

WEEKLY RAIL RECAP

For the week ending SAT, December 7, 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) Burlington Northern Santa Fe announced that it would contract with Alstom Transport for the maintenance of 434 EMD SD70MAC-type diesel locomotives based out of BNSF's Alliance, NE. locomotive shops. Under the terms of the contract, which is valued at \$421 million over a 12-year period, BNSF employees will perform maintenance work under Alstom management. A spokesman said that this is Alstom's first locomotive maintenance contract of this size and scope with a U.S. Class 1 railroad and that final details of the contract agreement were still being worked out. (ffd: Railway Age)

(TUE) Amtrak announced a "Buy Two, Get One Free" offer for travel on its Acela Express or Metroliner trains. The offer, which requires enrollment in Amtrak's Guest Rewards frequent flyer-type program, gives those taking 2 roundtrips or 4 one-way trips on these trains between Boston, MA., New York, NY. and Washington, DC. a free round-trip travel certificate, which they may use or give to family or friends. Later in the week, Amtrak announced that it would make available for bid on eBay a limited number of tickets on a variety of Amtrak routes, as part of a three-month trial promotion. (ffd: Amtrak)

(WED) Via Rail Canada conceded that it was incurring operational problems with its new Renaissance passenger cars recently placed in service, attendant with the onset of the Canadian winter. The cars were originally built for but never used in English Channel tunnel service and 139 of them were sold to Via for \$125 million. Canadian engineers examining the problems suggested that the cars were designed for Western European winters less harsh than those in Canada and would likely need to be retrofitted with small heaters placed near doors and other problem areas. (ffd: Kingston Whig-Standard)

(THU) The Association of American Railroads released the 2002 edition of its annual Railroad Facts booklet. Among the facts highlighted in this year's edition are that Class 1 U.S. railroads moved a record 1.5 trillion ton-miles of freight in 2001, that revenue per ton-mile has dropped in 9 of the past 10 years and that rail freight traffic per route mile has tripled over the past 20 years. The 80 page booklet, which costs \$15 for non-AAR members and \$5 per copy for AAR member railroads, may be ordered from the AAR by mail, fax, phone or through AAR's website. (ffd: AAR)

(FRI) The U.S. Federal Railroad Administration conducted a workshop in Washington, DC. on how to apply for Railroad Rehabilitation and Improvement Finance loans. Noting earlier criticism of the loan program for its complexity, Federal Railroad Administrator Allan Rutter said that "the industry has yet to take full advantage of the [loan] program. This workshop is designed to take the mystery out of the application process and encourage greater participation." (ffd: USDOT)

STATS:

(THU) For the week ending November 30 - which this year included the Thanksgiving Holiday but last year, in the comparable week, did not - U.S. carload rail traffic was down 13.9 percent, down 26.4 percent in the East and down 3.2 percent in the West. Also for the week ending November 30, U.S. intermodal rail traffic was down 11.2 percent, Canadian carload rail traffic was down 9.5 percent and Canadian intermodal rail traffic was up 16.5 percent, all ranking with the comparable week last year.

For the month of November, 2002, U.S. carload rail traffic was up 0.8 percent, comparing with November, 2001. This November versus last November, notable traffic increases included metallic ores up 38.6 percent, coke up 21.6 percent and waste and scrap materials up 10.4 percent; notable traffic decreases included crushed stone, sand and gravel down 7.9 percent, grain mill products down 6.0 percent and coal down 3.5 percent. Also for the month of November, 2002, U.S. intermodal rail traffic was up 6.4 percent, Canadian carload rail traffic was down 3.2 percent, Canadian intermodal rail traffic was up 19.8 percent, Mexico's Transportacion Ferroviaria Mexicana's carload rail traffic was up 45.0 percent and TFM's intermodal rail traffic was up 129.0 percent, all when ranked with November, 2001.

For the period January 1 through November 30, U.S. carload rail traffic was down 0.9 percent, U.S. intermodal rail traffic was up 4.2 percent, Canadian carload rail traffic was down 2.7 percent, Canadian intermodal rail traffic was up 11.0 percent, TFM's carload rail traffic was up 14.9 percent and TFM's intermodal rail traffic was up 33.0 percent, all when ranked with the

comparable period last year. (ffd: AAR)

ACQUISITIONS, ABANDONMENTS AND ALIKE:

(THU) Norfolk Southern filed to abandon approximately 7 miles of line between Wyatt, VA. and Jewell Valley, VA. (ffd: STB)

(FRI) Union Pacific formally filed to abandon several line segments which it has sold to the Utah Transit Authority for potential future use for regional commuter rail services. The line segments for which abandonments were filed this date are approximately 24 miles of the Salt Lake Subdivision Line between Valencia, UT. and Ogden, UT., approximately 6 miles of the Bingham Industrial Lead between Bagley, UT. and Lead Mine, UT. and approximately 4 miles of the Provo Industrial Lead between Cutler, UT. and Mount, UT. (ffd: STB)

CHANGING PEOPLE AND PLACES:

(TUE) Roger Nober was designated chairman of the U.S. Surface Transportation Board. Mr. Nober, who was previously Counselor to the Deputy Secretary of Transportation, succeeds Linda Morgan as chairman, whose term had expired. Mr. Nober's term runs through December 31, 1995. (ffd: STB)

(THU) Amtrak appointed William Crosbie SVP-Operations. Mr. Crosbie, who was previously the general superintendent of subway transportation for the Toronto, ON. Transit Commission, succeeds Stan Bagley, who resigned from that position on September 16. Amtrak also announced that the retirement of its Western Region General Manager Bill Duggan and the resignation of its Eastern Region General Manager Lynn Bowersox. Amtrak further announced that, following the departure of Mr. Duggan and Ms. Bowersox, their regional general manager positions have been abolished and that the Amtrak division general superintendents will now report directly to Amtrak VP-Operations Ed Walker. (ffd: Amtrak, NARP)

(THU) Regional and shortline conglomerate RailAmerica announced the appointment of Michael Howe as SVP & CFO. Mr. Howe, who was previously RailAmerica's VP & Treasurer, succeeds Bennett Marks, who recently left the company. RailAmerica also announced the following further appointments: Larry Bush to VP & Treasurer, Wayne August to VP-Administration & Investor Relations, Peter Turrell SVP-International Rail Group and Scott Williams to SVP & General Counsel. (ffd: RailAmerica)

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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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