
Subject: Starlight has a great January 2013!

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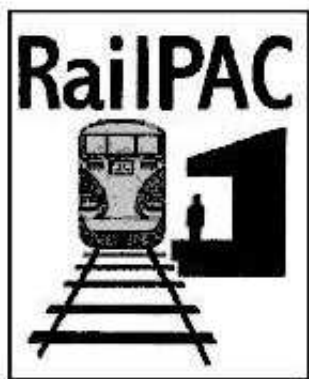
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RailPAC Weekly E-Newsletter for March 18, 2013

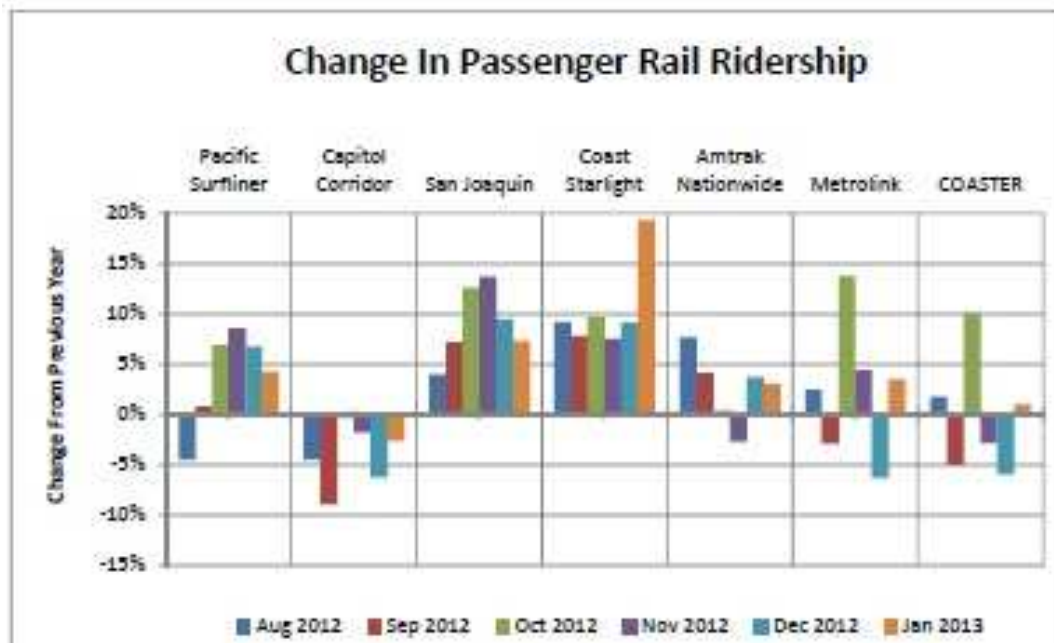
Edited by Noel T. Braymer

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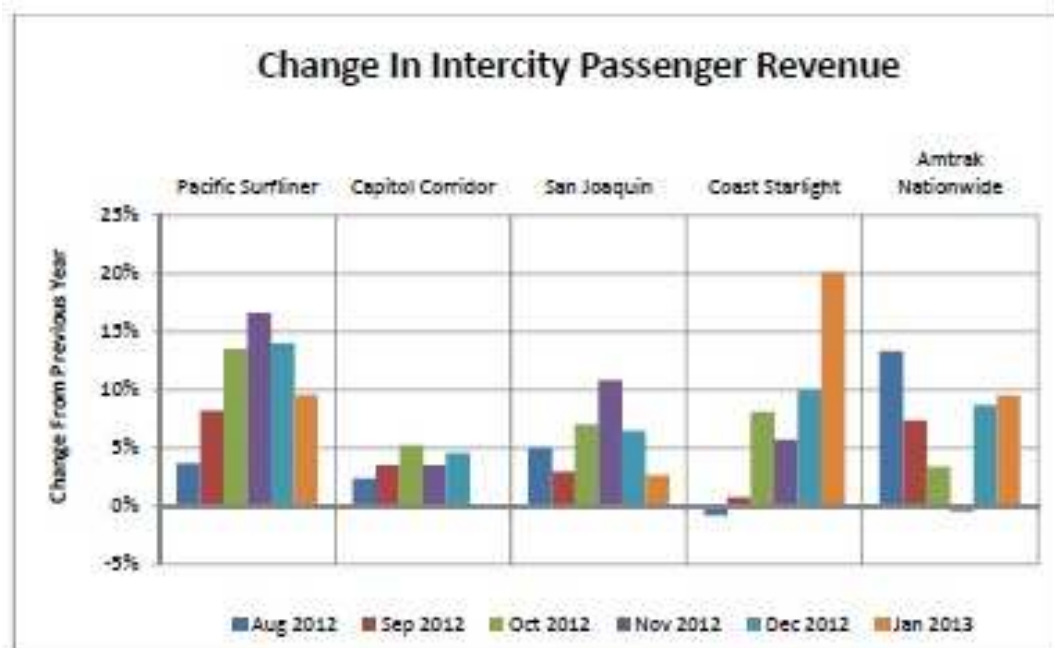
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Rail Passenger Association of California
www.railpac.org
Traffic? Gas Pains? We need more Trains!



This is a graph from the March 7th LOSSAN TAC Meeting agenda showing ridership of some of the trains in California. After almost a year of decline the Surfliners are seeing steady ridership growth.



Also from the agenda of the March 7th meeting shows the revenue growth of the same trains which is growing even faster than ridership.

Excerpt from the March 7, 2013 LOSSAN TAC Meeting Agenda

Ridership

When compared to the previous year, the Pacific Surfliner experienced a period of declining ridership in 10 of 11 months between October 2011 and August 2012. Since August, ridership has steadily increased including 4.3 percent in January.

The Coast Starlight has maintained positive ridership growth since September 2011 including a significant increase of 19.3 percent in January due to a combination of improved reliability, fare actions, and maintaining the summer consist with more cars (Emphasis added.) The Capital Corridor has had declining ridership since June 2012 including a 2.6 percent decline in January. The San Joaquin experienced positive ridership growth with a 7.3 percent increase in January. Amtrak nationwide ridership

increased by 3.1 percent in January.

The Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority (CCJPA) has looked at ridership data for the first quarter of FY 2013 (October-December 2012) and noticed significant declines in boardings in two of the three segments of the Capitol Corridor route: (1) Placer County stations of Roseville (-24%) and Rocklin (-9%); and (2) Oakland-Sacramento stations of Sacramento (-7%) and Martinez (-5%). The San Jose/Silicon Valley market stations are showing sustained growth except for the Fremont-Centerville Station (-8%). While the weekday peak travel trains and weekend trains are performing at the same level or slightly below last year, the later weekday morning trains are performing poorly. The CCJPA has begun discussions with Amtrak on the possibility of optimizing the weekday service plan with the focus to keep weekday service levels at 30 trains and re-slot the poorly performing trains to improve systemwide ridership and revenue results.

For the commuter rail services on the LOSSAN corridor, the COASTER and Metrolink have had fluctuating ridership since July. In January, Metrolink was up 3.5 percent and COASTER was up 1.0 percent. One of the key reasons for the variability in commuter rail ridership is the fluctuating number of weekdays each month from year to year.

MinnARP Newsletter Winter 2013

EMPIRE BUILDER REPORT by MinnARP Staff

In FY 2012 (Amtrak's fiscal year ending 9/30/12) the Builder racked up some great numbers: 543,100 passengers spent \$66.655 million (average fare: \$122.73); to travel 398.8 million miles (average trip: 734.3 miles), producing a 61.5% load factor. This ticket revenue was higher by far than any other single train Amtrak operates (AutoTrain grosses 10% more on its freight tolls for carrying cars). Next closest: California Zephyr at \$48.6 million and Southwest Chief at \$44.1 million. The Builder's output of transportation (398.8 million Rail Passenger Miles or RPMs) dwarfed the next closest (Southwest Chief: 315.4 million; California Zephyr: 311.1 million).

The Empire Builder by itself produced 62% of the transportation output of the entire Acela operation in the NEC (646 million RPM) at a small fraction of the cost.

And, speaking of outperforming the NEC, the long distance trains as a group produced 53% more passenger miles of transportation output than the entire NEC (2.93 billion RPM vs. 1.89 billion). Next time you hear someone refer to the "busy NEC," point out that the long hauls produced half again the output. The non-NEC regional trains as a group also outproduced the entire NEC (1.99 billion vs. 1.89 billion RPM).

One reason the Builder produces huge revenue and output numbers despite serving the most geographically isolated and the most demographically empty route in the system is that it is simply a bigger train: 50% more sleeping car space and one-third more coach inventory than most other long hauls. (emphasis added) This suggests strongly that adding more cars to the Builder, Southwest Chief, California Zephyr or Eagle would boost output and revenue much faster than expenses.

[California Rail Renaissance Or Reluctant Locomotion?](#)

California Economic Summit Mar 12, 2013

Have you noticed that news headlines seem to be taking a friendlier approach to California's high speed rail system, which is slated to begin construction this summer in the San Joaquin Valley?

[Rail meetings to detail Chowchilla alignment change](#)

Fresno Business Journal-Mar 12, 2013

Under the settlement agreement reached in January, the authority promised to quell concerns that the corridor would split the city by following Highway 99 and the Union Pacific rail line running north to south coupled with another route that branches off at Avenue 24 running east to west, forming a "Y"-like shape.

[California's high-speed rail board teleports meeting to Fresno office](#)

Fresno Bee- Mar 16, 2013

Leaders of California's high-speed rail efforts will take another swing Monday at approving an agreement to electrify a Bay Area train system as a step toward creating a statewide rail network...

But with only six of nine board seats currently filled, it doesn't take much to derail a plan. That's what happened March 6 when board member Michael Rossi was absent and board member Lynn Schenk, who represents the San Diego area, unexpectedly announced her intention to vote against the deal.

[Republicans request denial of federal XpressWest loan](#)

Las Vegas Review - Journal-Mar 11, 2013

WASHINGTON — Two leading Republicans have urged the Obama administration to reject a \$5.5 billion loan to build a high-speed rail between Las Vegas and Southern California, saying the deal is a bad gamble.

"The risks to the taxpayers from financing this project are untenable," Rep. Paul Ryan of Wisconsin and Sen. Jeff Sessions of Alabama wrote to Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood in a March 6 letter.

[CEO: Effort To Curb Las Vegas High-Speed Rail Project Based On "Faulty Data"](#)

Vegas INC Mar 11, 2013

"The Federal Railroad Administration has the benefit of current, factual information and analysis with which to make an informed decision on XpressWest," Marnell said in his letter, which also outlined the benefits of the XpressWest project, from relieving traffic on Interstate 15 to providing 80,000 direct and indirect jobs.

[Passenger Trains Make Money](#)

Report by Noel T. Braymer

To often we hear in this county about how passenger trains lose so much money. The fact is many passengers trains cover their costs for trains crews, fuel and direct operations of the trains. It is the passenger railroads which are losing money. To draw an analogy compare a passenger railroad to a shopping center, an old, run down shopping center with many empty stores. This shopping center is losing money. But the stores that are still open in this shopping center are making money. In this analogy the stores are the passenger trains.

[Amtrak shouldn't axe the national network](#)

Greater Greater Washington- Mar 15, 2013

The crux of the Brookings report, something that has not been picked up by much of the media, is not that Amtrak should drop the long-distance trains; rather, Brookings wants the states to pick up the tab to operate them. That's not the right policy.

[Riding the rails on the on the California Zephyr train](#)

KATU-Mar 11, 2013

EMERYVILLE, Calif. (AP) — The journey east on Amtrak's California Zephyr train is as good as the destination

[Kathy Strong: Journey is more than a destination when you see it by rail](#)

The Desert Sun- Mar 17, 2013

Train travel is a romantic notion. The humming lullaby of the rails has been a nostalgic part of America's travel lore since the rails headed west. Capture that romance and nostalgia, as well as some of the Pacific's most dazzling scenery, with an overnight rail trip on Amtrak's Coast Starlight.

[Holidays By Rail Announces New Rail-Cruise Holidays](#)