

## WBR ARTICLE

### Union Pacific marks another PRB coal milestone

By Dennis E. Curran

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OMAHA, Neb. – The Union Pacific Railroad has celebrated another milestone in hauling low-sulfur coal from Wyoming's

Powder River Basin.

The railroad this week is marking the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of serving the giant coal mines in the Southern Powder Basin that supply much of the nation's coal for electricity.

On Aug. 16, 1984, UP and its then partner Chicago & North Western moved their first coal unit train from North Antelope, Wyo., to Newark, Ark., on a new 107-mile rail line giving Union Pacific and C&NW access to the PRB coalfields. C&NW merged with Union Pacific in 1995.

Since the line was opened between Joyce, Neb., and Shawnee Junction,

Wyo., in 1984, a number of milestones have been achieved, including the operation of the 100,000th train March 17, 2001, and the movement of the 200,000th loaded coal train this past May 10.

"Capital investment in our coal corridor clearly has paid dividends for our customers over the past 25 years and has brought abundant, low-cost, low-sulfur coal to U.S. electrical power plants," said Doug Glass, Union Pacific vice president and general manager – Energy. "Operating the 200,000th train over the connector line during the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of our entry in the

South Powder River Basin. This is a thrilling milestone for our company."

In 1985, Union Pacific's first full year, the railroad moved 19 million tons, averaging almost five trains per day and hauling an average of 11,000 tons per average 110-car train. Today, Union Pacific averages more than 30 trains per day and average train size has grown to 132 cars carrying more than 15,500 tons, the railroad said in a news release.

One rail car of coal provides the energy to generate enough electricity for more than 20 homes for a year. Union Pacific's 200,000 trains out of the SPRB have carried enough coal to power all the homes in the for five years.

The railroad has added double and triple tracking along much of its coal-hauling routes to increase its capacity.

Glass noted that tonnage is down this year because of the global recession, but the railroad expects it to pick up and is counting on development of new power plants with carbon capture and sequestration to give PRB coal a long future.