

Prototype Modelling in the Western USA

Sources for Research and Track Planning
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Modelling Styles

- Freelance
- Proto-Freelance
- Prototype

1st: Remember its YOUR railroad

- So none of the following rules need to apply to your railroad if you do not want them to!
- But the rules are listed to create a framework for each layout style

Freelance Modelling

○ Rules of Freelance Modelling:

- Fictitious name of railroad
- Can be based on real towns or fictitious towns
- Fictitious names of industries
- Set in any time period
- Can interchange with real railroad names

Proto-Freelance Modelling

◉ Rules of Proto-Freelance Modelling:

- Real railroad name
- Follows real railroad rules & protocols
- Can be based on real towns or fictitious towns
- Generally fictitious names of industries
- Set in any time period
- Can only interchange with other real railroads that connected to the prototype

Prototype Modelling

- ◉ There are different types of Prototype Modelling depending on the chosen date:
 - Set on a specific date. e.g. 20th September 1951
 - Set on a specific year: e.g. 1951
 - Set on a specific period: e.g. 1950's (1950-1959)
 - Set during the “transition era” of 1947-1956
 - Set during the specific life of a railroad

Sources for Prototype Modelling

1. Books
2. Historical Societies
3. Track Diagrams
4. Maps
5. Employee Timetables
6. Google
7. Google Earth
8. State Libraries
9. Talking to railroad employees

Source 1: Books

- The most important source for prototype modelling is at least one book on your chosen railroad
- In my case I had chosen 6 railroads — but my layout was based on one book titled “Denver’s Railroads” by Forrest & Albi and published by the Colorado Railroad Museum in 1981

Where to buy Books

- ◉ The number one source for books is of course Amazon
- ◉ However I have bought most of my books from hobby shops or the Colorado Railroad Museum, just outside of Denver
- ◉ Unfortunately 3 of the hobby shops I have previously sourced books from have gone out of business

Buy a book from “The Train Shop”

- If you plan to attend the NMRA 2021 convention in Santa Clara, CA you are in luck as Santa Clara is home to “The Train Shop” which has a very large collection of Prototype Railroad books, as well as lots of model trains

Out of Print Books

◉ Unfortunately a lot of railroad books are now out of print, however . . .

- Amazon is still a good source for out of print books
- As is ebay
- And there are also a number of bookshops that specialise in out of print books such as AbeBooks and Biblio

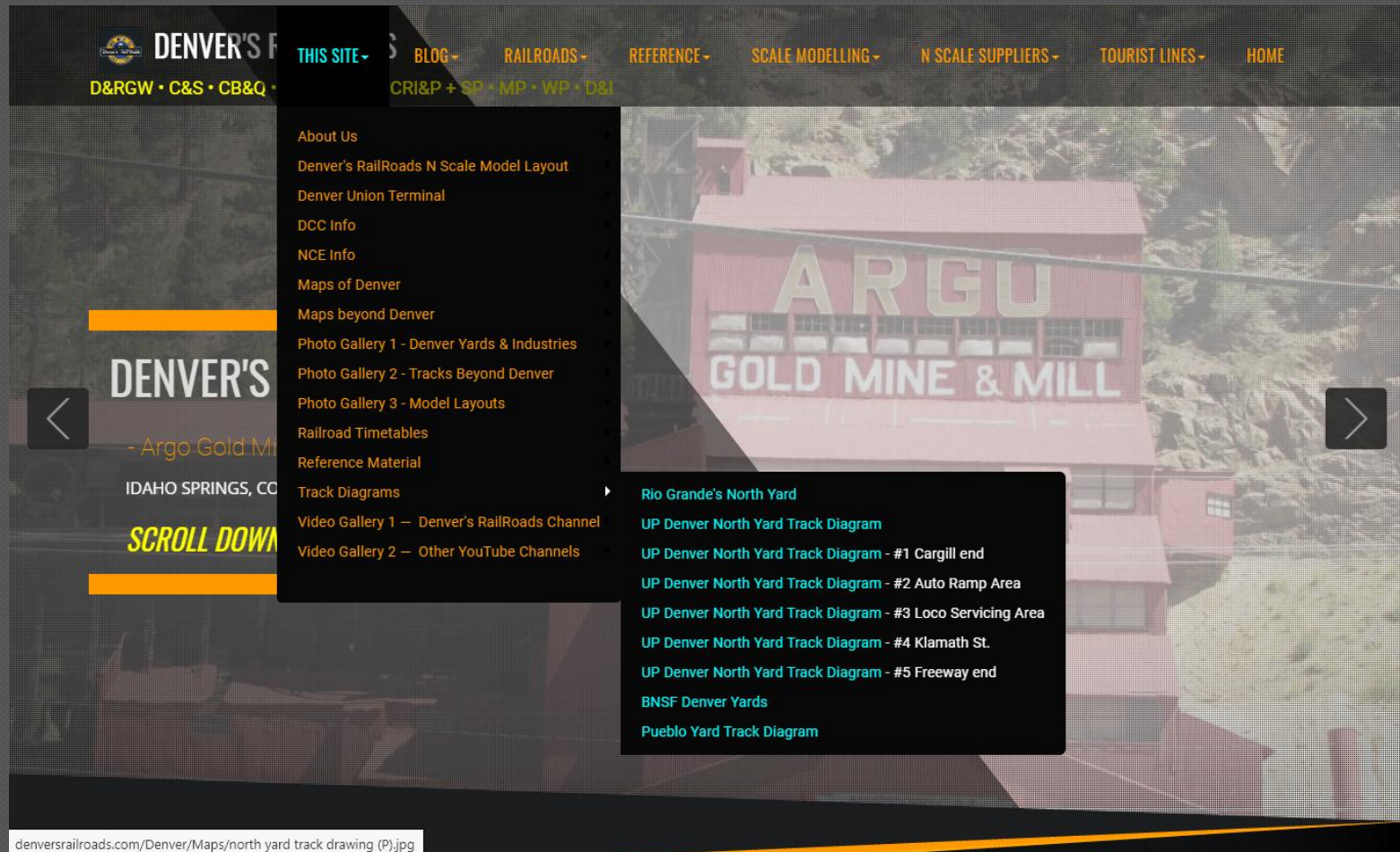
Source 2: Historical Societies

- Historical Societies can be a gold mine of information on their particular road
- I belong to:
 - Rio Grande Modeling & Historical Society
 - Burlington Route Historical Society
- Union Pacific, Burlington Northern and Santa Fe also have very active historical societies

Source 3: Track Diagrams

- Track Diagrams can be hard to find and only by persistent Google searches of different keywords over a period of time will you find them
- I have found a few over the years (see the next slide) but I have no idea of their source or where I found them
- They are however invaluable for prototype track planning

Track Diagrams on Denver's RailRoads web site



Denver Union Station

- A unique find for me was the 1916 scale drawing of all of the tracks of Denver Union Station
- Using CADDRail I traced the tracks to scale and drew my track plan of the station (see <http://denversrailroads.com/Denver/DUT/DUT%201916%20Plan.jpg>)
- I found the track diagram along with other diagrams/maps in an envelope that was sold as part of the Denver's Railroads book

Source 4: Maps

- ◉ As mentioned on the last slide books can be a good source of maps and diagrams
- ◉ An easy source for modern maps is of course Google Earth
- ◉ Magazines, especially Kalmbach's "Trains" magazine are a great source for maps
- ◉ I have found some great maps in historical society publications

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps

- ◉ Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps: Thousands of colour maps drawn between 1890 and 1930 for the insurance industry
- ◉ There are over 25,000 sheets from over 3000 city sets
- ◉ They are all available online at the Library of Congress website:
 - <https://www.loc.gov/collections/sanborn-maps/>
- ◉ However access can be restrictive

Source 5: Employee Timetables

- ◉ Finding Employee Timetables for the period you are interested in can be difficult
- ◉ Persistent Google searches can help
- ◉ Often you can buy Employee Timetables at swop meets or even hobby shops
- ◉ Because of the large number of small pages they are a pain to scan so there are not a lot of online sources

D&RGW Employee Timetables

- A great source of Rio Grande employee timetables is <http://idrgw.com>
- However all of the pages have been scanned individually as .jpg files, instead of putting them all in a .pdf file.
- You will find some of the timetables re-organised into .pdf files on the Denver's Railroads web site – but not all of them as it is a very time consuming job

Source 6: Goggle Search

- ◉ Searching the internet for information on your prototype railroad can be very rewarding
- ◉ Don't forget to also search Google Images

Source 7: Google Earth

- ◉ Google Earth is an invaluable aid to prototype modelling
- ◉ Using the Windows snip option it is possible to save both track diagrams and photographs to your PC

Source 8: State Libraries

- ◉ Difficult to visit in person but many state libraries have great websites
- ◉ For example the Denver Public Library
- ◉ However it might not be possible to access a Library website if you are not a resident
- ◉ The same applies to the Library of Congress website

Talking to railroad employees

- Beyond the scope of many of us but if you attend a historical society convention you may get a chance to talk to an old railroad employee

Denver's RailRoads

- ◉ My Denver's RailRoads layout is set during two time periods:
 - Passenger traffic is based on a pre-Amtrak time period from 1947 to 1962
 - Freight traffic is based on a pre-Burlington Northern time period from 1956 to 1970
- ◉ Remember its My Railroad and I get to set the rules

Passenger Traffic

◉ Why 1947 to 1962?

- 1947 because the Denver's Railroads book details every movement through the Denver Union Terminal (including switching) on June 13th, 1947 and I plan to duplicate the timetable with my model
- 1962 because I have a scanned copy of the 35 page D&RGW Colorado Division #2 timetable dated July 1st, 1962 which includes 6 passenger trains running west of Denver in 1962

Freight Traffic

◉ Why 1956 to 1970

- 1956 was generally the last full year of steam so I can correctly run my UP Big Boy (last run 1959) and D&RGW Challenger (last run 1957)
- 1970 was the year of the Burlington Northern merger, so making this the cut off year enables me to run any equipment in CB&Q, C&S, GN and NP livery
- Roof walks were no longer required after 1967 but were still allowed until 1975 — 1970 allows me to run both options

In Summary

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The End

- ◉ Thank you for your attendance

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