

Conclusion of The Baldwin Locomotives of Portola... Why We Have Them, by Wayne Monger

so much that the SP returned with three more orders for the upgraded AS-616 between 1950 and 1952. In all, the SP (and subsidiary T&NO) rostered 93 Baldwin six powered axle road switchers, including 5 cabless AS-616Bs and the only DRS-6-6-1500B ever built.

Between 1946 and 1955, Baldwin proved to the railroad world the practicality of a heavy road switcher with six powered axles and more than 1500 horsepower.

Every single six-axle locomotive built since, including the most modern SD60Ms and Dash 8-40CWs on the Union Pacific, is descended from this BLW line.

ALCO/GE did not produce a heavy road switcher with six powered axles and in excess of 1500 horsepower until the RSD4 of 1951. EMD was even later to enter what would turn out to be the most important configuration of diesel-electric locomotives ever, as their SD7 did not appear until 1952.

Initially with the DRS-6-6-1500 and later with the AS-616 model, many railroads dieselized their last strongholds of steam with these Baldwin products. In California, the Western Pacific looked, but was not interested. On the other hand, the SP, long a big Baldwin customer, accepted the heavy road switcher concept openly. In California and Oregon, A-B-A sets of DRS-6-6-1500s and AS-616s removed steam locomotives from helper service in the Cascades and the Siskiyou, and from numerous branchlines, and from heavy yard switching duties, and from mainline freights where the heavy Baldwins gained a reputation of being slow but being able to haul nearly everything out of a yard at once. The McCloud River Railroad also dieselized in the late 1940's and early 1950's with Baldwin road switchers and switchers. The end for extensive use of Baldwin road switchers on the SP came in 1970.

In 1968, while the SP's program of removing Baldwin diesel locomotives from the roster was in full swing, the O&NW purchased from them AS-616, SP 5274, which be-

came O&NW 3. This particular unit was one of four in the last order of AS-616s that was built with an additional faring on the ends of the hoods for the placement of those giant SP "ash-can" gyralights, leaving the factory in Eddystone, PA in May 1952 for the SP. This unit, along with 3 others, was designated for initial use on the Pacific Electric in Southern California and was equipped with trolley poles to activate the crossing signals on the PE. One source has the 5274 (O&NW 3) being lettered for the PE for a very brief time. Some reports have O&NW 3 being rebuilt in the Morrison-Knudsen shops in Boise during the mid-1970s following an electrical fire. A close inspection of O&NW 3 bears this out, as most of the electrical system and traction motors are in almost new condition. Both O&NW 3 and O&NW 4 are designed to operate long-hood forward.

AS-616 O&NW 4, is a unit that has worked for three railroads since being built in March, 1952 as a member of the second SP order for AS-616s. This unit was SP 5253 until July 1963, when it was sold to the McCloud River Railroad at McCloud, Calif. The McCloud had dieselized with Baldwin products starting in 1948 with a DRS-6-6-1500. At McCloud, this unit was renumbered to McCloud 34 and became the only AS-616 on an eight unit roster that included S-8s, S-12s, RS-12s, and DRS-6-6-1500s. Like most of the McCloud Baldwins, the 34 was sold off in 1969 when the McCloud converted from Baldwin motive power to EMD motive power in the form of the current SD-38s that run this line.

The 34 became O&NW 4 upon arrival at Hines, OR., and as the FRRS members that went to Hines in October 1990 found out, the O&NW purchased the entire contents of the locomotive parts warehouse at O&NW and moved it to Hines. Many of the parts that the FRRS purchased are still in their original B-L-H or Westinghouse packages addressed to the McCloud River Railroad.

Both of the AS-616 locomotives at Portola (O&NW 3, O&NW 4) are in complete, very good condition, except for the very thick coating of dust from their 6 year storage. The FRRS Board of Directors decided to acquire two units instead of one due to the lack of available Baldwin parts, many of which had not been produced since the early 1950's. We expect to have them operating before the end of the year.

Specifications of O&NW #3 and #4

Weight: 326,000 pounds
Weight per axle: 54,300 pounds
Length: 58 feet, 0 inches
Height above rail: 14 feet, 1 inch
Trucks: General Steel Casting
Commonwealth C-type
Bearings: Friction
Minimum curvature: 23 degrees
Number of powered axles: 6
Horsepower: 1600
Power plant: Baldwin 608A (in-line 8 cylinder) with H-704 turbocharger
Bore and Stroke: 12.75 in. X 15.50 in.
Displacement per cyl: 1,979 cu. in.
Traction Motors: Six Westinghouse Type-370
Main Generator: Westinghouse Type 471-B
Electrical System: Westinghouse
Total Number of AS-616s Built: 222

Oregon & Northwestern Railroad #3

Built: May 1952 by Baldwin-Lima-Hamilton Eddystone, Pa.

Built For: Southern Pacific Transportation Co.

Original Number: SP 5274 (briefly lettered for subsidiary Pacific Electric Ry. according to some sources).

Brief History: It is part of the final SP order of six B-L-H road switchers numbered 5273-5278 for heavy branchline use. #5273-5276 were equipped with large "ash-can" signal lights for crossing protection on the PE lines in southern California as initially used, but later all were used extensively on SP branchlines in California and Oregon. SP 5274 was retired by the SP in 1967 and sold to the Oregon & Northwestern RR in 1968, where it became O&NW #3. Electrical systems were rebuilt by Morrison-Knudsen at Boise, Idaho in 1976 (?) following an electrical fire.

Oregon & Northwestern Railroad #4

Built: March 1952 by Baldwin-Lima-Hamilton Eddystone, Pa.

Built For: Southern Pacific Transportation Co.

Original Number: SP 5253

Brief History: It was the first member of the second order by the SP for B-L-H AS-616 heavy road switchers numbers SP 5253 to 5271. It was used during the 1950's mostly on SP branchlines in California and Oregon. It was retired and sold to the McCloud River Railroad, in July 1963, becoming McCloud River #34. McCloud retired all Baldwin locomotives in 1968 upon delivery of new SD38s from EMD. The unit and a warehouse of locomotive parts were sold to Oregon & Northwestern RR in 1969, where it became O&NW #4.

Both of these units were placed into storage at Hines, Oregon in operational condition in March 1984 following shut-down of O&NW operations due to the flooding of connecting UP's Oregon Eastern branch.