



In 1878, the Pueblo & Arkansas Valley Railroad, formed by the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe to construct its mainline in Colorado, reached the New Mexico border. From there, work continued under another AT&SF affiliate, the New Mexico & Southern Pacific Railroad, whose first task was to cross Raton Pass. The NM&SP reached San Marcial on the Rio Grande from Raton Pass in 1880. From San Marcial, construction continued southward under the AT&SF affiliate Rio Grande, Mexico & Pacific Railroad, which completed a line to Rincon, New Mexico (this location), where the RGM&P line split. One line went southwestward to the then-new Southern Pacific Sunset Route (1881) at Deming, New Mexico, forming the A&TSF's first transcontinental route (via the SP Sunset Route 1881). The other line continued to follow the Rio Grande southeastward to the Texas border, where the AT&SF subsidiary Rio Grande & El Paso Railroad took over the work and reached El Paso in 1881. The AT&SF/RG&EP arrived in El Paso only a month and half after the SP.

This northward view of the RGM&P (now BNSF) line just north of Rincon follows a dry tributary of the Rio Grande to Rincon on the Rio Grande. The flat-topped hill is older alluvium deposited by the tributary; the tributary later eroded the alluvium due to some lowering of the Rio Grande, probably by normal faulting. RGM&P route leaves the Rio Grande about 60 miles north of Rincon to avoid some steep gorges along the Rio Grande and rejoins the Rio Grande at Rincon.





The yard at Rincon. The sidings and route to the right (southwest) is the AT&SF's RGM&P (1881) line to Deming and the branch to the left (southeast) is the RGM&P (1881) line to El Paso.





This building in the Rincon yard does not look like an original station and appears to be a modern operations facility.





Southeast view of the Rincon wye. The sidings and route in the foreground is the AT&SF's RGM&P (1881) line to Deming and the branch forming the wye is the AT&SF's RGM&P (1881) line to El Paso.





Northwest view of the Rincon wye; the RGM&P (1881) line to El Paso is in the foreground. The curve to the right heads north to Santa Fe and the curve to the left heads to Deming and the connection with the SP Sunset Route (1881).





Road crossing of the AT&SF's RGM&P (1881) line to Deming where it leaves the Rio Grande Valley southwest of Rincon. In 2001, the Southwestern Railroad acquired the RGM&P (1881) from Rincon to Deming from BNSF.





A Southwestern Railroad train plies the AT&SF's RGM&P (1881) route to Deming southwest of Rincon. The SW started operating in 1990, and in 2001 acquired the A&TSF's former Deming Subdivision (the 60 miles from Rincon to Deming) from BNSF. The SW's primary traffic on this division is copper ore from the mines to adjacent concentrators, and outbound loads of copper anodes, cathodes, and sulfuric acid (a by-product of the refining process).





A BNSF train plies the RGM&P (1881) to Deming southwest of Rincon. BNSF unit trains traverse the Rincon to Deming line under SW trackage rights, taking coal westbound to the Arizona Electric power plant near Cochise, Arizona.