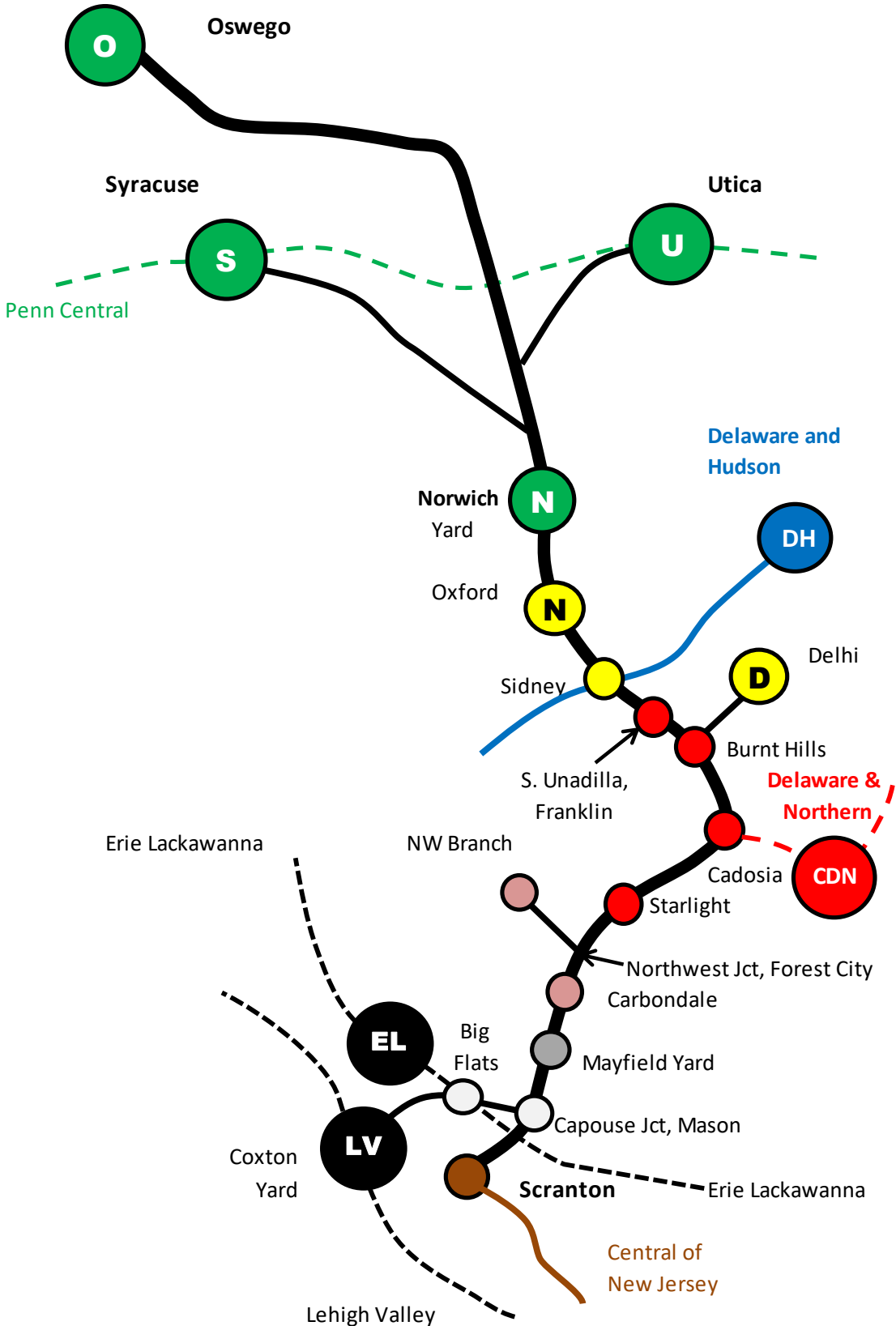


# Burnt Hills and Big Flats System Map



# ***LAYOUT TOUR BOOKLET***

## ***Revised August 2022***

### ***Introduction and Background***

It's June, 1970, and the Northeastern U.S. is struggling. The Penn Central is heading for bankruptcy. Oil prices are climbing. The recently formed DERECHO holding corporation is made up of three railroads – the Erie Lackawanna, the Delaware & Hudson, and the Burnt Hills and Big Flats. The BH&BF consists of remnants of the New York Ontario & Western, which were sold off in 1957.

DERECO is providing service to New York State from its Scranton PA gateway. Poor Penn Central service has caused traffic to shift to DERECHO, and the Lehigh Valley. Higher energy prices are spurring on mining of anthracite coal, and recovery of culm piles (tailings from past operations).

Traffic flows north on the BH&BF, out of Scranton (with its coal breakers, and railroad interchanges), through the Mayfield division point yards, and into New York State. There are four primary destinations in New York – the Delaware & Hudson interchange in Sidney, and the cities of Utica, Oswego, and Syracuse (reached by an ex-West Shore branch).

The Delaware & Hudson has routed some through traffic over the BH&BF, including the NE-84 and 87 Washington DC to Maine trains.

### **Operating the Model**

In 2013, the BH&BF changed over from Track Warrants to Timetable and Train Order. This was driven by the local operating group, and the availability of NMRA OPSIG materials on TT&TO.

BH&BF employee positions for a full operating session are:

- |                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| 1. Road Crew 1                 | 7. Mayfield Main Yard Switcher         |
| 2. Road Crew 2                 | 8. Mayfield Yardmaster                 |
| 3. Road Crew 3                 | 9. Mayfield Hostler                    |
| 4. Road Crew 4                 | 10. CTC: CP / CJ / SD Towers           |
| 5. Road Crew 5                 | 11. Mayfield North to Cadosia Operator |
| 6. Mayfield Coal Yard Switcher | 12. Dispatcher                         |

Road crews operate the mainline trains. These range in complexity from through runs, to transfers which set out and pick up blocks of cars, to the local freights. A Mine Run handles all switching south of Mayfield, shuttling between Big Flats Hampden Yard, Scranton (and its Central of New Jersey yard), and Mayfield Yards. Mayfield yard is a true division point, serving the same purpose as the prototype yard. Traffic from the southern interchanges and coal breakers are made up into trains for delivery to New York State, and vice versa. If there are more than 12 persons present, the Mine Run and Local Trains will shift to two-man crews and a Sidney / Norwich Operator may be stationed.

This booklet is intended to provide visiting operators with an introduction to the N scale layout, and what the model railroad represents.

# Scranton Area Interchanges

Northbound Traffic for the Burnt Hills and Big Flats originates with the Central of New Jersey at the end of the BH&BF mainline in Scranton. The majority of traffic for the BH&BF originates on the Capouse Branch, which includes connections with the Erie-Lackawanna and Lehigh Valley, and two major anthracite coal breakers.

Hampden Yard. Hampden Yard is the interchange with the Erie-Lackawanna in Big Flats on the Capouse Branch. Local Scranton traffic for the E-L is left in the yard, while through trains such as the train led by F-7 A and B units connect from the E-L's Taylor Yard (three hidden staging tracks). The track to the left of the small building heads for the McCormack's Coal sidings. The breaker is not modeled, but there are two tracks heading off the layout representing the lead to the breaker. Track heading under the steel trestle and behind the hill connects with the Lehigh Valley.



*Hampden Yard*



*NE-84 arrives at Sibley Junction from the Lehigh Valley Coxtan Yard. The Delaware breaker is in the background.*



*The Capouse Branch heads northward towards Capouse Junction and Mayfield under the Erie-Lackawanna mainline*

First Class freight trains NE-84 and 87 connect Washington DC with Portland ME via the B&O, Reading, Lehigh Valley, BH&BF, Delaware & Hudson, Boston & Maine, and Maine Central. This service provides competition with the troubled Penn Central. The connection to the Lehigh Valley is made via a two track staging yard, each track of which can hold two trains. The prototype NE-84 and 87 made so many changes of directions at interchanges, the train carried a caboose at each end to save time on train runarounds.

The Capouse Branch is serviced by the NE-84 and 87, LS-91 and SL-92 (LV to Syracuse and return). Four LV Coxtan yard to BH&BF Mayfield yard transfer runs, and four E-L Taylor Yard to Mayfield yard transfers. In addition, the southern mine run from Mayfield services Hampden yard, General Electric, and the Delaware and McCormack's Coal breakers.



*1 Overview of the Big Flats / Cayuga Junction area. LV and EL staging are under the hillside to the left.*



**Capouse Branch.** The Capouse Branch proceeds north from Big Flats through Mason to the end of the branch at Capouse Junction. The branch currently carries more traffic than the mainline to Scranton as it serves many Coal Breakers and Loaders (such as the one at the Mason Team Track). The Big Flats Mine Run shuttles six times a day between Mayfield Yard and the end of the branch at Big Flats. Several Lehigh Valley run throughs and transfers traverse the branch, as well as Erie Lackawanna transfers from Taylor Yard in Scranton.

*D&H Transfer crosses Keyser creek on the Capouese Branch*



*Mason Team Track on the Capouse Branch. Capouse Junction signal is in the distance. Bridge in center background is the BH&BF mainline heading to Scranton*





**Scranton Welcomes You.** The Burnt Hills and Big Flats ends in Scranton with a connection to the Central of New Jersey. The CNJ offers connections with local industries and breakers, and also with the Penn Central in Buttonwood Yard, south of Wilkes-Barre.

*The top picture shows the CNJ interchange yard in front, and the BH&BF Scranton Freight House.*

*The middle picture shows further Scranton industries, including the Lackawanna Tool and Die and Dunder Mifflin paper company made famous by the TV show "The Office". US Route 6 may be seen to the left.*

*The bottom picture is an overview of the Scranton area. The four track Central of New Jersey interchange is to the front, while the Scranton industrial area is at a higher level to the rear.*



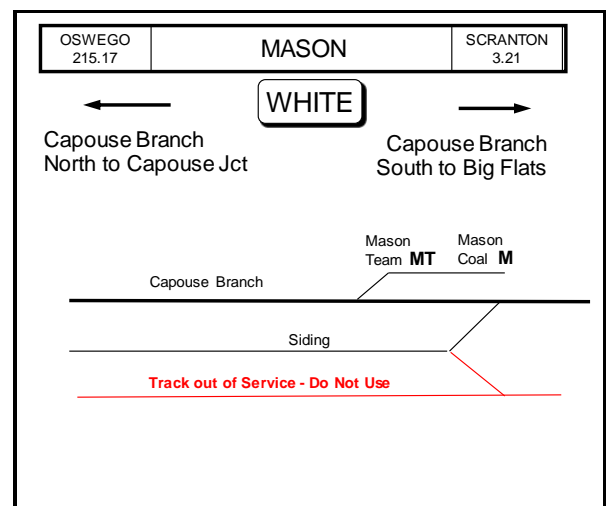
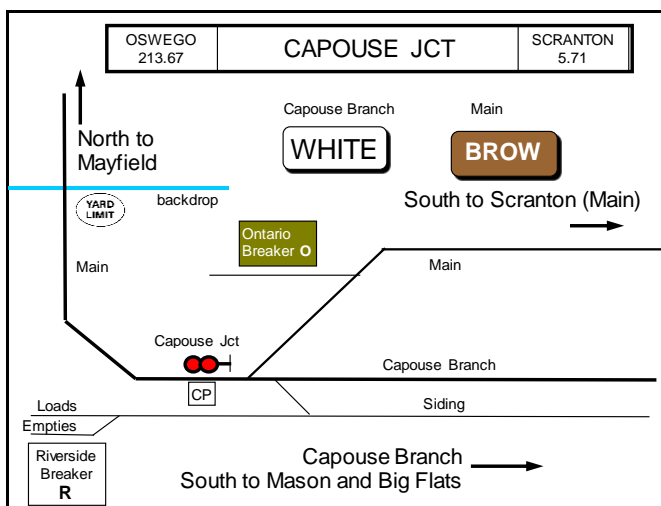
### **The Central Peninsula.**

This area originally contained the original BH&BF three foot by six foot layout. In 2018 the decision was made to replace the 35 year old sections and extend the peninsula. A 3% grade was reduced to 1.5% and Code 80 track replaced with Code 55. A room-dividing center back drop was added. This has brought better operations, with more sidings and more distance south of Mayfield. It also brought the opportunity to assist the Dispatcher by shifting the south end to Manual Block control and then to Centralized Traffic Control in 2022.



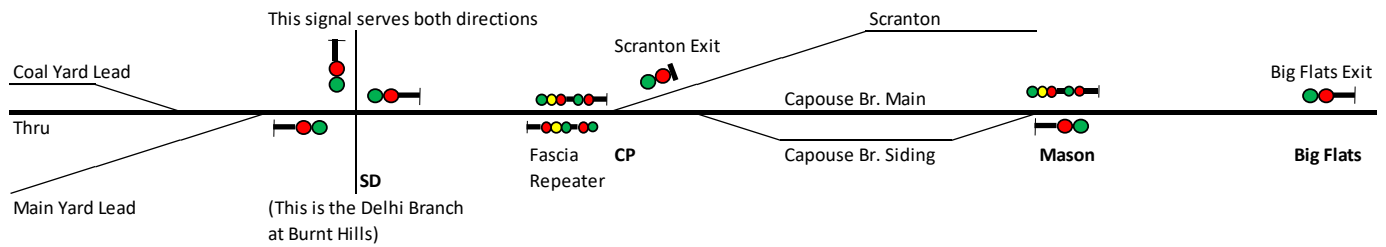
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Capouse Junction is where the Capouse Branch leaves the BH&BF main to head for Big Flats. It also includes a passing track at Mason, and the Riverside Breaker. Included in this track complex is a loads-in empties out arrangement for the Riverside Branch and Edison #3 Power Plant in Franklin NY and also a continuous run connection. This adds a lot of flexibility for the model railroad, but can add confusion UNLESS one realizes when at Mason on the Capouse Branch to ignore the track running along the layout edge.





## CTC Schematic with Trackside Signals



*Left: Capouse Junction Tower. Mainline to Mayfield on the right, Riverside Breaker is to the left.*

### **Capouse Junction to Scranton.**

The mainline climbs (non-prototypically) from CJ to Scranton. As you leave Capouse Junction south towards Scranton, you pass the Onterio Breaker, picture on the left. It usually produces two to three carloads per day.

The main then crosses high above Keyser Creek and proceeds into Scranton to serve industries and the Central of New Jersey interchange.



**Mayfield Yards.** Traffic from Scranton and the Capouse Branch are brought to the Mayfield Main Yard to be made into northbound trains. The old Mayfield Coal Yard is used for southbound classification. Most trains originate and terminate in Mayfield. Symbol freights such as NE-84 and 97 pass through Mayfield, setting out a block of cars and picking up a block of cars in the yard.

Up to four operators may be assigned to Mayfield – the Yardmaster, Hostler, Main Yard switching crew, and the Coal Yard switching crew.



# *Mayfield Yards*



*NE-84  
arrives in  
Mayfield  
Main  
Yard*



*Overview of Mayfield Yards. D&H mainline on the left side of the Lackawanna River. Coal Yard next to Lackawanna River, Main Yard to the right. The Southern Mine Run prepares to leave from the Coal Yard southbound. The Northwest Branch run is made up in the Main Yard and will depart after NE-84 does its work. The Yardmaster and Main Yard operator are stationed in the pit to the right.*



# *Mayfield to Forest City*

**Mayfield to Forest City.** The run from Mayfield to Forest City is 3/4 scale mile longer than in the previous arrangement in Pasco WA. A filler piece made on insulation styrofoam was added at the north end of Mayfield due to the increased width of the room. In 2022, the second level above Cadonia was reworked and became “Carbondale PA” with two new sidings and new scenery.



*The top picture shows the new Hendrick Metals siding at the end of Mayfield in 2022.*

*The picture to the right shows a Burnt Hills local (Extra DH 407 North) climbing the grade on the Carbondale Trestle over the Lackawanna River. The Carbondale freight house is in the background.*

The twenty foot square room in South Carolina provided two challenges – two dormers of 42 inch width and 10 foot long. Too much real estate to pass up, but very narrow. Fortunately, in N Scale a turnback curve could be laid. Where the existing layout was broken apart in front of the first dormer, I intended to send only the



lower level into the dormer, and have the upper level cross on a gate. However, John Decker (from Washington) convinced me to try double decking the dormer. The lower shelf is only 6 inches wide and the upper 3 inches. I put in only basic scenery, except in the turnback curve. The effect is reasonable, and provided an extra scale mile of trackage on the two levels. 2022 modifications added Simpson PA and the Delaware River Bridge to the left hand side of the area.





*An overview of the Starlight dormer in 2014 (above) and 2022 (below). Note Cadosia station on right, Delaware River bridge below left, and Simpson Coal above left in the 2022 version. Below is a view of Simpson PA, which consists of the Simpson Coal company loader.*







*Decker viaduct and Decker Falls, between Simpson PA and Forest City PA.*

## ***Forest City & Northwest Junction***

On the Forest City peninsula, the main loops back under itself and heads back to the dormer. The Northwest Branch leaves the main at Forest City and heads into the second dormer as a dead-end branch. The 2022 modification “moved” Carbondale from this location to above Cadosia NY. This gave a more realistic (versus the NYOW) distance from Mayfield to Carbondale.



*Overview of the Forest City siding, and Pleasant Mount (bottom center).*



## *Northwest Branch*

The Northwest Branch leads to two major coal breakers, a truck unloading ramp, a team track, and a pulpwood loading siding. The Northwest Branch leads to the northern-most anthracite coal fields in the Scranton area. Loads from the branch are hauled back to Mayfield yard for classification. Pulpwood loads head for the Delaware & Hudson interchange in Sidney NY.

*The Burnt Hills Local passes the Northwest Junction.*

*The Northwest Branch is the trackage leading off to the right*



*Above: Anthracite breakers on the Northwest Branch. Northwest Breaker on left, Richmondale Breaker on right.*

*Right :Richmondale Breaker. Note scale track on left*





## *Forest City PA to Cadosia NY*

Departing Forest City, the BH&BF passes through a rural area of Pennsylvania, with scenery and summer resorts. At Pleasant Mount, the station is still in operation as a stopping point for the Steamtown passenger runs. Side trips to various scenic locations and bed and breakfasts are available from the Pleasant Mount station.

The BH&BF proceeds downgrade to Starlight. Starlight is home to a pulpwood loading siding, and a station stop for the Inn at Starlight Lake.

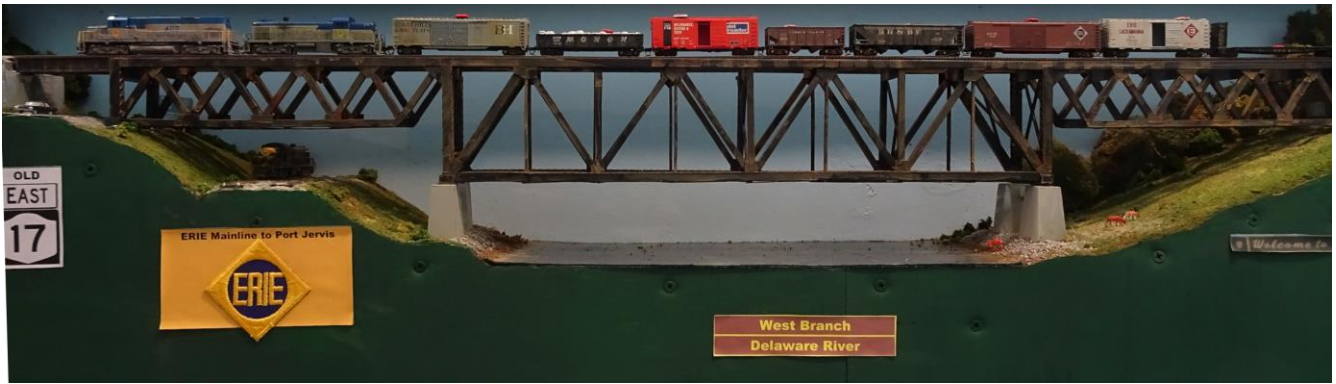
The railroad then proceeds to Cadosia NY.



*Caboose of the Burnt Hills Local passes Pleasant Mount station.*



*A train approaches the Starlight grade crossing. An empty pulpwood flat and loader await a delivery of pulpwood.*



*Extra DH 407 North on the Delaware River Bridge between Starlight PA and Cadosia NY. The bridge was built to scale from NYOW Historical Society info and web pictures in the 2022 modification.*

## ***Cadosia NY***

During the New York Ontario and Western days, Cadosia was a junction with a line going towards New York City. The line to New York has been abandoned by the BH&BF beyond Fishs Eddy. Cadosia to Fishs Eddy is operated by the Delaware and Northern. The 2022 modifications added the D&N connection, lengthened the Cadosia passing siding and redid the scenery to reflect Carbondale PA and Cadosia as one urban area.



This picture shows the Extra DH 407 North arriving in Cadosia, preparing to switch the Charles Auter plant's three sidings.



*Extra 34 North approaching Lee Farm Supply.*



## *Cadosia to Burnt Hills*

Beyond Lee Farm Supply the BH&BF meets up with the North Branch of the Delaware River. The railroad crosses the river twice as it approached Burnt Hills (prototype name – Walton NY).



# *Burnt Hills NY*

Burnt Hills corresponds to Walton NY on the O&W. A branch to Delhi meets the mainline at Burnt Hills in a wye. Burnt Hills has a large number of industries, including a Niagara-Mohawk power plant. The Burnt Hills local switches Burnt Hills twice per "day". This page of the layout tour shows scenes around the Delhi Branch wye, and the passenger station. Fan trips from Steamtown end at Burnt Hills and turn on the wye.

Major industries include Behling Electronics, Breakstone (Kraft), Borden's and Walton East Branch Foundry.







To the left is the Breakstone's office area, and across the tracks is the Walton East Branch Foundry.

Below is an overview of the center peninsula Burnt Hills area. This replaced the original 3 foot by 6 foot layout in 2018. The Breakstone Plant is against the front edge of the layout, and OH Wright, Wood's Furniture, and Walton East Branch foundry are to the left against the backdrop. There are two short storage tracks to allow for sorting cars to Burnt Hills industries or for empty car storage.





## ***Burnt Hills to Sidney***

**Franklin and Edison #3 Power Plant.** The replacement of the central peninsula allowed for the addition of another town, Franklin (Station) NY. Franklin Station is some miles from Franklin, and the feed mill did provide significant traffic for the NYO&W into the 1950's. A runaround track is available by using the shared center track with Mason (previously discussed) and the Power Plant is a paired loads-in empties-out arrangement. Do not use the inner-most Mason through track while in Franklin.

*H&H Feed Mill at Franklin. Building was a gift from local modeler Robin Riley Picture at bottom is Edison #3 Power Plant.*







*Climbing upgrade to Northfield tunnel.*



*Gravel plant near the Northfield tunnel southern portal.*

Sidney was the division point between the O&W Southern Division and the Northern Division. The primary yard for the Northern Division was at Norwich NY. Sidney hosts the Delaware and Hudson interchange. The BH&BF history assumes that as part of DEREKO, some traffic between Scranton and Sidney has been rerouted over the lower ruling grade of the BH&BF as compared to the Delaware and Hudson route.

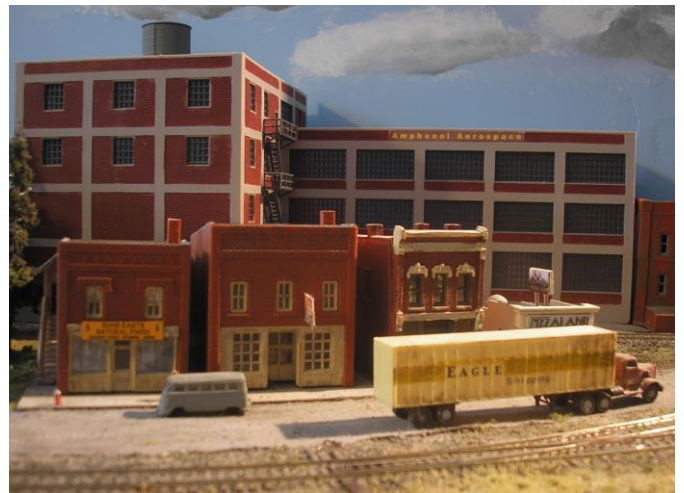


## *Sidney NY and the Delaware & Hudson*

In the picture to the right, the local is on the main track. The track to the left is the passing siding, to the right is the yard lead for Sidney Yard. The brick buildings to the left hide the two D&H staging tracks. The light brown building is Eagle Shipping.

The middle picture shows the Sidney yard office. Sidney yard is to the left of the office. In the distance may be seen the D&H station, a gazebo in the town's "Railroad Park", and GX Tower, controlling the diamond crossing for the BH&BF and D&H.

The bottom two pictures show the Amphenol Areospace plant, and Sidney Yard.







### *Overview of Sidney NY*

The final stop on the layout tour is the five track staging yard for the north end of the layout. Each track is long enough to hold two trains. The following destinations are represented:

Norwich Local (between Sidney and Norwich)  
 Norwich Yard  
 Utica  
 Syracuse  
 Oswego

There are a total of 12 staging tracks on the layout, and up to 19 trains may be staged.



## ***BH&BF Schematic and Track Plan***

