



In 1867, Colorado Territorial Governor John Evans, together with David Moffat and other Colorado business leaders, partnered with East Coast investors to form the Denver Pacific Railway to link Denver and the Colorado Territory with the national rail network at Cheyenne, Wyoming, where the Union Pacific Railroad arrived in the same year. The DP broke ground on May 18, 1868, cheered on by a crowd of nearly 1,000 local citizens, and the first train arrived in Denver from Cheyenne on June 24, 1870. In the 1870's, investors of the Kansas Pacific Railroad acquired control of the DP and in 1880 merged with the UP and started operating under the UP name. In this eastward view in downtown Greeley, Colorado, the DP (now UP) mainline is just out of site in the distance, in front of the grain elevators.

The Greeley Salt Lake & Pacific Railroad was founded in 1881 and was backed by the UP to compete with the Denver, Salt Lake & Western Railroad's never-realized plan to extend up through the Cache La Poudre River canyon to Utah. The DSL&W was intimidated by the GSL&P's quick progress and halted its project. In 1882, the GSL&P reached sandstone and limestone quarries west of Fort Collins, which is far as the line ever progressed. No railroad was ever built up the the Cache La Poudre River canyon. In 1890 GSL&P was one of twelve railroads combined into a consolidated railroad system, the Union Pacific, Denver & Gulf Railway Company, which in turn was taken over in 1899 by the newly formed Colorado & Southern Railway. The C&S remained independent until 1908 when it became part of the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad and today is BNSF.

The two tracks in the street (U.S. Highway 85) are the wye for the GSL&P, which began construction at this point on the DP mainline in 1881. As of 2015, the GSL&P tracks are still almost entirely in place between Greeley and Fort Collins, but are in the process of abandonment.



The tracks are partly gone on this small spur off the southern branch of the GSL&P wye (track at far left) in Greeley.



In 2015, tracks were being removed from the Greeley wye on west side of U.S. Highway 85 in this eastward view.



Another view of the Greeley wye.