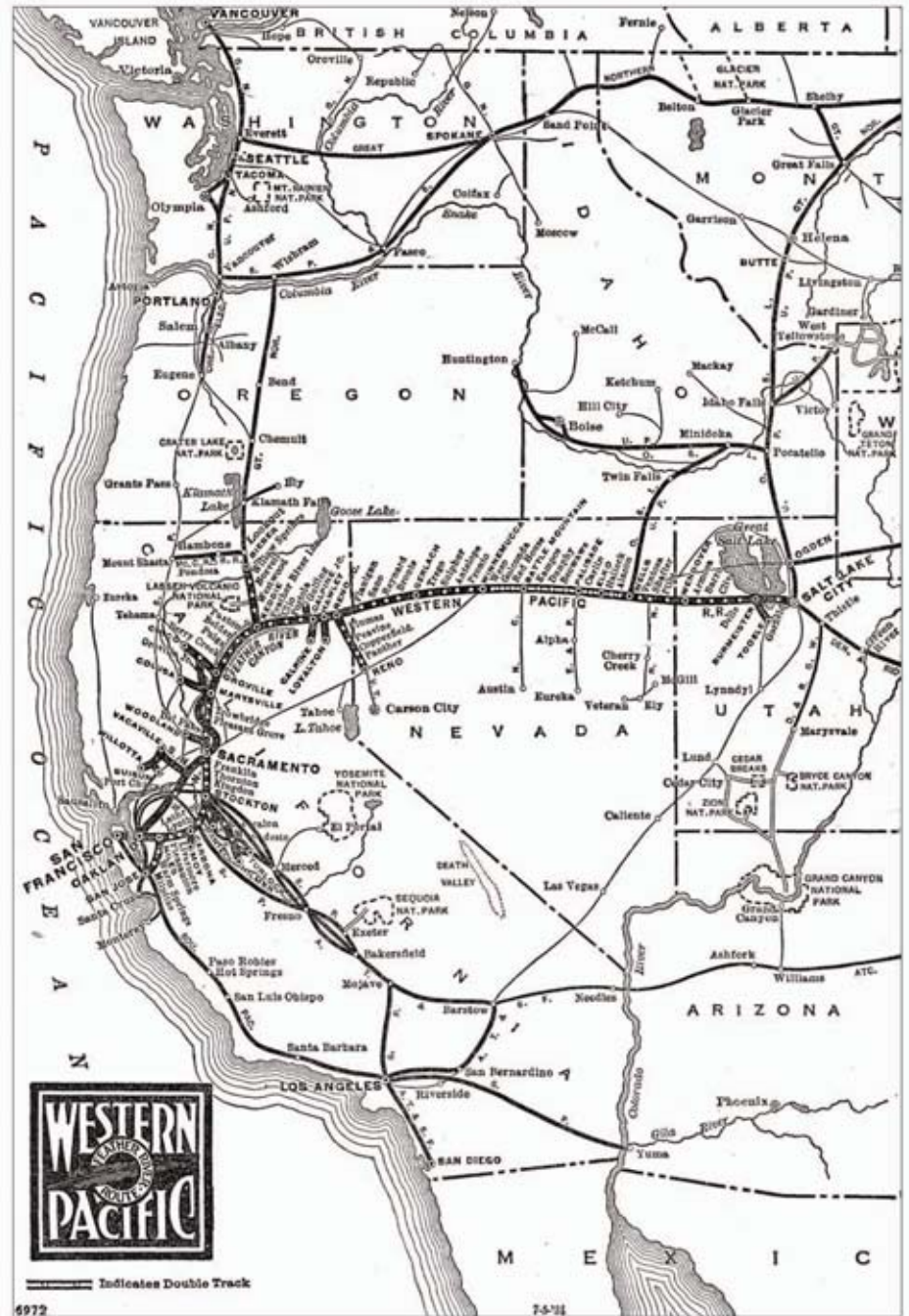
HERE now are the grand new days with such magnificent trains as these California Zephyrs. They are operated jointly between Chicago and San Francisco by the Burlington, the Denver & Rio Grande Western, and the Western Pacific. Vista Dome observation affords full, free vision of the scenery amid comfortable and luxurious surroundings. These crack trains are powered by General Motors Diesel locomotives.



To be sure of enjoying to the full the new and exciting features that modern railroad travel provides, there is just one thing to remember: Better trains follow General Motors locomotives.

ELECTRO-MOTIVE DIVISION OF GENERAL MOTORS

La Grange, Ill. • Home of the Diesel Locomotive



BRIEF HISTORY OF THE WESTERN PACIFIC

The Western Pacific was incorporated in 1903 to build from Salt Lake City, Utah, and a connection with the Denver and Rio Grande Railway, to Oakland, California. It was part of the Gould family of railroads that stretched from Utah to the Atlantic Coast with only a few small gaps. The WP was intended to provide a second transcontinental connection into central California, competing with the Southern Pacific Railroad and famously earning the ire of the mighty Edward H. Harriman, president of the SP, who vowed to prevent the WP from being built.

The railroad was completed in 1909 with the driving of a golden spike at the center of the Spanish Creek trestle at Keddie, California (near the city of Quincy). This trestle is now part of the famous Keddie Wye. By using the spectacular Feather River Canyon as its entrance into the Sierra Nevada range, the WP kept a gentle slope to its railroad. So committed were the builders to maintaining an easy grade to the line that they built the Williams Loop, where the tracks actually form a circle and cross over themselves, rather than violate the maximum dictated slope of 1 foot of rise in every 100 feet of linear run. The WP crested the Sierras at Beckworth Pass, the lowest saddle of the mountains, on the California-Nevada border. This well-engineered line allowed the railroad to move more freight with less power than the SP. Such advantages, however, did not initially translate into success. The railroad's charter forbid it to open branchlines and traffic levels were low. In 1916, the opening of the Panama Canal was the final nail and the WP went bankrupt. It was reorganized as the Western Pacific Railroad and, freed of the original restrictions, began acquiring feeder lines and building up its traffic base. Among the lines it acquired were the famous Sacramento Northern and the smaller Tidewater Southern, two electric interurban railroads in the fertile Central Valley of California.

In 1926, financier Arthur Curtiss James acquired control of the WP. James had major holdings in several large northern railroads, including the Great Northern. He saw the WP as an extension of the GN into California, again competing with the mighty Southern Pacific. While the GN built south from Washington state, the WP constructed a new line north from its Spanish Creek Trestle at Keddie, transforming the river crossing into the Keddie Wye, the most famous location on the railroad. The first 5 miles of this Northern California Extension (more commonly called "The High Line") were the steepest and most expensive on the railroad, in some cases nearly 3 times as steep as the original mainline. The two roads met at the town of Bieber, California in 1931, completing the largest railroad construction project undertaken during the Depression.

The WP developed into an innovative yet frugal company. While large, modern steam locomotives helped the road tackle larger freight cars, its original steam locomotives, outmoded they day they were built, continued in service until replaced by diesels. When the railroad needed new cabooses, it converted obsolete wooden boxcars and saved its money for revenue equipment. When the Electro-Motive Division of General Motors introduced its FT diesel-electric locomotive in late 1941, the Western Pacific became one of its first purchasers and eventually became the first large western railroad to eliminate steam entirely. After World War II, the railroad modernized, becoming one of the first railroads to embrace such innovations as roller bearing freight car trucks, centralized traffic control systems, computerized accounting and inventory management, and turbocharged diesel locomotives.

The WP teamed with the Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad and the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad to operate the first long distance passenger train designed around Vista-Dome passenger cars: the *California Zephyr*. These famous cars, with their 360 degrees of view in the upper dome section, were the trademark of the train. From 1949 to 1970, the CZ was the pride of the railroad, never downgraded in service even as it lost a reported \$1 million per year by the end.

By the late 1970's, mergers brought many smaller railroads into larger systems. The trend finally caught the Feather River Route on December 22, 1981, when it was purchased by the Union Pacific Railroad. Soon, the WP image was gone, although the UP generously aided efforts to preserve WP history, including the establishment of the FRRS and its museum. Today, the Salt Lake City to Oakland mainline serves the Union Pacific in conjunction with the once-rival Southern Pacific line over Donner Pass (the SP was also purchased by the UP). The High Line was later sold to the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad, which also acquired trackage rights from Keddie to Stockton, CA. Now, more trains than ever roll over the former WP, confirming the foresight and vision of those who helped build the railroad over 100 years ago.



The Feather River Rail Society is a California 501(c)3 non-profit Educational and Historical Corporation headquartered in Portola, California and dedicated to the preservation and presentation of the history of the Western Pacific Railroad family. The FRRS is the owner and operator of the Western Pacific Railroad Museum and is wholly funded by admissions, locomotive rentals, gift shop sales, and generous donations of time, material, labor and money. Society volunteers restore equipment, operate trains, sort and catalog archives, repair and improve the facilities, and perform hundreds of "house keeping" type duties related to keeping the museum open.



In addition to the museum grounds and equipment, the Society is the owner of a notable archive collection, including historic photographs, equipment diagrams, business ledgers and authorizations for expenditure, records and other important documentation from the Western Pacific Railroad and its subsidiaries, as well as the famous "California Zephyr" passenger train. This collection represents a nearly complete and total history of the railroad. The archives are currently being cataloged and scanned for presentation and availability to the general public and preservation for future generations.



The photos in this calendar are a small sample of this important archival record. We hope you enjoy them.

