



Name of Property: Denver & Rio Grande Railroad San Juan Extension
(Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad)

City, State: Antonito Vicinity, Colorado; Chama Vicinity, New Mexico

Period of Significance: 1879-1930

NHL Criteria: 1

NHL Theme: V. Developing the American Economy
3. Transportation and Communication

Previous Recognition: 1973 National Register of Historic Places
2007 NRHP, Updated Documentation

National Historic Context: XII. Business
L. Shipping and Transportation
XIV. Transportation
E. Railroads
XVIII. Technology (Engineering and Invention)
B. Transportation

NHL Significance:

- The Denver & Rio Grande Railroad San Juan Extension is the country’s longest and most complete representation of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century railroading. In terms of length, scale of operations, completeness, extensiveness of its steam operations, and state of preservation, the San Juan Extension is the country’s best surviving example of the American railroad at its peak of national influence, roughly 1870 to 1930. The



D&RG was exceptional as the country's most impressive narrow gauge system, yet it is also an outstanding representation of general American railroad practices during the first quarter of the twentieth century.

- The resource is an outstanding representation of the 1,000-mile Denver & Rio Grande Railroad (D&RG) narrow gauge railroad network, which was America's largest, most ambitious, and most successful narrow gauge railroad. Narrow gauge advocates noted that narrower track widths, with their smaller and lighter engines and rolling stock, reduced the costs of initial construction as well as those of ongoing operations. The so-called "Narrow Gauge Movement" of the late nineteenth century was one of the most distinctive and important epochs in American railroading. The standardization of gauge size was a primary concern for railroads during that period, and 39" narrow gauge was a viable challenger to what eventually became the 56-1/2" standard gauge. The San Juan Extension is one of only two functioning narrow gauge segments of the 1,000-mile D&RG system, the other being the Durango-Silverton Narrow-Gauge Railroad (NHL, 1961).

Integrity:

- The railroad retains a high level of historic integrity to its period of significance. After 1930, the company essentially ceased modernizing the San Juan Extension and substantially changing its operating practices or maintenance regimes, thus effectively freezing the railroad in time; it continued to serve as a railroad main line until 1968. The resource, which began operating as a heritage railroad in 1971, thus reflects almost every important change in railroad technology, operations, and physical form during the period when the American railroad matured into a fully integrated system.
- The long-time preservation ethic of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad Commission, assisted by the Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., has resulted in a



historic railroad district that surpasses all other North American railroad heritage corridors in terms of completeness, variety, representative characteristics, scale, and authenticity.

Owners of Property: The States of New Mexico and Colorado joined together to purchase the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad (C&TSRR) in 1970. They created a bi-state agency, the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad Commission, to act on behalf of the two states in overseeing the operation of the C&TSRR. The railroad operates in a right-of-way granted by an Act of Congress in June 1872. In addition, multiple private and local, state, and federal entities own land under the railroad right-of-way.

Acreage of Property: approximately 1,537 acres

Origins of Nomination: The nomination process began in 2009 when the Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Railroad, Inc. contacted NPS staff in the Intermountain Regional Office, Denver, about the potential for NHL designation. A nomination was prepared with funds provided by the Friends group.

Potential for Positive Public Response or Reflection on NHL Program:

- Designation as a National Historic Landmark will encourage the continuation of preservation values in the future operation, maintenance, and restoration of the railroad.
- Designation as a National Historical Landmark will likely increase regional heritage tourism. Visitation to the railroad itself may increase, providing additional resources for the restoration of significant railroad features.

Potential for Negative Public Response or Reflection on NHL Program: None known.

Landmarks Committee Comments:

National Park System Advisory Board

<http://www.nps.gov/history/nhl/Spring2012Nominations/DenverRioGrandeRR.pdf>



Landmarks Committee Recommendation:

Public Comments Favoring Designation (received as of 4/25/12):

Frank Simms, President/General Manager, Running Elk Corporation, Chama, New Mexico
Lance and Shelley Godfrey, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc.,
Prescott, Arizona
Ann Marie Velasquez, Chairman, Conejos County Chamber of Commerce
The Honorable Ross Aragón, Mayor of Pagosa Springs, Colorado
Amos Cordova Sr., Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., Durango,
Colorado
Robert A. Knobbe, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., Glendale
Heights, Illinois
Walter Gay, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., Towson,
Maryland
Richard Pennick, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., Spring
Valley, California
Delegation Office, State of New Mexico, Congress of the United States, Jeff Bingaman, U.S.
Senator; Tom Udall, U.S. Senator; Martin Heinrich, U.S. Representative; The Honorable Ben
Ray Luján, U.S. Representative; Stevan Pearce, U.S. Representative, Washington, DC
Tom Donnelley II, Chicago, Illinois
Jim Wrinn, Editor, Magazine *Trains*
Craig S. Kumler, San Jose, California
Tim Bristow, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., Pagosa Springs,
Colorado
Wayne & Marnie Ashby, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc.,
Reserve, New Mexico
Robert Craig, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., Farmington,
New Mexico
Dr. Robert E. Sloan, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., Winona,
Minnesota
Ron Boerger, Austin, Texas
Robert F. Holzweiss, Ph.D., President, Railway & Locomotive Historical Society, Colorado
Springs, Colorado
The Honorable Scott Tipton, U.S. Congress, 3rd District, Colorado
William C. Hume, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc.,
Albuquerque, New Mexico
Spencer Wilson, Board Member, Friends of the C&TSRR Inc., Albuquerque, New Mexico
Tom Noel, Professor of History & Director of Public History & Preservation, University of
Colorado, Denver
Randy Randall, Chairman; Peter Foster, Vice-Chairman; Billy Elbrock, Secretary; Dan Love,
Treasurer, The Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad Commission, Antonito, Colorado
Herbert Knoesel, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., Cupertino,
California
Bill Scott, Topeka, Kansas

Joe M. Bailey, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., Fort Worth, Texas

Yancey N. Juergenson

David Anders, Publisher, Wilk-Amite Record, Gloster, Mississippi

Kathleen A. Brosnan, Associate Dean for Faculty & Research, College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, University of Houston

Ray Hoppes, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., Colorado Springs, Colorado

Claude Wiatrowski, Ph.D., Colorado Springs, Colorado

W. J. Richardson, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., Raleigh, North Carolina

Robert Hawkins, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., Hudson, Wisconsin

Peter Moose, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., New York, New York

Tim Tennant, President & CEO, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., Albuquerque, New Mexico

Carolyn Beasley, Chama Valley Chamber of Commerce, President, New Mexico

William R. McCall, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., Austin, Texas

Major Brooks Carleton Wilson, USMC, Retired, Clovis, California

Brenfa Jahnke, Administrative Assistant, Durango, Colorado

Allen C. Harper, Owner, Chair/CEO, Narrow Gauge Railroad Museum

Bob Schork, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., Buena Vista, Colorado

Jason Rose, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., Spring, Texas

David Huete, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., New Orleans, Louisiana

Darlene Danko, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., South Fork, Colorado

Rory B. Peterson, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., Belvidere, Illinois

Mike Burstein, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc.

Mike Hadaway, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., Albuquerque, New Mexico

Thomas O. and Carol A. Hiscox, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., Payson, Arizona

John Cook, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., Silverton, Colorado

Lon Moffitt, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., Altoona, Iowa

Robert Olds, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., Newport Beach, California

Mr. and Mrs. Rex G. Kemp, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., McKinney, Texas

William Smith, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., Cypress, Texas



Fred Parce, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., Miami, Florida
W. Douglas Bond, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., Cambridge, Massachusetts
Diana Metcalf, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., Alexandria, Kentucky
Nathan B. Bryant, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., Denver, Colorado
Steve Austin, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., Talking Rock, Georgia
Edward and Judy Arbuckle, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., Las Vegas, Nevada
John Michael Smith, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., Tucson, Arizona
William A. Wiggins, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., Baggs, Wyoming
Richard B. Dunn, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., Los Alamos, New Mexico
John W. Porco, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., Pagosa Springs, Colorado
Rich Roberts, Annville, Pennsylvania
Barry H. Herlíhy, Pasadena, California
Jim McKeel, Wichita, Kansas
R. W. Hayden, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Wichita, Kansas
Charles R. Barnett, Santa Fe, New Mexico
Edward C. Nichols, President and CEO, Colorado State Historic Preservation Officer
Terry R. Reynolds, Ph.D., Ethnohistorian, Las Cruces, New Mexico
Todd Frazier, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, La Habra, California
Dr. Marietta Tretter, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad College Station, Texas
Joseph F. Calek
John D. Rupley, RA, LA, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Albuquerque, New Mexico
Ross Miller, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Ault, Colorado
Courtney B. Wilson, Executive Director, Railroad B & O Museum, Baltimore, Maryland
John C. Engs, Board Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc.
Sandra Engs, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Colorado Springs, Colorado
Donald J. Backys, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., Walland, Tennessee
Harim K. Evans, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., Highland, California
Hank Morris, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., Oceanside, California
Andres Gulliford, Ph.D., Professor of History and Environmental Studies, Fort Lewis College,

Durango, Colorado
George W. Metz, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., Newtown Square, Pennsylvania
Howard Morgan, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., Stow, Ohio
Duncan C. Burdick, M.D., Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., Colorado Springs, Colorado
Michael L. Bozzini, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., San Francisco, California
Rob Lenicheck, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., Palo Alto, California
R. M. Ross, Director and Vice President, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., Carmel, Indiana
Ted and Linda Smith, Logandale, Nevada
Robert Valesano, The Villages, Florida
N. Kent Loudon, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., Somerville, New Jersey
Robert J. Tórréz, New Mexico State Historian (1987-2000), Albuquerque, New Mexico
The Honorable Archie J. Vigil, Mayor, Chama, New Mexico
Rich Murray, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., Sholola, Pennsylvania
Douglas Junda, Member, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc., Lakewood, Colorado
Executive Director, Alamosa County Economic Development Corporation, Alamosa County Chamber of Commerce

Advisory Board Recommendation: