Subject: A Tale of 2 Sprinters: Light Rail and Locomotive

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RailPAC Weekly E-Newsletter for May 20, 2013
Edited by Noel T. Braymer
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Rail Passenger Association of California
www.railpac.org
Traffic? Gas Pains? We need more Trains!
The media was there on May 16th as the North County Transit District announced that Sprinter service had the approval of the CPUC and FRA to restart service on Saturday May 18th. This Sprinter is seen coming into the station at the Oceanside Transportation Center for the benefit of the TV cameras. At the same time a southbound Surfliner was leaving the station and blowing its horn while the video cameras were running. Photo by Noel T. Braymer

**State, feds give Sprinter green light**
U-T San Diego May 16, 2013
Frances Schnall, a transit agency spokeswoman, said on Thursday that the district believes the wear was caused by the replacement of the trains’ original brake pad with a smaller brake pad before the Sprinter started carrying passengers in 2008. The change was made, Schnall said, to stop a high-pitched squeal.

**Amtrak unveils new locomotives assembled in Sacramento**
Sacramento Bee-May 13, 2013
The Siemens rail company, one of the Sacramento region’s manufacturing mainstays, unveiled a major new product line Monday, rolling out the first of 70 electric locomotives it will produce over the next two years for Amtrak's East Coast passenger lines.

**New Amtrak Engines Unveiled for Northeast**
WASHINGTON — Amtrak rolled out three new locomotives on Monday, the first step in the railroad's plan to modernize its aging fleet of trains.

**Amtrak To Bicyclists: Oops, Never Mind**
Curbed LA May 15, 2013
Via Streetsblog comes word that "Amtrak has decided NOT to charge for Bicycles on the Pacific Surfliner, though reservations will still be required."

This won't solve the problem for Metrolink/Coaster Pass Riders with bikes if they have to ride a Surfliner Train on the Rail 2 Rail program and don't have time to make reservations. NB

Amtrak route from St. Louis to Kansas City in jeopardy
St. Louis Business Journal (blog) - May 14, 2013
Ticket sales don’t cover half the expenses for the twice-daily train, which costs about $9,600 to operate one way, according to the Star. The Missouri Department of Transportation has been providing about $8.5 million a year to help pay for the route. The state is past due its payments to Amtrak, and owes it more than $2 million, plus $8.5 million for this year, according to the Star.

More Amtrak in Cincinnati: What it would take and what we could...
Business Courier of Cincinnati (blog)- May 17, 2013
Currently, Amtrak's Cardinal line departs Union Terminal for Chicago at 1:23 a.m. and for the East Coast at 3:27 a.m. on Monday, Thursday and Saturday.

The Many Places Where You Can't Go by Passenger Trains
By Noel T. Braymer
There are several major cities in this Country without intercity rail passenger service. There are many more major cities that are not connected to each other by rail passenger service.

Amtrak's WiFi Upgrade Allows More People to Complain About...
The Atlantic Wire- May 17, 2013
Amtrak, America's much-maligned railroad service, have given rail passengers a gift: upgraded WiFi on its very expensive Acela trains and will upgrade the rest ...

2 new Oregon Amtrak trains named Mt. Jefferson, Mt. Bachelor
OregonLive.com- May 15, 2013
Following the tradition of naming Northwest trains after mountain peaks, they will be called Mt. Bachelor and Mt. Jefferson. Five trains already ...

Kings County fights for its lawsuit against high-speed rail
Fresno Bee- May 14, 2013
Hanford farmer John Tos, Hanford homeowner Aaron Fukuda and the Kings County Board of Supervisors have a court date May 31 in Sacramento for the suit they filed against the rail agency in 2011. They say that the high-speed rail project doesn't square with Proposition 1A, the $9.9 billion bond measure approved by California voters in 2008 to help finance high-speed rail.

Recommendation on bullet train contract expected Friday
Los Angeles Times- May 17, 2013
The California bullet train agency on Friday is expected to ... The action is a key step toward a groundbreaking on the $68-billion rail system.

On May 17th the California High Speed Rail Authority recommended the selection of Tutor Perini/Zachry/Parsons, a Joint Venture for the first major construction contract between Madera and Fresno. This team had the lowest bid and the lowest score for competency. The leading company of this consortium has a history of underbidding and cost overruns on major construction projects. NB
Group pushes for details on high speed rail from Colorado Springs to Denver
The Gazette May 17, 2013
The consumer advocacy organization this summer will campaign to build support for high-speed rail in Colorado. This month and in early June, members will canvass local residents door to door, said Danny Katz, CoPIRG director.

Metro-North Trains Collide in Connecticut; Dozens of Injuries Are …
Two Metro-North Railroad trains collided after a derailment near Fairfield, Conn., at the height of the evening rush on Friday, injuring 60 people, ...

May 14: This Date In Los Angeles Transportation History
Metro Transportation Library Primary Resources Blog
Sunset Boulevard opens 109 years ago today; Disney presents some must-see "futuristic" transportation visions in 1958

Fail Harder: Lessons From L.A.'s Best Unrealized Transit Ideas
GOOD May 8, 2013
For years Los Angeles has been known as a world capital for one thing more than any other. The motion picture industry, you say? Not quite...That’s been moving out of town for years. Nope, it’s traffic.

Expo Line Takes Shape In Santa Monica
Santa Monica Lookout May 14, 2013
Includes construction photos

Metro Considers Moving TAP Service Center To In-House
StreetsBlog LA May 14, 2013
This is good news. Not that everything will be peachy keen even with this change. Alex Vickers’ comment to my previous post I think brings up a very important point in re-gating: "Closing the turnstiles is still going to be a complete nightmare… was held up for 5 minutes the other day trying to get through the turnstiles and almost missed my train. It’s difficult to deal with the huge rush of an entire train of people unloading and the stations weren’t designed to deal with two way traffic. Union Station is going to be a complete C.F."

PERRIS VALLEY LINE: Judge tosses project's environmental impact …
Press-Enterprise- May 16, 2013
The decision is a significal setback for the $232.7 million project that would add 24 miles of track and four new stations from Riverside to Perris to the Metrolink system. Projections for the line say it would see about 4,000 boardings daily.

Work Begins On The Taylor Yard Development
News & Insights May 2, 2013
The tower will be preserved and incorporated into the new transit-oriented mixed-use development on the old railroad yard.

Third Cajon Pass Fire in Five Days Temporarily Snarls 15-215 in ...
Patch.com- May 15, 2013
A train was stuck at Glen Helen as of 2:46 p.m., according to the CHP.

Capitol Corridor Monthly Report