

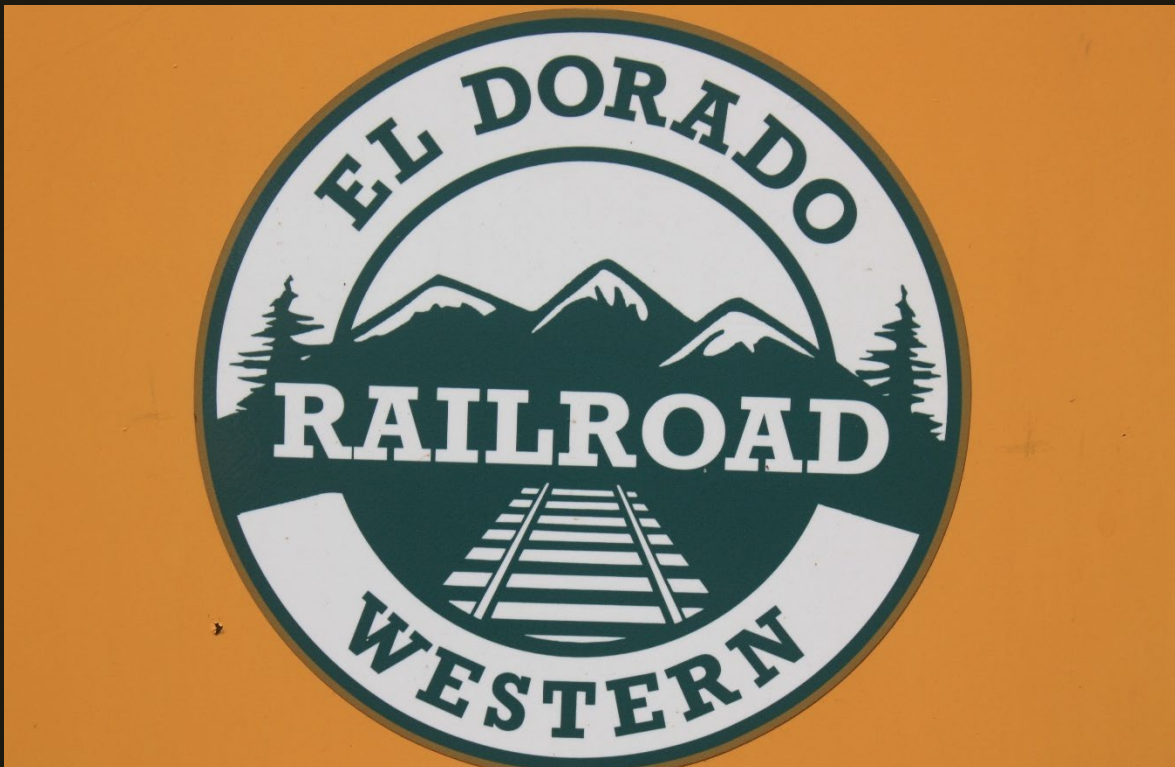


The first railroad to be named Placerville & Sacramento Valley Railroad was incorporated in 1862, and construction from a junction with the Sacramento Valley Railroad (1856) at Folsom towards the gold mining center of Placerville began in late 1863. The line reached Latrobe in 1864 and Shingle Springs (this location) in 1865, 26 miles from Folsom (not shown separately on the SWRRH Map). At some point prior to 1877 either the name was changed and/or a portion of the construction was built by a company called Folsom & Placerville Railroad. In either case, on April 19, 1877, the Folsom & Placerville Railroad and the Placerville & Sacramento Valley Railroad (neither shown separately on the SWRRH Map) were consolidated with the SV (1856) to form the Sacramento & Placerville Railroad. The new railroad operated over 49 miles of track between Sacramento and Shingle Springs (this location). The S&P came under the control of the Southern Pacific's subsidiary, the Northern Railway, in 1888, the same year in which the line was finally extended about 8 miles (as the crow flies) northeast on a sinuous route from Shingle Springs to Placerville. The 25-year history of construction from Folsom to Placerville, including the first Placerville & Sacramento Valley Railroad, the Folsom & Placerville Railroad, and the 1888 extension from Shingle Springs to the gold-belt town of Placerville, is identified on the SWRRH Map as "Sacramento & Placerville (1888)." The SP's route from Sacramento to Placerville, consisting of the SV (1856) and the S&P (1888) became known as the SP Placerville Branch. In 1904, the Placerville & Lake Tahoe Railroad extended the line east from Placerville to support lumber operations (not shown separately on the SWRRH Map). The SP Placerville Branch was used to haul forest products and was in service until 1986 when the SP abandoned the branch (but did not remove tracks). In 1986, the former S&P (1888) trackage was detached from the SV (1856) at Folsom. Also in 1986 or soon thereafter the tracks east of Placerville, i.e. the Placerville & Lake Tahoe trackage, and 3 miles of track west of Placerville (the last 3 miles of the S&P [1888]), were removed. The trackage between Folsom and a location 3 miles shy of Placerville, including this location at Shingle Springs, is under the ownership of the second Placerville & Sacramento Valley Railroad, which is restoring the line and running excursions using equipment from the California State Railroad Museum.

Eastward view of the S&P (1888) at Shingle Springs, where the railroad arrived in 1865. This is the Shingle Springs Station for the El Dorado Western Railroad, which is owned by the El Dorado County Historical Museum and offers rides in gas-powered railcars on the S&P (1888). The station building is new, not historical. The tracks are owned by the second Placerville & Sacramento Valley Railroad.



Eastward view of the S&P (1888) at Shingle Springs, a few steps west of previous location; the same station as before is hidden behind a tree. One of the El Dorado Western's gas-powered railcars is in the foreground.





Westward view of the S&P (1888) a quarter mile east of previous location. This is the beginning of the 1888 extension from Shingle Springs to Placerville.



Now we're 5 miles east of Shingle Springs looking northeastward at the El Dorado Station for the El Dorado Western Railroad. There are no sidings here; the caboose and excursion car are on the mainline.



El Dorado Western gas-powered railcars parked on the S&P (1888) mainline at today's El Dorado Station.



Northeastward view of the S&P (1888), one mile northeast of the El Dorado Station.



Westward view of the S&P (1888), 2 miles northeast of the El Dorado Station. The track is cut 800 feet west of here at Missouri Flat Road, 2 miles shy of Placerville. The white vinyl fence and path to the left are the El Dorado Trail, a recreational rail-to-trail that is on the S&P (1888) mainline grade. The overgrown track in the foreground is a siding for a depot that no longer exists. This track is 200 feet long and completely detached. A 1949 topo map shows a junction with another railroad at this location; that railroad heads southeast at least 4 miles. I found no record of this railroad but it may have been one of the narrow gauge lumber branches.



Westward view of the same 200-foot siding, a few steps east of the previous location. The same white vinyl fence for the El Dorado Trail on the S&P (1888) mainline, is barely visible through the trees on the left (south).





Eastward view of the S&P (1888), a few steps southeast of the previous location on the El Dorado Trail (the white vinyl fence ends just behind the viewer).



Northward view of the S&P (1888), 3,000 feet northeast of the previous location where the alignment crosses Weber Creek. The original 1888 trestle was constructed of wood and the SP replaced it in 1903 with the current metal structure. The tracks are gone but the trestle now carries the El Dorado Trail over the creek.



Northeastward view of a fill grade on the S&P (1888) one mile north of the Weber Creek Trestle and one mile west of the S&P end-of-the-line in downtown Placerville.



The S&P (1888) and the El Dorado Trail disappear in downtown Placerville. Now we are one mile east of downtown Placerville and the El Dorado Trail has reappeared, but this time on the grade of the Placerville & Lake Tahoe Railway (not shown separately on the SWRRH Map). In 1903, the Placerville & Lake Tahoe Railway started building eastward from Placerville, at the end of track of the S&P (1888), for a lumber railroad. In 1904, the P&LT was incorporated and the line was opened that same year. The first 8 miles from Placerville to Camino, including this location, was standard gauge, but from Camino eastward 65 miles into the forest was narrow gauge. The narrow gauge line was one of several operated in the area under the ownership of the El Dorado Lumber Company Narrow Gauge Lines (not shown separately on the SWRRH Map). In 1911 the P&LT was sold at foreclosure and was reorganized as the Camino, Placerville & Lake Tahoe Railroad. In 1917, the El Dorado Lumber Company and its railroads were sold to the Michigan-California Lumber Company. In 1986, when the SP abandoned the Placerville Branch, eliminating CP&LT's access to the national rail network, the Michigan-California Lumber Company removed the line back to Placerville.

Eastward view of P&LT (1904), 3 miles east of the previous location and 2 miles east of the S&P (1888) end-of-the-line in downtown Placerville (the P&LT is not shown separately on the SWRRH Map).



Westward view of P&LT (1904) and El Dorado Trail, one mile east of the previous location.



Southward view of a one of several structures at the abandoned El Dorado Lumber Company/Michigan-California Lumber Company mill in Camino, at the end of standard gauge track on the P&LT (1904) and 5 miles east of the previous location. There is no trace of the railroad that I could find, but the alignment is visible on satellite photos and historical topo maps. The alignment from Placerville approached the south side of Camino from the west then turned 90 degrees left (northward) and passed along the left (east) side of the building in this view. The tracks continued north (toward the viewer) where the left-most K-rail is located and on to the remainder of the mill facilities.



Southward view of foundations for the abandoned El Dorado Lumber Company/Michigan-California Lumber Company mill in Camino, 300 feet east of the previous location.



Now we've turned around 180 degrees looking north. The P&LT (1904) ran due north (away from the viewer) through the paved area in the foreground. There was a switch and the track split in front of the building, which may have been the mill office; one track runs to the left (west) and the other to the right of the building and behind the building the tracks split into multiple sidings for a lumber railyard that extended 1,500 feet behind the building. That railyard was the end of the standard gauge track on the P&LT (1904) and was probably the starting point of the narrow gauge trackage into the forest, of which there is no trace as far as I can tell.