

BACK ON THE RIGHT TRACK

Adopted: 1978 March 8

The Concept of the Monashee Pacific

Reformatted from the original

EMRA CONCEPTS, STANDARDS, & PRACTICES

EMRA Document No.: C-ED-02

Adoption Date: 1978.03.08

Revision Date: 0000.00.00

Document Revision: 0

Introduction

It is essential to establish a concrete and well-defined goal for the design, construction, and operation of the Edmonton Model Railroad Club layout. Without such a goal, construction and development will continue to haphazard and unmotivated, resulting in an unsatisfactory layout in both appearance and operation.

The Purpose of the Club

The purpose of the Edmonton Model Railroad Club is to provide Edmonton and area model railroaders with an opportunity to meet, work, and socialize with others in the hobby, and to share and develop modelling techniques while participating in the construction and operation of a layout larger than would usually be found in an Individual's home.

The Concept of the Club Layout

The club layout is to be a model of the Monashee Pacific Railway, a railroad that does not exist as such in the real world, but could. The model should adhere as closely as possible to the concept of of the Monashee Pacific, especially with regard to routing, scenery, operation, and equipment.

The Monashee Pacific Railway runs through south central British Columbia, from Castlegar to Armstrong. The route follows Lower Arrow Lake from Castlegar to Edgewood, then proceeds up Inonoaklin Creek to the Monashee Pass and into Vernon, with a line continuing on to Armstrong. This route connects several other railroads, providing the opportunity for Interchange traffic and foreign equipment. Although operated as a unique entity, the Monashee Pacific is jointly owned by CN and CP, and connects with both of these railroads in Kamloops through an Interchange at its northern terminus, Armstrong. Another interchange point with the CP is at Castlegar. Burlington Northern traffic comes onto the line through Nelson, and the Union Pacific connects via the CP through Yahk.

EMRA CONCEPTS, STANDARDS, & PRACTICES

EMRA Document No.: C-ED-02

Adoption Date: 1978.03.08

Revision Date: 0000.00.00

Document Revision: 0

The Proposal

Since construction of the expansion has not yet started, and the limitations of the current layout design are becoming obvious. especially with regard to scenery and operation, consideration should be given to removing these shortcomings. This proposal advocates the redesign of the entire layout, including the currently planned extension, to conform to the goals as defined above.

The features of the proposed design utilize the space available to provide as many characteristics of the Monashee Pacific and its environment as possible:

- 1) nowhere on the Monashee Pacific except at its endpoints are there other tracks running in close proximity to the railroad.
- 2) about 75% of the MPR is built along the side of a steep-walled valley, with numerous creeks crossing at right angles.
- 3) a mountain railroad is by nature a curvaceous thing.
- 4) only short tunnels, if any, occur along the route.
- 5) a 2% grade for 20 miles creates interesting operating challenges.

Several features which have proved successful and popular on the existing layout have been included in the new design:

- 1) the plan allows for walk-around operation.
- 2) no tracks are farther than two feet from an aisle.
- 3) many small towns exist along the right-of-way to provide interesting operation.
- 4) the design is easily adaptable for construction in stages which allow interesting operation during each stage.

Several features have been added or changed to adhere to the Monashee Pacific concept:

- 1) a viewer/operator can see only ONE scene (track) at any given location. This is achieved with backdrops, rather than long tunnels.
- 2) one track in a two foot wide space allows plenty of room for realistic scenery, including numerous bridges and short tunnels.
- 3) two large yards are included to support point-to-point operation, with hidden (but accessible) staging yards which simulate the connecting railroads, and provide the the link to complete a loop, a feature desirable for club shows. The total run for through trains between Castlegar and Vernon is about 288' (4.8 scale miles), including 13 separate townsites. The staging yards are approximately 40' long, with a capacity of at least six trains.
- 4) since no track crosses above another, grades are included for scenic and operational interests only.

EMRA CONCEPTS, STANDARDS, & PRACTICES

EMRA Document No.: C-ED-02

Adoption Date: 1978.03.08

Revision Date: 0000.00.00

Document Revision: 0

This proposal can be best summed up with Allen McClelland's closing comments from his series of articles in Railroad Model Craftsman on his Virginian and Ohio:

"Had I neglected the scenery or equipment, operation would have suffered through the lack of a realistic setting. Had I built poor benchwork and roadbed, the the trackwork might might have been so poor as to cause frequent derailments and thus block efforts to operate the railroad. And, most importantly, had I built the railroad without proper regard for its later operating potential, all of the previous efforts while being immediately rewarding at the instant they were being performed - would have paled when the construction phase neared an end and I found the result was simply a "layout" and not a railroad at all."