

Santa Fe Railroad, Los Angeles Division

WELCOME...

...to the Fifth District of the Los Angeles Division, of the Santa Fe Railroad.

SUMMARY:

The railroad runs from Los Angeles to Bakersfield, which are both represented by hidden staging loops. Casitas is the main switch yard.

Signals: If you see a green or yellow on “your” signal you can proceed.

Turnouts: Don’t “run through” turnouts the wrong way – you will short the system.

Phones: Push to talk. Use when you see a red light on the phone box or relay box on the layout.

Train Lineups: For each station are posted at the station. Also look for schematics and other information advising how to work that location.

Assignments and Operating Positions

Assignments range from easy to very challenging. Here listed in rough increasing order of challenge:

- Passenger trains, expedited freight trains and detouring trains.
- Through freights, work train and mail train: Typically do some switching enroute.
- Stock Special: A dedicated train gathering stock cars for the Swift plant over the same route as the mountain local.
- Oxnard perishables express: Dedicated run to gather reefers from Oxnard and run to connections in Bakersfield.
- Santa Paula turn and/or Simi turn: Out and back from Casitas, through Oxnard and Simi to Santa Paula. Can be fairly simple, or more challenging if switching both Santa Paula and Simi in one trip. Challenging switching en route.
- Mountain Local: Out and back between Casitas and Cuyama, very straight-forward.
- Cuyama: A smaller town with local switching.
- Ventura County Ry: This short line connection serves the Swift packing plant and Port Hueneme. It is a reasonably simple switching area, most challenging because it handles a lot of cars on limited track and must use some trackage rights on the ATSF. This operator sometimes assists with work at the Casitas yard.
- Matilija/BJM&L: If there is sufficient crew, we can operate this area, which is the only remaining DC analog section of the layout. Due to layout height and distance from the aisle, operation can be physically challenging.
- Casitas yard: This is the main yard, responsible to sort cars for locals, dispatch engines, and do minor passenger switching.
- Dispatcher: Dispatch panel is located in a narrow spot in the layout room, a simplified version of a CTC panel. This can be very challenging when the railroad gets busy.
- Oxnard: Sometimes called “reefer madness” this is a very challenging switching area involving a number of fruit packing plants centered around a large icing plant. Cars typically move multiple times within the town.

AND NOW, MORE DETAIL THAN YOU THOUGHT WAS NEEDED!

History

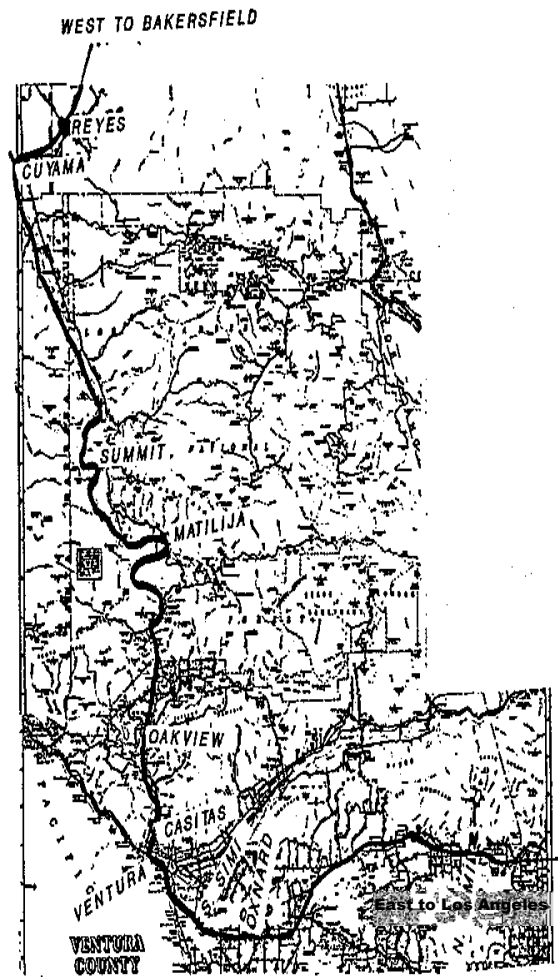
Remember *The Octopus* from high school? The Southern Pacific had a monopoly over the San Joaquin Valley. A group of local farming interests joined a Santa Fe subsidiary to build a competing line down the valley. However, at Bakersfield they were blocked by the S.P., which had the only line over the narrow Tehachapi pass. To reach the ocean, the new railroad turned west through the desert-like Cuyama valley, then south over Pine Mountain pass to Ventura. This mountain construction involved heavy grades and spectacular scenery. A shortline railroad was subsequently built to

connect the main line at Matilija to stands of timber and mines higher up in the mountains. After construction to Ventura was completed, the line was extended east to Los Angeles, to connect with the Santa Fe's transcontinental main line.

The S.P., realized its monopoly was broken and agreed to share the Tehachapi line (including the famous loop) with the Santa Fe. The line over Pine Mountain was downgraded to a secondary main line. However, the line sees several passenger trains daily, as it is shorter than the other available Santa Fe route between Los Angeles and Bakersfield (which traverses two mountain passes. Cajon and Tehachapi). In addition, freight trains between the San Joaquin Valley and Los Angeles (harbor and points south) utilize this shorter route, and there is substantial on-line mineral, oil and agricultural traffic. SP sometimes uses it as a bypass when Tehachapi is blocked, or as a shortcut for sugar beet trains to a processing plant on the coast.

The Model Railroad

The model makes slight adjustment in Southern California geography and history. Westbound trains begin in the hidden loop representing Los Angeles and emerge at Simi in the smaller room. They progress through Oxnard (a major town with many citrus packing plants), Casitas (a medium size classification yard that originates most of the local trains, as well as connection to the V.C.Ry and SPRR). The grade begins just west of Casitas. Trains progress to the larger room and go over Pine Mountain via Oak View. Wheeler Gorge. Sespe Gorge, Matilija, Summit and Portrero. Coming down the north (timetable west) side of the mountain there is a major town at Cuyama and a nearly abandoned town at Reyes Station. There is a small staging yard at Maricopa, where some trains may originate or terminate. Most continue to staging representing Bakersfield.

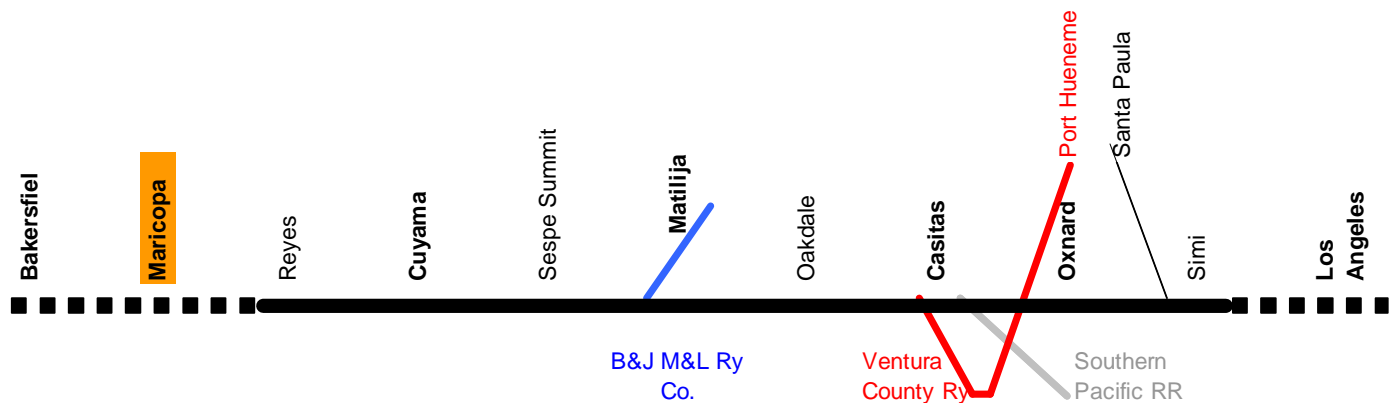


A branch runs to Santa Paula, from Simi.

In general, when standing in a normal operating location, timetable direction is the same as map direction. E.g., west is to your left and east is to your right. (Exception is at Matilija).

Other railroads represented include:

- Bernard Julia Mining and Lumber, fictional short line connecting at Matilija
- Ventura County Ry, connecting at Casitas, with interchange yard to west of station and trackage rights through to the junction. Some shared trackage in Oxnard. Serves the large Swift Packing Plant and Port Hueneme
- Southern Pacific RR...Interchange at Casitas.



OPERATING RULES

The main line is governed by CTC. Timetable operation governs passenger and some freight trains. Dispatching is done via voice orders over the phone system (no radios).

If you need to occupy a track and don't have signal indication, contact dispatcher for time and track authority.

Schedules

We can operate timetable (fast clocks) or rotation (turn the clocks off), according to the wishes of the group.

Signaling

The railroad is signaled with Integrated Signal Systems equipment and has TCS (Santa Fe's moniker for Centralized Traffic Control). Signaling operates in two modes:

- TCS, Dispatcher Controlled
- Automatic Block Signaling.

Most signals are color light targets. All signals are placed to the right of the track they govern, recognizing that engineers had limited view to the left around the locomotive boiler. E.g., if you are on double track and see two signals, the one to the right of the track you are on is the one to pay attention to.

When operating with CTC active, train crews can assume that the signal indication substitutes for voice communication with the dispatcher. E.g., a green or yellow signal allows you to proceed.

Signal indications are pretty standard model railroad (and some prototype practice):

- Green: (or semaphore vertical) Proceed: Track in the next two blocks is clear
- Yellow: (or semaphore at 45°) Approach: Track in next block is clear but subsequent signal is at stop or restrictive
- Red: (or semaphore horizontal)
 - Home signals (Interlockings): Stop.
 - Others: Approach dead slow.
- Two head signals:
 - Upper signal indicates track condition for main line. Lower indicates condition for diverging route.
 - Example: Red over yellow would mean the switch is set for the diverging route, the upcoming block on this diverging route is clear, and that the next signal beyond is red. Thus, this would indicate proceed, restricted speed.

Turnouts

Most turnouts are operated from buttons, slide switches or chokes on the fascia. **TRAIN CREWS MUST ASSURE THAT ALL TURNOUTS ARE SET FOR THE MAIN AFTER WORKING A SIDING!**

ALL TURNOUTS ARE HOT FROG. E.g., if you run through a turnout set against you, you will cause a short and shut down some portion of the layout. Some areas have their own short-circuit protection without a sound alert; in others a short will cause a beeping signal.

Interlocking turnouts (typically entrance/exit of passing tracks) will normally be operated by the dispatcher. When a local wishes to control such a turnout, call the dispatcher (by pressing on the button on the phone box) and request to get local control of the turnout. Be sure to call the dispatcher when you are done with the moves to clear use of the tracks.

Phones

Phones are available at stations – most are “push to talk”, requiring you mash the button on the handset to talk. Train crews seeing a light on a phone box where they are working, or the silver circuit box on the layout at the nearest interlocking, should pick up any available phone to talk to the dispatcher. (The light acts as a “train order” signal indicating the dispatcher has instructions for you). Train crews wishing to call dispatcher should push the button on the phone box to light up the light on the dispatch panel, keep pushing until the dispatcher responds. .

Car cards

Car forwarding is with the conventional card-card and system. Each car has a 3x5 card with a pocket. Destination cards are in the pocket. At switching locations, there is a three-pocket holder. Destination cards are color coded to indicate which area of the layout (and therefore which local) is likely to be most appropriate to handle them. Color codes are posted on papers above the layout in several locations. Car cards that don't have waybills in the pocket are through cars and don't get switched on the layout.

Train cards

Train cards on the front of a pack indicate the instructions for that train. You'll also find train cards and instructions for local switchers at some stations.

Locomotive Cards

Locomotives all have their own cards. Operation of function buttons is indicated on these cards.

Some Features of the Layout

While the layout is a fictionalized line, it follows a number of Santa Fe architectural practices. In particular, "company buildings" have been modeled from standard AT&SF plan books. This includes the roundhouse and sand house at Casitas and various station buildings.

Rolling stock began with the typical mix of RTR and kits. Over time, I have been upgrading the freight car fleet with epoxy resin kits and the newer, highly detailed plastic cars. An entire ATSF-prototype work train is in operation as well as many prototypical cars. This program is about 65% complete.

Passenger cars are likewise being upgraded to reflect AT&SF practice, as well as newer standards in passenger car modeling.

The locomotive fleet is a mix of steam and Diesel, most of which would have been active during the 1950 time frame. However, I am not averse to a few anachronisms, such as one of the unique 2-10-10-2 Mallets that were gone from the AT&SF by 1925, or Diesels delivered up to 1959, as well as souvenirs of travel and work assignments such as an Aussie 4-8-4+4-8-4 Garratt.

Operation is with Digitrax DCC.

A QUICK TRIP

- Los Angeles: Hidden staging, this is the upper level of two level staging, which is visible to the Dispatcher's left under the scenery. There are 9 tracks; 5 loop tracks are visible through the porthole and 4 more stub tracks that are accessed by a track running through the dam. Visible through hatches under the scenery by the lake, extending back under Summit and Cuyama.
- Simi: Junction with Santa Paula branch, limited switching. Beginning of double track, short runaround using unsignalled crossover.
- Santa Paula (on branch). Local switching, usually handled by a train from Casitas. Race track receives horse cars and sometimes Sunday race specials.
- Oxnard:
 - There is a major icing plant and several fruit packing plants here.
 - Full time switcher assigned here and some through trains will drop/add cars here
 - Most cars move multiple times within the plant due to need to ice and move them to/from packing plants, add top ice, etc. May also switch some express cars. Uses multi-sided waybills for reefers.
 - Also generates a time-sensitive train called the Oxnard Perishables Express (OPE); OPE also picks up cars from the Swift Packing plant in Casitas.
- Casitas: Major yard on the district
 - Dispatches trains in both directions
 - Switches cars in and out of many trains
 - Interchange here with the Southern Pacific and Ventura County RY: VCRy has trackage rights on one track through the station to reach its interchange yard.

- No signals within Casitas, all movements are yard limits.
- Ventura County Ry (See above)
 - Uses multi-sided waybills for meat reefers.
 - Time sensitive movements for arriving cattle cars and interchange reefers
 - Cross ATSF at east end of Swift plant, note lower-quadrant signals governing movements. Call ATSF dispatch if needed to get clearance.
- Oakview: Switching of oil fields and spur to dam. Check box for cars
- Matilija: Interchange with BJRR. Check box under control panel for outbound cars.
- Summit: Local switching at mine and house track. Check box for cars
- Cuyama: Agricultural town with local switching
- Reyes: Small town with limited switching. Usually handled by the Cuyama switch job, though stock cars may be picked up by other jobs.
- Maricopa: Small 4 track staging yard under Santa Paula. Check the semaphore at entry. Trains leaving Maricopa must check the semaphore at the exit to get clearance to enter the layout.
 - Track from Maricopa to Bakersfield is hidden, runs behind the Swift plant and behind Casitas to reach staging.
- Bakersfield: 8 track staging under Los Angeles. 4 loop tracks visible, 4 stub tracks as described above for Los Angeles.