

Northern Virginia NTRAK "How-To" Article

REMOVABLE SCENERY SECTIONS

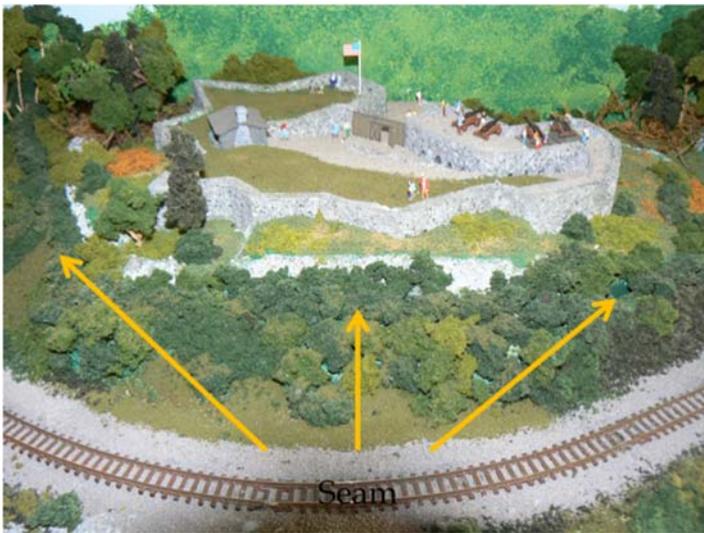
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For those of you who consider yourself to be more into scenery than rivets, you have probably wrestled with the problem of how to get all your creative scenes made. The average POFF with minimal scenery will cost at least \$100 and simple scenery pieces \$15-45 each. This essentially gives you two options if you want to change scenery: rebuild your POFF or build a new POFF. Obviously building more modules also creates storage and transportation problems. Removable scenery inserts can be used on either home layouts or POFFs to help you realize all the scenes you can dream up within a confined space.

The two anchor modules for the pit bridge were specifically designed with removable scenery inserts in mind. When the design process started, I had six different scenes in mind for the layout and couldn't decide on just two so all six were made. I now have eleven of these removable scenery inserts!



This image shows the opening in the module for the insert. Notice that the foliage was brought right up to the front edge of the opening to help with blending.

One question that will quickly arise is "what do you do with inserts that are not currently being displayed?" The key is keeping them safe while in transit. I built cases that can fit four inserts. Each case has a handle to make it easier for lifting. The cases have a Plexiglas front so that inserts can be viewed when not on display (not to mention making the case a little lighter). As a minimum, I recommend that you find a box that will fit your insert so that it is safe when you put it in the car to bring to a show.

When you make your insert add rigid base for stability and durability, especially if you have a longer insert (for example, the length of a module). I cut my bases from 3/8 inch plywood and glue a layer of 1 inch foam on it for my inserts. I usually keep a couple of these blanks on hand. The size and shape of your insert is only limited by the module. I've spoken with a couple HO and N-scalers who were planning on using this for buildings and houses that they could swap between their home layout and the ones they take to a show.

Keep the edge of the module higher than the edge of the insert (foliage makes it easier to blend seams). If you are making more than one insert, consider the continuity for the inserts with modules.



The rock face below the fort is just inside the edge of the insert. Green foam (foliage) is used to blend the edges of the seam.