

Steam Returns to Ridgway

Chris Weiser and Karl Schaeffer have signed a contract to fund the re-creation of Rio Grande Southern steam locomotive 36. The work is to be done by John Braun at Mammoth Locomotive Works in Palisade, CO. This will be a full size operating steam locomotive which will look exactly like RGS 36 as purchased by Otto Mears from the Denver and Rio Grande RR on 11/27/1891. At that time locomotives were still colorful and shiny rather than dull and dusty as they would later become. It is part of the heritage of Ridgway. It was a small 4-4-0 built by Baldwin Locomotive Works in Philadelphia, PA and released 1/9/1880. It was D&RG 93 the Roaring Forks before Mears' purchase. The RGS 36 was the smallest locomotive Otto Mears bought. It was used for pulling his private car San Juan and for pay train work. It was later used as a helper, but it was a small passenger locomotive better suited for fast passenger service than a slow drag freight. It was eventually sold to a RR in Arkansas and probably scrapped by 1916.

The new one will be stationed at the Ridgway Railroad Museum in Ridgway. Construction is expected to start May 2015 and be completed May 2017. We expect to operate it at the RRM on compressed air frequently and occasionally on live steam on a short demonstration track. We hope also to take it to various narrow gauge railroads as invited. This will be a major addition to the RRM and will add greatly to our mission of education and preservation about the local railroads. It will create many opportunities for museum members to learn how to operate (and maintain) a steam locomotive.

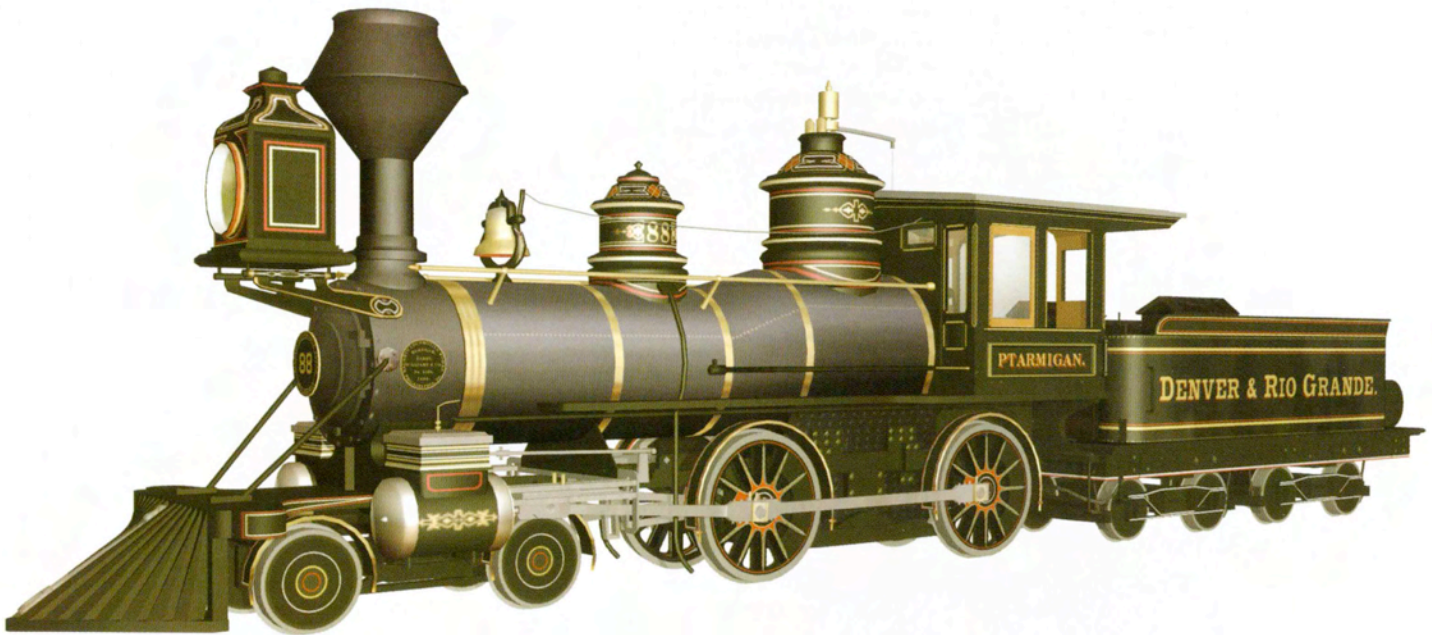
Chris and I are asking the RRM to provide a good home for our pride and joy. To that end, we need the Ridgway Railroad Museum to build 250 feet of new track, build a roof structure similar to that used by the museum in Gunnison, and provide security lights and cameras. To accomplish this we will need the following to start with:

1. 100 good 6' ties
2. 400 new 5" spikes
3. A little excavation work
4. A little concrete work
5. A set of steps to allow safe access for visitors to look in the cab

6. Help with building or funding the cover
7. Help with operating insurance
8. A trucker to move RGS 36 as needed

Please see the photos below. By the way, the world was very colorful although we see it through black and white photos.

- a) Drawing by John Davis of what sister engine D&RG 4-4-0 No. 88 looked like when new:

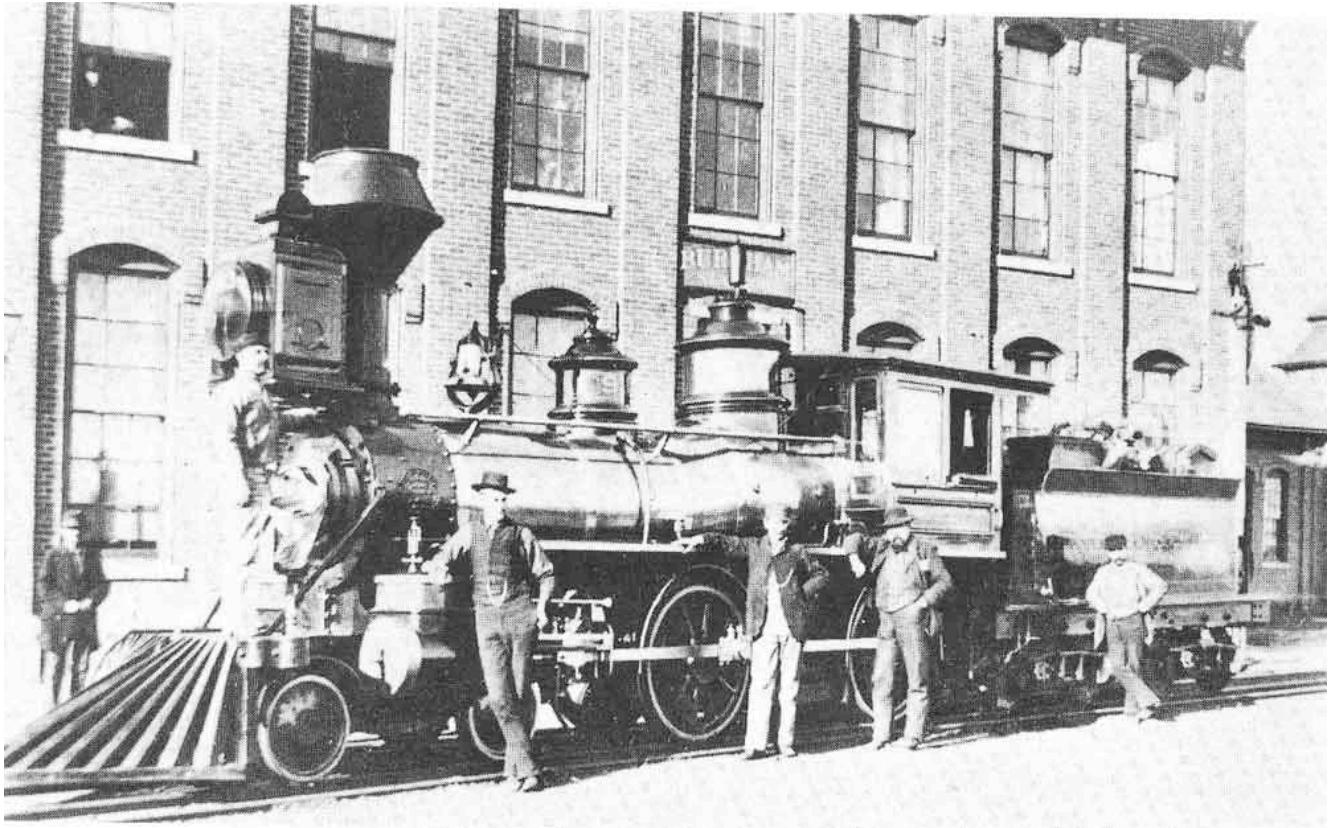


Denver & Rio Grande Locomotive Number 88, "Ptarmigan"
by Jon Davis

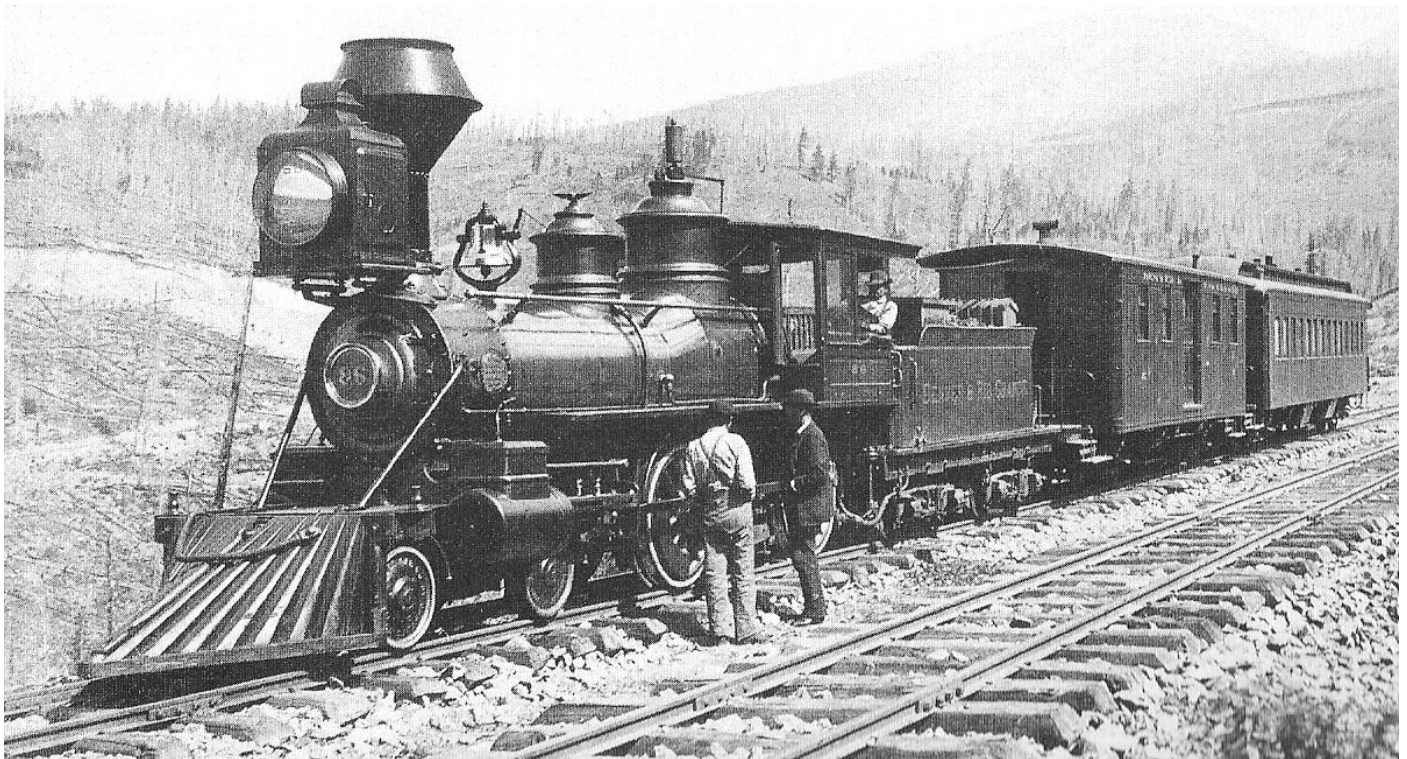
b) Only known photo of RGS No. 36.



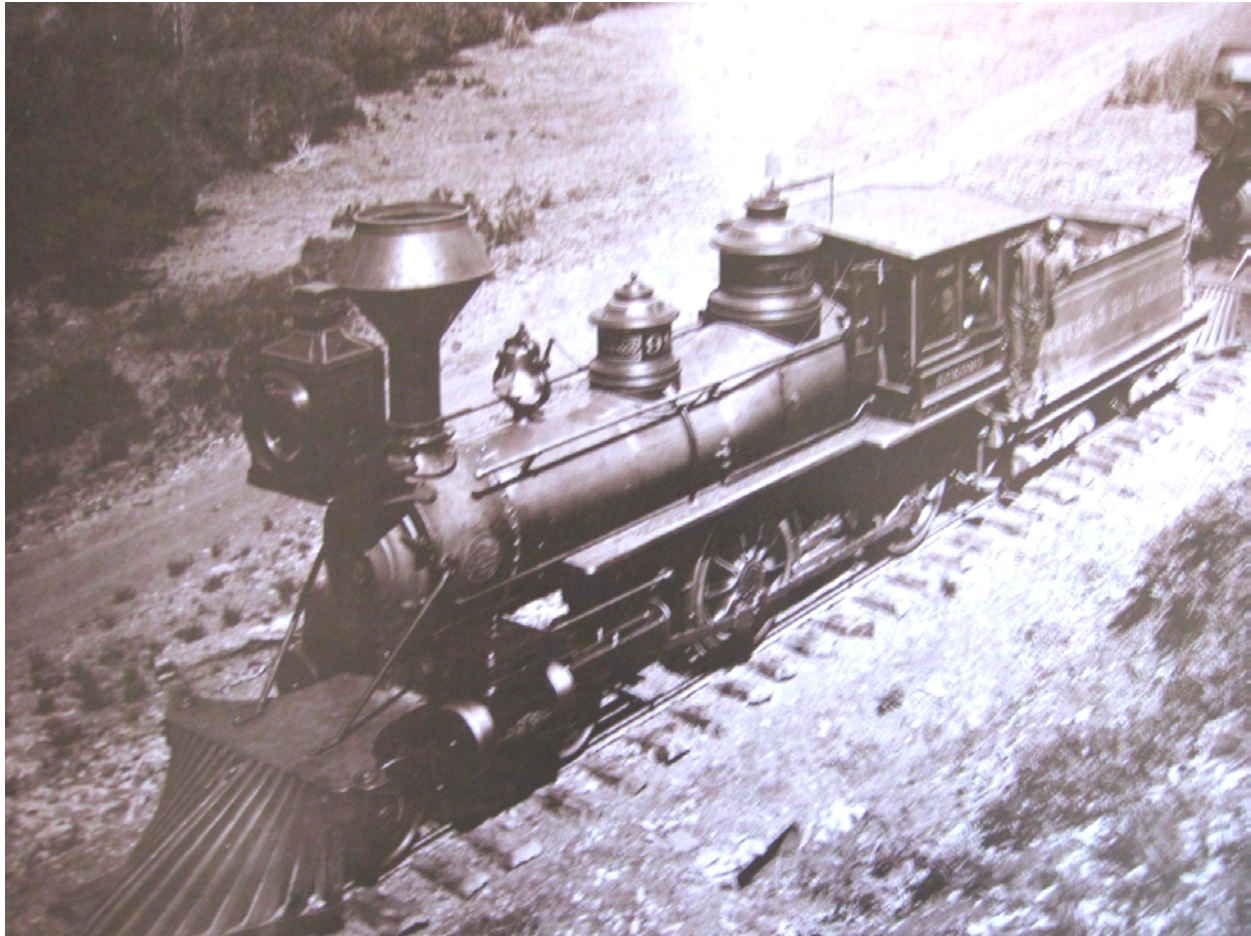
c) Photo of D&RG 4-4-0 No. 93 in service at the Burnam Yard in Denver. Photo from *RGS Story* Vol. 8, p.259



d) Class 42 *San Miguel* on the west side of Marshall Pass.



e) D&RG No. 99 at Dump Mountain



f) Class 42 No. 88, *Ptarmigan*

