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*The newsletter of the
non-profit
WI&MRyHPG.*

*Organized for railroad
historians, enthusiasts,
and modelers
interested in the
Washington, Idaho &
Montana Railway, from
its origins in 1905
through it's ownership
of today.*

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THE WHITE PINE ROUTE QUARTERLY

The Washington, Idaho & Montana Railway History Preservation Group



Potlatch Corporation: Historical Photographs, ©1999.

WE'RE IN THE DEPOT!

WATCO ALLOWS THE HPG TO BEGIN RESTORATION!

Mission Statement of the Washington, Idaho & Montana Railway History Preservation Group:

"To locate, preserve, and archive all items of a historical nature relating to the history of the WI&MRy; to issue publications on this and related subjects; to encourage public interest in the history of the WI&M and the Potlatch Lumber Company; and, to acquire objects and property appropriate for a museum and/or any of the purposes listed above."

POTLATCH—On March 18th, Scott Wintner, Operations Manager for the Palouse River & Coulee City Railroad [PCC], unlocked the doors of the Potlatch depot and allowed preservation-minded individuals inside for a first-look around. The "open house" was the result of several years of letters, phone calls, and inquiries to the PCC's parent corporation, WATCO, by first the Potlatch Historical Society [PHS] and, more recently, the Washington, Idaho and Montana Railway History Preservation Group [HPG]. While all in attendance imagined the potential of a rejuvenated depot, the tour pitted imagination against reality.

While some areas of the depot will require extensive work, the original woodwork is intact on the first floor, preserved under layers of green paint. On the second floor, all but one natural wood door is intact, as are the original door and window casements. However, every lavatory fixture and the wood flooring from one office

are missing. The stairwell is in an advanced state of deterioration due to two pane-free windows and a hole in the roof directly overhead. Other water damage is minor, but some of the plaster and lath walls have been physically abused.

Before reconstruction of the roof can be accomplished, the floors must be leveled. This will require replacement of the foundation posts, and possibly removal of the eastern portion of the concrete platform. The second floor must then be post and beamed back to its original position.

A unique feature of the depot is a two-story vault, which is generally credited with keeping the drooping roof from collapsing. The wood floor also drops several inches a few feet beyond the second floor vault. When each floor is raised, the vaults will provide the original level point.

The degree of work necessary to restore the old depot elicited a variety of opinions. Repairable, but in critical condition was the consensus of those assembled.