



The Apache Railway was incorporated in September 1917, grading began in October 1917 from Holbrook, Arizona, on the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe (original Atlantic & Pacific 1883) mainline, and in July 1920 was completed the 72 miles to what would become the logging town of McNary. In 1923, James McNary and William Cady purchased the railroad. In 1943, McNary's Southwest Forest Industries was awarded a timber contract and a year later SWFI extended the AR eastward from McNary through this location near Sunrise Lake, Arizona, then south to the town of Maverick on a route with elevations exceeding 9,000 feet. The AR offered passenger service until the 1950's. In 1964, the route from Maverick to McNary, including this location, became the White Mountain Scenic Railroad, which operated steam powered passenger excursions over the SWFI-owned line. As track conditions deteriorated, the excursions were cut back and in 1976 the railroad ceased operations. In the 1970's, the White Mountain Apache Tribe stopped selling logs to SWFI and the mill in McNary shut down in 1980. The SWFI (1944) line and the southern half of the original Apache (1920) line were abandoned in the early 1980's.

Southward view of the fill grade of the SWFI (1944) and behind the railroad grade the Apache Spring Shipping Corrals, where local ranchers once loaded livestock onto AR trains for shipment to market.





Closer view of the SWFI (1944) and the Apache Spring Shipping Corrals. The elevation here is 9,100 feet, thus green pastures in Arizona in summer.



Southeastward view of the SWFI (1944) 1,700 feet east of the previous location, where the SWFI (1944) alignment turns from eastward to southward toward Maverick. This location is the trailhead for the Railroad Grade Trail, a rail-to-trail, here on top of a significant fill grade and 90-degree curve of the SWFI (1944).

