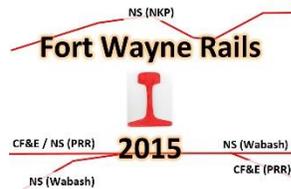


Operations on the Layouts of NCR Division 3



The Great Northern Railway, Cascade Division



The Cascade Division of the Great Northern Railway runs from Tacoma (Staging) in the West to Spokane (Staging) in the East, and comprises two subdivisions, Everett and Wenatchee. Each sub has assigned crew (paper flagmen), cabooses, and power. Seattle hosts five different yards: GN's expansive Interbay Arrival/departure yard, Interbay Class yard, and Holgate Street coach yard, and a joint Milwaukee/GN Duwamish Avenue Interchange yard, and the Milwaukee's Van Asselt yard. Gold Bar also has a smaller yard, and Wenatchee has the division point yard.

The layout keeps 24 people busy for 4 hours; operating sessions are held on the last Saturday of the month. There is a formal dispatcher; and we operate under Timetable and Train Order rules. Signals in use indicate switch alignment at several sidings. Carcards and Waybills direct car movement.

Welcome to this operations description of the Great Northern Railway. For further information, check out the layout website <http://div3.ncr-nmra.org/layouts/great-northern-cascade-division>

Schematic Track Plan

The schematic plan represents the physical arrangement of the layout in the room; it is not to scale. The layout is Digitrax DCC, with both simplex and duplex radio.

Mainline freights depart eastward from the seven staging tracks in West Staging (Pasco, Portland, Cle Elum, Tacoma, and Tide Flats). They all enter Seattle and proceed to one of the several yards there. From Seattle, the GN main heads through Everett and on to Snohomish. Snohomish and Everett are served by the Snohomish Turn. Proceeding onward, we pass the large Frye Lettuce farm, and enter Monroe. Monroe is served out of Gold Bar yard by the Monroe Turn. Just past Monroe, at Monroe-Milwaukee Junction, Milwaukee road's trains leave the GN main for Monroe staging.

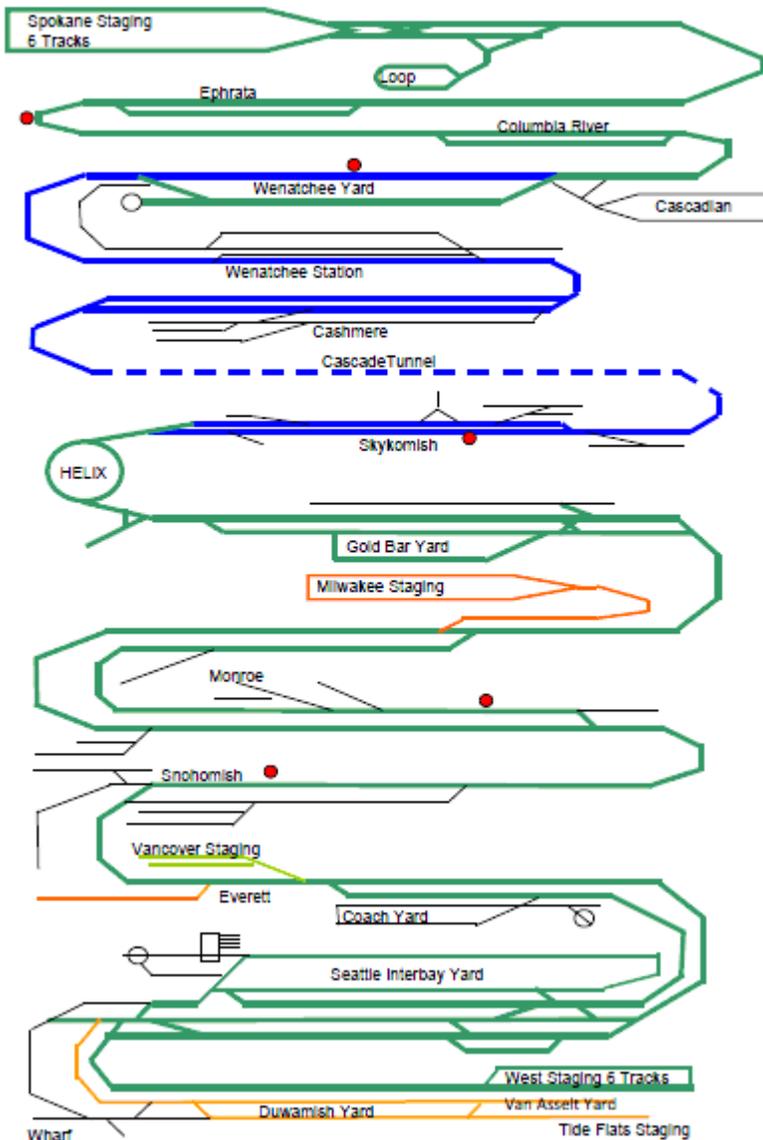
At Gold Bar, named for the discovery of gold on a sandbar in the river, we have a small yard where cars for Monroe, Gold Bar, and Skykomish are dropped off by through freights. Gold Bar yard builds the Monroe and Sky (Skykomish) Turns and the Gold Bar local.

Also, Gold Bar is the beginning of the long, slow, 2% grade to the summit of the Cascades at Stevens' Pass (the summit of the rails is inside the 8-mile long Cascade Tunnel). Pusher service is mandatory for all trains heading up to Sky from Gold Bar. The helper engine is manned by the "Sky Power Desk" job.

At Sky (Skykomish), the helper engine is dropped off, turned on the wye, and returned to Gold Bar. The train engine is cut off, turned, and readied for the next down-bound train, and a big Y-1 electric motor is coupled up and used to run through the Cascade Tunnel, past Cashmere, and in to Wenatchee.

At Wenatchee, we lose the electric in another power change back to steam or diesel. The "Sky Power Desk" operator takes it from there, and shuffles the electrics for their next stint of duty, moving

Joe Berger's Great Northern



them to whichever end of the tunnel they'll next be needed. The Power Desk also assists in engine changes if needed.

Cascade Division jobs

The Cascade Division's many yards support quite a bit of yard crew: Interbay A/D has 2 crewmen, as does the Interbay class yard. The coach yard adds one more, whose job it is to service local industries with express shipments, and to make up and break up trains departing both King Street and Union stations in Seattle.

The Milwaukee Road throughout the layout is worked by the 'Milwaukee Crew' of either 1 or 2 persons, depending on desire and experience level. They also work the Milwaukee's Van Asselt yard and make up and break up (and serve as road crew for) the Milwaukee freights. If the Olympian Hiawatha is running, they crew it, too.

Wenatchee yard uses two people, the yardmaster and the assistant/car agent. The car agent also services the town of

Wenatchee itself, and the industrial park.

Gold Bar yard has a single yardmaster, who makes up and breaks up the three locals running out of Gold Bar.

Wenatchee yard services Wenatchee local industries and also Cashmere, and creates the Cashmere local. The second yard crew also serves as 'car agent', rebilling refrigerator cars for the many local fruit industries in Wenatchee and Cashmere. Wenatchee depot also serves as a pickup/drop-off point for express cars from the through passenger trains.

Once past Wenatchee, we 'settle down' for the long, lonely run through Columbia River, Trinidad, Ephrata, Wilson's Creek, Odessa, Espanola, and Fort Wright, before we get to final staging in Spokane. Most of this long mainline run is not readily accessible, so there's no industry switching to be done here.

Timetable and other details

The GN Cascade master timetable is posted separately on the website.

We run (loosely) Timetable and Train Order operation. While there are a few master timetables posted, you don't need to carry a copy of one. Smaller 'breakout' timetables are posted in each town, showing all trains running through that area, and their schedules for the town and the next town in each direction. These smaller fascia timetables will help you in checking schedules. There are several "OS" points on the railroad, marked with telephone poles with a phone box on them, and also a fascia sign "OS". The signs, and the stripe on the pole, are either yellow (no stop required) or red (stop is required).

When you pass one, you'll need to contact the dispatcher using one of the 7 dispatcher telephones in the area. Alert the dispatcher using the buzzer, and use the press-to-talk button on the back of the handset when you want to speak. This is a 'party line' system, so you need to LISTEN before breaking in to an existing conversation. The dispatcher can also call any of the 3 main GN yards.

There are Train Registers in Snohomish and Monroe. Please fill them out completely when you pass through, and check them to see that all superior arriving scheduled trains have cleared your location prior to your departing.

We use "Air Test" cards which will be found in the pocket of the caboose card. If the one there is full, yards have new blank ones. When you pick up your train and have coupled your engine, please move forward enough to move the caboose to assure you're coupled up, then stop. If the caboose moves, you're good to go – sign the "Air Test" card like a railroader would: First and middle initials, and full last name.



pocket. More info is available at the icing / heating tag boxes.

We run refrigerator cars!! They need, depending on the temperature, icing or heating. In towns where platforms are available, you will find a "Today's Temperature" chart with the temp posted on the fascia. Follow instructions on refrigerator car's waybills if they say 'ICE THIS CAR'....it means the shipment must be temperature protected, and that may mean either heating with an alcohol heater, or filling the bunkers with ice. This is done through insertion of the appropriate tags into the waybill

Yards have 'cheat sheets' to facilitate classification. Waybills show INITIAL destination yard for each move, and train code for final delivery. There are check-off sheets to keep yard's crews apprised of next trains due in and out, and to serve as the YM's 'memory' of what's arrived and departed.

Since we model pre-crew radio, train crews may not talk to each other about the running of the train while the train is in motion, or if both flagmen (head and tail end) are not on the ground. Switches may not be thrown unless flagmen are on the ground and the train is stopped. Each crew member should have a 2-sided small card with whistle signals on one side, and communicating whistle signals on the other.

When in motion, the only train-related communication allowed between the crew is for the conductor to tap the engineer on the shoulder, and hold up the appropriate number of fingers to signify the correct amount of communicating whistle 'toots' he wants. Once stopped, and after flagmen are set out, the crew may resume normal verbal communication. Engineer should keep the engine card only. It contains the engine's number, DCC address, and info on what functions are available. Conductor should keep the caboose card, car cards, and the train header card which describes the job duties for that train.

There is normally a job assignment period prior to the briefing at each session. 'Stationary' jobs and road crew assignments are made. The 'Milwaukee Crew' both runs the Milwaukee Van Asselt yard, but also run all the Milwaukee Road's trains. All other trains are run by persons assigned as 'road crew', in order of reporting. If you're road crew, report to the dispatcher for assignment to your next train.

We typically break mid-session for food, snacks, and conversation, for ½ hour.

