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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.



When it was new in the 1880's, Northern Pacific 4-4-0 number 154 burned wood, sported a diamond-shaped stack, and pulled the finest trains on the line. Twenty years later, although assigned a new number and upgraded to burn coal, this locomotive was expendable; the NP could easily rent it to the WI&M without missing it. Curren Photo, Ron V. Nixon Collection, Courtesy Museum of the Rockies

First Steam Locomotives on the WI&M

The WI&M's last remaining locomotive, 4-6-0 Number 1, rests today in Potlatch at Scenic 6 Park. Judging from the number on its cab, you might assume that it was the WI&M's first locomotive, and you would be partly right. Number 1 was the first locomotive owned by the WI&M, but not the first to run on the WI&M.

That honor goes to a Baldwin-built American Standard 4-4-0, that the WI&M leased from the Northern Pacific in August 1905. When it arrived, Number 696 had already served the NP for over twenty years. In its early days it was numbered 154, and had been present at the NP's 1883 gold spike celebration. But by the turn of the century, newer and larger engines had bumped most of the NP's 4-4-0 locomotives from mainline trains, so the NP could afford to lend one to the WI&M; for a price, of course. When the 696 rolled onto the newly laid WI&M tracks at Palouse it immediately went to work pushing and pulling