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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.**



H. Lutrop of Orofino, ID shot this late-thirties or early-forties photo of WI&M 4-6-0 #1 as it paused with a mixed train at Kennedy Ford, ID, although the location has been misidentified on the print. It appears that the engineer is looking back at a brakeman clinging to the side of a box-car, so it's likely that they are preparing to deliver a cut of cars to the grain elevator. Grain traffic has always played a strong second to lumber in the WI&M's traffic mix, a trend that continues today.
Photo from Steve Gatke Collection.



Grain Traffic on the WI&M



For nearly a century, the Washington, Idaho & Montana Railway has delivered countless freight cars to its interchanges at Bovill, ID and Palouse, WA. Most of these cars contained finished lumber from on line mills, but more than a few of them carried another valuable commodity: grain. Even today, that traffic continues as one of the WI&M's last customers continues shipping numerous carloads of wheat following each year's harvest.

Early in the history of the Potlatch Lumber Co., company managers recognized the value of logged-off land for agricultural use. Farmers working the rich fields of the nearby Palouse region had long been rewarded with high yields of wheat, and demand for this land ran high. Potlatch managers estimated that once

the timber had been removed, they could sell company-owned acreage to other farmers who would be equally successful in cultivating the land.

It turned out that the land required more patience and sweat than expected before farmers could raise a good crop, but the lumber company still sold many acres. While reaping modest profits from the sales, Potlatch realized another important benefit; one that its managers likely had in mind from the outset. As farmers moved in to till these lands, they brought a new era of development and permanence to the upper Palouse River valley.

In establishing Potlatch, both the company and the town, General Manager William Deary and his assistant, Allison Laird, saw themselves