



ARKANSAS RAILROADER



Little Rock Chapter
NRHS

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The Little Rock & Western heading toward Little Rock over the back-waters of the Little Maumelle River at The Ranch subdivision, September, 18, 2003. (Photos by Bill Treadway)

2004 OFFICERS/POSITIONS OF THE ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB

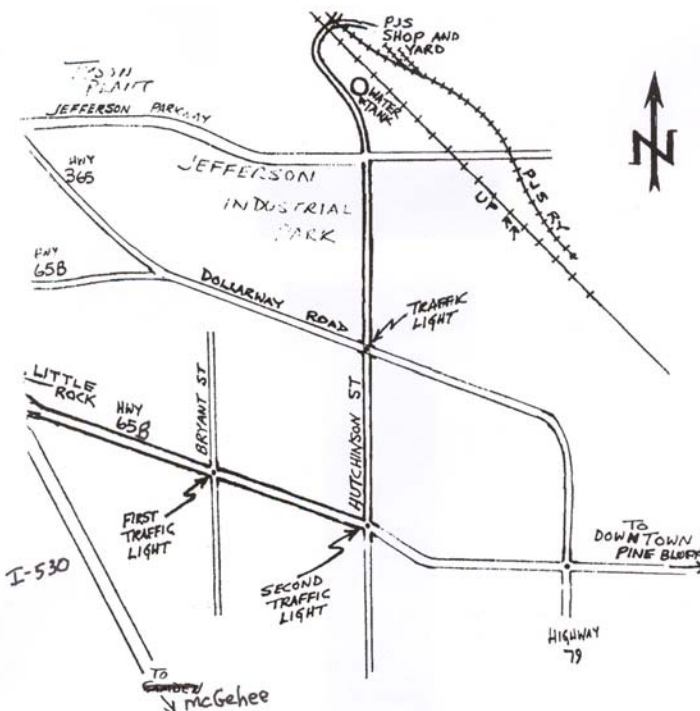
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The ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB is a non-profit organization of railroad and train enthusiasts that was formed in 1969. We are also the Little Rock Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society. We meet on the second Sundays of most months at 2 p.m. Anyone interested in trains is welcome!

Dues to join the ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB are currently \$20 a year, which includes the monthly *Arkansas Railroader* newsletter. If you'd like to join the NRHS through our club (thus being a member of the Little Rock Chapter NRHS and national NRHS), you must pay \$20 a year more, bringing the total to \$40 a year for both. Dues are always payable on January 1st of each year, but you may pay at any time (membership will extend through the following year).

To join or renew, send your name, address and phone number plus dues to the ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB, PO BOX 9151, NORTH LITTLE ROCK AR 72119. Call 501-758-1340 for information. The newsletter editor's email address is: trains@trainweather.com The Arkansas Railroader is put on the Web monthly, and that address is: <http://www.trainweather.com>

SEPTEMBER EVENTS – There will be **two** September Arkansas Railroad Club events this year. The first one will be the annual picnic/get-together at Peter Smykla's Paperton Junction Southern in Pine Bluff on **SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 4**. It will start around 10 in the morning. Bring a picnic lunch. Map at left.



Two weeks later there will be a **TRIP TO MEMPHIS SEPTEMBER 18**. We will be having a van trip to Memphis on Saturday, September 18 to ride the trolley system and explore Memphis for a day. Ron Esserman will use his 15-capacity van for the trip and if we have more, we'll take other cars as well. Call ROBIN THOMAS, **501-225-1952**, if you want to go. We'll all help pay for the gas. Robin said that an all-day pass for the trolley costs only \$2.50.

The van will leave Little Rock (probably from Union Station) about 7 a.m. or a little later and return that evening.

The following is for those who want to find certain railroad-related items, information, or want to sell or trade such items with other railfans. We reserve the right to refuse listings if deemed inappropriate. The Arkansas Railroad Club is not responsible for misleading ads.

FOR SALE - N-SCALE ARKANSAS & MISSOURI MODEL - I'm a model railroader from north Arkansas and I have some special Arkansas & Missouri engines and cars I'm wanted to place in a good home. I'm getting out of N



scale and would like to dispose of all my stuff. Do you remember the “N” scale Arkansas and Missouri Railroad project that was featured over the course of several 1999 issues of Model Railroader magazine? The project was later republished in Kalmbach’s “Project Railroads You Can Build” books. The model layout was built by former MR art director Mark Watson and exhibited some excellent custom cars and Alco engines. The real railroad it was patterned after runs in the mountains of western Arkansas and southern Missouri.

Anyway, I have the two RS-1 engines and the three passenger cars which were custom painted for the Arkansas & Missouri railroad. I would like to see these special items find a good home. Selling all together I have the engines (by Atlas) and passenger cars listed above, along with ten freight cars (8 by MT) with MT couplers, five PECO code 55 electrofrog turnouts, about twenty feet of PECO code 55 track (used), four buildings, bridges, parts, retaining walls, tunnel portals and anything else N scale I find in my cleaning up.

My price? I honestly don’t know what to ask. I’m more interested in getting rid of my N scale stuff and seeing these collector’s items in a good home than in money. If you would, email me at dragon@ozarkmountains.com and I will send you pictures. Make me a reasonable offer and we’ll see what we can do. (Randy Ates of north Arkansas)

RAILROAD ABANDONMENT PROPOSALS

The address of the Surface Transportation Board is: Office of the Secretary, Case Control Unit, 1925 K Street, Washington DC 20423. The STB phone number for abandonment procedures (Office of Public Services) is: 202-565-1592. If you contact them, it would be handy to use the Docket Numbers. Their Web address is: <http://www.stb.dot.gov> if you'd like the complete listings.

These abandonment proposals have been printed in the Federal Register or have come directly from the Surface Transportation Board. They will go in effect unless one of the following occurs: 1) an offer of financial assistance is received; 2) a request for public use of the land is received (for instance, rails-to-trails); 3) petitions to reopen the case is filed. Railroads, before they can file these "notices of exemption under CFR 1152 Subpart F," must certify that 1) no local traffic has moved over the line for at least 2 years; 2) any overhead traffic can be routed over other lines; 3) no formal complaint filed by a user is pending and; 4) environmental reports, historic reports, transmittal letter, newspaper publication, and notice to governmental agencies have been met. Even though approval is granted for the railroads to abandon, it may be months or years before track is actually taken up.

IOWA – BNSF – To abandon a 1.88-mile line of railroad, extending from milepost 67.38 to milepost 1.45, near Des Moines, in Polk County, IA. Effective on August 17, 2004. (STB Docket No. AB-6 (Sub-No. 401X, decided July 9, served July 16, 2004)

NORTH CAROLINA – NORFOLK SOUTHERN/ NORTH CAROLINA & VIRGINIA RAILWAY COMPANY, INC. – To abandon, and for NCVA to discontinue service under a lease from NSR over, a 0.33-mile line of railroad between approximately milepost NS-73.67 and milepost NS-74.00 in Edenton, Chowan County, NC. effective on August 17, 2004. (STB Docket No. AB-290 (Sub-No. 251X) and Docket No. AB-866X, decided July 9, served July 16, 2004)

KANSAS – UNION PACIFIC/ KANSAS & OKLAHOMA RAILROAD INC. – To to abandon and K&O seeks to discontinue service over a line of railroad extending from milepost 664.5, near Healy, to milepost 606.0, near McCracken, a distance of 58.5 miles in Lane, Ness and Rush Counties, KS. The line includes stations located at Shields, Pendennis, Utica, Arnold, Ransom, Osgood and Brownell, KS. A final decision will be issued by October 15, 2004. (STB Docket No. AB-33 (Sub-No. 214X), AB-853 (Sub-No. 2X, decided July 9, served July 19, 2004)

NEW YORK – NEW YORK AND EASTERN RAILWAY, LLC/CSX/ NEW YORK CENTRAL LINES, LLC – For NY&E and CSXT to discontinue service over and for NYC to abandon an approximately 4.7-mile line of railroad between milepost QCO 0.0 and milepost QCO 3.2 and between milepost QCK 29.5 and milepost QCK 31.0, in the City and Town of

Poughkeepsie, Dutchess County, NY. A final decision will be issued by October 15, 2004. (STB Docket No. AB-873X, AB-55 (Sub-No. 652X), AB-565 (Sub-No. 17X, decided July 13, served July 19, 2004)

WISCONSIN – WISCONSIN CENTRAL LTD. – To abandon a line of railroad, known as the Plymouth Line, extending from milepost 114.8 near Saukville to milepost 151.8 near Kiel, a distance of approximately 37 miles in Ozaukee, Sheboygan and Manitowoc Counties, WI. The line includes stations at Fredonia, Random Lake, Adell, Waldo, Plymouth, and Elkhart Lake. A final decision will be issued by October 18, 2004. ([STB Docket No. AB-303 (Sub-No. 27, decided July 14, served July 20, 2004)

IOWA – UNION PACIFIC – To abandon a line of railroad known as the Perry Subdivision extending from milepost 296.8 near Wauke, IA, to milepost 275.9 (Equation milepost 275.9 = 361.8) near Perry, IA, and from milepost 361.8 to milepost 369.0 near Dawson, IA, a total distance of 28.1 miles in Dallas County, IA. A final decision will be issued by October 25, 2004. ([STB Docket No. AB-33 (Sub-No. 213X, decided July 19, served July 27, 2004)

ALL STATES - CLASS EXEMPTION FOR EXPEDITED ABANDONMENT PROCEDURE FOR CLASS II AND CLASS III RAILROADS. (*I'm putting this on the Railroad Abandonment page because the outcome of this hearing may change the way abandonment notices are released, plus it lists the 65 Class II and Class III railroads that partitioned the STB for this rule change*)

The Surface Transportation Board (Board) will hold a public hearing on Wednesday, August 11, 2004, at its offices in Washington, DC, to provide interested persons an opportunity to express their views on the subject of the Board's abandonment regulations for Class II and Class III rail carriers.

The Board's regulations divide railroads into three classes based on annual carrier operating revenues. Class I railroads are those with annual carrier operating revenues of \$250 million or more (in 1991 dollars); Class II railroads are those with annual carrier operating revenues of more than \$20 million but less than \$250 million (in 1991 dollars); and Class III railroads are those with annual carrier operating revenues of \$20 million or less (in 1991 dollars).

On May 15, 2003, sixty-five short-line and regional carriers (petitioners) filed a petition to institute a proceeding under 49 U.S.C. 10502 to exempt a class of small carriers from the prior approval abandonment requirements of 49 U.S.C. 10903. Petitioners included a detailed proposal including revised rules for 49 CFR 1152.50 (exempt abandonments) and 1152.27 (offers of financial assistance). The Board will hold a public hearing to provide a forum for the expression of views by rail shippers, railroads, and other interested persons, on this and other proposed changes to the Board's abandonment regulations as they relate to Class II and Class III rail carriers. This hearing will provide a forum for the oral discussion of the proposed class exemption and any proposals that interested persons might wish to offer to amend the abandonment regulations.

The sixty-five carriers are: Allegheny & Eastern Railroad, Inc.; Bradford Industrial Rail, Inc.; Buffalo & Pittsburgh Railroad, Inc.; Carolina Coastal Railway, Inc.; Commonwealth Railway, Inc.; Chicago SouthShore & South Bend Railroad; Chattahoochee & Gulf Railroad Co., Inc.; Connecuh Valley Railroad Co., Inc.; Corpus Christi Terminal Railroad, Inc.; The Dansville & Mount Morris Railroad Company; Eastern Idaho Railroad, Inc.; Genesee & Wyoming Railroad Company; Golden Isles Terminal Railroad, Inc.; H&S Railroad Co., Inc.; Illinois Indiana Development Company, LLC; Illinois & Midland Railroad Company, Inc.; Kansas & Oklahoma Railroad, Inc.; Knoxville & Holston River Railroad Co., Inc.; Lancaster and Chester Railway Company; Laurinburg & Southern Railroad Co., Inc.; Louisiana & Delta Railroad, Inc.; Louisville & Indiana Railroad Company; Minnesota Prairie Line, Inc.; Montana Rail Link, Inc.; New York & Atlantic Railway Company; Pacific Harbor Line, Inc.; Palouse River & Coulee City Railroad, Inc.; Pennsylvania Southwestern Railroad, Inc.; Piedmont & Atlantic Railroad Inc.; Pittsburgh & Shawmut Railroad, Inc.; Portland & Western Railroad, Inc.; Rochester & Southern Railroad, Inc.; Rocky Mount & Western Railroad Co., Inc.; St. Lawrence & Atlantic Railroad Company; Salt Lake City Southern Railroad Company; Savannah Port Terminal Railroad, Inc.; South Buffalo Railway Company; South Kansas & Oklahoma Railroad Company; Stillwater Central Railroad; Talleyrand Terminal Railroad, Inc.; Three Notch Railroad Co., Inc.; Timber Rock Railroad, Inc.; Twin Cities & Western Railroad Company; Utah Railway Company; Willamette & Pacific Railroad, Inc.; Wiregrass Central Railroad Company, Inc.; York Railway Company; AN Railway, LLC; Atlantic and Western Railway, Limited Partnership; Bay Line Railroad, LLC; Central Midland Railway; Copper Basin Railway, Inc.; East Tennessee Railway, L.P.; Galveston Railroad, L.P.; Georgia Central Railway, L.P.; The Indiana Rail Road Company; KWT Railway, Inc.; Little Rock & Western Railway, L.P.; M & B Railroad, L.L.C.; Tomahawk Railway, Limited Partnership; Valdosta Railway, L.P.; Western Kentucky Railway, LLC; Wheeling & Lake Erie Railway Company; Wilmington Terminal Railroad, L.P.; and Yolo Shortline Railroad Company. (STB Ex Parte No. 647, served July 27, 2004)

FLORIDA – SEMINOLE GULF RAILWAY, L.P. – To a portion of the Baker Spur, which consists of a rail line beginning at engineering station 36+35+/-, which is approximately 100 feet southwest of where the line crosses Alico Road, directly west of Alico Center Road, approximately 1 mile east of U.S. Hwy. 41, and parallel to Alico Road station 79+00, continuing across Alico Road and then running parallel to and north of Alico Road for approximately 4,260 feet to the eastern terminus of the line at engineering station 79+95. Originally the proposed abandonment began approximately 300 feet to the west of Alico Road station 79+00 at Alico Road Station 76+00, but to accommodate nearby shipper Florida Power and Light's (FP&L) use of the Baker Spur, Lee County has moved the western terminus of the abandonment to Alico Road Station 79+00. No effective date given. (STB Docket No. AB-400 (Sub-No. 4, decided June 28, served July 6, 2004)

IDAHO – GREAT NORTHERN RAILROAD, INC. – To abandon a line of railroad extending from milepost 3.5, at Orofino, ID, to milepost 31.0, near Jaype, ID, a distance of approximately 27.5 miles, in Clearwater County, ID. A final decision will be issued by November 1, 2004. (STB Docket No. AB-872X, decided July 26, served August 3, 2004)

KENTUCKY – CSX – To abandon a segment at the end of its line of railroad in its Southern Region, Huntington Division, Big Sandy Subdivision, also known as the Beaver Creek Spur. The 1.43-mile segment extends from milepost CMH 0.00 near Dunleary to the end of the line at milepost CMH 1.43, all in Pike County, KY. The line includes the stations of Praise Dock, Little Beaver, and Little Beaver Dock. A final decision will be issued by November 2, 2004. (STB Docket No. AB-55 (Sub-No. 653X, decided July 28, served August 4, 2004)

ARKANSAS RAIL NEWS

NEW RAIL INSPECTION YARD

(*Marion, Arkansas, August 3, 2004s*) - Atlanta-based Southern Co., one of the nation's largest electricity producers, bought 140 acres along Burlington Northern Santa Fe's main line to build an inspection station that includes four tracks - each 2 miles long - and a 200-foot-by-300-foot terminal with offices and indoor work space near the east Arkansas city of Marion. Southern Company Rail Services Inc. will inspect its own cars, plus cars from BNSF, and hopes to eventually serve BNSF's adjacent intermodal facility at Harvard Yard. They will be inspecting mainly coal cars that carry 117 tons each of coal on the 2,300-mile trip through Marion from Wyoming's Powder River Basin to the Scherer power plant in Macon, Ga.

Every nine to 12 days, 3,800 cars will pass through the station where crews will check every wheel, every brake shoe, spring and coupler, making sure they're fit in statistics. They measure wear to the tiniest fraction of an inch on wheel-axle sets that weigh 1,800 pounds and brake shoes that weigh eight. Southern is contracting the work to Transportation Services Inc. in Birmingham. The facility cost \$10 million and will employ about 50 with annual pay averaging \$30,000. (*Memphis Commercial Appeal, August 3 via the Internet*)

BOARD TO SEEK PRESERVATION OF RAIL LINE

(*Pine Bluff*) – From the June 13, 2004 Pine Bluff Commercial, the Southeast Arkansas Economic Development District will explore the options in preserving the 30-mile stretch of railroad between Lake Village and Lake Providence, Louisiana, running through Eudora. Delta Southern has petitioned the Surface Transportation Board for abandonment of this segment. They are worried about losing the potential of a rail line to the Yellow Bend Port on the Mississippi River, the only port between Helena and New Orleans on the west side of the river.

Renovation of the entire 90 mile former Missouri Pacific line between McGehee, Arkansas and Tallulah, Louisiana (of which this 30-mile segment is a part of) would cost \$20 million. (*Forwarded by Lynn and Elizabeth Gaines*)

GENERAL RAIL NEWS

CROSSING ACCIDENT STATISTICS

The Federal Railroad Administration says it is important to point out that although they use data to analyze the causes of grade crossing accidents, the analysis over years of accidents clearly establishes there is very little variation in causal factors. Approximately 94% of all grade crossing accidents, and 87% of fatalities, involve motor vehicle driver behavior as a principal factor. Police reports are filled with statements from witnesses attesting to such driver actions as going around lowered crossing gates, ignoring flashing warning lights, driving into the side of a train, or racing the train to the crossing. Thus, FRA has found it

far more beneficial to concentrate on preventing grade crossing collisions and the fatalities in the first place, a system, which the record shows, has been highly successful.

T&P DEPOT MAY BE LOST

(*Shreveport, Louisiana*) - Plans to incorporate the 1942 Texas and Pacific station on Market Street into Shreveport's \$100 million convention center project have been scrapped, and eventually the building will be torn down, city officials said on July 25. The train station, which sits on the northeast corner of the convention center site, was last home to James S. Noel's collection

of 200,000 books, now housed in Noel Memorial Library on LSU's campus. At one time, city officials and train museum enthusiasts had grander plans to convert the building into a museum or even into a restaurant, lounge or drop-off area for conventioners.

The city purchased the Texas and Pacific station building and about an acre of land for \$256,000 as part of its plan to develop Cross Bayou. The station closed in 1964 after only being used 22 years, a small amount of time compared with many other old train stations.

At one time, Shreveport had six rail operations -- the Texas and Pacific, Kansas City Southern, the Louisiana and

Arkansas, Cotton Belt, the Southern Pacific and the Illinois Central.

Despite its historical significance, the city's plans to one day demolish the building drew no opposition from Red River Valley Historical Railroad Society Inc. (*this was the group that helped run the UP 3985 steam excursion back in 1995 out of Shreveport to Palestine, Texas. The Arkansas Railroad Club hosted the trip from Little Rock to Houston through Shreveport.*)

"Certainly the building was purchased with a railroad museum in mind, but time marches on and if the building can't be incorporated into the hotel, well, they're going to get a hotel hook or crook somehow if the convention center is going to be viable. It's just the fact that you can't save everything," said Gary Fox, secretary of the railroad society. "It didn't have a long history here. Some things just don't work out," he said.

"Inside it's not an architecturally interesting building -- just a big, barren, dark and dank building. And everything that can peel is peeling. It's dirty and filled with junk," said the Shreveport Mayor's office. (*Report via the Railspot group on the Internet*)

TEN 'BEST' PLACES TO REMEMBER TRAINS

(Summarized from *USA Today*, via *Randy Tardy*) – This list was told to *USA Today* by Janet Greenstein Potter, author of *Great American Railroad Stations*.

1) Omaha, Nebraska - Durham Western Heritage Museum. The building that 1930s locals called Union Station is considered an architectural wonder. Designed by G. Stanley Underwood in grand art deco style, it closed to decreasing passenger service in 1971 but was reopened in 1975 as a museum. Exhibits include an O-scale model-train layout. (402-444-5071; dwhm.org).

2) Roanoke, Virginia - Winston Link Museum. The Norfolk & Western Railway Passenger Station, built in 1949, is now a museum featuring the history of the N&W railroad and the work of O. Winston Link, famous for his 1950s photos of trains and railroad towns. (540-982-5465; linkmuseum.org)

3) Galveston, Texas - Galveston Island Railroad Museum. Known in 1913 as Union Depot, the structure received a major addition in the 1930s and was restored in 1982. The art deco waiting room features life-sized sculptures titled 'Ghosts of Travelers Past,' and the former Railway Express building houses three theaters depicting Galveston history. (409-765-5700; www.tamug.edu/rrmuseum).

4) Williams, Arizona - Grand Canyon Railway and Resort. Built in 1908, this historic building known as the Fray Marcos Hotel and Depot was a combination railroad hotel and depot for the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway. The museum is located in the depot portion, and a hotel is located next door. A great ride: Take a vintage train from here to the Grand Canyon. (800-843-8724; thetrain.com).

5) Lansing, Michigan - Clara's Lansing Station. From its beginning as the Michigan Central Railroad Depot in 1903 (later called Union Depot until its closure in 1972), this architecturally significant building, featuring elaborate cut stone arches and towers, is now a turn-of-the-century restaurant called Clara's. (517-372-7120; claras.com/claraslanhist.html).

6) Westport, New York - The Depot Theatre. Saved in the early 1980s by the town of Westport and the Westport Historical Society, the building that once was the Westport Station was built in 1876 along the rails of the Delaware and Hudson Railroad. Today, it houses a theatre company offering productions in the depot's original freight room. (518-692-4449; depottheatre.org).

7) Perris, California - Orange Empire Railway Museum. Here at the old Perris Depot, built in 1892, visitors can peruse rail artifacts or ride the museum railway, offering classic streetcars, passenger trains and other equipment of Southern California's railroad past. Be sure to see the Ventura County Railway No. 2, the museum's operating steam engine. (951-657-2605; oerm.org).

8) Cincinnati, Ohio - Museum Center. The Cincinnati Union Terminal, completed in 1933 as a busy Midwestern rail hub, was closed in 1972 when rail service was halted (it was later restored

in 1991). The 10-story art deco structure reopened in 1990 as the Museum Center, featuring several different museums, including one run by the Cincinnati Railroad Club. (800-733-2077; cincinnatiirclub.org).

9) Rockhill Furnace, Pennsylvania - East Broad Top Railroad Station. Known in 1906 as the Orbisonia Station, the current EBT station is used as an office and gift shop for the East Broad Top Railroad, still an extremely fascinating steam railroad, but for tourists only. Virtually next door is the Rockhill Trolley Museum, with antique trolleys that take people on rides through the woods. (814-447-3011; ebtrr.com).

10) Livingston, Montana - Livingston Depot Center. Historic Livingston Depot was built in 1902 as the Northern Pacific Railroad's original access to Yellowstone National Park. After rail service was stopped in 1979, the architecturally ornate building was restored and reopened as the Depot Center Museum, a multi-use facility featuring historical exhibits and cultural events. (406-222-2300; livingstondepot.org).

I'm sure there are many other railroad sites equally as good that were not listed. Here's a web site that lists a lot of tourist railroads across the country: <http://www.railsusa.com/tourist.shtml> (*Thanks to Randy Tardy*)

UP RECEIVES DEFICIENCY NOTICE FROM IRS

Bad news for depot donations? Union Pacific Corp. said August 6, 2004, it received a preliminary notice of deficiency from the Internal Revenue Service as a result of an examination of its federal income tax returns for the years 1995 to 1998. Specifically, the IRS proposes to disallow 100 percent of the deductions claimed in connection with some donations of property that occurred during those years. The railroad said it disputes the proposed adjustments, and plans to vigorously defend its position through applicable IRS procedures, and, if necessary, litigation. Union Pacific said it is currently unable to estimate the impact this may have on its financial statements. (*My question is: exactly what property donations is the IRS talking about? If that includes old railroad*

stations, then that would effectively put an end to UP giving cities their old depots and they'd be lost forever.)

SMOKE PROBLEMS

(Ridgeley, West Virginia) - The West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is taking Ridgeley residents' concerns over billowing smoke from the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad seriously. An inspection at the maintenance shop on July 9 found the railroad in violation of West Virginia Code "for causing statutory air pollution due to improper operating practices." The DEP ruling confirms reports of Ridgeley residents, who throughout the train season are subjected to waves of black smoke and noxious fumes seven days a week as the train sits at the maintenance shop in preparation for its weekend excursions to Frostburg and back.

According to the DEP, it's the operating practices of the train which create the "excessive particle emissions from the exhaust of the steam locomotive." The Western Maryland is marketed as a steam engine making historic journeys to Frostburg, and while residents do not want to endanger the jobs it provides or its impact on the economy, they do not feel they should have to suffer daily for its success.

The scenic railroad may be subject to civil and/or criminal penalties, which include fines up to \$10,000 per day for each violation; however, if this is the

first violation and conditions are remedied within 30 days there may be no further action. The railroad said it would begin shoving the steam locomotive out with the diesel engine, as it did several years ago when the Frostburg turntable was out of service. While this step has lessened the smoke in downtown Ridgeley, it has not helped area residents in and around the maintenance shop and adjacent track area. The smoke is also now making its ways toward neighboring Carpendale. During the hour prior to departure the train makes many "down and back" trips within a 100 yard area of the maintenance shop, where the stacks are blown repeatedly. Returning to the station around 3 p.m., the smoke continues to blanket the area until 8 and 9 p.m.

UNION PACIFIC CONGESTION

The big news this month is the congestion on Union Pacific due to too much business and not enough engines and/or crew. This is especially true on its former Southern Pacific line between Los Angeles and Houston, known as the Sunset Line. UP says it is hiring thousands of new employees as fast as it can and is double-tracking parts of the line. Amtrak's *Sunset Limited* has been delayed more than 24 hours in some cases due to not being able to get around the stalled freights.

The nation's railroads have more business than they are able to handle. And "we may see a doubling of the

nation's freight load in the next 20 years," according to the Surface Transportation Board. The July 22, 2004 Wall Street Journal had a front page story about Union Pacific's woes and its affect on the growing economy. One thing that article said was that UP accounted for about a third of all railroads freight volume (in total, railroads carry more than 40 percent of U.S. freight volume). UP's share would amount to about 13 percent of total (railroads, trucks, barges) freight volume in the country.

"In total, railroads carry more than 40 percent of U.S. freight volume and Union Pacific controls nearly a third of that business." – Wall Street Journal, July 22, 2004

Union Pacific said that during the second quarter, extra costs associated with slower service cost the company \$100 million in operating profits. *(News forwarded by Randy Tardy)*

BEACH TRAINS

California's MetroLink commuter trains are running special beach trains this summer, carrying beach-goers to within one block of some of California's best beaches at San Juan Capistrano, San Clemente, and Oceanside. These will run through the beginning of October.

www.takethebeachtrain.com *(Forwarded by Jim Johnson)*

AMTRAK NEWS

S&P RAISES AMTRAK DEBT RATINGS

Standard & Poor's Ratings Services said on July 14 that it raised the ratings of National Railroad Passenger Corp. (Amtrak) with a stable outlook citing its improved financial position. S&P raised its corporate credit rating and senior secured debt rating to "BBB" from "BBB-minus," affecting about \$3.9 billion of lease-adjusted debt. The Washington, D.C.-based passenger railroad's outlook is stable, S&P said.

AMTRAK UPDATES FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

Amtrak released a five-year strategic plan on June 29, 2004. The plan has three components dealing with the existing national system, state-initiated intercity corridors and the national freight network. The plan states that Amtrak is making steady progress on the existing system to achieve its state-of-good-repair objectives and is continuing to control operating expenses. The corridor strategy includes state proposals supported by Amtrak for specific

passenger rail corridor development. The freight strategy contains recommendations to protect and upgrade key facilities owned by freight railroads. The corridor and freight recommendations require federal matching investment programs to meet these goals.

"The update to the five-year plan continues the effort we began last year to provide specific and precise details on exactly how every dollar is to be spent to bring the existing Amtrak system up to a state-of-good-repair," said Amtrak President David Gunn. "However, states

and the freight railroads face serious problems of capacity, congestion and reliability, and there is a growing consensus within the rail industry that we must come together to address these challenges."

To support the existing system, the five-year strategic plan calls for federal funding averaging about \$1.6 billion. The plan holds the line on federal support for operating purposes each year at \$570 million. The majority of federal support is for capital improvements to the existing system and will be used to bring facilities and equipment up to a state-of-good-repair.

Planned infrastructure improvements over the five years include reconstruction of 32 interlockings, installation of 885,000 concrete ties, 423 miles of track undercutting, 352 miles of new rail, rebuilding of five major bridges (including the 97 year-old Connecticut River bridge), 136 miles of signal cable replacement and renewal of 300 miles of catenary hardware. The four-part fleet plan to increase passenger car and locomotive reliability and availability announced last year will continue with 326 locomotive overhauls and remanufacture or overhaul of an additional 1,457 passenger cars. Eleven cab cars will be rebuilt. Wreck repairs assume a rate of 20 passenger cars and six locomotives annually. Acquisition of 80 car-carriers (for the Auto Train) is scheduled to replace 50 year-old equipment.

The plan would also enhance and increase capacity on existing major corridors.

Because Amtrak trains travel on 20,000 miles of rail owned by the freight railroads, it has a unique perspective on these railroads' increasing congestion, deferred maintenance and lack of capacity. The problem is reflected in the growing number of delays to intercity passengers on both long-distance and corridor trains. Complicating the

growing congestion, the freight railroads are abandoning and downgrading secondary lines for economic reasons.

To address these problems, Amtrak recommended the federal government also consider a freight investment-matching program combining federal funds with those of the states and/or the freight railroads for key segments of the freight rail network. The investments would not necessarily be limited to lines on which Amtrak operates, but would be based on a number of factors, such as congestion relief, benefit to local freight shippers and cost-effectiveness.

The Norfolk Southern Corporation and Canadian Pacific Railway, Class I railroads, issued statements endorsing the proposal.

"This recommendation is a work-in-progress that deserves further study," said David Gunn, Amtrak President. "However, it is clear that if the railroads are having trouble carrying the business they have today, their ability to meet the growth they are projecting is totally unrealistic. Unless the railroads can earn their cost of capital, they are going to squeeze the rail network and it will break. Meanwhile, we are pouring billions of public money into highways and other transportation modes, yet highways are increasingly congested as well. It doesn't make sense. We need some balance in our priorities and in our investments, and federal leadership to make that happen. The problem is flying below the radar right now, and if we don't act soon we risk losing a significant portion of the rail network."

A series of measures instituted in FY '02 such as GAAP financial reporting, zero-based budgeting and strict control over company-wide headcount have helped to stabilize the railroad's finances. Amtrak's financial performance through the first seven months of the fiscal year is favorable to budget. Passenger ridership through the first eight months of FY '04 is 16.2 million, up 6.2% over

the same period last year. From February to May '04, the railroad has sustained four consecutive months of all-time record ridership and, should the trend continue through the end of the fiscal year, will exceed 25 million passengers for the first time.

At the same time, capital infrastructure projects are at their highest levels in the past 20 years. For FY '04 alone, Amtrak estimates it will lay 181,000 concrete ties, replace 200 track-miles of rail and undercut 51 miles of track. This is in addition to the approximately 60 miles converted to concrete ties. The railroad expects to install 81 miles of catenary hardware, replace 30 miles of signal cable and upgrade 185 miles of automatic block signals.

Through the first seven months of FY '04 (including April '04), the railroad was \$61.4 million favorable to budget on an operating loss of \$397 million. Despite Amtrak's accomplishments over the past two years, Gunn warned that substantial risks still exist. "Our progress has been incremental and steady thanks to the hard work of Amtrak employees across the country to rebuild plant and equipment and to improve service for our passengers," said Gunn, "but the whole network would be jeopardized if we are underfunded, suffer a major system failure or some other calamity beyond our control."

To view this update, go to <http://www.amtrak.com/press/financial-report.html> and click on FY 2005-2009 Amtrak Strategic Plan)

AMTRAK CONTACT NUMBERS

(800) 872-7245 or by visiting www.amtrak.com. Also, for information on route cities of the Texas Eagle or Heartland Flyer, see www.texaseagle.com or www.heartlandflyer.com.

NOTE-'EXCURSIONS/EVENTS' of other clubs is printed toward the end of the newsletter.



COTTON BELT BUSINESS CAR *THE TRAVELER* PLACED ON ARKANSAS REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES – August 2004

The Traveler, also known as St. Louis Southwestern Railway (Cotton Belt Route) Business Car #3, was built by American Car & Foundry Company in November 1905. It was rebuilt by the Pullman Car Manufacturing Company in 1922 and air-conditioned by the Cotton Belt in 1953. It remained in service on the Cotton Belt until it was sold in 1960. Since 1960, it has been located to the southeast of Rison on a private estate. However, the current setting, which is not historically appropriate and does not reflect a railroad setting, prevents the Traveler from being listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The general specifications for the Traveler are as follows: Classification: Business Car; Builder: American Car and Foundry Company, November 1905. Rebuilt by the Pullman Car Manufacturing Company in 1922; Length: 79' 8 ½"; Width: 9' 5"; Height: 14' 9"; Weight: 170,860 pounds.

The Traveler rests on two six-wheel trucks, one at each end. The wheels of the trucks are 36 inches

in diameter. The wheels are slowed and stopped by Westinghouse air brakes and a Lindstrom lever handbrake. The walls of the Traveler are currently sheathed in steel, which was done in 1922, although they were originally wood. The window sashes are wood, and the roof of the car is canvas.

The interior of the car has a kitchen and servants' section, a Pullman section with berths, a dining room, two staterooms with bathrooms, a public bathroom, and an observation room, located at the rear of the car. An observation platform with a decorative metal balustrade is located on the rear of the car. Each bedroom has two beds, and the rest of the officials' area of the car has three lower berths and four upper berths. The servants' section has an additional upper and lower berth.

The interior of the car is paneled in mahogany, rosewood, and cherry and features leaded-glass windows throughout. The car is lighted by a 32-volt electric system and a Waukesha 7½ kw generator. The Traveler also has 50 cells of

Edison batteries. It is heated by a steam and hot water heating system.

With the exception of the current setting, the Traveler possesses excellent integrity. The exterior of the car still reflects the 1922 rebuilding by the Pullman Car Manufacturing Company, and no alterations have occurred to the exterior since it was moved to its current location in 1960. The interior of the car also possesses excellent integrity retaining all of the original interior fixtures and finishes installed when the car was built in 1905. Today, the Traveler still very much reflects the elegance of rail travel during the early to mid-twentieth century, and is a rare surviving example of an early 20th century railroad business car.

Although the first railroad line in the United States was laid in the late 1820s, very little railroad construction was completed in Arkansas before the Civil War. The Memphis & Little Rock Railroad, which had laid some track westward from Hopefield and eastward from Little Rock, and the Mississippi, Ouachita, & Red River, which had laid a few miles of track inland from Chicot and Arkansas City, were the only railroads to complete any construction prior to 1860.

The Civil War, however, delayed the building of railroads by a decade, and it was not until the 1870s that railroad building took off again. The St. Louis, Iron Mountain & Southern built a line south from St. Louis to the Arkansas border. They wanted to go to Texas and purchased the Cairo & Fulton. Although the Cairo & Fulton had not done any construction, it had secured rights-of-way prior to the Civil War. The St. Louis, Iron Mountain & Southern reached Little Rock by 1872 and had completed the first line across Arkansas when it reached Texarkana in 1874.

The second railroad line to reach across the state incorporated the Memphis & Little Rock Railroad and the newly constructed Little Rock & Fort Smith, which had reached the coal fields of Clarksville in 1874 and Fort Smith five years later. The Little Rock & Fort Smith was purchased by Jay Gould (who already owned the Iron Mountain lines) in 1882 and became part of the Iron Mountain system – the largest railroad system in the state in the late nineteenth century.

When the realization came that only railroads could be used to exploit the vast tracts of virgin timber in Arkansas, railroads and the timber industry developed as one. As a result, railroad lines were constructed further and further into the forests to enable the harvesting of timber, and occasionally the spurs were linked to become new through lines. The boom in railroad construction also greatly influenced settlement patterns

throughout Arkansas. Some towns that had thrived on river trade and travel disappeared, and many new towns sprang to life along the railroad lines.

One of the railroads that helped to exploit the timber lands of Arkansas eventually came to be known as the St. Louis Southwestern Railway or Cotton Belt. The origins of the Cotton Belt go back to 1871 with the chartering of the Tyler Tap Railroad, a three-foot gauge railroad that opened in 1877 between Tyler, Texas, and the junction with the Texas & Pacific at Big Sandy. The Cotton Belt was re-chartered as the Texas & St. Louis Railway around 1880 and subsequently provided service through the timber, cotton, and rice areas of Arkansas between Texarkana, Clarendon, and Jonesboro. Trains began running on the line in 1884, but the line was forced into receivership the following year. It was reorganized as the St. Louis, Arkansas, & Texas in 1885 and became the St. Louis Southwestern in 1891. Even though the official name of the railroad changed several times, the route had been known as the Cotton Belt since at least 1886. (The Cotton Belt would remain an autonomous railroad until it was absorbed by the Southern Pacific in the mid-1980s.)

The Traveler was built for the Cotton Belt by American Car & Foundry Company (ACF) in November 1905, and named after the “Arkansas Traveler.” ACF had been formed on March 17, 1899, in New York City by consolidating 13 independent railroad car builders across the country, and it has remained a prominent rail car builder throughout the 20th century. Originally, the Traveler was sheathed in wood, as were most railroad cars prior to World War I, and it was one of the finest business cars in service at the time of its construction.

A ledger in the possession of the current owner, written c.1918, describes some of the interior appointments of the car at the time. Observation Room – Main State Room – Dressing Room – Helper Section – Kitchen – Public Toilet.

Observation room has 6 wicker chairs – one (1) high back sofa, 1 folding wall table, 2 electric fans. Main State room has – 1 full brass bed, 1 parcel rack, 1 8-day clock, 1 electric fan, 1 small dressing room, 1 dresser. Pullman Section room – has Standard Pullman seats with upper berth, 1 bedroom chair, 1 dresser, 3 parcel racks, toilet room.

Dressing Room – has 1 oval extension dining table, 8 dining chairs, 2 Pullman bed seats, 2 Pullman upper berths, 1 large china closet over cabinet with drawer and typewriter desk, 1 electric fan. Helper Section – has single upper lower berth

Pullman type, 1 white metal cooler, 1 hopper, 1 folding wash stand, 1 locker, 1 step box.

The Traveler was one of six business cars that the Cotton Belt had in its fleet, and it was the second oldest of the group. The Ranger, built by the Pullman Company in October 1901 as the Dixie and renamed in 1910, was the oldest, and would remain in the fleet until it was sold in February 1958. In addition to the Traveler, the Cotton Belt also had the Dixie (built by American Car & Foundry in September 1910, sold May 1948), Arklamo (built by the Pullman Car Manufacturing Co. in December 1912, retired November 1952), Fairlane (built by the Pullman Car Manufacturing Co. in 1921, sold at an unknown date), and the Dixie (built by the Pullman Car Manufacturing Co. in 1910 and rebuilt as the business car Dixie in 1953).

At the time that the Traveler was built for the Cotton Belt, it was assigned to the railroad's president and was also designated as Car #3. (In later years, it was assigned to various vice presidents and general superintendents.) However, this was common practice on the Cotton Belt. Each car was assigned to a specific individual on the line and given a name and number. A 1912 newspaper article states, "The private cars used by the Cotton Belt officials are designated by numbers and names. Superintendent E. A. Peck travels in the 04, General Superintendent Wm. Neff the 06 and W. R. Beattie, the agricultural commissioner has 07. Chief Engineer C. P. Purdon's is the 'Ranger,' President Britton's car is the 'Traveler,' and the private car used by George Gould, the former president who is now chairman of the executive board is the 'Dixie.'"

In the early 20th century, most American railroads invested little in new equipment for their lines. Increased labor costs and debt left over from the 1907 financial panic meant there was little extra money for new locomotives and cars. As a result, when World War I broke out it quickly became apparent that American railroads were not prepared to handle the sudden increase in traffic that the war mobilization effort required. The locomotives and cars in use on railroads across the country were not well maintained, obsolete, and not plentiful enough to meet the demand. The solution to the problem was the United States Railroad Administration (USRA), which was founded on December 28, 1917, and began the task of overseeing the nationalization of the privately-owned American railroads on January 1, 1918.

The creation of the USRA also affected the history of the Traveler. In August 1918, the

Traveler was taken under the jurisdiction of the USRA and changed to USRA Car #32 so that it could be used by a Mr. Pettibone in Texas. Later the same month, while the car was in service on the Texas & Pacific, it was changed to USRA Car #104. The Traveler remained under the jurisdiction of the USRA until it was returned to the Cotton Belt in February 1920.

Once the Traveler had returned to the Cotton Belt by the early 1920s, the railroad felt that it was time to rebuild the car and upgrade it to current standards. The Pullman Car Manufacturing Company did the work in 1922. The Pullman Company was probably the most famous railroad car manufacturer during much of the late 19th and 20th centuries, and began c.1860 when George Pullman renovated two cars for the Chicago and Alton Railroad into sleeping cars. By 1872, Pullman was building three new cars a week and had 500 cars on various railroads around the country. The company continued to expand dramatically until it reached its peak in the 1920s. It remained a dominant force until 1947 when it was sold to a consortium of 57 railroads for \$40 million as a result of an anti-trust decree.

The work done by the Pullman Company focused on the exterior of the Traveler. The Pullman Company installed both the steel exterior sheathing present today and cast steel body bolsters, both of which increased the car's safety. As far as is known, the interior of the car was left alone and still reflects the 1905 craftsmanship of the American Car & Foundry Company.

After the Traveler was rebuilt by the Pullman Company, it returned to its duties on the Cotton Belt where it was used by the railroad's officials and hosted other guests, including industrialists, governors, and other political dignitaries. Probably its most famous guest was Will Rogers, who used the car in 1929 as his rolling hotel during a speaking tour of the Cotton Belt.

The 1950s brought some other changes to the Traveler. In 1953, air-conditioning was installed at the Cotton Belt shops in Pine Bluff. The Traveler returned to Pine Bluff again in 1956 for a thorough reconditioning, but its days on the railroad were numbered.

After a period of idleness, the railroad decided to dispose of the Traveler in 1960. The Cotton Belt solicited bids for the car through advertisements, and the Elrod Company was the successful bidder for the Traveler. Searcy Elrod, the company's president at the time, was a former official of the Federal Land Bank and a pioneer of Arkansas's reforestation program. The Elrod Company was founded in 1925, and began as a saw mill and

timber supply service. Annually the company shipped approximately 600 to 800 carloads of untreated utility poles to processing plants in North Little Rock, Kansas City, Missouri, Houston, and Carbondale, and it also operated a fence post plant and was one of the major suppliers of pulp wood to the paper industry.

The Cotton Belt delivered the Traveler to its siding in Rison, and on April 16, 1960, a private contractor moved it to its current location southeast of town. The Traveler remained in the Elrod family until it was purchased by the current owner, Bob Abbott, president of Abbott Enterprises, on April 20, 2004.

Today, the Traveler is a living reminder of Arkansas's rich railroad history and the rich history of the Cotton Belt's presence in southern and eastern Arkansas. As an excellent example of a railroad business car, the Traveler is also a monument to the golden age of railroad travel in the early 20th century and to the craftsmanship of a bygone era.

(Data obtained from the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program - "An Agency of the Department of Arkansas Heritage." The information came from the official document that accompanied the car's inclusion on the Arkansas Register, including the photograph of the car)

EXCURSIONS/SHOWS/EVENTS OF OTHER CLUBS

MEMPHIS – Memphis Railfest 2004 – Saturday, October 16, 2004 – Sponsored jointly by the Gulf, Mobile & Ohio and Louisville & Nashville Historical Societies, this will be a large railroad event. It will be held at the Hilton Hotel (formerly the Park Vista), 939 Ridge Lake Blvd., Memphis, Tennessee from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. October 16.

Admission will be \$4.00 for adults (\$2.00 for GM&O, L&N Historical Society members). Kids under 12 free. If you'd like to rent a table, they are \$25 for non-GM&O/L&NHS members, \$20 for members. Contact Memphis Railfest 2004, c/o David Johnston-GM&OHS, 3955 Muirfield Drive, Memphis TN 38125-2505, email: DMJ4501@bellsouth.net or Ken Donnelly, 815-791-0201.

To join/renew membership in the Arkansas Railroad Club (Little Rock Chapter National Railway Historical Society), fill out the form below. **Annual dues are \$20** for local dues (plus **\$20** for the national NRHS dues if you want to join the NRHS through our chapter, a total of \$40 for both local and national dues). Send to: Arkansas Railroad Club, PO Box 9151, North Little Rock AR 72119.

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Send check, made out to the Arkansas Railroad Club, PO Box 9151, North Little Rock AR 72119. Call 501-758-1340 for more information or visit us on the web at <http://www.trainweather.com> and click on *Arkansas Railroader*. Our email is trains@trainweather.com.