

The Rail Report

NCDOT Rail Division



November 2014

Secretary Tata Pledges Commitment to Rail Safety, Encourages Others to Join



N.C. Department of Transportation Secretary Tony Tata visited the BeRailSafe booth at the N.C. State Fair to sign a pledge stating his commitment to rail safety.

The pledge encourages people not to walk on or along railroad tracks, and if they must cross, to do so at a public crossing and look both ways to be sure a train is not coming.

"We want all North Carolinians to be safe around railroad tracks, and I welcome everyone to join me in signing this pledge and doing their part to keep themselves and their communities safe. Even one death on North Carolina's railroads is one too many," said Tata.

Fairgoers were invited to stop by and sign the pledge, which is displayed at the BeRailSafe booth at Safety City, located behind Dorton Arena. Safety City is sponsored by NCDOT's Governor's Highway Safety Program.



In North Carolina, walking on or along railroad tracks without the consent of the railroad company is illegal and a Class 3 misdemeanor. It can also be deadly – each year, an average of 32 people are killed or injured walking on railroad tracks across the state.



In addition to the pledge, paper engineer's hats, train banks, other safety materials were distributed at the fair. Children had fun posing as an engineer



or passenger at the BeRailSafe train. The Rail Division's goal at this year's fair was to provide an interactive display that gave staff and

Volunteer Train Hosts the opportunity to talk with fair goers about rail safety and the dangers of trespassing. Train schedules for North Carolina's Amtrak and Amtrak Travel Guides were also available.

BeRailSafe is NCDOT's statewide rail safety program that provides information and programming to adults and kids alike about the importance of staying safe around railroad tracks. BeRailSafe also trains first responders across the state in how to deal with emergencies that arise around railroad tracks.

Back by Popular Demand – NC's Amtrak Santa Train

Santa will make a special appearance on the mid-day *Piedmont* Trains on Saturday, December 6. NCDOT is offering a Santa Train Excursion from both the Raleigh and Charlotte stations.


From Raleigh: Santa Train Raleigh travels to Greensboro and back with a brief layover. To get on board, book a seat on the *Piedmont* #75 departing Raleigh at 11:45 a.m., and a return trip on the *Piedmont* #74 departing Greensboro at 1:34 p.m. and arrive back in Raleigh at 3:11 p.m.

From Charlotte: Santa Train Charlotte travels to High Point and back with a brief layover. To get on board, book a seat on the *Piedmont* #74 departing Charlotte at noon, and a return trip on the *Piedmont* #75 departing High Point at 1:34 p.m. and arrive back in Charlotte at 2:55p.m.

Visit ncbytrain.org to purchase your tickets today, and enjoy visiting with Santa, refreshments and Christmas carolers on board the trains.



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

	RIDERSHIP			REVENUE		
	2014	2013	% +/-	2014	2013	% +/-
Piedmont	14,867	14,685	1%	\$294,911	\$276,510	7%
Carolinian	29,823	29,413	1%	\$2,140,850	\$2,107,808	2%

RailPlan, Inc. Celebrates 365 Injury Free Days at Capital Yard and Charlotte Maintenance

Rail Plan, Inc. Senior Management visited Capital Yard to thank employees and provide all three shifts with an appreciation dinner.

Amtrak and North Carolina's Amtrak have big presence at the Wide Open Bluegrass Festival in Downtown Raleigh

With trains figuring prominently in many bluegrass songs and more than 180,000 people pouring into Raleigh during the Wide Open Bluegrass Festival on October 2-4, NCDOT and Amtrak took the opportunity to market the trains to this large and diverse audience. As sponsors of the Youth Stage, the North Carolina's Amtrak and Amtrak logo were prominent on the stage backdrop. Rail Division's Alison Boswell and Volunteer Train Hosts staffed two booths for the event, one across from the youth stage by the front door and one inside of the Convention Center which served as the epicenter for the festival activities.

Thank you to Volunteer Train Hosts, Doug Corriher, Rachael Gieshen, Sarge Sweeney, Tom Sandwick, Leon DeBaer, Bob Warner, Sam Exxum who staffed the booths WOB.



Youth Stage in front of Raleigh Convention Center



Above: Leon DeBaer and Alison Boswell at the outdoor booth

Left: Bob Warner and Tom Sandwick pickin' and grinnin' at the Blue Grass Festival

Children and adults enjoyed appearances by Casey the Conductor Bear, aka Alison Boswell of the Rail Division.

Registering to win a round trip for two.



Rail Staff, Interns and Volunteer Train Hosts reach out to spread the word about NC passenger train service

In addition to the NC State Fair and Wide Open Bluegrass, NCDOT has had booths and tables at the following locations the fall

- Greensboro Grasshoppers Baseball Playoff Game
- Selma Rail Days
- Eastern Carolina BBQ Throw Down Festival
- Elon University Football Games
- Lexington Barbecue Festival
- Thomasville Everybody's Day Festival, High Point
- Hamlet Seaboard Festival
- Thomasville Rail Fan & Rail Appreciation Day
- Cary Downtown Harvest Festival
- NC State Talley Student Center
- Winston-Salem State University Football Game
- Historic Salisbury Tour of Homes
- Southeast Alternative Fuels Conference

NCDOT Wins National Award For Excellence In Communications for Rail Marketing

NCDOT Communications staff received an award from the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials' (AASHTO) for print and online ads produced as part of a new campaign to brand and market North Carolina's passenger rail service. The team developed the "Simple and Stress-Free" brand to showcase the many benefits of taking passenger rail between Raleigh and Charlotte and points in between. The ads used varied photography to reach its target audiences – students, parents and seniors – to promote special fares and discounts. Team members, led by Julia Casadonte, Marketing Specialist, include designers Emily Jones and Billy Barrier, and photographer Katy Warner.

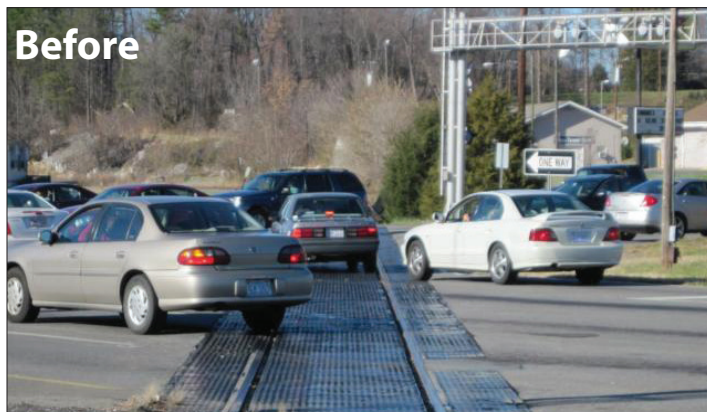
Rail Crossing at Andy Griffith Parkway (US 52) and Rockford Street gets major safety upgrade

Work was completed on a new railroad crossing at the intersection of Andy Griffith Parkway (U.S. 52) and Rockford Street in Mount Airy just in time for the 25th Annual Mayberry Days Festival. The old crossing was deteriorating, and traffic turning north onto Rockford Street had to travel in line with the tracks for a brief period. The resurfacing project replaced the old crossing structure with a more durable concrete crossing and created a turning lane to prevent drivers from traveling down the tracks.

The Yadkin Valley Railroad, NCDOT Highway Division 11 and NCDOT Rail Division worked together to complete the project in an

efficient and timely manner. Yadkin Valley Railroad was responsible for rail labor expense and rail safety coordination, Rail Division FR&RCSI funding provided approximately \$260,000 for tub crossing materials, and NCDOT Highway Division 11 provided signing detours, lane shifts, all road work including an additional right turn lane to get the traffic movement out of the tracks.

For more information on the FR&RCSI program, visit the NCDOT Rail Division projects page.



NCDOT seeks leasing partner to operate the Piedmont & Northern Railway

The N.C. Department of Transportation is seeking a new partner to operate the 13-mile Piedmont & Northern Railway line from Gastonia to Mount Holly in Gaston County following Patriot Rail's termination of its lease of the corridor.

The railroad has two businesses, averaging 12 carloads per month. The line connects with CSX Transportation at Mount Holly and Norfolk Southern at Gastonia.



Photo courtesy of Casey Thompson

"Our department believes that this rail line has the opportunity to be an economic driver, and we will collaborate with Gaston County to select the best railroad operator to accomplish that goal while providing seamless service to existing and prospective shippers," said NCDOT Rail Division Director Paul Worley.

"The Gaston County Commission looks forward to being a partner with the N.C. Rail Division. We believe the rail line is a catalyst to

economic growth and look forward to selecting a new operator that will provide service to businesses in need of a rail line," said Gaston County Commission Chairman Tracy Philbeck.

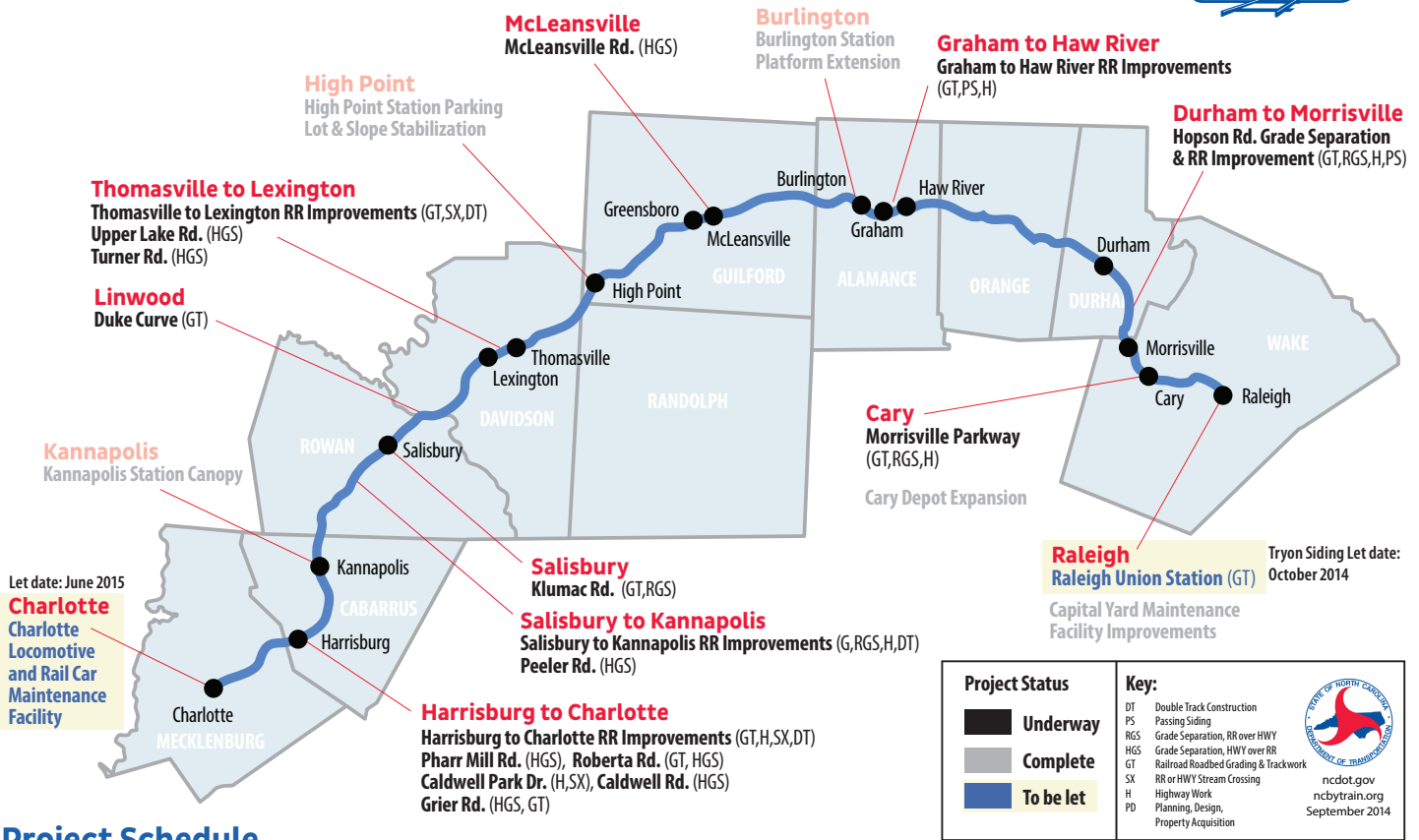
NCDOT is underway with a public procurement for a freight operator, with the goal of having a new operator in place on the line at the beginning of 2015. In the meantime, the two existing freight customers will continue to be serviced and the Rail Division continues to pursue additional business for the line in partnership with Gaston County.

Governor Pat McCrory and state officials outline state's Ebola Readiness

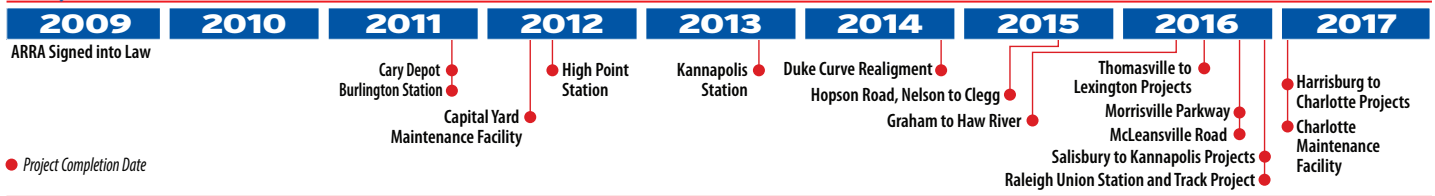
North Carolina officials have been preparing since July for any Ebola diagnosis that may occur in our state. The Department of Health and Human Services has provided extensive guidance to health care providers and procedures are in place to screen and evaluate patients. Additionally, the department is actively monitoring for cases using a network of hospital-based Public Health Epidemiologists in the state's largest hospital systems and surveillance of hospital emergency department visits.

The NCDOT is also reviewing its response plans. "From our airports to our sea ports, our transportation network provides international gateways to North Carolina. Our employees, therefore, may be the first to detect a potential Ebola event in our state, which they would report to appropriate authorities for immediate action," said NCDOT Secretary Tony Tata. "We are reviewing our emergency plans to ensure our employees are prepared."

Piedmont Improvement Program – September 2014 Status Report



Project Schedule



ARRA Funds Spent to Date (effective 9/30/2014)

Component	Expenditure
PD&A/ROW	\$42,285,558.61
Equipment Procurement & Rebuild	\$25,318,073.14
Stations & Facilities	\$10,534,890.75
Track & Structures	\$106,063,722.57
CRISP	\$2,180,376.32
Program Totals	\$186,382,621.39 of \$520M awarded FRA Grant Funds
New ARRA Contracts Awarded in September: 11 contracts worth \$240,803.74	

Raleigh Union Station (RUS) Update



The RUS project is progressing, with completion of final design for the station scheduled for this month. NCDOT and the City are reconciling the budget and scope. Construction of the new NS Tryon siding began in October, and will enable relocation of Cabarrus Yard which today conflicts with the RUS improvements. A ground-breaking is scheduled for early 2015, which coincides with the anniversary of the first passenger train to arrive in Raleigh 175 years ago.

Piedmont Improvement Program Project Photos – September to Mid-October 2014



P-5201 Morrisville Parkway grading



P-5201 Morrisville Parkway, west approach to bridge



U-4716 Hopson Road bridge construction



U-4716 Nelson to Clegg, CP Nelson



P-5205 Graham to Haw River, signal installation



P-5205 Graham to Haw River Grading

Piedmont Improvement Program Project Photos – September to Mid-October 2014



C-4901 Bowers to Lake - View from Upper Lake Bridge



C-4901 Bowers to Lake - Bridge over Hamby Creek



P-5206 Reid to N. Kannapolis - Ditch Line Work



P-5206 Reid to N. Kannapolis - Landis Utility Work



P-5208 Haydock to Junker - Caldwell Road bridge



P-5208 Haydock to Junker - Track Construction