

# Overview of the Cresson Branch

The Cresson Branch of the Pennsylvania Railroad connects Punxsutawney, PA to the PRR system at Cresson, PA, with access to the B&O in Cloe and the NYC System in Mahaffey. Operations represent the fictional necessities of the railroad on February 2, 1955 – Groundhog Day, with steam and some diesel operations. My version of conditions includes more mixed freight and less coal, as that's what the fictional customers demand.

Timetable and Train Order (TT&TO) operations are in full effect on the branch, controlled by a Dispatcher who communicates with crews via telephones. We run with yard masters in Punxsutawney and Cresson; 4 locals, or turns, each with 2-person crews; and several other trains operating during a typical operating session, including passenger service and more freight.

The railroad at a glance:

- Scale: HO
- Size: 33' X 48'
- Prototype: Pennsylvania RR Cresson Branch between Cresson and Punxsutawney, PA
- Location: Central Pennsylvania
- Era: Groundhog Day, 1955
- Style: Walk-in, point-to-point with continuous running capabilities
- Mainline run: 300 ft.
- Minimum radius: 32 in
- Minimum turnout: no. 6 (main), no. 5 (yard)
- Maximum grade: 2.5% - Hastings Branch to Wolfson ONLY
- Benchwork: 11/16" plywood and 1X4" L-girders
- Height: 53 inches (50 inches in Wolfson)
- Roadbed: Homasote for yard/industry; cork on Homasote for mainline
- Track: Code 83, super-elevated with .029 fishing line
- Scenery: In-progress, with many finished areas
- Control:
  - Digitrax Digital Command Control – simplex and duplex wireless
  - RRCirKits MotorMan used for turnout control
  - RRCirKits TowerMan used for short circuit announcement and continuous running
  - RRCirKits SignalMan used for Glen Campbell Junction interlocking signals
  - PSx & PSxAR devices programmed and connected for short circuit announcement system, and power-off via tablet interface
  - Turnouts can be controlled by:
    - Recessed, fascia-mounted pushbuttons
    - Android tablets display railroad "panel" image of Glen Campbell Jct.
    - Digitrax DT-4XX, DT-5XX, and DT-600 throttles
  - Recessed, fascia-mounted toggles for Rapido Rail Crew uncouplers
  - LED route indication on fascia
- XtrakCad used for layout design, files exported for use by JMRI's Panel Pro to create panel images displayed on tablets
- Phone System: Excelltel SOHO-PBX system and 8 phones
- Raison d'être: TT&TO Operations

