

WEEKLY RAIL REVIEW

FOR THE WEEK ENDING FRIDAY, MAY 13, 2011

BY DAVE MEARS

(NOTE: My personal computing capability now resumed, I am continuing to issue WRR until it is current. Thanks for the kind comments many of you have sent me as I catch up.)

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

(SAT) National Train Day was celebrated at station and other rail locations throughout the U.S. Organizers said that this year's celebration was timed to coincide with the 1869 completion of the Transcontinental Railroad and the month of the 40th anniversary of Amtrak. (ffd: Trains)

(SUN) A deadheading Amtrak train derailed in one of the four rail tunnel bores under the East River between Manhattan and Queens. The accident damaged approximately 1,400 feet of track. Repairs required that the number of Long Island Rail Road trains operated through the tunnel be reduced through the week, on some days by as much as 15 percent. Repairs were completed and normal service was resumed on Friday. (ffd: MTA, NARP, Railway Age, Trains)

(SUN) In response to information obtained at the Osama bin Laden compound the previous week that the Al Qaeda terrorist organization may have been targeting the U.S. rail network, Senator Charles Schumer (D-NY) called for a "no-ride" list for Amtrak that cross-checks with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Terror Watch List. In response, U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood noted that Amtrak has "a manifest with every person's name on board...[and that they] check to make sure that these people are legit people." Sen. Schumer also called for increased funding for passenger rail security. (ffd: NARP, wire services)

(MON) The U.S. Department of Transportation announced how the \$2 billion in federal passenger rail funding renounced by Florida Governor Rick Scott (R) would be reallocated. The largest amount will go to Amtrak, which was recently made eligible for this funding. Projects that will be completed with the funding include \$450 million for further Northeast Corridor power, signal, track and catenary improvements, \$295 million to build a bypass for NEC trains around Harold Interlocking in Queens, and \$336 million for additional locomotives and cars for Midwest and California corridor services. (ffd: NARP, USDOT)

(WED) New Jersey Transit debuted its first dual-powered locomotive. The locomotive, which was developed by Bombardier, can operate under electric power in electrified territory and under diesel power in non-electrified territory. It is the first of 26 dual-powered locomotives ordered by NJT in September, 2008, the total cost of which is \$310 million. (ffd: NJ Transit)

(WED) Further his comments earlier in the week, U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood said that riding Amtrak is "very, very safe." He noted that, since 2005, Amtrak has more than doubled its bomb-detecting canine teams from 20 to 45 and, since 2007, has worked with the U.S. Transportation Security Administration to increase the presence of uniformed police and security officers in Amtrak stations. (ffd: Bloomberg News)

(FRI) The Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania said that it was installing a new geothermal heating and cooling system. A spokesman for the museum said that approximately 125 geothermal wells are being drilled on the museum's property to provide the necessary heating and cooling functionality, providing stable temperatures for the museum, which presently fluctuate over the course of a year by as much as 70 degrees. The \$6 million project is being funded by the state. (ffd: Lancaster Intelligencer Journal)

(FRI) Google Maps announced that it would now include transit planning information for the Washington, DC bus and subway system. A spokesman said that users can visit maps.google.com, select "get directions" and then the "public transit" icon, and then enter their origin and destination to get trip information. (ffd: NARP, Railway Track & Structures)

STATS – CLASS 1 RAIL TRAFFIC:

(THU) The Association of American Railroads reported that, for the week ending May 7, 2011 and ranked with the comparable week last year:

-U.S. carload rail traffic totaled 281,860 units, down 2.6 percent

-Notable U.S. carload traffic increases included grain up 19.9 percent, metals and metal products up 13.1 percent; notable decreases included primary forest products down 19.5 percent, nonmetallic minerals down 16.3 percent, and waste and nonferrous scrap down 13.7 percent.

-U.S. intermodal rail traffic totaled 232,178 units, up 11.2 percent

-Canadian carload rail traffic totaled 77,676 units, up 3.3 percent

-Canadian intermodal rail traffic totaled 50,052 units, up 8.7 percent

-Mexican carload rail traffic totaled 14,700 units, up 8.4 percent

-Mexican intermodal rail traffic totaled 7,929 units, up 28.7 percent

For the period January 1 through May 7, 2011 and ranked with the comparable period last year:

-U.S. carload rail traffic totaled 5,233,086 units, up 3.4 percent

-U.S. intermodal rail traffic totaled 4,002,923 units, up 8.9 percent

-Canadian carload rail traffic totaled 1,319,965 units, up 0.9 percent

-Canadian intermodal rail traffic totaled 828,973 units, up 3.9 percent

-Mexican carload rail traffic totaled 260,813 units, up 8.1 percent

-Mexican intermodal rail traffic totaled 128,525 units, up 11.5 percent

Note: Canadian traffic totals include that traffic on U.S. operations of the Canadian National and Canadian Pacific Railways.

EXPANSIONS, CONTRACTIONS AND ALIKE:

(TUE) Lassen Valley Railway filed to abandon their line between Flanigan, NV and Wendel, CA, totaling about 22 miles of line. (ffd: STB)

(WED) Carolina Coastal Railway filed to acquire, from the Rocky Mount & Western Railroad doing business as the Nash County Railroad, approximately 15 miles of line between Rocky Mount and Momeyer, NC. (ffd: STB)

(THU) GE Transportation announced plans to open a locomotive assembly plant in Fort Worth, TX. GE noted that this will be its first such facility located outside of its Erie, PA base in more than a century. The new facility is expected to employ more than 250 workers. (ffd: Bloomberg News, NARP)

(FRI) Amsted Rail announced that it would acquire Holland LP's Hollube Wear Eliminator product line. Amsted Rail is manufacturer of rail car components. (ffd: Railway Track & Structure)

APPOINTMENTS, ACHIEVEMENTS AND MILESTONES:

None of note this week.

EDITOR'S NOTES:

-In case it is helpful to anyone who may not have received the last edition sent due to it possibly having been caught in or deleted by a spam filter, please know that it was sent June 15 for the week ending May 6.

-The expression "ffd" stands for "for further details" and denotes a news periodical, website, etc. that may have more information.

-I always appreciate any readers who send on Weekly Rail Review to let me know to whom they forward it, so that I may learn more about my total readership. Thank you to those of you who have so advised! All names, email addresses, etc. sent me are kept confidential and are never used for any other purpose.

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BE SAFE AND PROSPER,

Dave Mears

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