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NCDOT Rail Division

The Rail Report



February 2016

SRF 2016 Southeast Rail Coalition

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Preparing for Change... Planning for Success

The NCDOT Rail Division and the Triangle Chapter of the Women's Transportation Seminar (WTS) are hosting a regional rail forum to discuss ongoing freight and passenger rail initiatives in the Southeast. The Southeast Rail Forum will be held on March 16-18, 2016 in Charlotte, North Carolina at the Sheraton Hotel.

Rail agency top and mid-level management, engineers, maintenance and safety professionals, operations staff, equipment designers, board members and policymakers, government agency staff, suppliers, consultants and contractors are invited to attend.

Forum sessions will be led by top rail experts and will:

- Highlight the regional economic benefits of passenger and freight services, including a discussion of the Northeast Corridor.
- Introduce attendees to the Federally-Led Regional Planning Study and provide an opportunity for participation.
- Identify the role, trends and activities in intermodal freight transportation: Rail, ports, trucking and shipping hubs, including, but not limited to, CCX, described in the previous article.
- Explore potential governance structures that could be used fund and operate services across state lines.
- Provide an opportunity for multi-state networking and information sharing.
- Provide an opportunity to tour Piedmont Improvement Program projects between Charlotte and High Point that will enhance intercity passenger services.

Visit <http://www.ncdot.gov/conferences/srf/> to register for the Forum and for info on accommodations and sponsorship opportunities.

TRAIN-'EM Program presented at RANC Executive Board Meeting

The Rail Division hosted the Executive Board of the Railway Association of North Carolina's (RANC) first quarterly meeting of 2016 in Raleigh at the NCDOT Chief Engineer's conference room, January 15.

Roger Smock, Rail Division Safety Consultant, made a presentation to RANC board members and guests regarding a



rail incident notification program entitled TRAIN-'EM.

The NCDOT Train, Railway and Incident Notification program (TRAIN-'EM) in partnership with the North Carolina Department of Public Safety, Division of Emergency Management (EM), is a comprehensive resource for capturing all rail-related incidents allowing proactive responses to real and perceived concerns. Further, it will capture accurate data to identify needs for future rail improvement in North Carolina. While participation by rail companies in TRAIN-'EM is voluntary, the Rail Division highlighted the potential benefits to the regional rail companies in terms of operational transparency within the communities they serve and increased communications with NC Emergency Management, NCDOT and other response resources when necessary.

Rail Division Director Paul Worley presented the values of TRAIN-'EM as it relates to the railroad industry, rail communities, Emergency Management and NCDOT. He also updated members on recent enhancements implemented by NCDOT regarding oversized/overweight truck permits as it relates to crossing railroad tracks.

RANC's Executive Board is composed of Carl Hollowell (Aberdeen, Carolina & Western RR), President; Todd Burchette (Yadkin Valley RR), Vice President; and Jamie Rowe (North Carolina & Virginia RR), Secretary-Treasurer. Additional RANC railroad, affiliate members and guests were in attendance.



Rail Division Director Paul Worley addresses the RANC Executive Board.

NCDOT's Rail Division Partners with Town of Old Fort and Norfolk Southern for Railroad Track Improvements



Crossing safety has improved for motorists using railroad crossings in Old Fort in McDowell County. NCDOT's Rail Division, in partnership with Norfolk Southern Railway, closed two crossings in the Town of Old Fort.

The Lackey Town Road crossing, closed August 4, was a state system crossing with 4 tracks protected by signals and gates. The Mauney Avenue crossing, closed October 23, was a municipal crossing with four tracks protected by crossbucks.

The project, funded by the federal Section 130 Highway/Rail At-Grade Crossing Safety Program, also included the construction of a new crossing at Spring Street between the two crossings that were removed. Norfolk Southern removed a small building to allow for the extension of Spring Street. Norfolk Southern also relocated two switches and shortened two storage tracks so that the new crossing only has two tracks.

"The existing Mauney Avenue crossing needed improvement," said Rail Division Project Engineer Dan Havener. Originally, Norfolk

Southern was to raise the grade of the storage and passing tracks to the elevation of the main line track so that the new crossing would be flat. "Instead, we suggested that they relocate the existing switches so that the storage tracks end short of the new crossing location and there would be only two tracks," Havener added.

Twelve trains pass through the town every day. This is a main track for Norfolk Southern freight operations.

The project also included patching and strengthening South Railroad Street between the old Lackey Town Road crossing and the new Spring Street crossing in order to accommodate the large volume of tractor trailer traffic that previously used the Lackey Town Road crossing.

The work on the project began with the removal of the Norfolk Southern building. The last pieces of the project, funded by NCDOT, were completed on December 4, 2015.



December 15th Ribbon Cutting sends off First Batch of Cars built by Vertex



The first 30 covered hopper cars built at the Vertex plant in Wilmington, NC left the site in route to their customer after a ceremony held December 15, 2015. Secretary Nick Tennyson and Rail Division Director Paul Worley were on hand for the ribbon cutting and send off for the cars. The Vertex plant, which opened just over a year ago, is located in the space once occupied by Terex Crane.

NCDOT, Wilmington and New Hanover County helped to pay for a road extension to the plant. The NCDOT's Freight Rail and Rail Crossing Safety Fund (FRRCSI) contributed \$200,000 to improvement of the rail spur to the plant. The plant employees 287 and has completed 67 cars and has another 91 in production.

NCDOT
 **BeRailSafe**
 Message Shared with more than
41,631 in 2015

2015 was a busy year for BeRailSafe, NCDOT's rail safety program. The program touched the lives of many North Carolinians through training sessions taught to law enforcement, fire, rescue, EMS and 911 personnel on safety issues during train collisions. The program also reached members of the public through safety fairs, festivals, crossing blitzes, special meetings and other events across the state.

What's Ahead for BeRailSafe in 2016?

Next year will be very busy and exciting for the BeRailSafe program. The program promises to reach more North Carolinians through safety training and hands-on activities. The Rail Division is working with railroad safety advocates, such as Operation Lifesaver, and major freight train operators throughout the state to meet those goals.

BeRailSafe is extending their message to the youth of North Carolina, kindergarten through high school, by creating initiatives with other state agencies that will share safety initiatives with young people across the state.

The key message of BeRailSafe is simple and effective:
RESPECT THE CROSSING, RESPECT THE TRACK!

BeRailSafe 2015 Activity Summary

Reaching the public:

- Delivered safety message to motorists through Crossing Blitzes, including ILCAD (International Level Crossing Awareness Day) event - **1,600**
- Conducted First Responder Training Sessions - **945**
- Spoke at Community Presentations - **140**
- Conducted NCDOT and Right of Entry training workshops - **152**
- Participated in local community fairs and festivals, including NC State Fair's "Safety City" - **36,700**
- Participated and attended conferences – **2,094**



Officer shares rail safety materials with motorist during Crossing Blitz

Conferences Attended:

- NC Fire Chiefs Association
- NC School Resource Officers Association
- Governor's Highway Safety Program Symposium
- Smart Rail Congress
- Assoc. of Police Communications Officials/National Emergency Number Association
- NC District Attorneys Association



The LED star, seen here on Train 76 in Cary, was a new addition for the holiday season. It was so well received by passengers, the public and train crews, that the Rail Division has decided to make it a permanent fixture on the Piedmont Trains. The lit star adds visibility to the Piedmont while also highlighting and promoting the service. Photo courtesy of Andrew B. Futrell.

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

	RIDERSHIP			REVENUE		
	2015	2014	% +/-	2015	2014	% +/-
Piedmont	15,111	15,384	-2%	\$329,304	\$325,330	1%
Carolinian	24,066	24,920	-3%	\$1,542,557	\$1,614,300	-4%

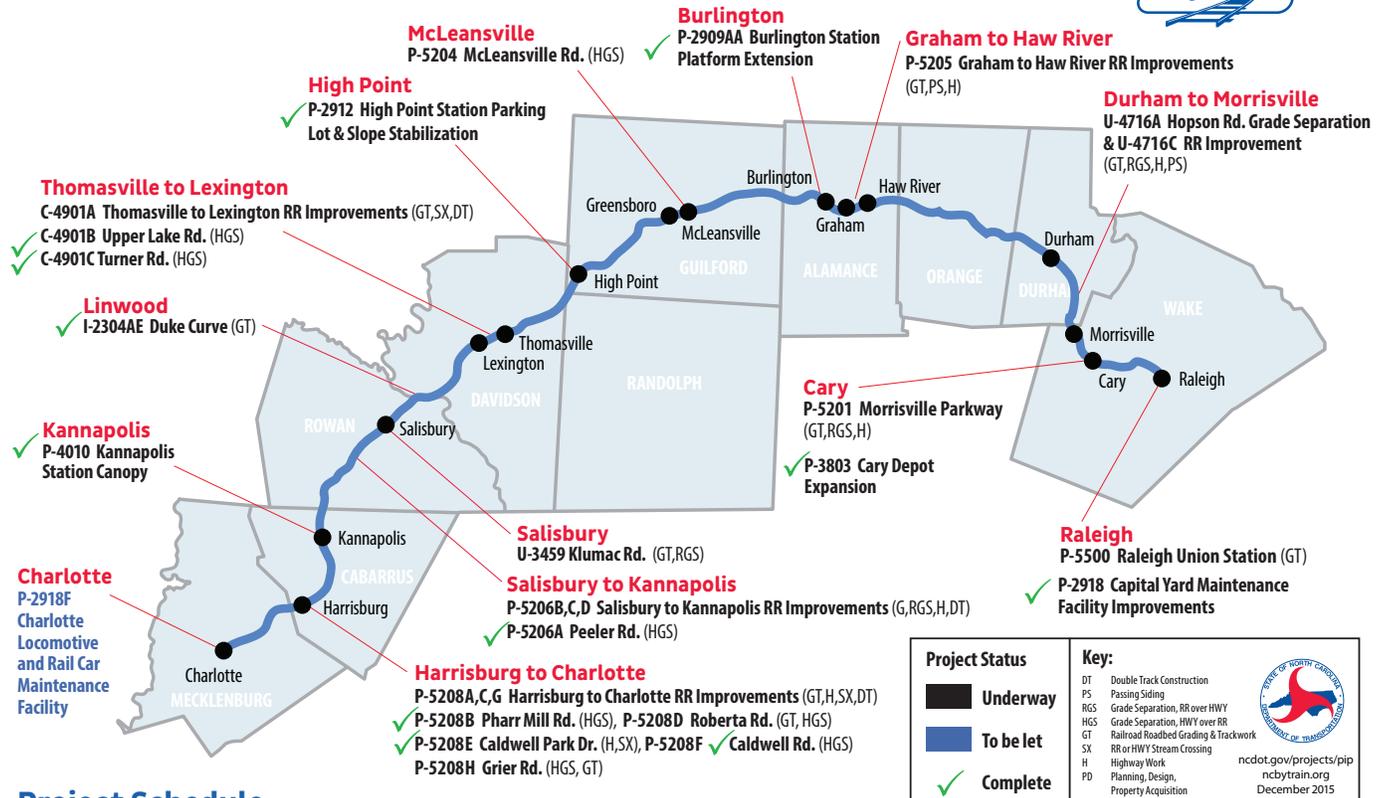
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Hours Volunteered by N.C. Train Hosts in November, supporting North Carolina's Amtrak onboard trains and at events.

*November 2015 service modifications and annulments impacted ten Piedmont trains. On Nov. 3, Trains 74 and 75 were annulled to accommodate CATS work, which was canceled too late to reschedule the trips. In addition, on Nov. 9 and Nov. 16, Piedmont Trains 73 and 75 terminated at Kannapolis and Trains 74 and 76 originated there. In Nov. 2014, no Piedmont or Carolinian trains were annulled. Additional disruptions for PIP project work may continue to occur as necessary. Average gasoline prices were \$2.20/gallon in Nov. 2015 vs. \$2.95/gallon in Nov. 2014 (EIA Weekly Retail Gasoline for Lower Atlantic region), and are expected to continue to fall.

Piedmont Improvement Program – December 2015 Status Report



Spent to Date of \$520M (eff. 12/31/2015)

Component	Expenditure
PD&A/ROW	\$49,295,989
Equipment Procurement & Rebuild	\$27,710,949
Stations & Facilities	\$43,127,059
Track & Structures	\$241,398,945
CRISP	\$2,180,376
Program Totals	\$363,713,318

Ten new contracts totaling \$554,426 were awarded in November.

Commitments to Date of \$520M (eff. 11/30/2015)

Current Commitments		\$471M
Pending Commitments	Anticipated Date	\$42.7M
Charlotte Maintenance Facility Construction	3/16	\$33M
PIDS Construction	1/16	\$1.5M
PD&A	Through '16	\$8.2M
Balance		\$6.3M

PIP Milestones

Morrisville - The last remaining roadbed for the Nelson-Clegg passing siding has been accepted by Norfolk Southern and final track construction is underway. The siding is anticipated to be fully in service by end of March 2016.

Thomasville - Construction is underway on new number 24 turnouts, below, at new CP "Lake" within the Bowers to Lake double track project. Completion of the control point is anticipated for July 2016 with the overall completion of the project.



Piedmont Improvement Program and Congestion Mitigation Project Photos Dec. 2015



Congestion Mitigation Project, CP Armstrong signals in service



P-5201 Morrisville Parkway, bridge construction



U-4716 Nelson to Clegg Passing Siding, track construction



P-5205 Graham to Haw River Passing Siding, new alignment



P-5204 McLeansville Road Bridge Construction



P-5204 McLeansville Road Bridge Construction

Piedmont Improvement Program Project Photos

Dec. 2015



C-4901 Bowers to Lake, Rich Fork Creek Bridge



P-5206 Reid to North Kannapolis, industrial track construction



P-5206 Reid to North Kannapolis, Kimball Road Bridge waterproofing and backfill



P-5208A Haydock to Junker, Coddle Creek Bridge, drilled shaft construction for north interior bent



P-5208 Haydock to Junker, Track Construction



P-5208 Haydock to Junker, Rocky River Bridge Construction