



GP9



When Bison Rail went from a regional railroad to a Class I operator almost overnight, they were forced to start up with second-hand equipment, as they could not wait for new power to be built and delivered. One of the first acquisitions was a couple of GP9's for local and yard work.

The GP9 was first introduced in January of 1954 and was produced up until December of 1959 (August of 1963 in Canada). In all, 3436 standard units were built for US railroads, 646 for Canada and 10 for Mexico. 169 GP9B's were also built, all for the United States. In addition 5 GP9's went to Brazil and 6 to Venezuela. This is the largest production figure for any first generation diesel, and in fact is only exceeded by the SD40-2 in overall production. The last GP9 built came from the GMD plant in Canada and went to the Algoma Central Railway in Ontario. The comparison between the dynamic-braked GP9 and the non-dynamic-braked unit can be seen at the top of the page.

Hundreds of these and GP7s were rebuilt by various shops to extend their lives. They were given various model numbers such as GP8, GP10 or GP12 depending mostly who did the work.

SP GP9's were also used rather extensively in commute service in the San Francisco Bay area. The attached photo shows such service. Notice the GP9 on the other end of the train, probably the first use of push-pull service in the U.S.

Our two GP9's came from the Northwestern Pacific in California. When Bob Artim bought the NWP for his Pacific & Atlantic, he inherited a number of units that were in storage at Eureka. The first thing he did upon taking over the NWP was to have a yard sale and we purchased two of the GP9s, and had them upgraded before putting them in service.

Both these units were still in SP paint with a NCRP patch on it when we purchased them. They never carried any NWP identification on it. They had been through SP's upgrade program and were actually classed as GP9E's.

The Northwestern Pacific Historical Society has an excellent website at www.nwprhs.org, that even includes a map of the NWP, plus articles and photos of the ferries that transported NWP customers across the bay to San Francisco.

Drawings Courtesy by Michael Eby @ trainiax.Ocatch.com & Roland Ruesch @ usloki.tripod.com



Prime Mover - 567c General Motors
Horsepower - 1750
Generator - D12
Gear Ratio - 62:15
Traction Motors - 4 D37 DC motors
Weight - 123.8 tons
Length - 56' 2" (18 meters)
Width - 10' 4" (3.1 meters)
Height - Height - 24' 6" (4.7 meters)

