

Trout Creek & Western RR

Sitting between Colorado's South Park and the Arkansas River valley, just up the mountains above the town of Buena Vista, is the little known Trout Creek Pass. When mining was at its peak, in South Park ran the **Denver, South Park & Pacific** railroad, above the Arkansas river ran the **Colorado Midland** railroad and along the river came the **Denver & Rio Grand Western** railroad. Even today, the **Union Pacific** railroad still has an un-used track through Buena Vista. All of this was the idea behind the freelance short line railroad called the *Trout Creek and Western Railroad*.

The modular layout has a double track HO standard gauge main line which circles the entire layout. On the East side of the layout is the Francton TC&W dual gauge HO & HO_{N3} yard with its turntable, coaling & water towers, some business and industrial background buildings as well as an oil refinery with its storage area and the Francton Station.

Leading out of the Francton yard, the HO_{N3} track begins its climb on the North side of the layout passing through the mining town of Pynebrook, an operating mine area and into the mountains. After crossing over the Trout Creek trestle, the narrow gauge continues along the mountains allowing trains to exit through a tunnel to a reversing loop and coming to the other mountain town of Chinook.

Below the mountains on the West side is the area of Kennington with its cattle yard and meat packing plant, a pickle factory, the small Kennington town businesses, hotel and station. This area is also dual HO and HO_{N3} gauge accessed from the mountains and the main line tracks.

As the mountains drop down into the foothills to the South, there is western farming. Along this part of the layout, there is a small HO main line yard, an exit to a "staging track", a small industrial area and more western farming.

The *Trout Creek & Western Railroad* short line serves as a connecting line for the western railroads to the mining and tourist mountain areas, the oil industries as well as farming, cattle and ranching businesses during the transition time period of the late 1940's, the 1950's and into the 1960's. It is not unusual to see tourist, passenger, lumber, cattle, ore, oil, and mixed freight trains running both on the mountain narrow gauge and below on the standard gauge main line tracks of this railroad “Connecting the West”.

(SHORT VERSION)

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