



On May 19, 1881, the Southern Pacific was the first railroad to reach El Paso, Texas, beating the rival Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway by a month and a half. The SP kept building east from El Paso under the provisions of the Galveston, Harrisburg, & San Antonio Railway charter, and met the Texas & Pacific Railway at Sierra Blanca, Texas, on December 15, 1881.

An eastbound Union Pacific train plies the 1881 SP/GH&SA route in Clint, Texas, 20 miles southeast of El Paso, though agricultural land on the Rio Grande floodplain.





Close-up of siding in Clint.





Southeast view of the SP/GH&SA (now UP) route in Clint, Texas, toward Sierra Blanca. Note that the double track reduces to single track in the distance.