

# Winter Scenery



How I did it....

# Disclaimers

- There's more than one technique
- Scale matters
  - Larger scales will be easier, small scales harder
    - Snow "flakes" don't always scale,
    - Track in larger scales less sensitive to snow effects
- Other resources out there
  - Dave Frary's scenery book
  - Occasional articles in model RR publications
  - Woodland Scenics video
  - [Http://www.building-your-model-railroad.com/winter-scene.html](http://www.building-your-model-railroad.com/winter-scene.html)
  - Internet searches will yield more results

# Planning...

- Think about what kind of snow scene you are doing
  - An early (or late) dusting of snow
  - Patches of snow left in spring
  - Snow up to the railhead
  - Really deep – like rotary snowplow country
- Open fields, wooded area , flat terrain or hilly, water in scene?
- Built up area vs. Rural
  - Snow on buildings
  - Roads and parking
  - Trees and prairie
- Look at pictures for ideas
  - I used railroad Christmas cards...



# Planning..

- Around buildings:
  - For more than a light snow cover, recess building foundations, except for paved areas that would be plowed.
- Create roads as normally done unless will be covered with deep snow.
  - Snowbanks along roads, parking areas?
- Track:
  - Snow will fill in ditches and reduce depth of embankments.
  - Snowbanks and snow between rails – must watch clearances





# Getting started

- Scenery base can be whatever you normally use – plaster, foam, etc.
- Rock castings are installed and painted as usual
- Fields and hillsides areas made as usual but no need to for normal paint/ground cover unless modeling light snowfall.
  - For deeper snow the scene surface will be higher than normal - plan accordingly
  - A light snowfall will mean some ground cover is needed that will be dusted with snow.
    - But you may want the vegetation "dead"





# Supplies: "Sifting Snow"

- Use a fine tea strainer for sifting
- Woodland Scenics Snow
  - Looks pretty good but has large flakes
- Dry plaster
  - Tended to make clumps even with fine tea strainer. It also has a very flat tone – not relective enough.
- Baking Powder looks great, but....
  - Do not use because of corrosive properties!!
- Powdered Marble (from art supply store)
  - Also clumped when sifted
- I use 50/50 mix of marble and WS snow
  - Some clumping but not as much, WS snow provides sheen
- New idea: White tile grout

# Woodland Scenics Snow



# Other Supplies

- White Acrylic Caulk
  - Used to smooth surfaces, make snowbanks
  - Woodland Scenics "Flexpaste" seems to do a similar job
- Lightweight spackle or drywall compound
  - Use around and between rails
  - Can be easily scraped or sanded down to the proper level below railhead
  - Can also fill in holes in scenery

# More Supplies

- Gloss (or Semi-Gloss?) White Interior Housepaint
  - Paint snow surfaces prior to sifting on snow
  - Drybrush on rocks
  - *Keep this away from the rails*
- White artist acrylic paint
  - Inexpensive squeeze bottles
  - Use for fine work, and on and near tracks
- Hairspray
  - Used to adhere sifted snow to rocks, vegetation, roofs
- White glue
  - Use diluted to adhere snow to painted surface
  - Could also try Woodland Scenics products

# Snow Goop

- From Dave Frary's scenery book
  - Equal parts
    - Acrylic Gloss Medium
    - Acrylic Modeling Gel
    - Titanium White Acrylic tube paint
      - Can optionally add touch of dark blue
  - Mixes to the consistency of mayonaise
  - Put in rock crevices, tree branches, telephone poles, etc.
  - Provides good color tone.
  - Woodland Scenics Flex-paste appears to work the same way

# Making the Scenery Base

- Work the scenery base (plaster, Sculptamold, etc.) up to end of ties and near railhead level (if modeling deep snow).
- Can make mounds of snow along track to simulate snowdrifts thrown by plows.
  - Use caulk, Sculptamold or other material
  - Watch clearances – run long rolling stock after scenery base in place to check
- Leave room for turnout throw bars. These would typically be shoveled clear or have heaters to clear snow.
- Can use caulk to smooth scenery base, fill in holes or gaps

# Making a Smooth Scenery Base

- Smooth areas can be quite challenging
  - Typical ground cover obscures small ridges and holes
  - Plaster spread over scenery base typically is not really smooth
  - Sculptamold looks like cottage cheese
  - Snow goop looked like cake frosting
- I used acrylic caulk over Sculptamold
  - Put a blob on the surface and smooth with wet finger.
  - Drywall compound needs several coats and a lot of sanding
- Plaster when wet can be smoothed somewhat with wet hands (wear nitrile gloves unless you enjoy dry torn up skin).

# Some Bad Snow







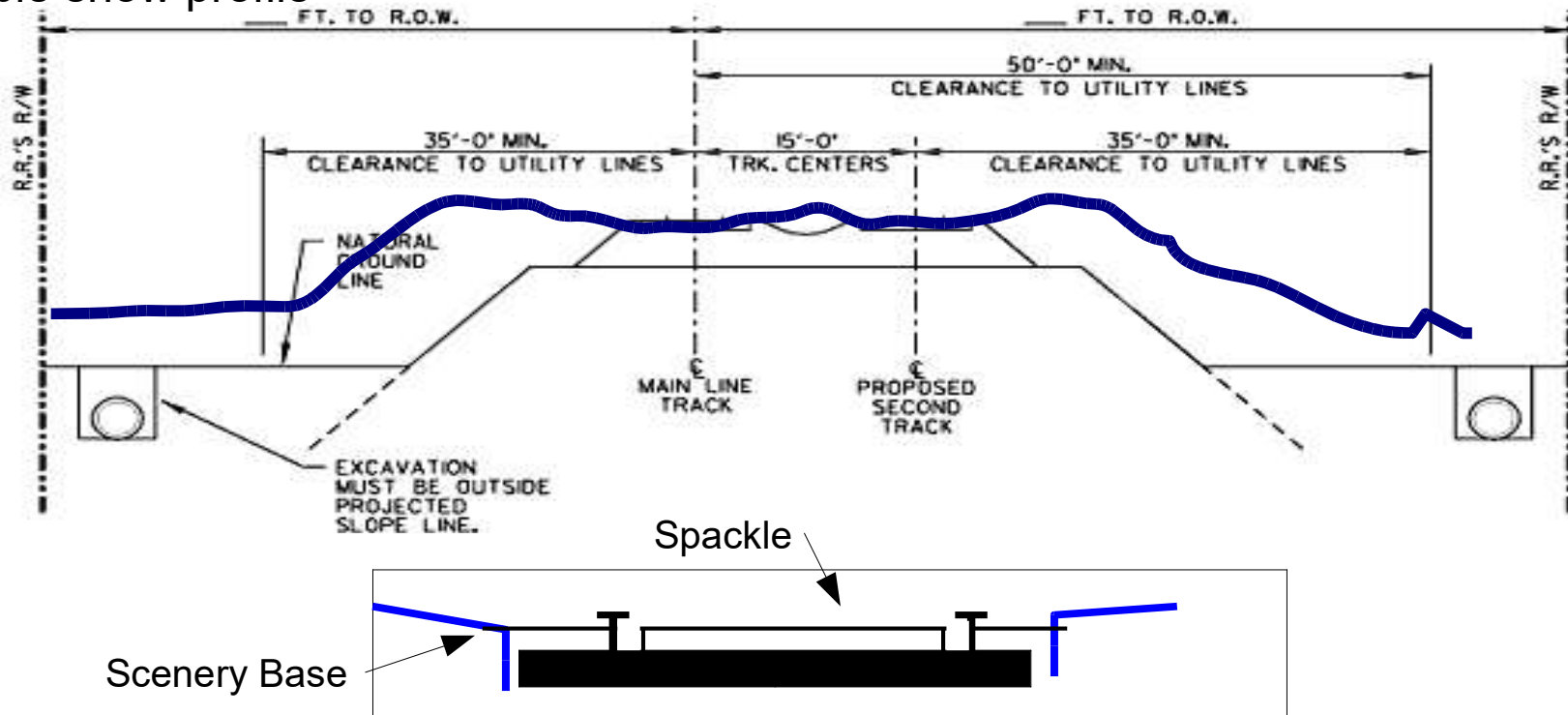
# Sifted Snow Cover Technique

- Similar technique as typical ground foam scenery
  - Paint scenery base with white interior paint
  - Sift snow mix over wet paint using tea strainer.
    - Put it on heavy so paint doesn't show through
  - Sweep up excess snow when dry, then vacuum.
  - To add another coat or add more snow mix:
    - Spread diluted white glue
    - Sift snow mix
- Before you ask – I don't know ratio of white glue/water – I dribble glue on surface straight from the bottle then spray with water, then spread it with a paintbrush.
- Putting dilute glue on snow powder, like is done with normal scenery, does not look good. You can see the glue.

# Snow Near Track

From Union Pacific RR web site via Trains.com web site

Possible snow profile



**Need to leave railheads above snow by .03-.05 inch**

Need to leave room for paint and sifted snow cover

# Snow On and Near the Tracks

- Painting rails, and ties and ballast white first.
  - I used sand ballast around turnout points
- Use spackle/drywall compound to fill in next to and between rails. Make flangeways with a palette knife or similar tool.
- Scrape/sand down to proper level
- Paint area with white acrylic paint.
- Carefully spread dilute white glue next to and between rails, then sift snow powder mix, vacuum up excess.
- Clean rails. Paint and any snow mix will scrape off
- Turnouts:
  - Do not put spackle between points. Fill with ballast or sand around throwbar and point area.
  - Brush or spray white artist acrylic to paint rails and ballast.



# Roads and Parking Lots

- Paved and plowed
  - Make snowbanks from plaster, caulk, Sculptamold along the side of roads and parking lots
  - Paint white, sift on snow mix
  - Spray some hairspray or paint some white glue on pavement, sift on snow to make snow patches
  - Gloss medium can simulate frozen puddles
- Unplowed areas
  - Spray with hairspray, sift on snow, make wheeltracks with vehicle
- Combine two techniques for plowed roads that were then covered by light snowfall.



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Frostbite Falls  
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# Rocks and Cliffs

- Start with a normally painted rock
- Lightly wisk a nearly dry brush of white paint on rock face
- Use snow goop or white paint on ledges and crevices
- Spray with hairspray and sift on some snow mix





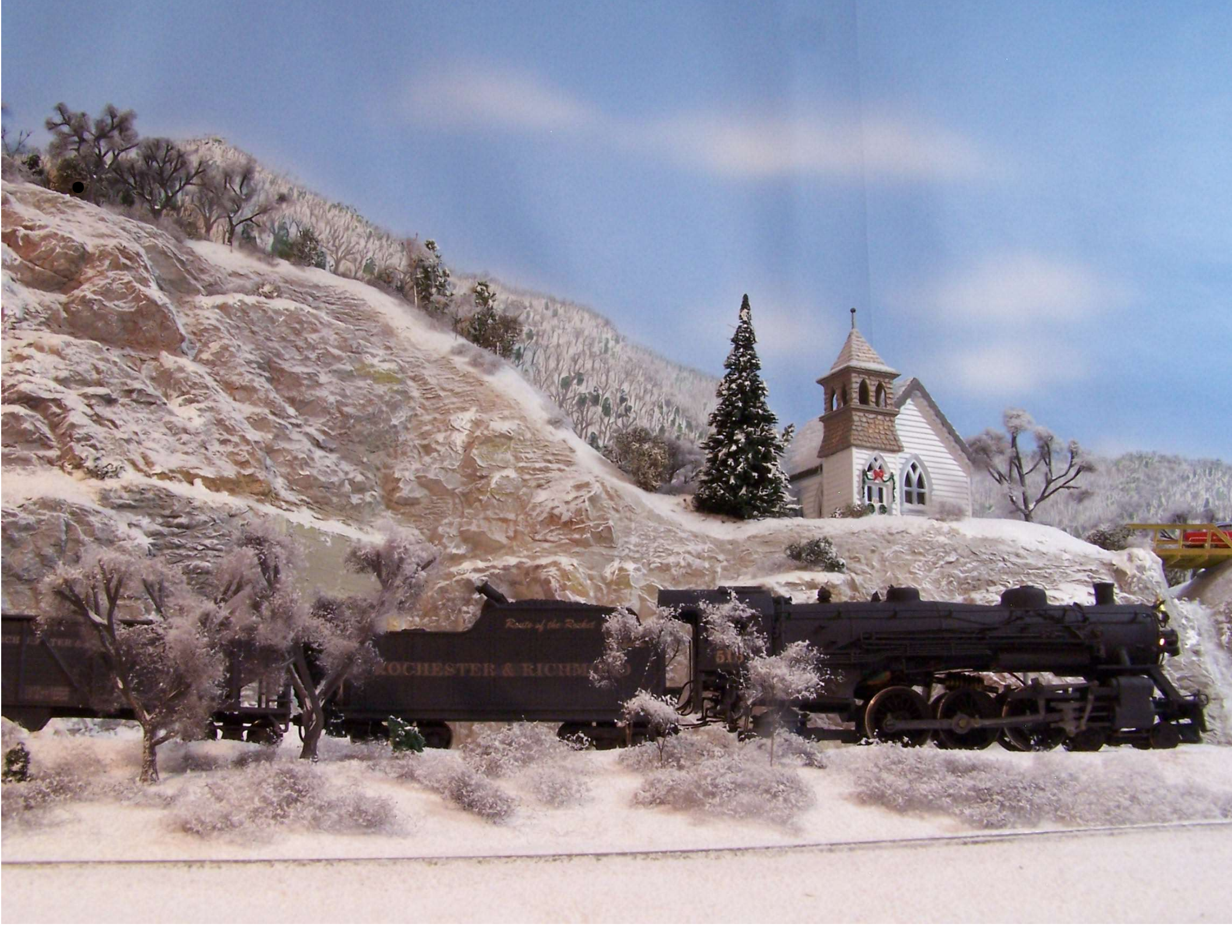


# Vegetation

- Evergreen trees
  - Wisk white paint on tips of branches
  - Apply dabs of snow goop or white paint
- Deciduous trees
  - Start with a tree armature that hasn't had leaves applied
  - Use paint or snow goop in crotch of tree or horizontal trunk sections
  - For small branches, use what you like. I used polyfiber
  - Spray with hair spray and sift on snow mix
- Shrubs
  - Start with dark polyfiber
    - I started with white and sprayed it dark gray
  - Spray with hairspray, sift on snow mix

# Tree example







# Buildings

- Build up snow mounds with caulk along walkways, roads where snow would have been piled
- Use snow goop or paint and gloss medium to simulate ice drips, snow on window ledges, etc.
- Snow on the roof
  - Apply to each roof area separately
  - For steep roofs may need to support building at an angle
  - Spray hairspray on roof section, sift on snow mix
  - Apply 3 or 4 coats
  - You could spread snow goop or thin plaster on the roof for deep snow if desired
- Recess buildings into scenery base when modeling deep snow







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*Happy Christmas to all....  
and to all a good night!*



*Merry Christmas from  
the Rochester and Richmond Railroad*



The End