



The Southern Pacific's West Side Line was completed in 1891 and extended southward from the SP-owned Western Pacific (1869) at Tracy, California, through this location at Los Banos to Oxalis on the west side of the San Joaquin Valley, then eastward to Fresno, where the line connected with the SP (1876) main line to southern California. The new line was the fastest and least expensive route to Los Angeles; the SP's overnight Owl passenger train operated over this line between San Francisco and Los Angeles into the 1960's. The SP abandoned the section of the West Side Line between Los Banos and Oxalis in the 1990's. The California Northern Railroad now operates the northern section of the West Side Line from Tracy to Los Banos (this location) to transport agricultural goods.

Northwestward view of the SP West Side Line (1891) at Los Banos on a rainy afternoon. Note the bend in track, which appears to be a former switch for a siding; the main line would have continued in the gravel area to the left (west) and the curved track was a siding for loading (next photo).



Southeastward view of the SP West Side Line (1891), the main line probably ran in the flat area to the right. The track ends at a loading facility in the distance, which now is the end-of-track of the California Northern.