



COLORADO MIDLAND RAILROAD

LENGTH: 5.5 Miles
DIFFICULTY: Moderate

Hello railroad enthusiast and nature lovers! The Colorado Midland Railroad area is full of glimpse of perhaps some of the greatest feats in railroad history. If you take time to find the remains of the trestles, snow sheds, cuts through solid rock, and of course, tunnels, you may find yourself lost in another world.

If you begin your journey at the parking area 3 miles west on Hagerman Pass Road (the Windsor Lake Trailhead), the first tunnel you come to is the Busk-Ivanhoe Tunnel which was completed in 1893. It is at an elevation of 10,953 ft. and is over 9,393 ft. in length. This tunnel was built to replace the Hagerman Tunnel that was too high in elevation and cost too much to maintain. The Busk-Ivanhoe was converted to auto traffic in 1922 after the railroad abandoned it. It was then called the Carlton Tunnel and remained open to automobile traffic until 1943. Today it is part of the Fryingpan-Arkansas water diversion project which brings water from Colorado's Western Slope area to the states front range.

The next important railroad feat you will find was once the Hagerman trestle, located due west of the Carlton Tunnel. This trestle was 1,100 ft. in length and 84 ft. high. To the northeast of the trestle is a road that will take you to Douglas City, home of the Italian railroad workers who built this part of the Midland. This city once boasted eight drinking establishments and a dancehall full of "jaded women". It is now one of the more spectacular wildflower areas in this part of the Sawatch Range.

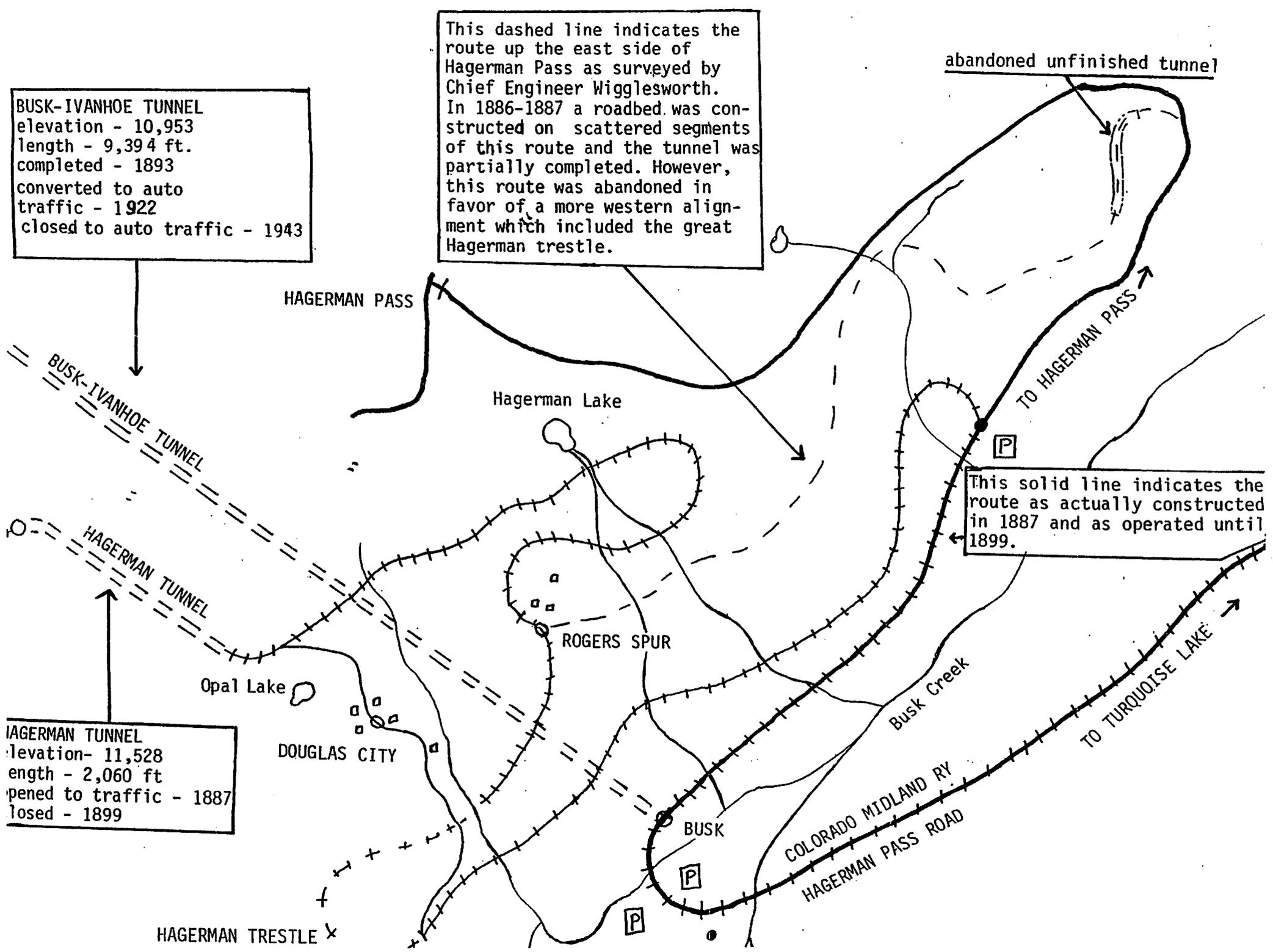
To continue to the Hagerman tunnel from this point, you have two options. Either continue up the road past Opal Lake where a trail takes you to the railroad grade and over the Hagerman Tunnel; or backtrack down to the railroad grade just below Douglas City and take Rogers Spur. Rogers Spur was originally part of an earlier survey which brought the railroad grade further east and involved an additional tunnel. The Rogers Tunnel was abandoned before its completion. From Rogers Spur, the grade continues to the second trestle and another deep cut to the beautiful Hagerman Lake. Beyond the lake, there is evidence of 13 snowsheds that covered the tracks. From here it is only a short distance to the portal of the Hagerman Tunnel. Remember, the tunnel is not safe to enter! The trail will take you back through Douglas City to the parking area. We hope you have enjoyed this jaunt into the past!



BUSK-IVANHOE TUNNEL
 elevation - 10,953
 length - 9,394 ft.
 completed - 1893
 converted to auto traffic - 1922
 closed to auto traffic - 1943

This dashed line indicates the route up the east side of Hagerman Pass as surveyed by Chief Engineer Wigglesworth. In 1886-1887 a roadbed was constructed on scattered segments of this route and the tunnel was partially completed. However, this route was abandoned in favor of a more western alignment which included the great Hagerman trestle.

abandoned unfinished tunnel



This solid line indicates the route as actually constructed in 1887 and as operated until 1899.

HAGERMAN TUNNEL
 elevation - 11,528
 length - 2,060 ft
 opened to traffic - 1887
 closed - 1899

HAGERMAN TRESTLE x