

## Libby travels to Nevada for old steam engine

By Suzanne Core, Staff Writer 03/15/2007

Cripple Creek Mayor Ed Libby is as fired up as an old steam engine. He has tracked down a train, or at least the all-important engine and tender car, and has been working behind the scenes to acquire it for Cripple Creek.

"This is the No. 10 locomotive, a Baldwin 2-8-0," Libby said. "It is one of the first two engines that came into Cripple Creek on the Florence-Cripple Creek line." Libby said one of his focuses in connection with the city's pursuit of heritage tourism has been "rolling stock with Cripple Creek history."



Ed Libby Train engine - The No. 10 Cripple Creek-Florence railroad engine, a Baldwin 2-8-0.

The No. 10 fills the bill.

"The No. 10 ran in Cripple Creek for 16 years, until the line was washed out by a flood in 1913," he said. "Then it went to Nevada, where it was used for just three years." Libby said the Florence-Cripple Creek railroad, which came up Phantom Canyon to the Gold Camp District, was the only narrow gauge. The other two railroad lines to the Gold Camp in the late 1800s and early 1900s, the CS&CCD and the Midland, were both standard gauge.

"Narrow gauge trains can go up and down the steep grades the standard gauge can't," he said. "They can turn in half the radius. They are also low cost, both to operate and to maintain."

Libby received a tip recently that the No. 10 was in Las Vegas. He flew to Las Vegas, met with the engine's custodians and began negotiations to bring it home. He has a second trip to Nevada scheduled for March 22, to meet with the Nevada state museum board, which is the governing body with control over the No. 10.

Libby's enthusiasm reached council members when he asked for permission to pursue purchase of the old locomotive. Council approved the request. Libby hopes, however, purchase will not be necessary.

"I just want to have the option," Libby said. "Not everyone there is on our side. A couple of people said they would fight me to the death to keep the No. 10 in Nevada. But we do have an advocate in Nevada who recognizes we have both the will and the resources to restore the No. 10."

"It's just been sitting there for the last 63 years," he said. "And it's No. 48 on Nevada's restoration priority list, many years off."

"I have bids for transporting it back," he said. "I have a local party to supervise its reconstruction. It's very restorable. We have the money in the budget to do it. And Cripple Creek has the greater historical claim."

If the mayor has anything to say about it, the 110-year-old narrow gauge locomotive will soon again grace the Gold Camp's narrow gauge rails.