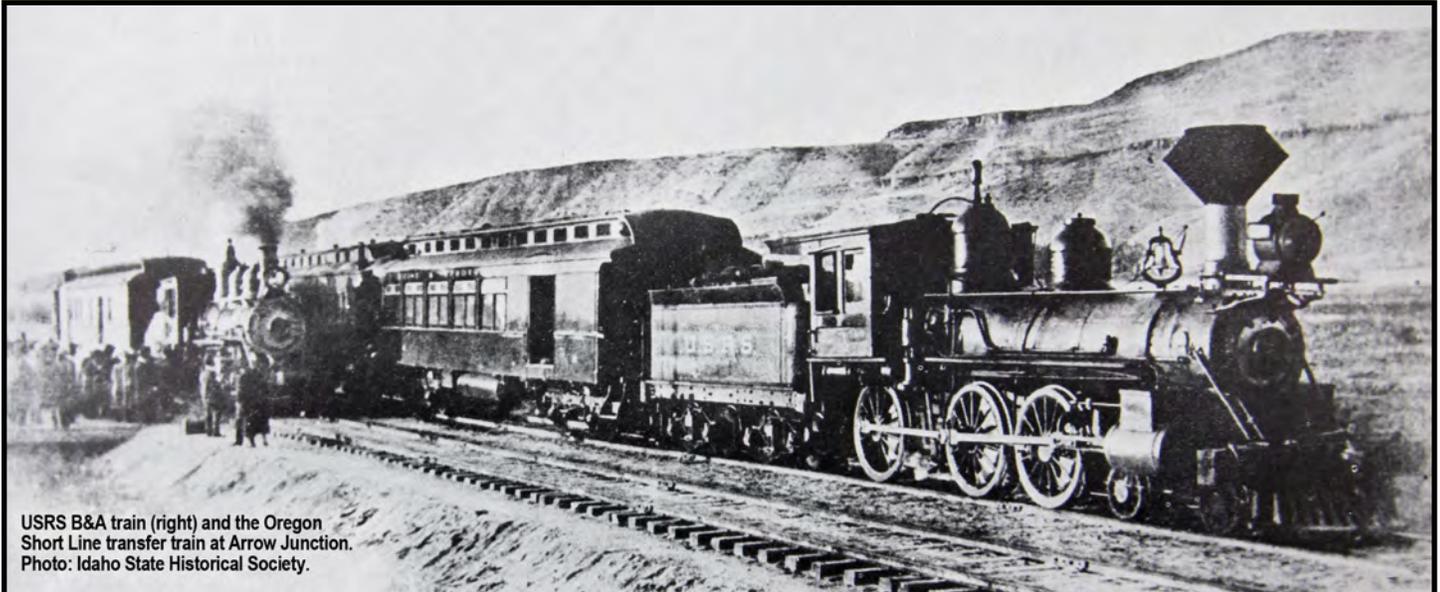


Arrow Junction



USRS B&A train (right) and the Oregon Short Line transfer train at Arrow Junction.
Photo: Idaho State Historical Society.

It's hard to imagine, but between 1912 and 1915, four railroads met here at Eckert Road and nearly 90,000 passengers changed trains here! What was the attraction? Just a few miles upriver the World's Tallest Dam was under construction and everyone wanted to take a look!

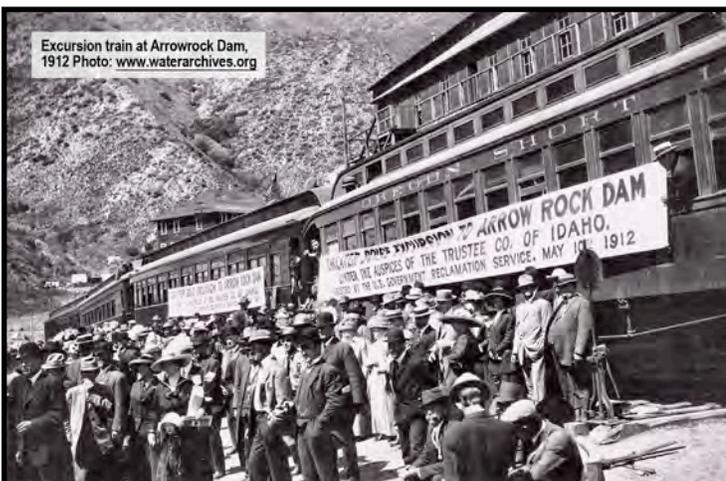
From 1896-1907, short rail lines were built by several companies with an eye toward serving commerce in Boise, Barber, and the Boise Basin, but none were very successful. Then, in 1910, along came the U.S. Reclamation Service (USRS) in need of a railroad for the construction of Arrowrock Dam. Barber Lumber, having recently abandoned its dream of building a railroad to carry Boise Basin logs to the now-closed Barber Mill, gave its easement to the USRS on one condition: that it create a public carrier. Out of this agreement, the Boise & Arrowrock (B&A) Railroad was born.

The B&A operated a "daily-except-Sundays" combination freight and passenger train, which connected with an Oregon Short Line train. At first, the "mixed train"

attracted little ridership because the round-trip fare from Boise to Arrowrock was \$2.00—about an average day's wage. Then, in January 1912, the B&A started running Saturday afternoon excursion trains from Boise to Arrowrock for \$1.25 and Boise tourists boarded by the thousands—89,500 of them in three years—to see the World's Tallest Dam. Some 2,000 rode the Inaugural Special to the Dam's commissioning on October 4, 1915.

During this same period, the Intermountain Railway operated its own line diverging at the confluence of Mores Creek and the Boise River. It also ran a scheduled mixed freight and passenger train on Wednesdays and Saturdays, connecting with the Shortline at Arrow Junction. So, in 1914-1915, Arrow Junction saw six trains a day on Saturdays!

The B&A train service was suspended on January 1, 1916, but even then, the demand was so great that one final excursion ran as part of Boise's 1916 Fourth of July celebration.



Excursion train at Arrowrock Dam, 1912 Photo: www.waterarchives.org

