

# Western Pacific Railroad 3051

## Diesel Electric Road Locomotive

After remaining a loyal customer of the Electro-Motive Division of General Motors (EMD) in regards to road locomotive orders since the first of EMD's streamlined FT model arrived in 1941, Western Pacific turned to the General Electric Company for new road power in 1967. WP's subsidiaries had purchased small GE locomotives, both diesel and electric, for decades, but this locomotive was the first GE power acquired by the WP itself.

In the mid 1960s, WP tested EMD's new SD45 model demonstrators. The large 6 axle, 20 cylinder locomotives were very impressive and the WP realized there would be a benefit in higher tractive force over their current GP40 locomotives. However, the SD45s were very expensive to purchase and were (correctly) assumed to be more expensive to maintain. Consequently, GE had introduced their U30B locomotives and WP tested this new demonstrator set as well. WP realized that they could purchase 5 U30Bs for the price of 4 SD45s. Also, GE's 4 cycle engines were more fuel efficient than EMD's 20 cylinder monster. WP purchased 5 examples in 1967 and soon went back to GE and ordered 15 more (plus acquiring 2 of the former demonstrator units). This engine was delivered as number 751 in silver and orange colors. The GE trucks were disliked by crews who tested them, so WP had their GE locomotives customized to ride on EMD's patented "Blomberg" trucks.

In the long run, the U30Bs were not very successful or well liked on the WP. Some were set aside before the merger and all of the U30Bs were retired by successor Union Pacific. WP 3051 was donated in 1985 while the rest were scrapped. No other west coast railroad used this model of locomotive aside from the Milwaukee Road up in the Pacific Northwest. WP's U30Bs were also unusual in being the heaviest 4 axle diesel locomotives ever built. Of the 296 examples of this model constructed, our 3051 is the only known survivor.

**builder**

General Electric Company

**built**

September, 1967

**type**

U30B

**horsepower**

3000

**serial number**

36451

**original cost**

\$234,458.00

**top speed**

75 MPH

**operating weight**

287,000 lbs (143.5 tons)

**acquisition**

donated by Union Pacific

[tour.wplives.org/wp3051](http://tour.wplives.org/wp3051)

