

Oroville Track Change Proposal

December 21, 2012

Robert Schott

SMRHS Board of Directors:

Please consider this proposal to change the track and industrial configuration at Oroville. I believe this proposal better meets the challenge of providing both an enjoyable operating experience for Society members and historical interpretation for our operating display as we are obligated under our 503 (c) 3 standing.

This proposal is presented in Adobe Illustrator as it is well suited for this. I am preparing a version in Sandia Software Cadrail 9 which I hope to send early next week. It is challenging to obtain, learn, and master a new drafting program in the 2 weeks since the surprise BOD meeting earlier in the month.

The Proposal:

This proposed track change attempts to fulfill three major goals. These are: 1) provide industries and track configurations that mimic the prototype while allowing, but minimizing, selective compression; 2) providing large industries that can accommodate several freight cars; and 3) minimizing impact to the layout as a whole and the Oroville mainline in particular.

Why?

There are several features on the layout the Society has chosen to model that do not directly support our enjoyment of running trains along the mainline. There are good reasons behind including these features as they allow us to share railroading history and common practices with our members and the visiting public. Modeling these features, both common and unusual, provides an opportunity to further the purpose of the Society as an educational institution. Some of the features we have modeled are the turntables and roundhouses, signals, and structures. Another feature to consider is an at-grade crossing between Oroville and Marysville.

Binney Junction. Even considering the following: 1) Oroville is about 25 miles beyond Marysville instead of three feet, 2) the SP and not the SN crossed the WP at Binney Jct., and 3) overhead electrical wires can be problematic, compressing and combining these elements is worthwhile. This proposal would model the Oroville/Marysville crossing as Binney Junction using a WP standard plan tower identical to the Niles Tower (see photo). Actual photos of Binney Jct. in the 1950s would help immensely.

To protect trains from getting “T-boned” or otherwise skewered at the crossing, an electrical switch similar to the local lockouts used for turnouts would be installed. This would kill power on the conflicting rails. The crossing would be signalized and dispatcher or locally controlled like the existing turnout controls.

Depot Track. There are three spur tracks near the Oroville Depot as indicated in the WP Training Manual. These tracks are in an interesting configuration that can be modeled by extending the edge of the benchwork out the edge of the lower level. There is a support pole at this location that wastes space that could be reclaimed by incorporation into the upper level scene.

Adding these tracks near the depot would enhance the operational possibilities of the SMRHS layout. The tracks include a coach track with an overhead crane, a team track with a loading dock, and a house track that serves a freight house. To minimize impact to the mainline, the mirror image of these tracks are modeled.

Some photos of the Oroville Depot are attached but none show the three spur tracks. I expect the aerial photos will provide additional information.

Existing Setout Track. The existing setout track in Oroville has proved its value to Proto Ops participants and is quite popular. This proposal would keep the setout track but would cut in several new turnouts to serve the new Adolaide Branch, Sacramento Northern interchange, and a new track for the Sunical Spur to serve Stokely Van Camp and Hoke Fuel. Stokely Van Camp is a fruit and vegetable cannery that would accept about 6 cars. Hoke is a small fuel distributor that would take one or two cars at most.

Adolaide Branch. The WP Training Manual notes several industries located off of a long track called the H.J. Kaiser (Adolaide) Spur. Two large wood products plants can be modeled here that will accept about 6 cars each. The turnouts and uncoupling sites are located within 30 inches of the layout front for convenience. This industrial is graded about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch higher than the mainline and siding for visual interest.

Mt. Ida & SP. The layout is extended to surround the other pole located near the Oroville setout track. A short runaround track is proposed with a 4 car spur to Mt. Ida Packing. Also extending off of the runaround is the SP interchange which can accommodate about ten 40' cars.

Other Details. At the added extensions, the facia would be higher to accommodate turnout control panels and Proto Ops card boxes. Grouping these facilities would minimize clutter. Other sections of the facia would be reduced from the existing 6 inch height to 4 inches to allow better viewing of the lower level.

Uncoupling magnets (under track or other) are higher encouraged as they allow “hands free” uncoupling and car switching. Minimizing the number of times someone must reach into the layout will reduce the potential for damage.

Operations. These changes should not alter the normal “fun running” enjoyed by the membership. However, Proto Ops will see a big change. The Oroville/Marysville Local will be split into two jobs because of the increased industrial development for the WP in Oroville and the expanded Sacramento Northern (Marysville) track on either side of the crossing. Freight traffic should see a big increase as most Oroville industries can accommodate several more cars as can the added SP/WP/SN interchange tracks.

Operators will welcome these changes as the controls and card boxes will be more convenient. For easier access, switching and uncoupling areas are grouped toward the front of the layout near the aisle. Another enhancement is the installation of permanent uncoupling magnets at strategic locations.



WP Oroville Depot, c1945



R.R. DEPOT AT OROVILLE, CALIF.

J. EASTMAN B-673

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WP Oroville Depot, c1915



WP Oroville Depot, c1916



WP Niles Tower

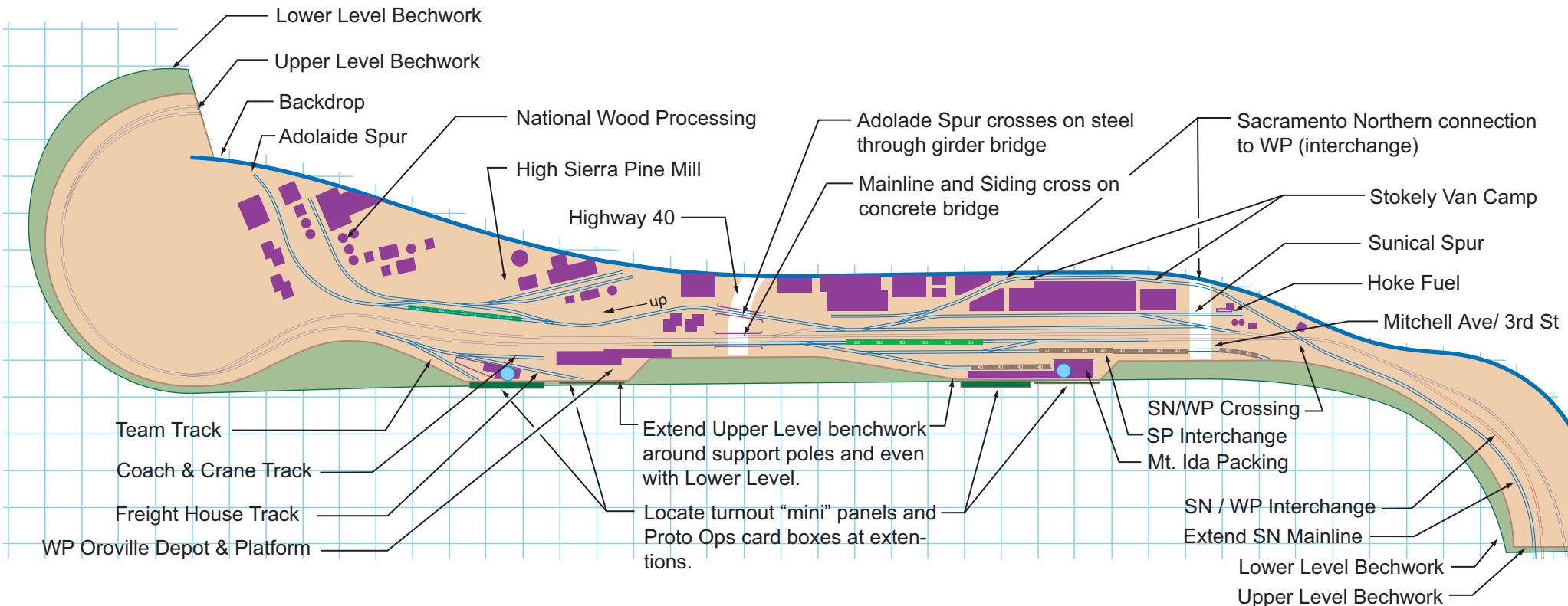


WP Niles Tower

OROVILLE

Proposed Track Change

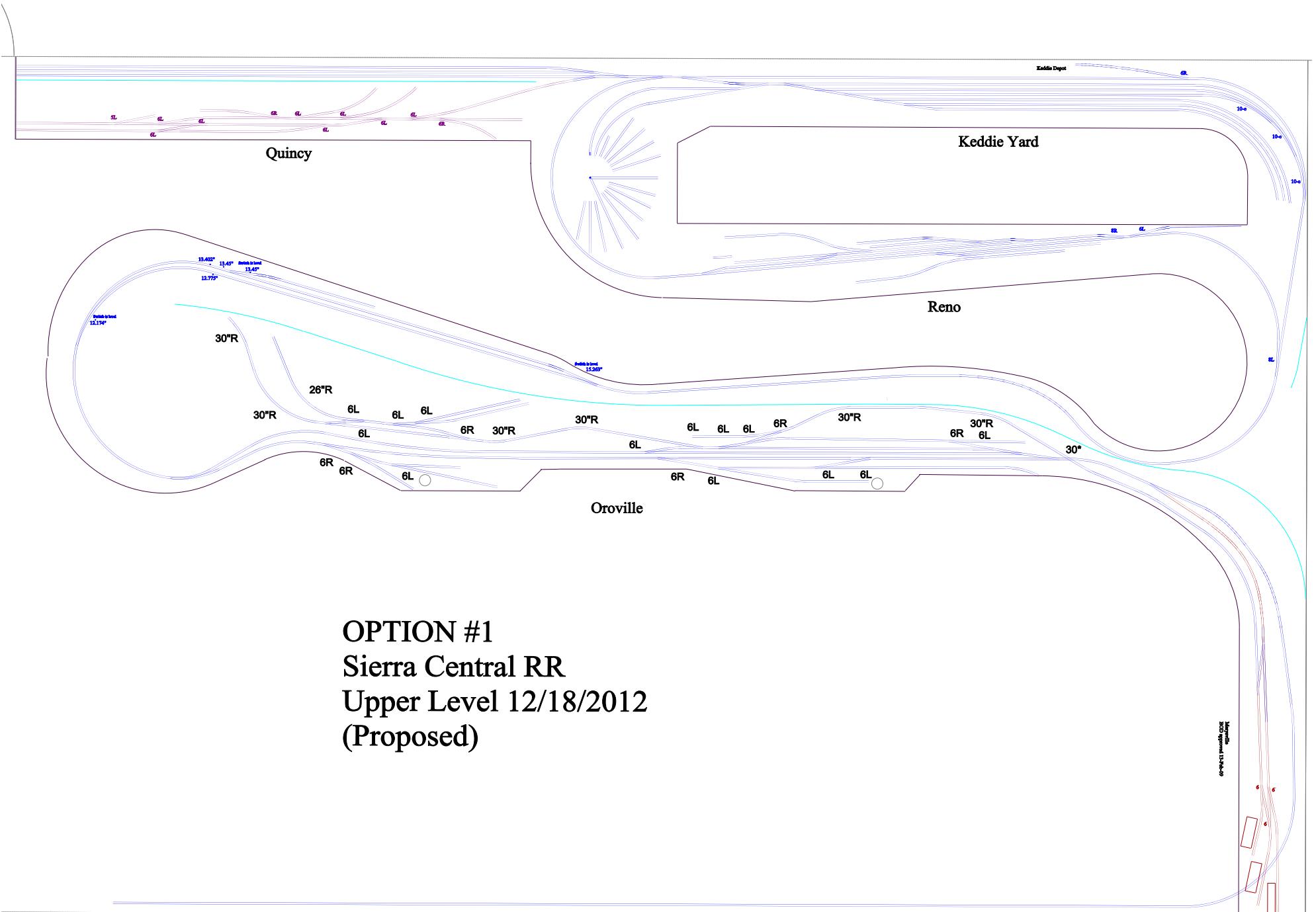
Dec. 18, 2012



Notes:

1. No changes are made to the Oroville mainline, siding, or setout other than to add new turnouts and crossing. This should minimize layout downtime.
2. Facia components such as turnout controls, panels and proto ops card boxes are grouped to minimize clutter.
3. Proposed design utilizes wasted space around the building support poles.
4. The Oroville facia is reduced from 6" to 4" to improve viewing of lower level.
5. The Adolaide Spur is graded 1/2" above the mainline for added interest and accessibility.
6. All turnouts and uncoupling sites are located toward the front of the layout.

Scale: 1/4"=1'-0"
Grid shows one foot squares

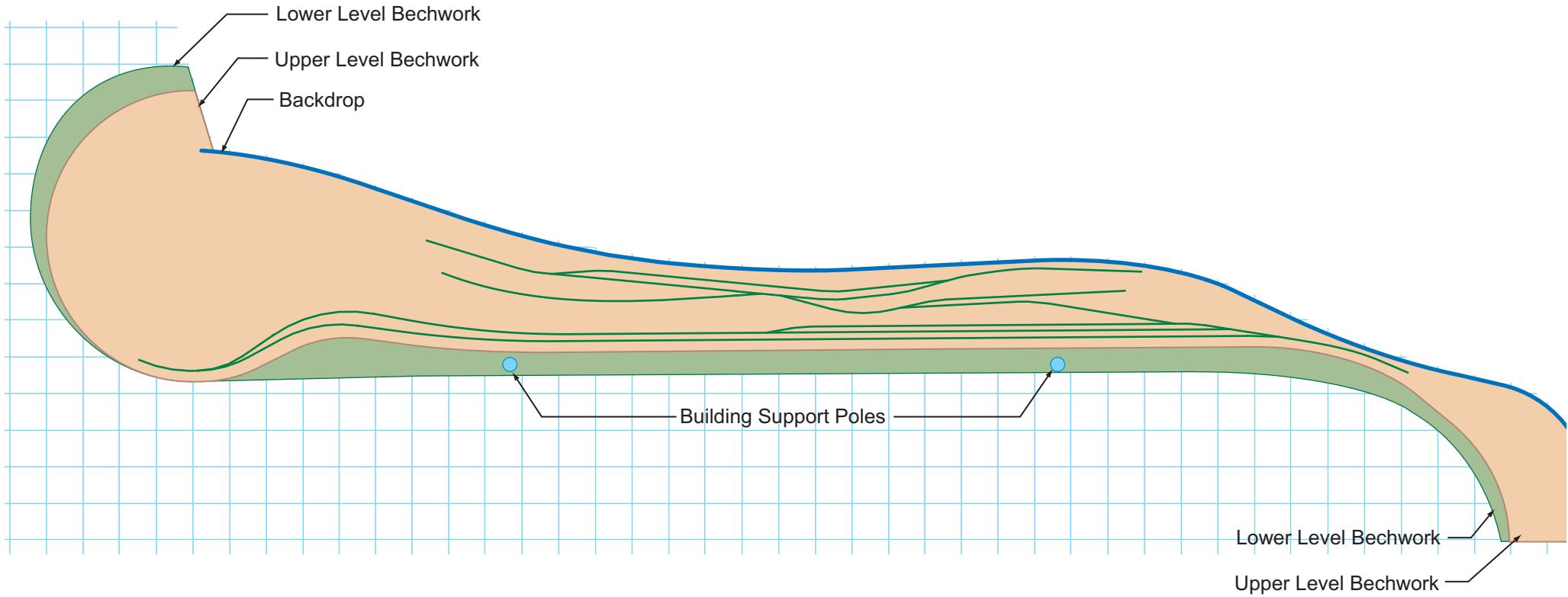


OPTION #1
Sierra Central RR
Upper Level 12/18/2012
(Proposed)

OROVILLE

Existing Track

Approved by SMRHS Board of Directors 2002



Scale: 1/4"=1'-0"
Grid shows one foot squares

