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**Subject:** Route picked for High Speed Rail Bakersfield to Fresno

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**From:** Rail Passenger Association of California (noelnoelt@cox.net)

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**To:** ntbraymer@yahoo.com;

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**Date:** Tuesday, November 12, 2013 9:32 AM

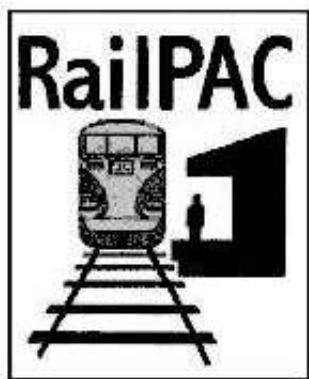
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## **RailPAC Weekly E-Newsletter for November 12, 2013**

**Edited by Noel T. Braymer**

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**Traffic? Gas Pains? We need more Trains!**



At the November 7th Board Meeting of the California High Speed Rail Authority in Sacramento the board approved the HSR route between Bakersfield and Fresno. The route shown above in red is still subject to possible changes before construction. Most of the approved alternatives have local acceptance in the San Joaquin Valley. The route in Kings County continues to have opposition while nearby Tulare County supports the route which is near to it. There is a developer in Bakersfield who is threatening to sue over use of a sixth of one of his projects for the Bakersfield route.

### [High-speed rail plans focus of hearings in Sacramento](#)

Fresno Bee-Nov 6, 2013

Kings County, where sentiments against high-speed rail plans run strong, will be at the heart of action and arguments over the state's proposed train system today and Friday in Sacramento.

The California High-Speed Rail Authority's board of directors meets today to consider a staff recommendation for a preferred high-speed train route between Fresno and Bakersfield. The route, which bypasses Hanford by swinging east around the city, would be submitted to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for environmental assessment .

### [Board selects high-speed rail route east of Hanford](#)

Fresno Business Journal - Nov 7, 2013

The California High-Speed Rail Authority approved its preferred alignment of the bullet train east of Hanford during its monthly board meeting today. The preferred alternative of the Fresno-to-Bakersfield section of the rail is a reversal of the authority's previous ...

### [Rail board approves bullet train route from Fresno to Bakersfield](#)

Bakersfield Californian - Nov 7, 2013

Recently unveiled route changes for high-speed rail between Fresno and Bakersfield won approval

Thursday by the project's governing board.

The unanimous vote, which the board's chairman emphasized is not final, was supported by Shafter and Wasco farmers but opposed by Bakersfield representatives unhappy with the proposed alignment through downtown.

### [High-speed rail route in Valley comes under scrutiny](#)

Fresno Bee - Nov 7, 2013

The authority board concurred with its staff that the overall route represented the "least environmentally damaging practicable alternative" for the Fresno-Bakersfield section -- one portion of the San Joaquin Valley "backbone" of the proposed 520-mile statewide high-speed train system.

### [High-Speed Rail Authority Promises 3 Percent Of Jobs To Disabled ...](#)

CBS Local-Nov 7, 2013

To be part of this from the ground floor, to ensure disabled veterans are allowed to get contracts in this high-speed rail project, this is a great ...

### [Judge looks for a remedy to California's defective high-speed rail funding plan](#)

Fresno Bee - Nov 9, 2013

Now that he's found the state's high-speed rail 2011 funding plan to be out of compliance with the voter initiative that got the project out of the roundhouse, a Sacramento Superior Court judge asked Friday what would happen if he just throws out the financing arrangement altogether.

The lawyer for the California High-Speed Rail Authority said the practical effect would basically be nothing.

The lawyer for the plaintiffs who successfully challenged the funding plan generally agreed,

**This lawsuit is based on the 2011 Business Plan which is no longer in effect. The current 2012 Business Plan goes a long way towards meeting the requirements this lawsuit. The prime mover behind this lawsuit is Mr. John Tos who owns 6 farms in Kings County. In the above article Mr Tos said "I would hope that we would kill the whole plan, We have other issues we need to be spending our time and efforts and money (on), such as water. What good is a train going to do if we don't have any water in this valley?" Funny he should mention that. The Governor who supports High Speed Rail also supports major water projects which would divert more water to the San Joaquin Valley. Mr. Tos seems more upset about spending taxpayers money on anything other than supplying more water to farmers in the San Joaquin Valley. This seems to be his big problem with the project not construction of a railroad on farmland.**

**The entire West is in a long term drought and everyone is looking for more water. Urban areas in California are conserving and recycling water to deal with declining supplies. This includes filtering brackish water and water reclaimed from sewage in some places. Farming uses around 75 percent of all water consumed in the State. We all have to eat, but most of the water used for farming is for growing food for livestock. The reality is spending money won't make it rain or snow. The San Joaquin Valley has one of the most depressed economies in the State and highest levels of unemployment. The Valley needs to diversify its economy beyond farming for its own good. High Speed Rail service will go a long way to do that. NB**

### [Our Biggest Problem is The Weather](#)

By Noel T. Braymer

It is now just over a year since Hurricane Sandy caused record breaking damage along the East Coast. There was wind and flood damage which disrupted electrical power, fuel supplies, destroyed homes while damaging roads, railroads and rail transit. For the first time 100 plus year old river tunnels to Manhattan were flooded. Rail passenger traffic in and out of the New York area was largely shut down at the same time gasoline was in short supply in the area. Even if the gas stations had fuel they couldn't

pump it because there was no electricity. Much of the infrastructure of the region suffered major damage some of which which is still being repaired.

### [How Republicans Killed America's High-Speed Rail Plan](#)

The Atlantic Cities-Nov 4, 2013

A new report in the Tampa Tribune adds some spice to that notion. The paper details an interesting exchange between one of these governors, Rick Scott of Florida, and Paula Dockery, a (now former) political ally who favored the proposed high-speed route from Tampa to Orlando. Dockery tells the paper that Scott promised her in February 2011 that he'd accept \$2.4 billion in federal money pledged for the project — in no uncertain terms:

### [Talgo seeks \\$65.9 million from state for abandoned high-speed rail line](#)

Journal Sentinel Nov 7, 2013

Madison — The U.S. arm of a Spanish train-maker filed a \$65.9 million claim against the state Thursday, setting up a likely lawsuit and reviving debate over Gov. Scott Walker's rejection of \$810 million in federal stimulus money for a high-speed rail line.

### [A tale of two \(or more\) Talgos](#)

RailwayAge Magazine-Nov 4, 2013

The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) has taken delivery on the second of two new Talgo Series 8 13-car trainsets the State of Oregon purchased with federal stimulus funds administered in 2009. The first trainset entered service on July 26.

### [Engineering Chicago-St. Louis HSR](#)

Railway Track & Structures-Nov 5, 2013

The Illinois High-Speed Rail (HSR) project between Chicago, Ill., and St. Louis, Mo., is progressing right on schedule and currently wrapping up construction for the 2013 season. While the full project will not be complete until 2017, a significant portion of the work will be in place to support speeds of up to 110 mph over about 75 percent of the route by the end of 2015. The project will shave about an hour off travel time between Chicago and St. Louis, with about half of this savings in place by the end of 2015.

### [Express Rail Link high speed train unveiled](#)

Railway Gazette International-Nov 6, 2013

MTR Corp placed a HK\$1.74bn order for the trainsets in early 2012. Based on the CRH380A design, the trainsets will have two driving trailers and six motor cars with a total of 579 seats. They are designed to operate at up to 350 km/h, although they will be limited to 200 km/h on the section of the ERL within Hong Kong which will be entirely in tunnel.

### [Chinese high-speed rail contractors eye overseas opportunities](#)

WantChinaTimes-Nov 4, 2013

After the development of a domestic high-speed rail network, the Chinese government and rail enterprises are actively seeking overseas ...

Countries including the United States, Russia, Malaysia, Singapore, Brazil and Turkey are also considering their own high-speed rail projects. The Australian government has completed a feasibility study into a proposed high-speed rail route along its east coast.

### [China's high-speed rail networks may merge for IPO](#)

WantChinaTimes-Nov 5, 2013

The plan is to cope with the railway authority's internal demand to simplify its management, and help the authority promote its quality assets to the capital market to achieve its financing plans, the report said.

### [High-Speed Train in Northeast Corridor Gaining Steam](#)

NBC4 Washington-Nov 8, 2013

Some high-powered business and political leaders are making a new push to bring the high-speed Maglev train to Washington. Imagine ...

### [Amtrak adds service for Thanksgiving travelers](#)

Chicago Daily Herald-Nov 6, 2013

Amtrak is giving travelers in Illinois more options on the Sunday after Thanksgiving, adding service on the Chicago-to-Quincy corridor that has stops in Galesburg and Macomb.

### [Amtrak adds 18 Michigan trains for Thanksgiving](#)

WAOW - Nov 4, 2013

Amtrak says it will run every available rail car during what it says is the busiest travel time of the year.

### [Extra Amtrak holiday trains will connect Portland, Seattle](#)

Statesman Journal - Nov 4, 2013

Amtrak's busiest travel times annually are the Tuesday and Wednesday before Thanksgiving, and the Sunday after Thanksgiving.

### [Amtrak to provide service for travelers affected by upcoming rail shut ...](#)

San Diego 6-Nov 5, 2013

SAN DIEGO (CNS) - Amtrak announced Tuesday it will provide bus service to passengers between San Diego and Irvine over the weekend of Nov. 16-17, when the track will be shut down in Camp Pendleton. North County Transit District officials said Monday that the rail disruption is scheduled to accommodate construction work at the Santa Margarita Bridge.



Under construction off and on since 2010 the end seems in sight! Finally rail is being laid to and over the new double tracked concrete bridge over the Santa Margarita River in Camp Pendleton. Photo by Noel T. Braymer

### [The haunting of 763: the Curse of the Coaster?](#)

The Surfliner Stories Oct 31, 2013

It's Halloween, so appropriate to talk about curses. The last few weeks have been tough on the 763 (the first northbound departure of the day from San Diego), with frequent delays. This Tuesday it was 40m late, and then on Weds it was annulled completely, having broken down south of Sorrento Valley. The grumpy passengers were accommodated on the next train, 565.

Alas, it was an Amfleet day (the loathed single-level Amfleet set is on a rotation that puts it on the 565 every other day), which adds considerable delays as the doors must be manually opened and the stairs folded down. By the time 565 lumbered into LA, it was over 20 min late itself, which added insult to injury, making the 763 passengers almost 1.5h late into Los Angeles.

### [Amtrak train to Fresno delayed due to engine problems](#)

ABC30.com-Nov 4, 2013

Hundreds of passengers were forced to board buses to Stockton, and then take a different train to Fresno.

However, the second train also had a power failure near Modesto -- delaying the trip even more.

### [San Jose man dies after falling from Amtrak train in Solano County](#)

San Jose Mercury News-Nov 7, 2013

The incident is believed to have occurred just after 2 p.m. near Pierce Lane off Goodyear Drive when Darms, who is believed to have been holding onto the outside of the cab of a westbound Amtrak

passenger train, lost his grip and fell, according to Vernae Graham, a spokeswoman for Amtrak.

### [Woman who jumped to her death off Amtrak train was French tourist, Iowa ...](#)

The Republic - Nov 6, 2013

STANTON, Iowa — Authorities say a woman who leaped to her death off an Amtrak train in southwest Iowa was a French tourist. The woman's body was found near the tracks in Stanton on Monday night. She was pronounced dead at the scene. Montgomery ...

### [Bomb threat delays departure of Amtrak train in Eugene, proves ...](#)

The Register-Guard- Nov 10, 2013

About 300 travelers were delayed this afternoon after police evacuated cars in Amtrak's Coast Starlight train to investigate a possible bomb .

### [Gerald Sokol named Amtrak CFO](#)

RailwayAge Magazine-Nov 6, 2013

Amtrak has named Gerald Sokol, Jr., as Chief Financial Officer. He will be responsible for corporate finance, business forecasting, and ...

### [How Federal "Safety" Regulations Undermine Amtrak in California](#)

STREETSBLOG NETWORK Nov 5, 2013

Hispanics make up half the population of California's Central Valley. Los Angeles has 5 million Hispanics (9% of the nation's population). And 23% of the Bay Area population is Hispanic. So why does Amtrak California struggle to attract Hispanic riders? Hispanic ridership on the San Joaquin service is only 20%.... But the really big problem is the TSA, and the legally-required ID checks.

### [Biden, Whoopi Goldberg ride Amtrak together](#)

Boston.com-Nov 8, 2013

A lifelong Amtrak passenger, Biden frequently takes the train to and from weekend stays at his Delaware home. The vice president's office says ...

### [Maryland gets approval to seek public-private partnership to build, operate Purple Line](#)

The Washington Post Nov 6, 2013

Maryland transportation officials received state approval Wednesday to pursue private companies to design, build, operate and help pay for a \$2.2 billion Purple Line in the Washington suburbs, marking a major milestone for the light-rail proposal.

**Public-Private-Partnerships (PPP) such as this one being proposed for a Light Rail Line in Maryland is also the basis for building and funding the California High Speed Rail Project. PPP's are a Conservative idea championed and used heavily by Prime Minister Marget Thatcher and has since been used in most of the World except here. NB**

### [Groundbreaking to be held next week for Southern California grade ...](#)

Progressive Rail Roding-Nov 7, 2013

Each day, about 90 trains pass through the current grade crossing on Laurel Street that features six tracks, resulting in a total "gate down" time exceeding four hours daily, according to SANBAG. The number of trains crossing Laurel Street is projected to double by 2035 due to regional growth.

### [Work scheduled to begin later this month on tying Gold Line Foothill Extension into existing Gold Line!](#)

The Source Nov 5, 2013

And now comes the next step: tying the future extension into the existing Gold Line in Pasadena. Initially this work will be done over several phases through this fall and the upcoming winter. Most of the work involves building and/or reworking the overhead wires and infrastructure that delivers electricity to light rail trains.

### [There's a Lot of Development Coming in Santa Monica](#)

LA Times Nov 5, 2013

City planners say the Expo Line offers Santa Monica an opportunity to build more housing and businesses along the route and reduce reliance on cars. It's an appealing argument on the Westside, where traffic gridlock is a way of life. The Expo Line, which will run from downtown Los Angeles to downtown Santa Monica, is expected to open in early 2016.

### [Scandals Be Darned, Streetcar Moving Forward](#)

KPCC Nov 5, 2013

Councilman José Huizar along with other streetcar advocates hosted a community meeting Monday night to reassure residents that the downtown streetcar was still pushing forward. Recent reports have shown the initial costs of the streetcar may have been grossly underestimated, but Huizar maintains these new numbers are “worst-case scenario.”

### [Palo Alto steams ahead with study of trench option for Caltrain](#)

San Jose Mercury News-Nov 6, 2013

The city council voted 7-2 Monday to pay New Jersey-based Hatch Mott McDonald up to \$127,550 to evaluate a trench for Caltrain between San Antonio Road and Matadero Creek, as well as submerged roadway crossings at Churchill Avenue, Meadow Drive and Charleston Road.





**This is a Sprinter Station for the DMU service between Oceanside and Escondido. The trains have high level boarding but use drawbridges to the train doors that can be raised to allow freight trains to use the tracks at night after passenger service ends. Such an approach could be used by Caltrain if they insist on using high level platforms to allow freight and other passenger trains to share Caltrain's tracks. But given the current passenger loads it would make sense to use bi-level cars on all future Caltrain Trains with low level loading and 8 inch above rail platforms which allow other trains to use the tracks. NB** Photo by Noel T. Braymer

## [Caltrain Wants Level Boarding — These Are the Hurdles That Remain](#)

Streetsblog San Francisco (blog)-Nov 8, 2013

Currently, passengers need 55 seconds at each station, on average, to get on and off the newer two-step Bombardier train cars. The electric trains set to be purchased in 2015 will also include two steps unless the platforms at all 25 stations between San Francisco and Tamien in San Jose (the section planned to be electrified) are re-constructed 17 inches higher than they are today.

## We Get Emails

### **Re: Repealing the Perata Bill SB804**

I have read Noel T. Braymer's article Passenger Trains and Buses Should Connect with Each Other Oct 18, 2013. How right he is. SB 804 should be repealed. I believe that the California Law that prohibits this senior veteran getting on an empty Capitol Corridor bus in Truckee, CA to travel 45 miles to Reno, NV to go to the VA hospital is a clear violation of the United States Constitution under the provisions of interstate commerce. How can a bus system funded by the California taxpayer that crosses a state line prevent a California resident from traveling on it? I buy a ticket to Davis all the time to get to Sacramento. I would have to buy a ticket to Winnemucca to get to Reno. This is pure stupidity. It takes two days via Greyhound to do any kind of business for a disadvantaged individual living in the North Shore/Truckee region. This problem can be fixed; it is not about money it is about a proper/sound regional transportation service. Either repeal SB 804 and allow people to use the Capitol Corridor system on the Reno/Sacramento I-80 corridor or force Greyhound to give more service. I have asked the Town of Truckee, the Nevada County Transportation Commission, my State Senator, and my State Assemblyman to look into this matter and resolve this major regional transportation disconnect. So far I have been shown the door. I need your help if you are interested?

Dennis A. Dickinson  
Truckee, Ca

**This issue is an example of why we need a California State Caucus in the Legislature for Rail Passenger Service. This is an effort strongly supported by RailPAC. Almost every State Senate and Legislative District has at least one Rail Passenger Station or connecting bus to rail service. This needs a broad bi-partisan effort to create a rational public transportation system people can use to get around. Clearly this is a case the Disabled Community can and should get involved to see that SB 804 Perata is amended or overturned soon. NB**

### **Re:Rosemary Green and new cars to NEC**

Except for 3/4 baggage cars, no other cars are going to the NEC Boston-Richmond Va. They will be going to the Eastern Long distance trains, which operate on the NEC, such as Florida,& New Orleans, Since they handle no local passengers on the NEC, no revenue is counted as such.  
Ed Von Nordeck

**Amtrak Fiscal Year 2013**

The Pacific Surfliner finished federal fiscal year (FFY) 2013 (October 2012 through September 2013) with 2,705,823 passengers, an increase of 2.5 percent over FFY 2012 maintaining its rank as the second busiest rail corridor in the nation. Revenue on the Pacific Surfliner was up 6.8 percent over last year which ranks as the third best corridor in terms of revenue. The Amtrak California services continue to be among Amtrak's best performing corridors in terms of ridership generating 18 percent of Amtrak's total ridership. State-supported Amtrak services continue to represent more than half of Amtrak's overall ridership.

Top 10 Amtrak Ridership Corridors FFY 2013			Top 10 Amtrak Revenue Corridors FFY 2013	
Ridership Rank	Corridor	Ridership (Millions)	Revenue Rank	Corridor
1	Northeast Corridor	11.4	1	Northeast Corridor
2	Pacific Surfliner	2.7	2	Empire Builder
3	Capitol Corridor	1.7	3	Pacific Surfliner
4	Keystone	1.5	4	California Zephyr
5	San Joaquin	1.2	5	Southwest Chief
6	Empire (NYP-ALB)	1.1	6	Empire
7	Hiawatha	0.8	7	Coast Starlight
8	Cascades	0.8	8	Silver Meteor
9	Chicago-St. Louis (Lincoln Service)	0.7	9	San Joaquin
10	Washington-Newport News	0.6	10	Keystone

**Re:Chart from last week from LOSSAN of Amtrak's top performing trains**

That chart in the first item is a real howler—they only left off what must have been the third chart showing the actual output, the production of actual transportation (revenue passenger miles), in which the NEC shows up as the SMALLEST, weakest, poorest performing, and most heavily subsidized—in total and per RPM (Revenue Passenger Miles)—of all three of Amtrak's divisions.

Andrew Selden

**Re: Where more Long Distance Passenger Should Go?**

How can we get more Long Distance Passenger Trains which Americans want?

Permit an operator who wants to run them, who believes adding trains is in their best interest.

You may quote me on that.

William Lindley

**Re: How can we get more Long Distance Passenger Trains which Americans want?**

Get one going to Las Vegas, There was one. It was always filled/ Turtles interfered. Seems that can be dealt with!

rosegood

**If you really want service to take off to Las Vegas run a train from Los Angles with connections to the entire State to Las Vegas and on to Salt Lake City and make it a section of the California Zephyr as well as with a new Pioneer. Then have that train connect at several points to other trains to Chicago and New York. NB**

**Opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Rail Passenger Association of California.**

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