

Worthington and Randolph Railroad  
200 Main Street  
Worthington, Colorado  
Thomas Worthington, Chairman

Dear Chairman Worthington;

I am in receipt of your instructions to provide a complete and full report of the tragic accident befalling the Baker and Grande Ronde Railroad on July 10<sup>th</sup> of this year. Hereby follows my report on the incident.

The W&R has entered into a lease agreement with B&GR to provide locomotives when the volume of traffic exceeds their resources. On July 10<sup>th</sup> of this year, the W&R had two 10 wheelers working on the B&GR, numbers 10 and 205 and Shifter number 40 working the Baker Yard. Work had progressed very well that day, with several scheduled freights, passenger runs and freight extras traversing the lines. The Chairman will recall that the B&GR has substantial grades which can delay traffic, require helpers and limit loads.

It was late in the day and the B&GR Dispatcher was ordering out the “Sweeper”, the last freight of the day to clear up any cars on the line and clear the line for the next day's operations. It is my opinion that the Dispatcher may have been under some substantial pressure as there was a large contingent of VIP'S expected to tour the line the next day.



Subsequently the Dispatcher ordered that the Sweeper was going to be photographed and he needed a heavy load on the train. Engineer Rash in Number 10 and Engineer Moore in Number 205 double headed out of Baker with a train of 14 cars with DDDR Shay acting as Pusher with Caboose. In Whiskey Creek the train added a B&GR C-16 of 6 cars cut in the middle of the train. The train successfully traversed the line to Ukiah.

At Ukiah, the Dispatcher ordered the addition of a second C-16 and 7 more cars to the consist. Engineer Jones realized that watering the train at Windy Point would be difficult at best given the size of the train, so pulled up the grade to the Tank and watered three of the locomotives while waiting for the rest of the cars to be switched out of the Sawmill complex.

These additional cars were cut in behind the train picked up at



Whiskey Creek and again the Shay was acting as pusher. Due to the large number of brakemen and switchmen from the three trains, they were mostly traveling in the one large caboose located in front of the Shay. While traversing the trestle over the Grande Ronde River between Windy Point and Odell Summit the rear coupler failed on the caboose, and it derailed and tumbled down the cliff, coming to rest in the River. Fortunately, a large five hook crane was nearby and the caboose and all equipment was recovered from the river. Regrettably, no bodies have been recovered from the River.



As soon as the remainder of the train crested Odell Summit, Number 10 cut loose from the consist and sped ahead to Baker to sound the alarm and report the accident.

The B&GR lost three Conductors, three Brakemen and three switchmen in the course of the accident. From my own observations I noted that the B&GR has no rules concerning the number of cars per train, coordination of Engineers operating in multiple unit consists by whistle signals, and no guardrails on the trestle where the incident occurred.

In conclusion, the W&R does not appear to have any liability as to the accident as it's employees were acting under the orders of the B&GR Dispatcher.

Respectfully submitted,  
C. Rash, Engineer Number 10

*And now for something completely different* (for all you Monty Python fans).

If we have had one consistent feature at the Ops Sessions, it has been a lot of "FUN". This has been, for me, a blast, well worth the time researching card systems and organizing the sessions. A really big part of the FUN is the great group of members we have participating in the sessions and in this club. Thank you for letting me get this off the ground. (or on the ground depending on the track work)

Respectfully Submitted  
Nick Kelsey