



The narrow gauge Imperial Gypsum Company Railroad was built in 1922 from the San Diego & Arizona Railway at Plaster City, California, northward 20 miles to the gypsum quarry. U.S. Gypsum purchased the line in 1946, and in 1947 operated the first diesel engine on the line. Today, U.S. Gypsum operates the last industrial narrow gauge railway in the United States. The Plaster City plant manufactures “Sheetrock” brand gypsum panels, which are shipped out on trucks and on the standard gauge SD&A.

In this southward view of the southern end of the narrow gauge Imperial Gypsum Company Railroad, the tracks cross former U.S. Highway 80 to access a Plaster City ore processing facility. The SD&A standard gauge line is on the other side of the building. U.S. 80, now designated County Road 80, was replaced by Interstate 8, 3 miles to the south of this location, in 1964.



Narrow gauge hoppers await their next duty, with the sprawling Plaster City plant in the distance.



The narrow gauge of the tracks is obvious in comparison to the wheels, which appear close together (compared to standard gauge wheels).



Another view of hoppers, showing a narrow gauge switch on an industrial railroad, a sight that can be seen nowhere else in the United States.



The SD&A standard gauge line west of Plaster City, in the distance to the east. A few locomotives and box cars are stored on the inactive SD&A track.



In the desert west of Plaster City, this southward view is taken from little-used County Road S80, which was built as U.S. Highway 80 in the 1920's. The older road in the foreground was the Ocean-to-Ocean Highway, the original southern transcontinental highway, built between 1911 and 1915. The 1919-vintage SD&A parallels both roads. The modern route through this transportation corridor is Interstate 8, which is over the hill about 2 miles.