



During 1905 and 1906, the Twin Buttes Railroad Company built an 18 mile line southward from the SP Sunset Route (1881) at Tucson to the mining town of Twin Buttes via Sahuarita (this location) on the Santa Cruz River. In 1910, the Tucson & Nogales Railroad purchased the TB (1906) and built 37 miles south along the Santa Cruz River from Sahuarita (this location on the TB) to Calabasas (also known as Río Rico), on the AT&SF's New Mexico & Arizona Railroad (1882), to complete a line from Tucson to Mexico border via Nogales (on the border).

In this northeastward view at Sahuarita, the track in the foreground and the track to the left (north) of the junction is the TB (1906). The line to the right of the junction is the T&N (1910). The snowcapped Santa Catalina Mountains are visible in the distance.



Southeastward view of cars stored on the Sahuarita siding of the T&N (1910).



Northeastward view of the TB (1906) about a quarter mile west of the junction with the T&N (1910) at Sahuarita. Note the groves of nut trees on the floodplain of the Santa Cruz River.



Southwestward view of the TB (1906), same location as previous. Note the steeper grade of the tracks in the distance, on the west edge of the Santa Cruz River floodplain, where the nut trees end and the climb up to Twin Buttes and the mines begin. The bedrock hills in the distance are the Sierrita Mountains. The tailings piles visible in the distance are part of the Twin Buttes mining district, which consists of two major open pit mines. The southern of the two mines is out of view to the left and at the end of the TB (1906) track, about 8 miles up. The northern of the two mines is accessed via a separate spur, call the Pima Spur, explored below.



Southward view of the the TB (1906), 4 miles north of Sahuarita. The junction is called Pima and the track to the right is the Pima Spur (not shown separately on the map), which extends 6 miles due west to the northern of the two open pit mines in the Twin Buttes district. I could not find information on when the spur was built.



Northeastward view at Pima, the track in the foreground is the Pima Spur and the mainline is the TB (1906). The snowcapped Santa Catalina Mountains rise above Tucson in the distance.



Westward view of the Pima Spur, same location as previous. Note the groves of nut trees on the Santa Cruz River floodplain.



Eastward view of the Pima Spur, 1 mile west of the previous location, where a trestle carries the line over the currently dry Santa Cruz River.





Westward view of the Pima Spur, just west of the previous location. Note the stored maintenance vehicles and the tailings pile for the Pima Mine in the left distance.



Westward view of the Pima Spur, 5 miles west of the junction with the TB (1906) line and 1 mile shy of the end of track at the Pima Mine. Note the stored tank cars, probably for ore processing chemicals, and the tailings pile for the Pima Mine.



Eastward view of the Pima Spur, 5.5 miles west of the junction with the TB (1906) line at Pima and less than a mile shy of the end of track. The stored tank cars of the previous photo are barely visible in the distance, and the tailings are piled high to the right (north) of the line.



Westward view of the Pima Spur at today's ASARCO Mission Mine, which began operating in 1961. The track curves to the left in the distance and ends just on the other side of the mill complex.