

The West Bend Wisconsin station was built in 1900 by the Chicago & North Western Railroad. The FRVR/Wisconsin Central/CN section crews used it until the line was abandoned, and it was then boarded up. The Ozaukee Washington Land Trust purchased the depot. Its renovation began in August 2009, and was completed in December 2009.

By Thomas Burns
West Bend Wisconsin



The completed renovation

Photos by author, unless noted.



Digging the new basement



Workmen put on the finishing touches



Old shingles and asbestos are removed from the depot



Replacement of rotted siding is under way



Ozaukee and Washington County land trust preserves land for historical purposes. The depot will become offices for the land trust and part of the building has been converted to bathrooms, while the outside is a picnic area. The railroad right of way was converted to a paved bike trail.



Photo by Dick Talbott, May 1980

C&NW #2 standard wood depot at West Bend, WI.

The train depot was built in 1900 and it replaced a freight depot that was moved behind the new one.

During World War I, draftees came to the depot and boarded trains to Camp Grant for basic training.

In 1934, FDR came to the West Bend depot for a train stop, and there was a large crowd to see him. Later, men from the area who were enlisting for World War II boarded trains at West Bend, WI.

Passages from *The Chicago & North Western's Air Line Subdivision* by James H. Yanke

The Chicago & North Western sold 208 miles of track in Wisconsin to the Fox Valley and Western Railroad (FRVR). This sale was completed on December 9, 1988 and included the Air Line Subdivision. The first FRVR train ran from Butler to Green Bay through Fond du Lac on December 10, 1988.

The FRVR was purchased by the Wisconsin Central Railroad on August 27, 1993 and was operated as the Fox Valley and Western Railroad, a Wisconsin Central affiliate. The Canadian National Railroad took over the Wisconsin Central Railroad on October 9, 2001.

The line was abandoned in April 2000, between West Bend and Eden and the rails were removed during the summer of 2000. The line was pulled up from West Bend to Rusco Drive, 2 1/2 miles south of the depot, for a city development plan in the summer of 2004. The roadbed became a trail in late 2003 between West Bend and Eden under the Rails-to-Trails program.