



In 1883, the standard gauge Virginia & Truckee Railroad completed its narrow gauge Carson & Colorado Railroad, which the V&T owners immediately realized was "either 300 miles too short or 300 years too soon" and thus sold to the Southern Pacific Railroad in 1900. Shortly after the sale of the C&C, silver was discovered at Tonopah, Nevada, and the C&C became prosperous for the SP. The break in gauge between the narrow gauge C&C and standard gauge V&T at Mound House caused ore and supplies to back up at Mound House. So in 1905, the SP formed the Nevada & California Railroad to standard gauge the C&C as far as its junction with the Tonopah Railroad (1904n), which in the same year (1905) had changed its name to the Tonopah & Goldfield Railroad and standard gauged the line. The combined V&T, N&C (SP), and T&G formed a standard gauge line from the SP (original Central Pacific[1869]) mainline at Reno to the Tonopah mines. The N&C offered to buy the V&T but the price was too high. Instead, the N&C built its own line from Hazen (this location), on the SP (1902) re-alignment of the original CP (1869), southwestward 28 miles to the C&C (1883n)/N&C at Fort Churchill; the new Hazen Cutoff thus bypassed the V&T entirely.

Northwestward view of the N&C Hazen Cutoff (1905), in the foreground, at its connection with the SP (1902) re-alignment, which is the straight track in front of the shack. A switch leads to two N&C sidings along the SP (now Union Pacific) mainline. This is the only current connection, but it was originally the west branch of a wye.



Southeastward view of the N&C Hazen Cutoff (1905) showing the same switch as the previous photo. Note the flat topography of the Carson Sink, the marshes and playas at the terminus of the Carson River and a remnant of Pleistocene Lake Lahontan. The fill grade for the abandoned eastern branch of the original wye is visible in the brush to the left.



Southeastward view of the N&C Hazen Cutoff (1905), 900 feet southeast of the previous location. The fill grade for the abandoned eastern branch of the original wye is well preserved to the left. Note a small bridge with a small tree in the right distance and the U.S. Highway Alt 50 overpass behind it.



In 1907, the N&C built a 15-mile branch line from Hazen (this location) to Fallon, an agricultural area based on diversion of the Carson River to irrigate loamy soils in the Carson Sink.

Northward view of the same small bridge and tree as noted in the previous photo, 800 feet southeast of the previous location. The fill grade for the east branch of the abandoned Hazen wye is to the right of and behind the bridge. N&C Hazen Cutoff (1905) is in the foreground and the N&C Fallon Branch (1907) goes off to the right (southeast). The small bridge is for Hazen Drain, which drains agricultural fields west of this location.



Southeastward view of the same small bridge and switch as in the previous photo. The N&C Hazen Cutoff (1905) is in the foreground and continues straight under the U.S. Highway Alt 50 overpass and the N&C Fallon Branch (1907) goes off to the left (southeast). The small bridge is for Hazen Drain, which drains agricultural fields west of this location.



Northwestward view of the N&C Fallon Branch (1907) in the foreground and the N&C Hazen Cutoff (1905) to the left. The hill in the distance is Black Butte, on the drainage divide between the Carson Sink and the Fernley Sink, the latter in the Truckee River watershed.





Southward view of the N&C Hazen Cutoff (1905), just south of the U.S. Highway Alt 50 overpass. The hill just right of center was once an island in ancient Lake Lahontan.