

Denver & Rio Grande Western Railway

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The 7mm ('0') Scale layout portrays the Denver & Rio Grande Western Railway's Three Foot Gauge service from Denver to Durango and onto Silverton, as well as the Farmington Branch run here as a Colorado & Southern operation for variety. The time period is 1900 to 1905 at the peak of goods transportation. The model scene is primarily set at Durango and its precious metals (chiefly silver) smelter. The layout has around a scale '0' gauge mile (125 feet) of 16.5mm narrow gauge track plus 31 switches and a manually operated turntable. Electrically the layout is run under dual cab control which enables two locomotives to be operational at any given moment. The Durango daily schedule of train arrivals and departures is set out overleaf.

Trains featured are the Durango/Denver Mails (including a Denver Federal Mint bullion car to carry silver to Denver), the Durango/Silverton Accommodations and the Durango/Farmington Flyers. In between are way freights to and from Alamosa and Chama, ores from Silverton, coal for the smelter and locomotives from the Durango City Coal Mine at Carbon Junction, lumber from the Posta forests for the Durango Sawmills, livestock movements (sheep from Silverton, beef from Farmington, plus pigs from Iowa transferred at Denver to the narrow gauge – all destined for Durango's slaughterhouse), imports of beer from Denver, a host of domestic and industrial goods, plus special charters and railroad maintenance work.

Construction of layout buildings has made further progress since February – the Locomotive Depot and its Coaling Tower Facility plus the Freight Depot have been built. The Denver scene now has some business buildings plus the two Portals separating it from Durango. The Durango RIP/Maintenance Facility needs a crane to complete it. Other buildings to follow are the Durango Sawmills Facility and the Durango Stock Yard and adjacent Passenger Car Servicing Yard. In addition, a number of small sheds are required around the layout. About half the layout has been ballasted – most of the unballasted track lies in and around the four track Durango Marshalling Yard. It is hoped to complete ballasting and associated landscaping in time for the Club's next exhibition later this year.

Since the last Show in February another Mogul locomotive (number 20) has been delivered. It is in the standard Vanderbilt Black livery and is to act as Durango heavy switcher and reserve locomotive as well as performing track maintenance and helper duties. These additions bring the current steam locomotive register total to 12 (2 x Porter 0-4-0 Yard Switchers, 7 x 2-6-0 Moguls of which one is the Colorado & Southern locomotive, and the Colorado Mining Company's 0-4-2 wood-fired Porter Switcher and the Company's 28 Ton Climax and 14 Ton wood-fired Shay engines).

An additional Passenger Car (number 284) has arrived together with another Caboose (number 47) for use on the services between Durango and Silverton.

Please feel free to give advice and ask questions – your interest will be appreciated.

Thank you.

(John Feltham (Gosport American Model Railroad Group))