

# Southern California Local Freight Trains: A Comprehensive Guide for 2024

Southern California is home to a vast and diverse network of local freight trains, offering a unique glimpse into the region's rich railroading history and bustling industrial landscape. From iconic landmarks like the Tehachapi Loop to hidden gems like the San Diego & Arizona Eastern Railway, these trains traverse a wide range of terrains, connecting cities, industries, and communities throughout the region.



## Southern California Local Freight Trains 2024/2024

by Charles Freericks

★★★★☆ 4.8 out of 5

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## Key Local Freight Train Lines in Southern California

- **BNSF Railway:** BNSF operates a significant number of local freight trains in Southern California, serving major industrial centers in Los Angeles, Orange County, San Bernardino, and Riverside counties. Key lines include the Alameda Corridor, the Harbor Subdivision, and the San Bernardino Subdivision.

- **Union Pacific Railroad:** Union Pacific also has a strong presence in the region, operating local freight trains through the Los Angeles Basin, Orange County, and Inland Empire. Notable lines include the Los Angeles Subdivision, the San Pedro Subdivision, and the Orange County Line.
- **Metrolink:** While primarily known for its commuter rail services, Metrolink also operates a limited number of local freight trains, mainly in the San Bernardino and Riverside counties. These trains often haul construction materials and other goods.
- **San Diego & Arizona Eastern Railway (SD&AE):** SD&AE is a short-line railroad operating in San Diego County. It provides local freight service to various industries in the region, including the Port of San Diego and the Otay Mesa Industrial Park.

### Iconic Local Freight Train Landmarks

- **Tehachapi Loop:** Located in the Tehachapi Mountains, the Tehachapi Loop is an iconic railroad landmark. It consists of a horseshoe-shaped curve that allows trains to climb the steep grade through the mountains. The loop is a popular destination for trainspotters and railway enthusiasts.
- **Alameda Corridor:** The Alameda Corridor is a 20-mile-long freight rail line that connects the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach to the Inland Empire. It is one of the busiest freight corridors in the United States, handling a significant volume of containerized cargo.
- **San Pedro Subdivision:** The San Pedro Subdivision runs along the Pacific Ocean coastline from Los Angeles to San Pedro. It serves

various industries, including the Port of Los Angeles, the Long Beach Container Terminal, and the refineries in Carson.

## **Historical Significance of Local Freight Trains**

Local freight trains have played a vital role in the development of Southern California. They have transported raw materials, agricultural products, and manufactured goods, connecting the region's cities, industries, and ports. The Tehachapi Pass, for example, was a major obstacle for early railroads, but the development of the Tehachapi Loop allowed trains to cross the mountains and connect the San Joaquin Valley to the Los Angeles Basin.

## **Tips for Exploring Local Freight Trains**

Exploring local freight trains can be a rewarding experience for railway enthusiasts and photographers. Here are a few tips:

- **Identify train schedules:** Check online resources or contact the railroads directly to obtain train schedules for specific lines.
- **Choose observation points:** Look for safe and accessible locations along the tracks where you can observe trains. Consider using online mapping tools to identify potential spots.
- **Respect railroad property:** Always stay away from the tracks and obey all railroad signs and signals. Do not trespass on railroad property.
- **Use appropriate equipment:** Bring binoculars or a telephoto lens for capturing distant trains. A scanner can also be useful for monitoring railroad communications.

- **Be patient:** Train schedules can be unpredictable, so be prepared to wait for trains to pass by. Patience and perseverance will increase your chances of capturing great shots.

Southern California's local freight trains offer a fascinating glimpse into the region's railroading heritage and industrial landscape. From iconic landmarks to hidden gems, these trains traverse a diverse range of terrains, serving vital roles in the local economy and transportation network. Whether you're a trainspotter, a railway enthusiast, or simply curious about the region's industrial side, exploring local freight trains is a rewarding and educational experience. As we move into 2024, these trains will continue to play a crucial role in the movement of goods and the development of Southern California.



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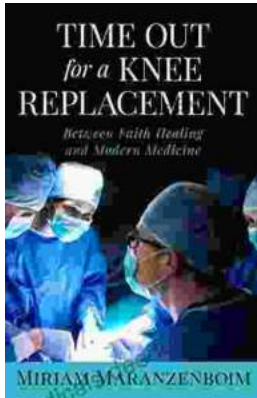
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