

News Release



RGS Caboose Prepares for the Limelight

Donors Step Up to Help Caboose 0404 join Locomotive 20 for D&S Excursions

GOLDEN, CO - JULY 7, 2025....Last week, the Colorado Railroad Museum (CRRM) announced it had partnered with the Durango Railroad Historical Society (DRHS) and the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad (D&SNRR) to collectively make two locomotive loans possible in 2025 and 2026. Now, the Museum is announcing RGS caboose No. 0404 is undergoing a thorough overhaul and repainting. If all goes well, the caboose is anticipated to accompany RGS “Ten-Wheeler” No. 20 as it makes its triumphant return to Durango & Silverton rails in winter 2026, as part of one of the loans. Tickets for these special D&S excursions are now on sale via the D&S website.

Rio Grande Southern home-built caboose No. 0404 is currently in Durango, having been trucked from CRRM’s Golden, Colorado campus in May for rehabilitation and repainting. Durango & Silverton crews are working on this overhaul in hopes that the caboose can be part of the special consists pulled by RGS No. 20 this coming winter. A \$40,000 Challenge Grant from the Narrow Gauge Preservation Foundation, along with the support of generous individual donors, has made the rehabilitation work possible.

“The Colorado Railroad Museum is gearing up to commemorate Colorado’s 150th anniversary, along with America’s 250th anniversary in 2026,” said Paul Hammond, executive director of the Colorado Railroad Museum. “A big part of what we want to share is what we call ‘Live Rail Experiences,’ locomotives and cars traveling to and operating at offsite locations throughout Colorado, as well as onsite at the Museum’s campus in Golden. We’re delighted to add Rio Grande Southern caboose No. 0404 to the list of exciting opportunities for 2026.”

Home-built by the Rio Grande Southern at its Ridgway, Colorado shops in 1902, caboose No. 0404 enjoys the distinction of being the only “long caboose” owned by the railroad. As with most cabooses on narrow gauge railroads, No. 0404 was involved in several accidents and derailments. Rebuilt after each misfortune, the caboose was purchased by Bob Richardson and moved to his Narrow Gauge Motel and Museum in South Alamosa in the early 1950s. When Richardson moved his collection to Golden in 1958-1959, No. 0404 was one of the first to arrive.

CRRM's beloved Rio Grande Southern steam locomotive No. 20 (Schenectady, 1899) will travel from Golden to Durango this fall, where it will run special winter excursions over the D&SNGRR select days in January-February 2026. In its last years in-service, No. 20 starred in the 1950 feature film *A Ticket to Tomahawk*, with scenes filmed along the scenic Animas River route that is today followed by Durango & Silverton excursions, so these excursions will reunite the locomotive with familiar territory. The return of RGS No. 20 to Durango is a monumental achievement for crews and personnel of both railroads, truly bringing the history of the Rio Grande Southern to life.

Tickets are now on sale, via the D&SNGRR website www.DurangoTrain.com for the trips behind No. 20. Caboose No. 0404 is not yet guaranteed to be part of these trips, but CRRM and D&S plan to share updates as the rehabilitation work progresses.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

The Colorado Railroad Museum, located in the beautiful Clear Creek Valley in Golden, is open Tuesday-Sunday year-round. Visit www.ColoradoRailroadMuseum.org for more information. The Narrow Gauge Preservation Foundation works to establish interactive exhibits where the public can learn of the significant history of Narrow Gauge railroading as well as to support preservation activities and projects wherever possible. Visit www.thengpf.org for more information. The Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad has been in continuous operation between Durango and Silverton since 1882, carrying passengers behind historic steam and diesel locomotives and rolling stock indigenous to the line. Visit www.DurangoTrain.com for more information.

MEDIA CONTACT: Joy Meadows, 303-522-9045, joy@meadowspr.com