

## Rick Wright's CONUS Lines



**What is the name of your layout?** CONUS Lines, CONUS being the Navy's acronym for "Continental United States." Growing up in Cincinnati (7 Class I railroads) and in my decades long naval career I lived in East and West coast ports plus Washington DC. I model what I have seen and photographed, so the name is relevant to my life.

**What is the scale of your layout?** O Scale, 3-Rail. While I have from my childhood days and my family growing up traditional Lionel tinplate, on CONUS Lines I operate only scale motive power and freight and passenger cars. All cars have Kadee couplers and Atlas track allow me to run O Scale wheelsets when desired.

**Does your layout have a specific era and/or location?** I run what I have seen and photographed in six specific US locales and two Canadian between 1929 and 2019. I change locales twice a year. Right now (Apr '21) it is Nickel Plate, Erie and New York Central 1948-55 in northern Indiana. In the autumn of '21 it will shift to Illinois Central, Illinois Terminal and Peoria and Eastern in central Illinois 1970-1989.



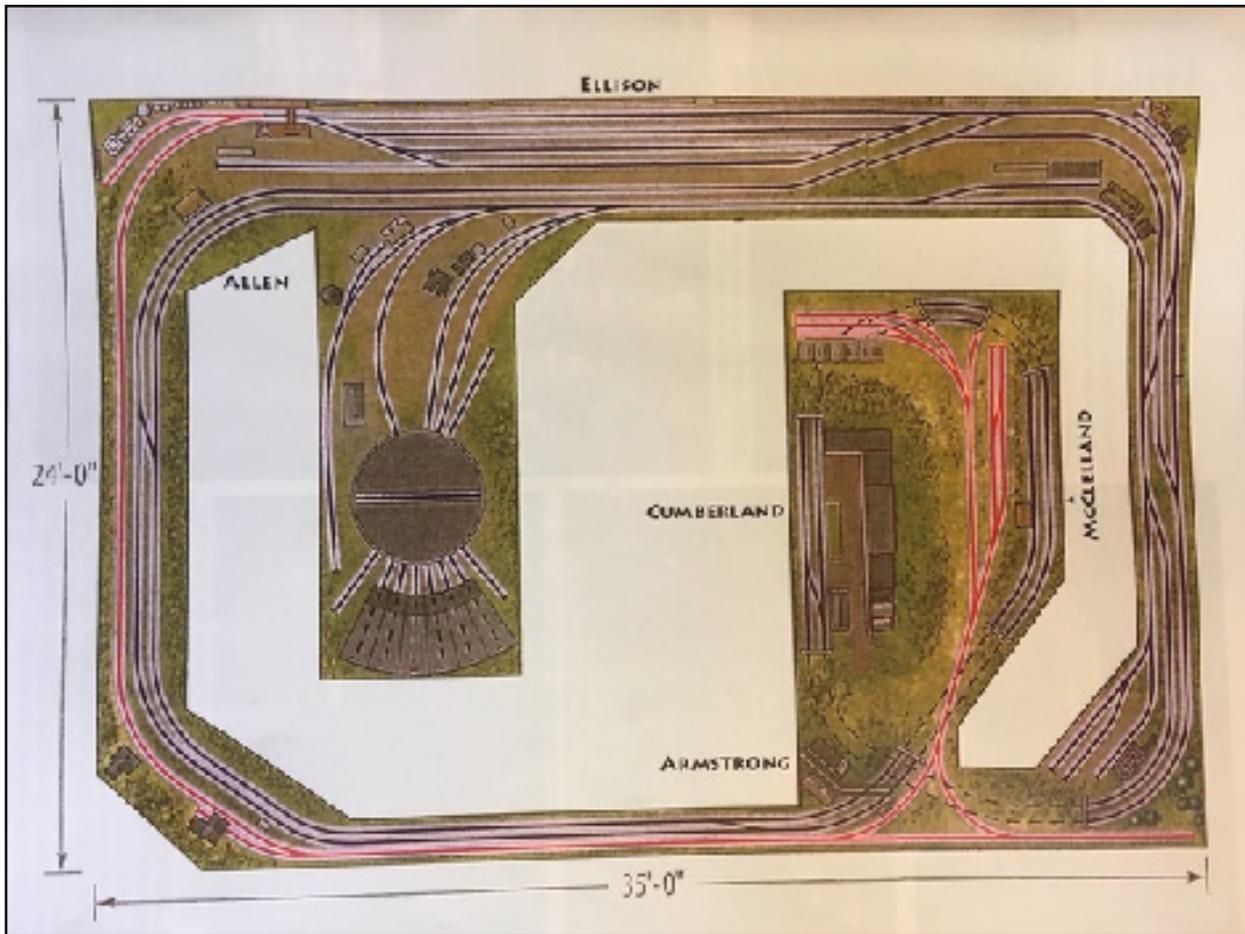
**What are the overall dimensions of your layout?**  
A three-level layout, 24' x 35' with two 7' x 14' peninsulas. Layout is based on a John Armstrong plan "Big Trains You Can Live With" with a double-track "continuous run," and single-track "out and back" and "point to point" operations possible depending on number of operators

**How do you control your layout?** MTH Digital Control System (DCS), three Z4000s, three TIUs, four Controllers.

**When did you start making your layout?** My late wife and I dismantled the modular layout that had made four transcontinental moves in 16 years of Navy life and began the current CONUS Lines layout in the summer of 2004 after my retirement from the sea service.

**What type of track and switches are on your layout and what is its code?** All Atlas, Code 100 flex track, minimum radius O-72, with turnouts. With eight exceptions due to their remoteness, all turnouts are manually thrown; I like to "walk around" with my trains. All track is ballasted and "weathered" with a goal of making the black center rail "fade" from consideration.





If you were to brag about your layout what would you describe as its outstanding features? More than 800 hand painted figures in 27 different vignettes from roundhouse and turntable (48" above the floor) to a mountain resort hotel, coal mine and produce warehouse (71" off the floor). All the vignettes and many of the buildings reflect events from our family's life together and were built by everyone. Model railroading for us was truly a family affair and it brings back fond memories as I continue to work on it today.

