



2013 Steel Wheels Conference Joint RailPAC-NARP members meeting

Saturday, October 5, 2013
Port of San Francisco Community Room
Pier 40 • Embarcadero, San Francisco

10:30 am-3:00 pm with a break for lunch (*not provided*)

Doors Open 10:00 am

RailPAC members business meeting 3:00 pm

2013 Conference Program Includes

High Speed Rail – Dan Richard, CHSRA

Northern California Regional Rail – Dan Leavitt, SJVJPA

Caltrain Modernization – Marian Lee, PCJPB

Amtrak and the National Network – Robert Stewart, Chairman, NARP

[Colton Crossing Rail Project Finished](#)

\$109 Million under Budget and Eight Months Ahead of Schedule

eon.businesswire.com Aug 26, 2013

Original estimates calculated the project would cost about \$202 million and be finished in 2014. Thanks to cooperation between Caltrans and SBAG, innovative construction methods, and a competitive marketplace that resulted in much lower bids than expected, the project wrapped up eight months ahead of schedule for \$93 million.

[New crossing relieves train bottleneck](#)

Press-Enterprise- Aug 25, 2013

For long-suffering Colton residents, the project promises relief from the constant sound of horns blowing as trains made their way through the crossing. Federal law requires trains to sound their horns as they approach a crossing, but that is no longer necessary with the fly-over.

As part of the project, the railroads also agreed to install improved train gates and an electronic signal system that will create quiet zones at other rail crossings in the city so trains won't need to blow their horns there either.

Passenger rail also should see some improvements. The Union Pacific line also is used by Amtrak, and BNSF has agreed to allow additional Metrolink trains to run on its line.

The UP last year came to an agreement with Amtrak for some changes to the Sunset Limited between Los Angeles and New Orleans in return that Amtrak not discuss a daily Sunset for 2 years. Well that was the time needed to finish the Colton Flyover. Now is the time to start talking again about a daily Sunset which would still not be ready for service before 2014.NB

[Union Pacific CEO visits Whittier, faces tough questions](#)

San Gabriel Valley Tribune- Aug 28, 2013

WHITTIER >> The president and CEO of Union Pacific Railroad was peppered with questions Tuesday

about the giant company's paltry contribution to costly grade separation projects in Los Angeles County and a delay in approving design plans that threaten to derail two future projects...

The railroad benefits from grade separations by fewer collisions, experts say. Recently, two UP freight trains collided with automobiles at the Nogales Street at-grade intersection. In one accident, a UP train plowed into the back of a semi-tractor, sending its cargo container into a passenger car which careened into the switching station. Repairs to the switch box kept trains on a slower schedule for several days.

How about the UP accepting money to allow more passenger trains on their tracks which the taxpayers have helped improve to increase capacity, be more efficient and cost effective? NB

[RIVERSIDE: City marks Rail Safety Month](#)

Press-Enterprise- Aug 30, 2013

Mayor William "Rusty" Bailey presented a proclamation to two organizations that promote rail safety and also encouraged pedestrians and motorists to heed the warning signals when crossing the tracks...

Bailey said rail safety is especially important in Riverside, which has 22 rail crossings within the city limits and 10 grade separations, which allow vehicles to travel without crossing the railroad tracks at the same level as a train.

[A Wyoming first: No bids for coal mining tract in Powder River Basin](#)

Casper Star-Tribune Online-Aug 21, 2013

No companies bid on the coal lease, said BLM spokeswoman Beverly Gorny. "This is the first time it's happened in Wyoming," she said. Minutes ...

This is not good news for the railroads since a major part of their business has always been and still is shipping coal. The demand for coal is going down and this is likely to continue. NB

[Solar and electric vehicles will kill industry dinosaur](#)

By CleanTechnica

Monday, August 26, 2013

The predictions are made on the basis that the cost of solar and EV batteries will continue to fall, while the cost to consumers of sourcing energy from fossil fuels through the grid or liquid fuels will continue to rise. Before the decade is out, Seba says, both technologies will pass a tipping point that will eventually sweep the incumbents aside, just as technology and cost developments have done in the computer, internet, media, photographic and telecommunications industries.

"I am incredibly optimistic that by 2030, nuclear, coal, gas, big hydro, and oil will be all but obsolete," Seba told RenewEconomy in an interview in San Francisco last month.

Mr. Seba's opinions may be on the optimistic side. But the fact is the cost of fossil fuel is not going down but costs for renewable energy and electricity storage are. Solar electricity is price competitive now in many places with fossil fuels. The railroads are counting on a major new market hauling oil to refineries to make up for lost coal traffic. This may not last long since much of this oil is from shale, tar sands and heavy oils which are more expensive to refine than light sweet crude. The railroads can have a bright future market from passengers trains. Even if cars of the future are green, the roads and freeways will be more congested and in need of repair than ever in the future. NB

[Amtrak honors memory of Pullman Porters' union founder](#)

Progressive Rail Roding- Aug 27, 2013

Amtrak officials yesterday marked the 50th anniversary of the civil rights movement's "March on Washington" by honoring the memory of A...

[Schumer: Amtrak Owns All Tunnels Used ny LIRR Between LI & NYC, but Neither LI nor NY Commuters Have Representative on Amtrak's Board](#)

Press Releases By Long Island News & PRs Aug 30 2013

Schumer: "For Beleaguered Long Islanders, This Is Transportation Without Representation."

[Schumer: Amtrak Owns All Tunnels Used by LIRR Between LI & NYC, but Neither LI nor NY Commuters Have Representative on Amtrak's Board

New York, NY - August 30, 2013 - U.S. Senator Charles E. Schumer today called for a Long Island commuter representative to be appointed to Amtrak's Board of Directors.

No! I have a better idea. Have local governments own the tracks and tunnels on the NEC just like the counties do for most local rail passenger service in Southern California. Create a Joint Powers Authority similar to what has been created for all 3 major intercity corridors in California to manage the NEC and coordinate connections between commuter trains and Amtrak to make life easier for all passengers. The JPA can directly lobby for itself at the State and Federal level for money. This would save about \$200 millions dollars a year for Amtrak from spending which now is a subsidy to commuter rail services on the Northeast Corridor. This cost is charged to the general overhead of Amtrak which in turn is charged to State supported and Long Distance trains NB

[Improving the Awful Walk From Union Station to the Civic](#)

Curbed LA Aug 26, 2013

As beautiful as Union Station is, it remains somewhat separated from the heart of Downtown by the vehicular moat known as the 101.

[Neighbors for Smart Rail Petition for Expo Line Rehearing](#)

Patch.com-Aug 27, 2013

If you thought the legal battle over Expo Line Phase II ended with the California Supreme Court upholding a ruling in early August that will allow the Exposition Light Rail project from Culver City to Santa Monica to go forward as planned, think again, reports CurbedLA.

[Subway/Freeway Tunnel Under 405 Could Start in 2 to 3 Years](#)

Curbed LA Aug 23, 2013

Metro remains bullish on having a private company help pay for and construct a super-tunnel--with room for cars and trains--connecting the Valley to the Westside under the 405.

This sounds to good to be true. Large corporations like Public Private Partnerships (PPP) when they have a guaranteed source of income from the public sector. The plan is to pay for this from tolls for cars and payments for running trains in this tunnel. This would start as a 10 mile long tunnel for cars and trains from Westwood to Sherman Oaks. In time it would be extended to 28 miles from LAX to Sylmar. The problem with running trains is what would they connect to? This tunnel would be finished before the Purple Line will be built to Westwood. The Expo Line is the only planned rail line to cross the 405 north of LAX and south of the San Fernando Valley. The only major transit in the Valley near the 405 is the Orange Line Busway. How many stations are they planning to build for this new rail line in this tunnel? NB

[Curitiba receives four Feasibility Studies for metro PPP project](#)

Infra PPP Aug 28, 2013

The city of Curitiba has received four Feasibility Studies after publishing a Request for Expression of Interest (PMI) to structure a Public private partnership project for Curitiba underground.

Curitiba

City in Brazil

Curitiba is the capital and largest city of the Brazilian state of Paraná. The city's population numbers approximately 1,760,500 people as of 2010, making it the eighth most populous city in the country, and the largest in Brazil's South Region. Wikipedia