

WEEKLY RAIL RECAP

For the week ending SAT, November 2, 2002

By Dave Mears

(NOTE: The expression "ffd" at the end of a news item means "for further details" and usually represents what I believe to be the most helpful news resource if a reader wants more information on a particular item.)

THE WEEK'S TOP NEWS (in chronological order):

(MON) New York State announced that it would raise clearances on the Metro North Railroad's Hudson Line to accommodate doublestack freight trains. The project, which is being done in partnership with the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, will cost approximately \$40 million. Work is scheduled to begin in Spring, 2003 and is projected to be complete by the end of the year. (ffd: AAR)

(MON) Florida East Coast Industries, the parent of the Florida East Coast Railway, announced that it was discontinuing regional long-haul trucking operations. An FEI spokesman said that it would continue to operate and expand FEC intermodal train services and would also continue intermodal drayage services within a 250 mile radius of FEC intermodal terminals in Atlanta, GA. (operated in partnership with Norfolk Southern), Jacksonville, FL. and Miami, FL. (ffd: AAR)

(MON) The U.S. Federal Railroad Administration confirmed that it had issued a notice of proposed rulemaking related to accident and incident reporting. The proposed rulemaking would conform FRA accident and incident reporting to that of the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration. FRA said that it would accept written comments on the proposal and also public hearing requests through November 6. (ffd: Keystone State Railroad Association Bulletin)

(TUE) CSX announced that it had begun an initiative it called "Zero Defect Management." Under the initiative, which is being administered by CSX's Customer Service Department, selected customers are assigned a CSX "service reliability official" who initiates a detailed review process that includes more than 20 service elements affecting performance and reliability. A CSX spokesman added that reliability has proven to be at least 90 percent effective at more than 140 customer facilities or traffic lanes where the initiative has been applied. (ffd: Railway Age)

(TUE) San Francisco, CA.'s Bay Area Rapid Transit System inaugurated its newly improved and expanded Daly City, CA. Shop and Maintenance Yard. A BART spokesman said that the improved and expanded facility at Daly City was part of a 10 year, \$1.2 billion Systemwide Renovation Program, which also includes refurbishing 439 BART subway cars, installing new automatic fare equipment and improving and expanding all 4 BART major maintenance facilities. (ffd: UTU News)

(WED) The Port of New York and New Jersey announced that it has begun design work for a new ExpressRail intermodal facility at its Port Elizabeth-Port Newark complex. A PANYNJ spokesman said that the new 70 acre facility, which will replace ExpressRail's existing 32 acre facility, will cost \$20 million to construct and is expected to be open by Spring, 2004. (ffd: JofC)

(THU) Amtrak announced that it had restored a full complement of Acela Express service between New York, NY. and Boston, MA., and for the first time since mechanical problems sidelined the high-speed trainsets beginning last summer. An Amtrak spokesman said that 9 Acela Express round trips now operate between New York and Boston and 12 round trips now operate between Washington and New York. Also and on Friday, Amtrak announced a systemwide fall travel promotion of 30 percent off best available fares, subject to certain restrictions. (ffd: AAR, Amtrak)

(THU) British Columbia's BC Rail operated the final run of its "Cariboo Prospector" passenger train between North Vancouver, BC. and Prince George, BC. The discontinuance leaves BC Rail operating only one remaining passenger train service, between Darcy, BC. and Lillooet, BC. (ffd: Canadian Press)

(THU) Amtrak, in conjunction with the Illinois Department of Transportation, operated a special test train equipped with Positive Train Control technology on Union Pacific's Chicago, IL.-St. Louis, MO. line. The PTC-equipped train attained speeds of 109.6 mph on a special 16 mile test section of the line between Normal, IL. and Lexington, IL. where the normal passenger train speed is 79 mph. An IDOT spokesman said that a 123 mile section between Springfield, IL. and Mazonia, IL. would be ready for 110 mph speeds by early 2004. (ffd: NARP, wire services)

(THU) As part of service improvement effort, Norfolk Southern's Harrisburg Division designated 7 freight trains as "Focus 7

Trains." A division notice said that the 7 trains are ranked in the bottom ten percent of all trains operating on NS. The notice went on to request all division transportation employees to assist in moving these trains in a safe and timely fashion as would allow removal of these trains and the Harrisburg Division from the worst performing list. (ffd: CRTS)

STATS:

(THU) For the week ending October 26, U.S. carload rail traffic was down 0.6 percent from the comparable week last year, down 0.1 percent in the East and down 1.1 percent in the West. This week this year versus this week last year, notable traffic increases included metallic ores up 27.3 percent, waste and scrap materials up 9.6 percent, and motor vehicles and equipment up 8.6 percent; notable traffic decreases included nonmetallic minerals down 17.2 percent, primary forest products down 9.2 percent and coal down 3.3 percent. Also for the week ending October 26, U.S. intermodal rail traffic was up 7.1 percent, Canadian carload rail traffic was up 1.7 percent, Canadian intermodal rail traffic was up 14.4 percent, Transportacion Ferroviaria Mexicana's carload rail traffic was up 17.3 percent and TFM's intermodal rail traffic was down 5.5 percent, all when ranked with the comparable week last year.

For the period January 1 through October 26, U.S. carload rail traffic was down 0.9 percent, U.S. intermodal rail traffic was up 4.0 percent, Canadian carload rail traffic was down 2.6 percent, Canadian intermodal rail traffic was up 10.2 percent, TFM's carload rail traffic was up 2.6 percent and TFM's intermodal rail traffic was up 7.7 percent, all when ranked with the comparable period last year. (ffd: AAR)

ACQUISITIONS, ABANDONMENTS AND ALIKE:

(MON) Rockwood Service Corporation, parent of Sperry Rail, announced that it had acquired Harsco Corporation's Rail Flaw Detection Group. A Rockwood spokesman said that they would merge the group into Sperry Rail. (ffd: RT&S)

(WED) Regional and shortline holding company Summit View, Inc., whose railroads include the Ohio Central, announced that it had acquired the Aliquippa & Southern from LTV Steel Corporation. A Summit View spokesman said that they would rename the 21 mile railroad, which interchanges with the CSX at Aliquippa, PA., the Aliquippa & Ohio River Railroad. (ffd: UTU News)

(FRI) The Illinois Indiana Development Corporation filed to acquire approximately 6 miles of line from the Chicago, South Shore & South Bend Railroad between 115th St., Chicago, IL. and the Illinois-Indiana border, opposite Hammond, IN. (ffd: STB)

CHANGING PEOPLE AND PLACES:

(MON) Burlington Northern Santa Fe announced the following Mechanical Department appointments: Brandon Mabry as Shop Superintendent-Barstow, CA.; Richard Olsen as Shop Superintendent-Northtown, MN.; and Gary Parsons as Shop Superintendent-Topeka, KS. (ffd: BNSF Corp.)

(THU) Burlington Northern Santa Fe announced that Charles Schultz, its EVP and Chief Marketing Officer, would retire in mid-2003. (ffd: BNSF Corp.)

(FRI) Norfolk Southern appointed Michael Fesen Resident VP-Pennsylvania. Mr. Fesen was previously with the Williams Companies, where he had been Manager-State Government Affairs. (ffd: NS Corp.)

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Weekly Rail Recap is edited from public news sources and published weekly, usually on Sunday or Monday, to the rail and transit industries and those interested in them. Send an e-mail to djmservices@aol.com to receive it, with my compliments.

HAVE A SAFE AND PROSPEROUS WEEK,
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