

Halifax County Amtrak Crash disrupts service along major rail line



Secretary Tony Tata, Rail Director Paul Worley, NCDOT Railroad and Rail Transit Safety Oversight Manager George Young speak with the CSX Track Master at the crash scene.

On Monday, March 9, North Carolina's Amtrak train 80, the *Carolinian*, was involved in a crash South of Roanoke Rapids in Halifax County. The

train was heading north from Charlotte to New York when it collided with a tractor-trailer on the tracks at the N.C. 903 and U.S. 301 crossing.

NCDOT Division Four staff, along with SHP and local EMS, rushed to the scene to quickly set up detours and reroute traffic. Transportation Secretary Tony Tata also traveled to the site along with NCDOT Rail Division leaders to meet with the train crew and first responders, check on passengers at the Halifax Agricultural Center and visit with staff at Halifax Regional Medical Center to inquire about those injured and thank them for their support.

"We thank everyone involved in this effort for their quick response and outstanding teamwork," Tata said. "Our thoughts and prayers are with those who were injured, and we are continuing to work with authorities as they proceed with their investigation."



Secretary Tony Tata thanks Sheriff Wes Tripp for the assistance provided by the Halifax County Sheriff's Department.

Safety Tips from the US Department of Transportation Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

WHAT TO DO IF YOUR VEHICLE STALLS OR HANGS UP ON THE TRACKS

1. GET OUT IMMEDIATELY.

Evacuate your vehicle. (Trains traveling at 60 mph may take a mile or more to stop.)

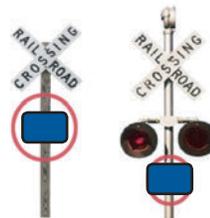
2. Move away.

Walk **toward the oncoming train, and away from the tracks** at a 45-degree angle. (If your vehicle is hit, debris will spread out from the tracks in the same direction the train is moving.)

3. Locate the emergency phone number.

When you are safely away from the tracks, find the railroad's emergency phone number and the DOT crossing identification number posted near the crossing. (See sample locations below.)

Railroad Identification, Emergency Phone Numbers, and DOT Number Locations.



4. Call for help!

Call the railroad's emergency phone number, the local police, or 911. **Tell them a vehicle is on the tracks.** Provide the location, crossing number (if posted), and the name of the road or highway.

Railroads' Emergency Phone Numbers

Norfolk Southern: 1-800-946-4744

CSX: 1-800-232-0144

Call the local police or 911 if you cannot locate the railroad emergency phone number at the site.

NCDOT 2015 Freight Rail and Rail Crossing Safety Improvement Program Funding

The N.C. Department of Transportation has programmed approximately \$3.7 million to fund 15 projects across the state through the Freight Rail and Rail Crossing Safety Improvement (FRRCSI) program for Fiscal Year 2015. The program, established in 2013 by the General Assembly through Senate Bill 402, utilizes dividends distributed to the state by the North Carolina Railroad Company (NCRR) to improve freight service and the safety of rail-highway crossings in the state.

"In addition to improving safety, these projects will support the use of the rail transportation in our state's economic development and job creation efforts," said NCDOT Rail Director Paul Worley.

The 2015 FRRCSI projects include:

- \$411,000 to fund two projects that will improve rail access for new and existing businesses and enhance the ability to move freight via the rail network
- \$2.83 million to fund 11 projects that will improve short line railroads by adding capacity, increasing operating efficiency and enhancing safety on these critical rural development corridors
- \$500,000 to fund two projects which will modernize rail crossing signals.

"Our mission is to enable freight to grow business, expand rail to move people and invest in North Carolina," said NCRR President Scott Saylor. "We're committed to working with local, state and private partners in planning for freight and passenger rail mobility now and in the future. Together with NCDOT and our economic development partners, we want to work to promote rail improvements that lead to manufacturing and agricultural jobs for the people of our state" said Saylor.

Atlantic & Western Railway Improvements

The Atlantic & Western Railway (ATW) continues to upgrade its infrastructure to support current and new customers. The ATW has partnered with NCDOT on projects such as timber-pile bridge upgrades and reconstruction of Globe Road in Sanford. ATW provides service to customers like 3M, Noble Oil, Lee Iron and Metal, and HJ Baker and Brothers. Short line railroads like the ATW are valuable to freight logistics and economic development efforts throughout North Carolina.



The ATW is part of Genessee & Wyoming Inc.



Above: The bridge pilings were upgraded as part of last year's FRRCSI grant.

Andrews to Murphy Rail Reactivation Study Public Meeting held March 11

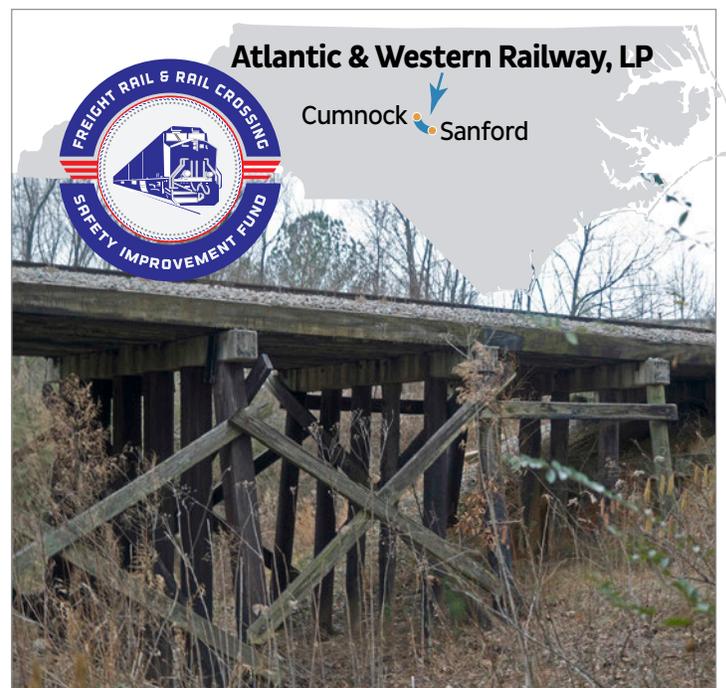
The N.C. Department of Transportation held a public meeting at the Tri-County Community College to review results of the recent study of reactivating the Murphy Branch rail line between Andrews and Murphy. The draft study evaluated the market and investment viability of returning rail service to the Murphy Branch rail line.

About 80 people attended the meeting to express their interest in reactivation of the line and how it could support the economy in the area. NCDOT representatives, consultants and public officials were available during the meeting to provide information, answer questions and collect comments regarding the study and the project in general.



NCDOT Chief Deputy Secretary Nick Tennyson speaks with citizens at the Andrews to Murphy Reactivation Study Public Meeting

NCDOT purchased the Murphy Branch from Norfolk Southern Railroad in 1988 – 67 miles between Dillsboro and Murphy. All but the Andrews to Murphy portion was sold to the Great Smoky Mountains Railroad in 1996. This was the first corridor NCDOT purchased to save under the Corridor Preservation Act. The 14 miles between Andrews and Murphy was preserved for future use.



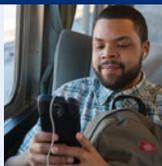
This bridge on the Atlantic & Western Railway in Lee County will be improved in the near future with 2015 FRRCSI funds.

Ridership & Revenue on NC's Amtrak Service – January 2015 vs. 2014

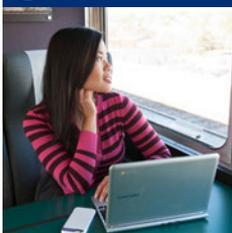
	RIDERSHIP			REVENUE		
	2015	2014	% +/-	2015	2014	% +/-
Piedmont	12,243	12,324	-1%	\$251,268	\$250,102	0%
Carolinian	19,996	21,662	-8%	\$1,250,942	\$1,340,915	-7%

CURRENT TRAVEL DEALS

1 College Students get 15% off fares now through April 25th by using fare code V632.



2 Travel Mid-Week & Save 10%



Get 10% off the price of your ticket automatically if you travel on Tuesdays, Wednesdays or Thursdays. Tickets must be reserved three days in advance to get the discount. No promo code is required. Purchase tickets at ncbytrain.org.



Rail Customer Service Manager Teshena DeBrew holds banner that was on display on train cars and at the Raleigh Station to celebrate the 175th Anniversary of the first train arriving in Raleigh. Cake and refreshments were served at the station and a 30% companion discount was offered for travel on that day.

Raleigh Union Station Project Set to Go!

Raleigh City Council voted to move forward with construction of Raleigh Union Station at their March 3rd meeting. The \$79.8 million project is a joint initiative of the NCDOT and City of Raleigh to construct a new passenger station in downtown Raleigh.

The new station will be located in the renovated Dillon Supply Company Warehouse Viaduct Building at 510 West Martin Street, and will include retail and civic spaces. Rail infrastructure improvements are part of the project as well.



The project is funded through a series of federal grants, and state and local matches. The Raleigh Union Station project fits within Governor McCrory's 25 Year Vision for North Carolina by supporting the expansion of mass transit options in the central region of the state. The new station will replace the existing Amtrak Station on Cabarrus Street, which routinely experiences overcrowding, too few parking spaces and an inadequate platform to serve longer trains.

"Good teamwork between the City of Raleigh, NCDOT and FRA got us to this point, to be able to break ground on a project that will bring great benefits to Raleigh's Warehouse District and to North Carolina's Amtrak service as well," said NCDOT Deputy Secretary for Transit Jeff Mann.

A groundbreaking ceremony will be held early summer and the station should be completed in 2017. For more information about the project, visit www.raleighnc.gov and search "Union Station."



The N.C. Train Hosts volunteered 7,800 hours in 2014 on board the Piedmont and Carolinian, at stations, events and festivals across the state. The NCDOT Rail Division thanks you for your service and dedication!

NC Train Host Annual Meeting

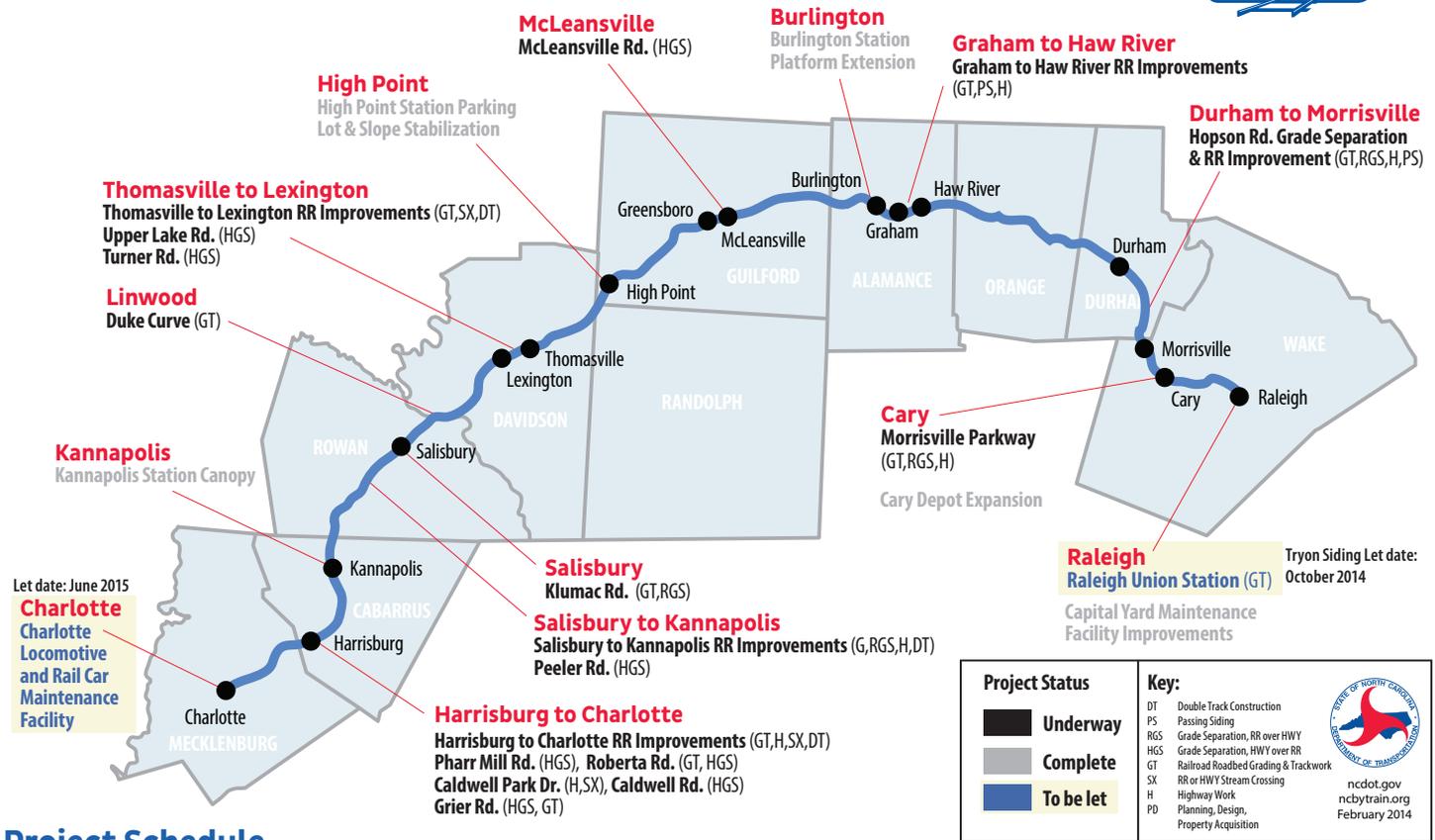
The 2015 Annual Train Host Meeting was held at *The Cary*, a renovated theater in the heart of downtown Cary.

Mayor Harold Weinbrecht kicked off the meeting by welcoming the train hosts to Cary. The group had a moment of silence to honor members who had passed during the last year. Host President Bob Warner recognized hosts new to the organization and hosts currently in training and updated members on business matters.

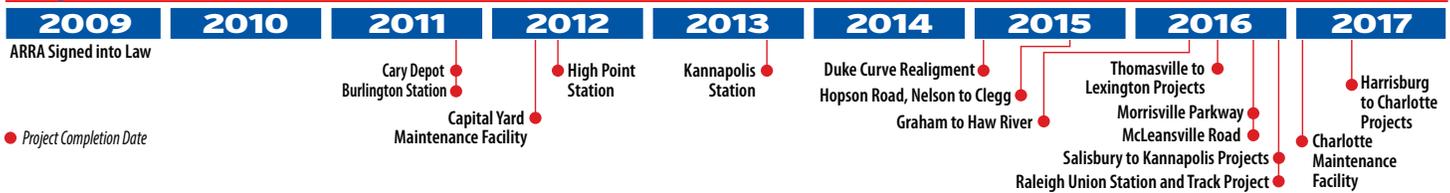
In addition to the updates by Amtrak and NCDOT staff, Rail Director Paul Worley spoke to the hosts, thanking them for their services, and announced Governor Pat McCrory's Proclamation naming March 7th, 2015 as NC Train Host Association Day. "I don't know of any group of volunteers more dedicated and deserving of being recognized for their contributions to our state," said Rail Director Paul Worley.



Piedmont Improvement Program – February 2015 Status Report



Project Schedule



ARRA Funds Spent to Date (effective 2/18/2014)

Component	Expenditure
PD&A/ROW	\$44,729,161
Equipment Procurement & Rebuild	\$26,257,230
Stations & Facilities	\$10,941,117
Track & Structures	\$149,895,328
CRISP	\$2,180,376.32
Program Totals	\$234,003,214.01 of \$520M awarded FRA Grant Funds

PIP Milestones

Harrisburg - A critical permanent track realignment (*below*) at the location of the new Roberta Road overpass was completed and put in service the weekend of February 14-16. The half-mile track realignment allowed the removal of the existing track which was necessary for the completion of the overpass structure and the progression of track construction to the west.



Bowers to Lake - Track construction has progressed over two miles from the now removed Lower Lake Road at-grade road crossing to the south end of the project.

Piedmont Improvement Program Project Photos – January–February 2015



P-5201 Morrisville Parkway



U-4716 Hopson Road bridge construction



U-4716 Nelson to Clegg passing siding construction



P-5205 Graham to Haw River Passing Siding – Grading



P-5204 McLeansville Road, clearing



C-4901 Bowers to Lake, Rich Fork Creek bridge track construction

Piedmont Improvement Program Project Photos – January-February 2015



C-4901 Bowers to Lake, track construction



P-5206 Reid to North Kannapolis, signal installation



P-5206 Reid to North Kannapolis, utility relocation



P-5206 Peeler Road Bridge construction



P-5208 Haydock to Junker - Roberta Road Bridge construction



P-5208 Haydock to Junker - retaining wall