

Tools for successful ballasting to eliminate hand pipette gluing of your ballasted track. Jim Osborn, MMR 11/17/2024

- Real rock ballast. I find the Woodland Scenics stuff is too light, it floats and bounces around too much.
- Polymeric sand “ConSANDtrate” glue – available from Amazon at \$10/pound.
- A pickle jar and lid for mixing ballast and glue. 9 parts ballast to 1 part glue by weight.
- Fleet or generic enema bottles. Dump the contents, remove the check valve, wash and dry the bottle and tube. Cut a ¼ inch off the end of the tube.
- 3-inch metal funnel for filling the enema bottles. Plastic is static prone.
- 4-inch square piece of cereal box cardboard to cover part of the funnel while pouring the ballast and glue mixture into the bottle to control dust.
- Small soft brush on the end of a fat BBQ skewer. (Gum Proxabrush refills glued to the skewer end.) Use for clearing the rail flange areas.
- Soft acid or paint brush.
- A Covid mask and eye protection to protect your lungs and eyes from the glue. The powdered glue is very fine and dusty and should not be inhaled when mixing or applying the ballast mix to the track. Note that the enema bottle application technique really minimizes the dust.
- A misting bottle. I found a good one from Sally’s Beauty Salon Supply. (Do not use a pump atomizing spray bottle – the droplets are too big.)
- 70% alcohol. Mix approximately 1 part alcohol to 9 or 10 parts water for the wetting solution in the mister. The alcohol cuts any surface tension.