



In the late 1870's and first years of the 1880's, the Southern Pacific Railroad focused its resources on completing its southern transcontinental route through southern Arizona and New Mexico to El Paso and beyond. The SP was in no rush to build east from Mojave, California, until 1880, when the St. Louis & San Francisco Railway came to an agreement with the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad to jointly control the Atlantic & Pacific Railroad. The A&P would build west from the AT&SF mainline at Isleta, New Mexico, to meet the as yet un-started SP Mojave Branch at Needles, California. The A&P crossed the Colorado River in 1883, just before the SP arrived.

Today, the BNSF (former A&P and AT&SF) is double tracked from Los Angeles to eastern New Mexico and beyond, including here in this eastward view near Adamana, Arizona.





Westward view of the BNSF (former A&P and AT&SF) tracks, with the settlement of Adamana in the distance. Note the pile of ties, part of BNSF's upgrading to concrete ties. Prior to the establishment of the Petrified Forest National Monument in 1906 and during its early history, the station at Adamana was the main stopping point for visitors. Tourists stayed at the Forest Hotel and visited local attractions such as the various petrified wood forests and petroglyphs. The Fred Harvey Company hosted guided tours of the Petrified Forest in open-topped "Harvey Cars" into the 1930's. The advent of the automobile and construction of U.S. Highway 66 and later Interstate 40 ceased public railroad travel to the Petrified Forest.



Northward view of one of the many BNSF container trains from a cliff in Petrified Forest National Park.





A BNSF container train, with the Puerco River in the foreground; the route follows the Puerco River from its confluence with the Little Colorado River at Holbrook (junction with Apache Railway) eastward through Adamana and into New Mexico.



The same BNSF container train as above, where the grade cuts across a bend in the Puerco River.