

The Rail Report

NCDOT Rail Division



June 2014

Rail Division Staff attends Railway Association of North Carolina Annual Conference

On Thursday, May 15, Rail Division Director Paul Worley presented at the RANC conference, providing attendees with a division update and information on the Freight Rail and Rail Crossing Safety Improvement (FR&RCSI) Fund projects approved by the NCDOT Board of Transportation in May. These projects, funded through dividends received from the North Carolina Railroad, will modernize and improve the infrastructure and improve safety for many of the short line railroads across the state and add thousands of carloads to the North Carolina rail network.



Projects by Category

Purpose	Funds	Projects	Funds Range
Crossing Closures	\$4,690,000	8	\$25K-\$1.275M
Crossing Surfaces	\$240,000	1	\$240K
Rail Access/New Customers	\$2,950,000	13	\$100K-\$500K
Rail Industrial Access	\$200,000	1	\$200K
Short Line Improvements	\$5,271,108	14	\$50K-\$2M
Signal Modernization	\$1,862,000	2	\$750-1.112M
State Ports	\$833,000	1	\$833K

Worley also presented at the North Carolina Metropolitan Planning Organizations Conference in Wilmington on May 16, providing a Rail Division Update. At both conferences, staff was on hand to receive State Rail Plan input and surveys.



Integrated Service Development Plan Kick Off

Virginia and North Carolina DOT staff met in Richmond on May 6 to kick off development of an Integrated Service Development Plan for the Southeast Corridor. The Plan will propose alternatives for improved rail service between Charlotte to Washington, D.C. The document will build upon environmental analysis completed to date and will detail operational scenarios including service outlines, equipment needs and a capital funding plan. FRA and Amtrak participated in the discussion. Meetings will be held quarterly going forward.

NCDOT Rail Division

COMPREHENSIVE STATE RAIL PLAN



Rail Plan Stakeholder Engagement in Full Swing

During the past month, Rail staff has met with various groups one-on-one and at statewide conferences, providing updates on the State Rail Plan and soliciting input from stakeholders to develop a comprehensive plan that complies with FRA guidelines and meets the needs of North Carolina.

Stakeholders include the NC State Ports Authority, Class I freight railroads, short line railroads, the North Carolina Railroad Company, other modes within the NCDOT, economic development organizations, governmental agencies, metropolitan and rural planning organizations.

Learn more about the Rail Plan at ncbytrain.org/projects/rail-plan.html. MPO's, RPO's and short line railroads/terminal operators can submit input at this site using the fillable PDF survey forms. Anyone may submit a project to be considered using the project submission form.

Currently, it is anticipated that the public draft of North Carolina's Comprehensive State Rail Plan will be available for comment in January 2015.

NCDOT Rail Division receives grant from Clean Fuel Advanced Technology Project

NCDOT received a grant through NCSU's NC Solar Center on May 1, 2014 for \$92,974 toward the replacement cost of head end power units on two locomotives with EPA Tier 3 approved head end power units. The new HEP units, which provide power on board the train, will reduce emissions and improve performance and fuel economy on the state-owned F59 PH locomotives.



The Clean Fuel Advanced Technology (CFAT) 2013-15 project is sponsored by the NC Department of Transportation with federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality funds.

National Train Day – May 10, 2014

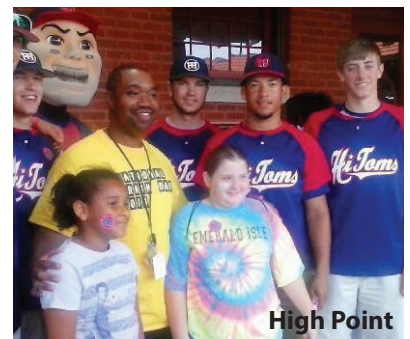
National Train Day was a hit with young and old alike. Celebrations were held at 17 locations across North Carolina.



Kannapolis



On board the *Piedmont*



High Point



Cary



High Point



Cary



Selma

Washington Post reporter agrees that riding North Carolina's Amtrak is "Simple and stress free."

As part of a Washington Post story, three reporters were sent from Washington, DC to Raleigh, NC, one by plane, one by train and one by automobile, to determine which mode of transportation was best for traveling between the two cities.

Andrea Sachs was chosen to ride the train. From the time she boarded the train with two carry-on bags, a 1.5 liter bottle of water and reading materials, the trip went so well that even when the train was running a little late, she did not mind. She talked with other passengers who were also enjoying their rides – for the comfort, the cost, and the room to stretch out for a nap.


On a scale of 1 to 10, Sachs rated traveling on the *Carolinian* a low-stress level of 0.75. The other reporters gave their modes ratings of 5 for flying and 4 for driving. All three agreed with the old adage – different strokes for different folks – and offered a personality guide to help readers chose the best mode for their trip They determined that train travel is best for: "laid-back travelers who think that the journey is half the fun and timid travelers who fear flying and don't dare to drive. Also eco-minded travelers concerned about their carbon footprint."

To read the articles visit washingtonpost.com, click on Lifestyles and then Travel.

Bring Your Bicycle On Board the Train


Did you know you can take your bicycle on the *Piedmont* at no charge? With five bicycle racks on the baggage car, it is easy to bring your bike along for the trip. Simply walk the bike up and hand it to the conductor for safe storage in a rack until you reach your final destination. A reservation is required for each bicycle and should be made when booking your ticket. The bike racks are frequently full on weekends and holidays year-round, so be sure to book in advance.





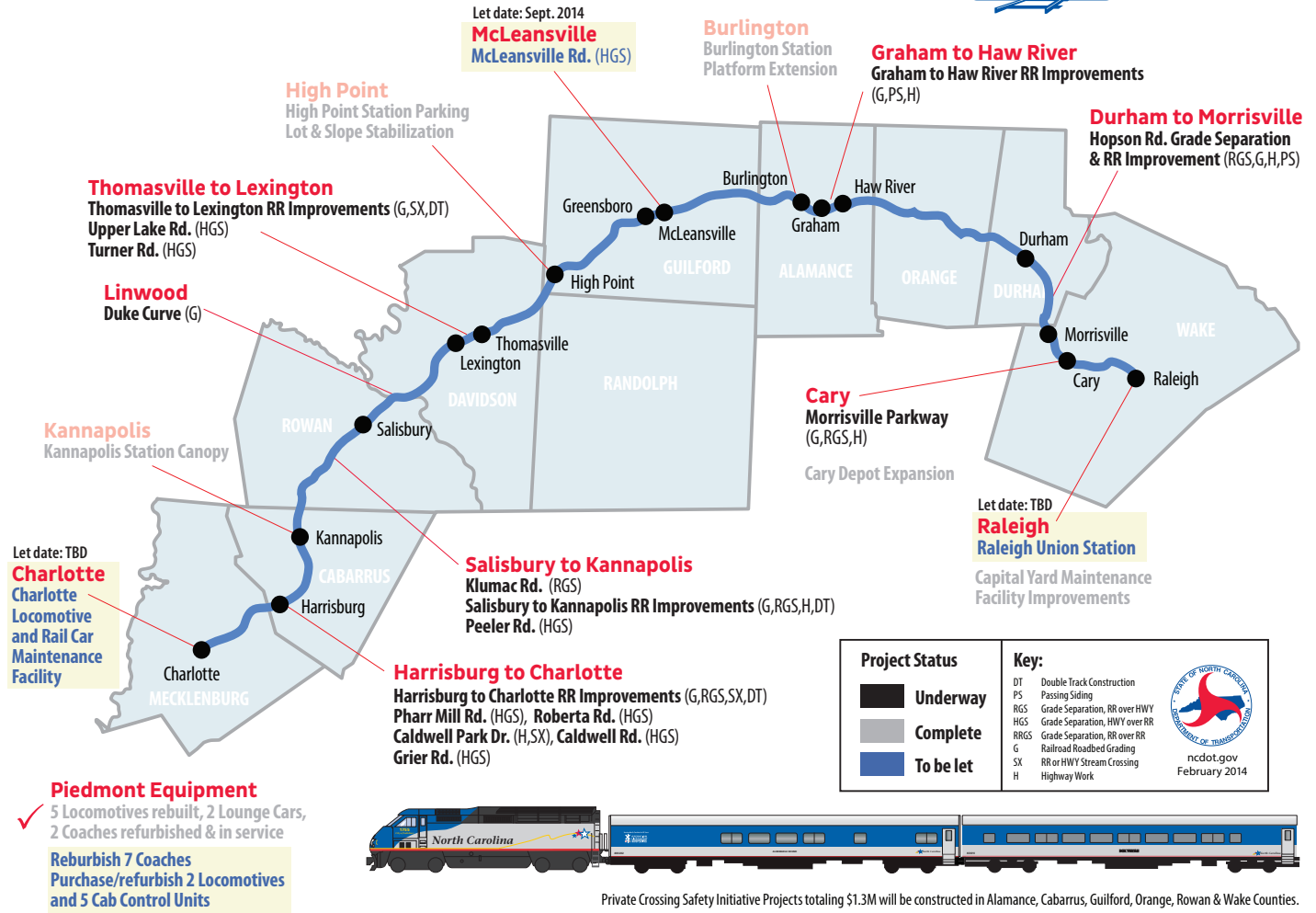
Kids 2-12 ride for \$5 with full adult fare on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays within North Carolina. Offer good for travel June 3 – August 28. Use fare code V812 when buying your ticket. Seating is limited. Advance reservations required. Not valid with other offers.

Ridership & Revenue on NC's Amtrak Service – March 2014 vs. 2013

	RIDERSHIP			REVENUE		
	2014	2013	% +/-	2014	2013	% +/-
Piedmont	13,842	16,273	-15%	\$227,093	\$338,553	-18%
Carolinian	26,492	30,438	-13%	\$1,564,974	\$1,846,476	-15%

Each month, Amtrak surveys customers to find out what passengers think about North Carolina's Amtrak service. In February, the *Piedmont* scored 96% and the *Carolinian* scored 86% in overall customer satisfaction.

Piedmont Improvement Program Projects



ARRA Funds Spent to Date (effective 4/30/2014)

Component	
PD&A	\$37,014,115
Equipment Procurement & Rebuild	\$23,541,378
Stations & Facilities	\$10,480,039
Track & Structures	\$65,879,304
CRISP	\$2,174,762
Program Totals	\$139,089,600 of \$520M awarded FRA Grant Funds

PIP Milestones in April

During May, construction of the second track started between Nelson and Clegg in Durham County. (see below) On the mainline curve realignment at Duke, in Davidson County, track work is finished and is awaiting final cut in and grading. The Duke project I-2304AE will then be complete.



The Piedmont passes through the second track construction work zone of U-4716 Nelson to Clegg at McCrimmon Parkway.

Piedmont Improvement Program Project Photos – May 2014



U-4716 Hopson Rd./Nelson-Clegg



U-4716 Hopson Rd./Nelson-Clegg



U-4716 Hopson Rd./Nelson-Clegg



P-5205 Graham to Haw River (west of Pomeroy St.)



P-5205 Graham to Haw River



C-4901 Bowers to Lake - Turner Road overpass

Piedmont Improvement Program Project Photos – May 2014



C-4901 Bowers to Lake - Upper Lake Road overpass



C-4901 Bowers to Lake - grading



C-4901 Bowers to Lake - embankment stabilization



U-3459 Klumac Road - Detour tracks in place



P-5208 Haydock to Junker - Roberta Road overpass



P-5208 Haydock to Junker - Pharr Mill Road Overpass