



In 1898, the El Paso & Northeastern Railroad completed the line north from El Paso to the future town of Alamogordo and to Carrizozo in 1899, from which it built a 21 mile branch east to Capitan. With an operational railroad in place, the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad took an interest and in December 1900 agreed to build a line southwest and meet the EP&NE in Santa Rosa, New Mexico. In 1900, the EP&NE formed the El Paso & Rock Island Railway to build 128 miles from Carrizozo to Santa Rosa, which was completed in February 1902 and met the CRI&P, operating in New Mexico under the name Chicago, Rock & El Paso Railway, completing a new transcontinental route. The El Paso & Southwestern Railroad purchased the EP&NE in July 1905.

A small bridge carries the EP&NE grade over a wash 4 miles south of Carrizozo. This bridge may be original 1899 EP&NE construction, but more likely was an upgrade by a successor, either the EP&SW, Southern Pacific, or Union Pacific. The snowcapped Sacramento Mountains, the westernmost Basin and Range fault block range, are in the distance in this eastward view; beyond the mountains lie the Great Plains.



A small bridge carries the EP&RI grade over a wash 5 miles north of Carrizozo. This bridge may be original 1901 EP&RI construction, but more likely was an upgrade by a successor, either the EP&SW, Southern Pacific, or Union Pacific. The Sacramento Mountains are in the distance.