

Southeast Rail Forum held in Charlotte

The NCDOT Rail Division and the Triangle Chapter of the Women's Transportation Seminar (WTS) hosted the Southeast Rail Forum from March 16-18 in Charlotte to discuss ongoing rail initiatives and issues and to begin to chart a common course forward to meet the freight and passenger needs of our growing region. Over 200 people attended the forum.

Through the generous support of 21 sponsors, attendees were able to listen to speakers and ask questions of panelists on passenger, freight, safety, and multi-state project governance issues.

Speakers and panelists included elected officials such as North Carolina Representative Bill Brawley, Co-Chair of the Virginia-North Carolina Interstate High Speed Rail Compact, Mayor Jennifer Roberts of the City of Charlotte, Mayor Rick Danner of Greer, South Carolina, and Mayor Stephen Benjamin of Columbia, South Carolina. Governor McCrory also provided comments via a video noting his 25-Year Vision for North Carolina.

Other federal and state officials presenting at the forum were highlighted by USDOT Secretary of Transportation Anthony Foxx, Corey Hill, Executive Director of the Federal Railroad Administration, and NCDOT Secretary of Transportation Nick Tennyson.



NCDOT Secretary Nick Tennyson addresses conference attendees.

CSXT, Norfolk Southern, Palmetto Railways, RJ Corman, Amtrak, and other industry experts also participated in the conference.

Key points echoed by all elected and appointed officials included the need for the Southeast to develop a common vision for freight and passenger rail for delivering goods and moving people in the region and the need for the region to speak with a unified voice on rail priorities and needs.



USDOT Secretary Anthony Foxx

Virginia-North Carolina Interstate High Speed Rail Compact Convenes

The Virginia-North Carolina Interstate High Speed Rail Compact met on March 21,



2016. The meeting featured reports from each state along with presentations regarding the All Aboard Florida passenger system project and FAST Legislation. Representative Bill Brawley of North Carolina, the Compact co-chair, directed the state directors to 1) develop a list of joint grant applications to bring back to the Compact; 2) draft a three-year plan of next steps including how states can better support each other's plans and bring in other southeastern states; 3) hold monthly conference calls between the co-chairs and state directors; and 4) begin to look at the Compact's branding and how it might reach out to members of the respective congressional delegations.

SRF 2016 Agenda and Presentation materials are available for download at:
www.ncdot.gov/conferences/srf/



Compact Co-Chair Representative Bill Brawley (left), presents Senator Watkins (right) with a Certificate of Appreciation in recognition of his leadership and service in advancing the work and goals of the Compact to support high speed rail service in the Southeastern United States.

NCDOT Rail Division Awards Short Line Railroad Grants for FY 2016

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) Rail Division has programmed nearly \$1 million in matching funds to support six projects across the state through the Short Line Infrastructure Assistance Program (SIAP) for Fiscal Year 2016. The total requested ask from NCDOT Rail Division was over \$6.6 million from thirteen different short line railroads. This amount is the highest recorded funding request since the SIAP program began. It highlights the significant financial need that North Carolina's short line railroads have in order to continue providing safe and efficient freight service.

The SIAP is a component of the Freight Rail and Rail Crossing Safety Improvement (FRRCSI) program which was established in 2013 by the General Assembly to utilize dividends distributed to the state by the North Carolina Railroad Company (NCR) for the improvement of freight service and the safety of rail-highway crossings in the state. Each project that was submitted was assigned funding based on the needs of the railroad and impact of the proposed improvement. The 2016 projects were selected for their emphasis on rehabilitation of railroad bridges, which will improve the safety and reliability of the state's freight rail network.

The projects that were selected for award based railroad bridge rehabilitation are as follows:

- 1. RJ Corman Carolina Lines: \$415,625**
 - Repair three bridges (MP 302.3, MP 305.6 and MP 309.5)
 - Replacement of 6,000 ties and surfacing (MP 297.3 to MP 311.2)
- 2. Carolina Coastal Railway: \$53,000**
 - Repair two bridges (MP 138.5 and MP 184.9)
- 3. Chesapeake and Albemarle Railroad: \$178,300**
 - Rehabilitate one bridge (MP 41.5)



Photo Courtesy Tim Schaefer.

- 4. Aberdeen, Carolina and Western Railway: \$225,500**
 - Repair four bridges (MP 23.10, MP 56.40, MP 338.50 and MP 346.0)
- 5. Blue Ridge Southern Railroad: \$70,300.72**
 - Repair seven bridges (MP 11, MP 38.0, MP 39.6, MP 40.1, MP 40.3, MP 40.5 and MP 44)
- 6. Yadkin Valley Railroad - \$53,639.13**
 - Repair one bridge (MP 87.9)

RJ Corman Carolina Lines was awarded the remaining balance of funds for tie replacement and surfacing due to their overall project impact score being the highest. The next anticipated round of SIAP is due to be announced sometime in August and NCDOT Rail Division encourages all short line railroads to submit applications as soon as the request is distributed.

"The NCDOT Rail Division's SIAP program partnering with private investments in short line railroads continues to make an impact on job creation in North Carolina," said Paul Worley, Rail Division Director.



AASHTO GIS Transportation Symposium held in Raleigh

On April 5-7, NCDOT hosted the annual American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) GIS for Transportation Symposium (GIS-T 2016) at the Raleigh Convention Center. The symposium is a chance for GIS professionals in government and private industry who are interested in the use of GIS for transportation purposes to get together and share experiences, see state-of-the-art software, and learn more about this field. All states are invited to attend the conference. Each year, the symposium attracts more than 400 attendees and 30 exhibitors.

In addition to the many staff from NCDOT's GIS unit in attendance, Larry Sanders of Simpson Engineers and Associates and Rail Division Crossing Inventory Engineering Consultant, moderated sessions. Rail Division's Katie Kyzer of Simpson Engineers and Associates, and Rail Division GIS Support Consultant, presented a joint collaboration project between the NCDOT and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA). Through this partnership, the agencies support shared goals for increased rail safety and capacity by sharing their respective highway-

rail grade crossing GIS products. Specifically, the NCDOT will host its photos of open, public, at-grade crossings in the north, south, east and west directions, as well as the crossing surface and the placard displaying the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) unique identifier and emergency contact number. The photos can be geolocated using NCDOT's spatial data on crossings and the associated USDOT unique identifier. Crossing photos can be hosted within the state and the FRA will integrate them via a hyperlink from NCDOT's North Carolina Rail System Map on ArcGIS Online to its geospatial data, services and applications. This project will allow the FRA and its stakeholders to easily access crossing photos for reference and safety/planning analysis.



Katie Kyzer presents at AASHTO's GIS-T Symposium

Upcoming Special Train Stops

Thomasville

Carolinian and Piedmont Trains 80, 73, 74 and 75 will

be making special stops at Randolph Street in Thomasville on May 30, Memorial Day, for the city's annual Memorial Day Parade. Governor Pat McCrory will be grand marshal.



A special 15% off ticket price will be offered to veterans and active military members who ride the train to this event. Please enter Station Code TMV—Thomasville, NC for destination and use promotion code V706.



Piedmont in Thomasville. Photo Courtesy Andrew Bryant Futrell

Raleigh – North Carolina State Fair

Carolinian trains 80 and 79 will make special stops at the Blue Ridge Road grade crossing during the North Carolina State Fair Oct. 14 - 23, 2016.

Lexington Barbeque Festival

Carolinian and Piedmont trains will also be stopping in Lexington on Oct. 22 for the annual Lexington BBQ Festival.

Ridership & Revenue on NC's Amtrak Service – *Feb. 2016 vs. 2015

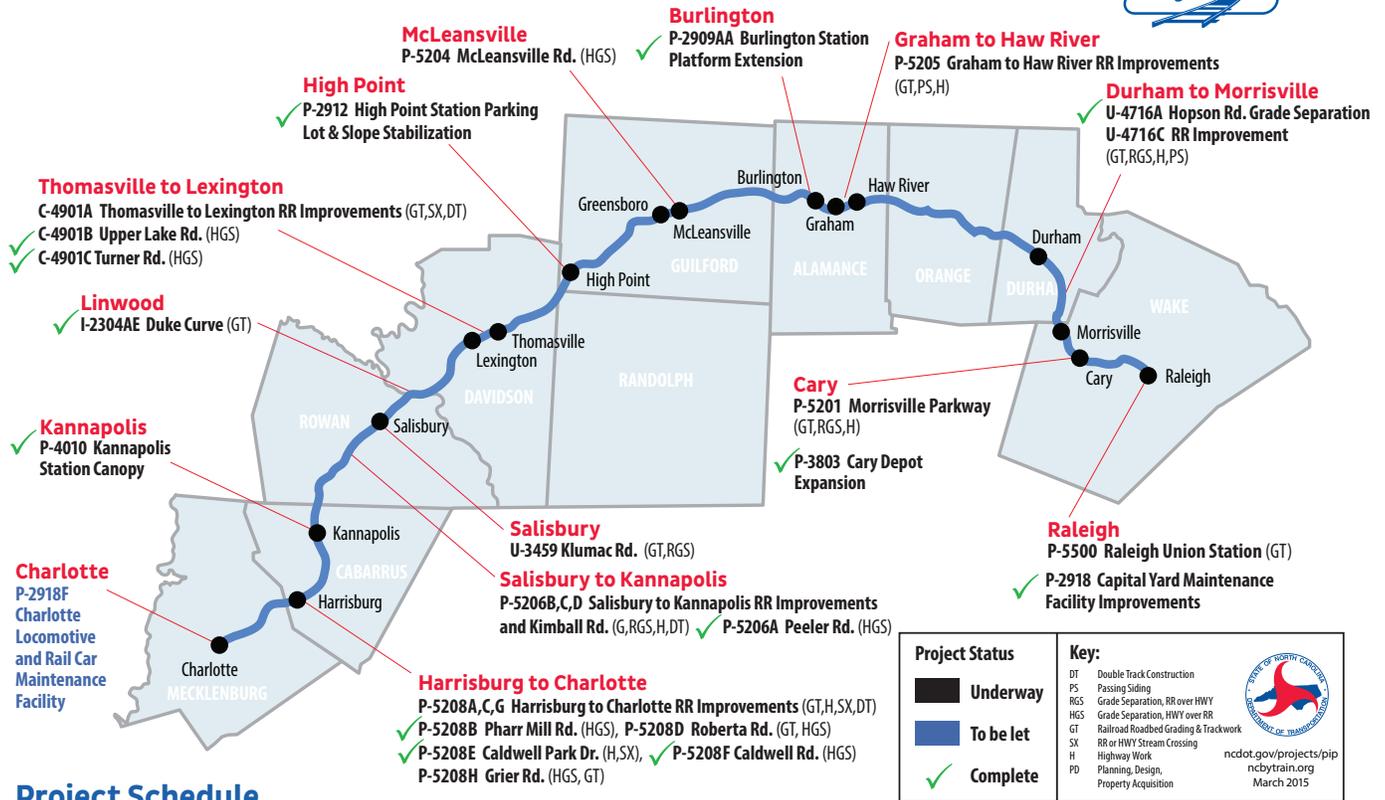
Icon	RIDERSHIP			REVENUE		
	2016	2015	% +/-	2016	2015	% +/-
	11,414	10,934	4%	\$246,515	\$228,747	8%
	16,977	19,434	-13%	\$987,667	\$1,186,842	-17%

846

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

***February 2016 service modifications and annulments impacted four Piedmont trains and six Carolinian trains.** On Feb. 8 and Feb. 29, Trains 74 and 75 were annulled for PIP project work. Feb. 16 - Feb. 18, Trains 79 and 80 operated between Raleigh and Charlotte only due to CSX trackwork on A Line. On Feb. 1, Train 76 sustained a 40-minute delay due to NS Train 337 breakdown between Charlotte and Kannapolis and on Feb. 2, Train 76 sustained 133 minutes of delay due to NS Train 352 breakdown between Greensboro and Burlington. Additional disruptions for PIP project work will continue to occur as necessary. Average gasoline prices were \$0.42/gallon lower in Feb. 2016 than in Feb. 2015 (EIA Weekly Retail Gasoline for Lower Atlantic region).

Piedmont Improvement Program – March 2016 Status Report



Spent to Date of \$520M (eff. 3/31/2016)

Component	Expenditure
PD&A/ROW	\$50,513,615
Equipment Procurement & Rebuild	\$27,965,272
Stations & Facilities	\$44,519,456
Track & Structures	\$263,536,679
CRISP	\$2,180,376
Program Totals	\$388,715,398

Twelve new contracts totaling \$8,120,050 were awarded in March.

Commitments to Date of \$520M (eff. 3/31/2016)

Current Commitments		\$471M
Pending Commitments	Anticipated Date	\$42.7M
Charlotte Maintenance Facility Construction	5/16	\$33M
PIDS Construction (pending FRA approval)	5/16	\$1.5M
PD&A	Through '16	\$8.2M
Balance		\$6.3M

PIP Milestones



Morrisville: The railroad bridge (above) and remaining roadbed for the Morrisville Parkway grade separation has been completed for track construction. The new track alignment across the bridge is anticipated to be put in service in May which will allow the existing railroad roadbed to be removed and the roadway construction to be completed under the new bridge.

Harrisburg: On March 14, a key cut-over was completed at new CP Shamrock on the Haydock to Junker double track project. Trains are now operating over two completed Number 24 turnouts in Main track 1. With the temporary track detour removed, Main track 2 turnouts are now under construction.

Piedmont Improvement Program – Project Photos – Mar. 2016



P-5500 Raleigh Union Station, site grading



P-5201 Morrisville Parkway, track 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



C-4901 Bowers to Lake, conveyor train

Piedmont Improvement Program – Project Photos – Mar. 2016



C-4901 Bowers to Lake, construction of second track



C-4901 Bowers to Lake, track construction over Abbotts Creek



P-5206 Reid to North Kannapolis, CP Sumner



P-5206 Reid to North Kannapolis, Kimball Road, bridge construction



P-5208 Haydock to Junker, Coddle Creek, bridge pier construction



P-5208 Haydock to Junker, construction of second track