



The Union Pacific organized the Oregon Short Line Railway on April 14, 1881, to build northwest from the UP mainline at Granger, Wyoming, to Portland, Oregon. The OSL would create a direct "short line" to Oregon that did not require the UP to use Central Pacific tracks (via Donner and Siskiyou passes). The line reached Kemmerer, Wyoming, in 1882, where the OSL established facilities about 5 miles east of the summit over the divide between the Colorado River drainage and the Great Basin. Sometime around 1909, a branch line was built south from a wye with the OSL 2 miles west of Kemmerer. The branch was about 10 miles long and accessed coal fields near Elkol, Wyoming. A Post Office was established, at Elkol in 1909, and that is only indication I could find as to when the branch may have been built. Spurs were built to mines and new (post-2000?) spurs to mines and power plants are too new to appear on topographic maps.

This bolted, rusted spur is of the older generation.



Spurs from the Elkol Branch.



Two coal spurs, a coal-fired power plant, and a coal elevator (upper right) near Elkol.



The Elkol Branch "main line" is beyond (east of) the U.S. Highway 189 bridge, and this spur branches after crossing under the highway.