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# Back On Track...The Return of the 539!

Sources: <http://gosw.about.com/od/grandcanyon/a/locomotive539.htm>  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grand\\_Canyon\\_Railway](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grand_Canyon_Railway)

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The Grand Canyon Railway is a passenger railroad, which operates between Williams, AZ and the South Rim of Grand Canyon National Park. In 2000, the route was listed on the National Register of Historic Places (see [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grand\\_Canyon\\_Railway](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grand_Canyon_Railway)).

In 2007, to expand its steam locomotive fleet, the Grand Canyon Railway acquired locomotive No. 539. The large locomotive arrived in Williams after being transported by rail from Battle Ground, WA, aboard three flat cars.

Locomotive No. 539 was built for the Northern Pacific Railroad in 1917. For 40 years, the locomotive ran on various lines including the Spokane, Portland and Seattle Railway, before being retired to a civic-monument in Vancouver's Esther Short Park. The locomotive was then moved to Battle Ground before being recently displaced by a park project.

Grand Canyon Railway completed the acquisition in early April 2007, which involved swapping two of the Railway's smaller locomotives – No. 18 and No. 20, which were 2-8-0

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type locomotives – for the big No. 539, which is a 2-8-2 type\* locomotive. The two smaller locomotives were transported to the Mt. Hood Railway in Washington for service on that line.

Now restored, the No. 539 is now the Railway's largest locomotive in its steam fleet, which also includes locomotives Nos. 29 and 4960.

Restoration efforts included converting the engine to operate on ultra-low-sulfur diesel fuel, refitting the draft apparatus of the engine, and a remodel of the steam engine's boiler feedwater system. These modifications made it possible for the steam locomotive to burn less fuel and use less water than the conventional steam engine.

(Article by Elizabeth R. Rose; <http://gosw.about.com/od/grandcanyon/a/locomotive539.htm>)

\*Under the Whyte notation for the classification of steam locomotives, 2-8-2 represents the wheel arrangement of two leading wheels on one axle, usually in a leading truck, eight powered and coupled driving wheels on four axles and two trailing wheels on one axle, usually in a trailing truck. This configuration of steam locomotive is most often referred to as a Mikado, frequently shortened to Mike. (Source: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2-8-2>)

If you visit Williams, AZ, stop in at Cruisers and order the Original Burger. Cruisers occupies a refurbished 1950's filling station along the Mother Road - Historic Route 66.

