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The newsletter of the non-profit WI&M Ry HPG. 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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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."

THE WHITE PINE ROUTE QUARTERLY

The Washington, Idaho & Montana Railway
History Preservation Group, Inc.



Eastbound WI&M freight behind Milwaukee Road GP-9 #280 (or 290) crosses bridge #2 just west of Kennedy Ford. This photo, taken in June 1976, shows the second incarnation of bridge #2, having originally been built as a Howe truss. The bridge was again rebuilt after this photo when several bents were damaged during the flooding of 1996. Carl Sonner photo

Bridges of the White Pine Route By Carl Sonner

The WI&M had many bridges. Originally, twenty-two bridges were built when the line was constructed from Palouse to Purdue between 1905 and 1908. Over the years some bridges were filled in, and a few new ones were added. In fact, four of the largest trestles had already been replaced with fills by the end of 1916.

The WI&M numbered its bridges consecutively, west to east from 1 to 22, while its mileposts ranged from MP 0 at Lairds (Palouse) to MP 49.37 at Purdue. When the WI&M came under Milwaukee Road ownership in 1962 the bridge and milepost number systems remained the same. Beginning in 1980, Burlington Northern retained the WI&M's mileposts, but re-numbered the bridges based on their mileage from the junction with the ex-NP P&L line at Palouse. Presumably these

designations are still used by the Palouse River & Coulee City Railroad since each bridge had been prominently labeled by the BN. Bridge numbers were shown on profiles and other engineering records and were also used by section gangs, train crews, and other employees to identify a specific structure and its location on the railroad.

The largest, and probably most spectacular bridge on the WI&M was bridge number 18 crossing the Corral Creek ravine at MP 38.5, about a half-mile west of Helmer. At just over 500 feet long and 80 feet high, this timber trestle was replaced by a huge fill and large concrete culvert in 1916. When this occurred, the trestle was left in place and the fill material dumped