

Subject: More about the San Joaquins. Is the Hoosier State soon to be History?
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To: ntbraymer@yahoo.com;
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RailPAC Weekly E-Newsletter for July 28, 2014

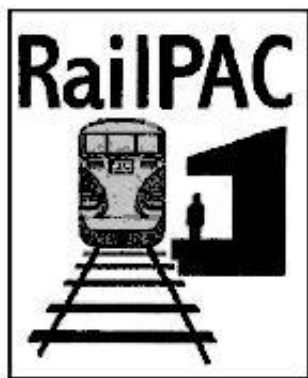
Edited by Noel T. Braymer

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

Crenshaw/LAX Transit Project

Full Closure of Century/Aviation Intersection July 25-28, 2014



Detour begins at 9pm on Friday, July 25 and ends at 6am on Monday, July 28. For the most up-to-date information, please visit metro.net/crenshaw.

Over the weekend drivers to the main entrance to LAX had a 3 mile detour due to demolition of the old Santa Fe railroad bridge over Century Blvd to be replaced with the new Crenshaw Light Rail Line.

[Attention LAX passengers: Aviation/Century intersection to be closed July 25-28 — allow extra time driving to airport!](#)

The Source Jul 23, 2014

A media event was held this morning. In the meantime, above are the important visuals, including a map

of the impacted area, the detour map and a rendering of the Aviation/Century station that will be shared by the Crenshaw/LAX Line and the Green Line. The bridge needs to be demolished as part of the Crenshaw/LAX Line project, which is adding 8.5 miles of rail between the Expo Line and the Green Line.

[Century Crunch, update #3: bridge has safely been knocked down](#)

The Source Jul 26, 2014

All is going well. As the tweet from LAX shows, the old railroad bridge over Century Boulevard has safely been collapsed as work continues this morning. The video shows the the demolition work that began early Saturday.

Oops: Story on Metrolink to Del Mar was 3 years old

It was just too good to be true, that Metrolink would be returning after 3 years with Del Mar Service during racing season. I found the story under the heading Popular Posts which are usually recent stories on The Source. I missed the dateline. What is interesting though is this 3 year old story would get so many hits now reflects the level of interest for this service. NB

[Crowded San Joaquin route needs more Amtrak trains](#)

Visalia Times-Delta-Jul 22, 2014

And I'm not the only person who is riding. Amtrak publishes annual ridership statistics, and for several years in a row, the numbers have been going up for all of Amtrak California's trains.

But don't take Amtrak's word for it, see for yourself. The trains which I have taken lately have been more crowded than when I started riding, and the connector buses are often full.

[Friday's problems on the San Joaquins and Amateur Hour with the Bus Connections at Bakersfield.](#)

Story and Photos by Noel T. Braymer

I have known for years that July and August are the busiest months for Amtrak California. Having had 2 trips on Amtrak on Fridays this month I've learned that Fridays and Sundays are the busiest days on Amtrak in California. Unfortunately when there is a problem on the railroad, those problems can snowball into other problems.

[We Need More Connections to California High Speed Rail](#)

By Noel T. Braymer

For the first 300 miles of High Speed Rail the plan is to run 34 round trips trains a day between Burbank and Merced. The San Joaquins are hoping to add a 7th train by 2016 and an eighth depending on funding for track work sometime later. There are only 2 round trips to Sacramento on the San Joaquins now. ACE is planning for 10 round trips between Stockton and San Jose by 2022, with 6 round trip trains from Merced to San Jose. Two of these trains would connect with High Speed Rail at Merced while the other 4 with the San Joaquins.

[Blast used to test high-speed rail structure](#)

ABC30.com - Jul 23, 2014

Before they can actually build the many bridges and viaducts that carry the high-speed trains they have to study and test the structural supports. Not only to make sure they can hold up the trains, but withstand things like earthquakes. They are using explosives and heavy weights to do that here in Madera County.

Complete with explosive video NB

[High-speed rail station proposal moves forward in Gilroy](#)

KIONrightnow.com - Jul 23, 2014

A plan to potentially bring a high-speed rail station to downtown Gilroy is moving forward, state and city

officials said. The California High-Speed Rail Authority and the city have entered into a funding agreement that will allow the two entities to initiate the planning process for a potential high-speed rail station in the downtown area of the city.

[High-speed rail meetings coming to the Santa Clarita Valley](#)

Santa Clarita Valley Signal - Jul 24, 2014

Officials from the California High-Speed Rail Authority will hold a series of meetings — two locally — next month to discuss possible routes for the bullet train as it snakes its way through Southern California and potentially through the Santa Clarita Valley.

[Proposed California High-Speed Rail Route Through Pacheco Pass Upheld By Appeals Court](#)

NBC Bay Area Jul 24, 2014

The original lawsuit filed by Bay Area cities had argued that a planned path through the Pacheco Pass hurts the environment. The state argued the project was exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act because of federal oversight.

[How China's high-speed rail has created an economic miracle](#)

Global Construction Review-Jul 23, 2014

However, a recent paper produced by two Chinese academics at Tsinghua University in Beijing has given an empirical estimate of the economic impact of one high-speed line on western China – and they are dramatic.



New signs at the Bob Hope Airport train station. In the background the building with the red roof is the "elevated moving walkway" which is part of the airport's new Regional Intermodal Transportation

Center. The new transit center opened to the public on July 15 and will serve car rentals, bus riders, bikes and of course train passengers. In the future a bridge over Empire Blvd on the left will connect the station to the elevated moving walkway which has segments allowing passengers to ride the sidewalk or ride and walk and go faster to the terminals. The open air and shaded walkway is much more comfortable than walking in the sun. Photo by Noel T. Braymer



This is the view from the new Bob Hope Regional Intermodal Transportation Center next to the new elevated moving walkway. After opening in mid-July there were still many last minute details contractors were finishing up at Bob Hope Airport. This will be the new crosswalk from the train station to the new walkway which should open soon. There are already plans to replace this with a pedestrian bridge that goes right to the walkway. Photo by Noel T. Braymer

[Too good to pass up - travel tips](#)

The Australian-Jul 22, 2014

RAIL passes are understandably popular in Europe on networks that cross multiple borders and cover immense distance. Rail Europe is a major supplier through Britain and the continent, with the advantage of being able to book online in Australian currency before departure. If you are really on the move, consider a Eurail Global Pass covering 20 countries and including the BritRail network. In North America, Amtrak USA Rail Passes cover 15, 30 or 45 days of riding the rails or, if considering a more focused stay, state options such as the California Rail Pass provide seven days of travel over 21 days.

[Man jumps to death from George Washington Bridge onto Amtrak tracks](#)

New York Daily News-Jul 22, 2014

All Amtrak train traffic was shut down for about 90 minutes until the body was retrieved from the tracks, said Joseph Pentangelo, a Port Authority ...

[Amtrak to renovate Camden train station, grounds](#)

Chronicle Independent-Jul 25, 2014

After decades of requests from residents and years of negotiation with city officials, Amtrak is announcing that it will renovate its station in ...

[Amtrak's struggles in Missouri](#)

Blue Springs Examiner-Jul 22, 2014

Let's talk about three trains.

Amtrak 311 had a bad day last Wednesday. That's the morning Missouri River Runner comes out of St. Louis, and it arrives in Kansas City in the middle of the afternoon. Then came trouble. West of Sedalia, No. 311 suffered engine failure, according to the Missouri Department of Transportation. That created a delay of more than three hours, and downstream problems.

[Indianapolis pulls future support for Amtrak line](#)

Indianapolis Business Journal-Jul 25, 2014

City officials in Indianapolis have cast the future of an Amtrak passenger line between Indianapolis and Chicago into doubt after deciding not to provide any additional money to subsidize the line.

[Feds Propose New Safety Rules as Oil Transport by Rail Increases](#)

KQED-Jul 23, 2014

The U.S. Department of Transportation is proposing regulations that would make trains carrying oil safer. There have been several fiery oil train derailments in other parts of the country in the past year, and last July, a train carrying crude oil from North Dakota's Bakken formation exploded in the town of Lac-Mégantic, Quebec, killing 47 people.

The new rules include lower speed limits, better brakes and safer rail cars.

[Bay Area short line upset with passenger project](#)

RailwayAge Magazine-Jul 22, 2014

Among the injurious actions, according to Park: "SMART has (a) removed customer turnouts, (b) removed passing sidings and yard tracks, and (c) built 15-mph gauntlet track, all of which obstruct and hinder NWP's obligation to provide common carrier freight service, thus eliminating businesses option to ship by rail."

[Caltrain to replace speaker systems at station](#)

sabc7news.com-Jul 21, 2014

SAN FRANCISCO (KGO) --

Caltrain riders will soon get some welcome relief from the muffled, garbled recorded messages that often play inside train stations.

From the clanging bells to the roar of the locomotive and the screeching of brakes, there's one sound that Caltrain passengers might have missed.

[Santa Clara VTA pre-selects Elecnor for double-track project](#)

Progressive Rail Rooding-Jul 24, 2014

The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) has pre-selected Madrid-based Elecnor as the contractor to double-track the Mountain View single-track segment.

[Oakland: Coliseum BART station reopens after bomb threat ..](#)

.San Jose Mercury News-Jul 25, 2014

OAKLAND -- The BART Coliseum station was closed for more than an hour Friday morning due to a

bomb threat investigation, resulting in major delays on the Fremont, Daly City and Dublin-Pleasanton lines, authorities said.

The station closed at about 7:40 a.m. after an unknown person reported the threat, BART spokesman Jim Allison said.

[Cafe Crepe coming to Union Station](#)

The Source Jul 24, 2014

The Metro Board earlier today approved a lease agreement with Cafe Crepe to take over the former Union Bagel space in Union Station (the Metro staff report is above). This is the space directly across from Traxx that has been vacant for quite some time.

[Here's the Big Plan to Finally Make Union Station Accessible to Walkers and Bikers](#)

CURBED LA Jul 23, 2014

The plan, seen in this presentation delivered at a public meeting last week (via The Source), recommends five new "esplanades"; wide, tree-lined walkways, including one that would connect Union Station to the Little Tokyo area via Alameda and have a two-way bike path; and improving a cycling route that's particularly hairy at present. It also recommends new esplanades and protected bike lanes for Los Angeles Street, Alameda, and North Broadway; that last one would pass right by the Cornfield park (for improved gawking at music festivals).

[Metro Board approves \\$1.6-billion contract to construct first phase of the Purple Line Extension subway](#)

The Source Jul 24, 2014

After a long discussion, the Metro Board of Directors voted 9 to 3 to approve a \$1.6-billion contract with Skanska, Traylor and Shea, a Joint Venture (STS), on Thursday morning to construct the 3.9-mile first phase of the Purple Line Extension subway. The first phase — with a total budget of \$2.7 billion — is currently forecast to open in 2023.



This is the path in Sacramento to the new passenger platforms which isn't very direct from the station.
Photo by Noel T. Braymer

We Get Emails

Re: Sacramento station, delays on Zephyr and trackage out of Kansas City on SW Chief

We are seasoned rail travelers so we recently began trip through Sacramento to Chicago on the Zephyr June 14, 2014 departure out of SAC and were wondering why they placed the tracks so far out from the station as well as the drop offs for bus and taxi areas. The bedroom cars were all supposed to be a left turn up the ramp, but some passengers who were on the 40 car, had to do a quick hike to the other end of the train once it came in. To top it all off, we were 17 hours late into Chicago due to a tornado that knocked a grain elevator onto tracks in Kansas. At the beginning of the delays, we had to await arrival of the westbound Zephyr into Denver (five hours) to use one of their cars for the over abundance of passengers boarding there. ????. What was the cause of that--they must have known they had all those passengers for a fully reserved train.

Then, with the need for the crew change somewhere in Kansas we sat on a steep embankment in the middle of nowhere. Still can't figure out how the exchange of crews were able to get up or down to the train and why they couldn't have stopped at a city station since they knew they would need the exchange soon--such a waste of energy and expense of the transportation for crews. What brain surgeons figured all that out?

Then on our return on the SW Chief, July 5-7, 2014 we were bounced around that first night out of Chicago (after Kansas City)--seemed worse than usual. What's going on with repairs on that line? That was a four-hour late arrival into Fullerton--not the norm from previous experience.

Thanks for your attention to keeping us informed about the rail situations around the country through your email RailPac news.

Cathy Schamp

Rail, Cruise and Tour Specialist

The Travel Gallery

Re: Earlier San Joaquins

A very thoughtful article! Currently, you catch a bus a 1:30 am from LA, so now you would catch it at about 10:30 pm. Good for a Starlight / San Joaquin one full day round trip. (OK, only railfans would be interested in that.) However, I agree that getting to SF and Sacramento in time for a business meeting would be very popular.

One other think this would open up, is the joint San Joaquin / ACE through ticket option. When ACE was experimenting with the mid day round trip, 711 arrived just in time to transfer to the mid day ACE train, and get a train trip to Fremont (where I live) or San Jose. I used it a couple of times, and it appeared to me that about 1/3 of the passengers were off the San Joaquin. It got you to Fremont at 11:15 am. Note that this would complement the ACE to south bound San Joaquin option that already exists in the evening.

That ACE train doesn't run anymore, but they've added a fourth morning (and evening) train, which leaves Stockton at 7:05 am. It should be an easy connection with an almost 3 hour earlier 711! (It would have about an hour for the bus transfer to the ACE train station, 1/2 hour longer than before.) Fremont arrival would now be 8:40 am and San Jose 9:05.

I think this would be a very popular train indeed. Now, the San Joaquin JPB needs to buy some old slumber coaches (or make them if none are available) and use the low level train set. OK, that's the rail fan in me talking again, but they would be fine for a 4 - 6 hour overnight journey.

Drew Wilson

Re:Your comments about the San Joaquin schedules caught my attention.

On a number of occasions in the past few years, I've taken the 1:45 AM bus out of LA to Bakersfield. My wife will drive me to the Gold Line Sierra Madre Villa station, where for 25 cents I ride into LA. I think it would make a lot of sense to have a bus leaving around 9 PM, with a train leaving BAK around midnight. Wouldn't be very popular with folks going to Fresno, but for Sacramento and the Bay Area it would be just right.

I remember one morning when the bus arrived in Bakersfield a bit early. It was just after a rainstorm (remember those?) and water had accumulated around the bases of some of the trees near the platform. Some mallards had found the puddles and must have thought they were "just ducky".

On one of these trips, I took 711 to Modesto saw some BNSF action, then caught 701 to Sacramento, getting some "rare mileage" through Lodi (a town made famous by Creedence Clearwater Revival). The only other time I had gone to Modesto by train, the station was still in Riverbank, and the connection to downtown Modesto was with a classic Flxible "Art Deco" bus.

I still miss the overnight "Spirit of California" that followed the Coast Line to San Jose, then went to Oakland and Sacramento.

Bob Davis

San Gabriel CA

Re:Earlier San Joaquins

Regarding N/B service from SoCal connecting with early morning busses to Bakersfield. I, when I lived in San Diego, used Metrolink from Oceanside to connect to early bus to Bakersfield. From there Amtrak 711 to Martinez and Ambus to Eureka.

Carl Casalo

Re:Two questions about the barrage of HSR “news”.

1. When did the HSR become primarily about the Central Valley, not the end-points? No difficulty is seeing why this change occurred, but someone will have to go back a decade or more, and study the initiative’s text, to see if this is not a falsification of history.
2. Your Contra Costa Times piece on new private funding conflates investors with beneficiaries of the funding. All the companies named are engineering and construction firms, who will of course rave about it, but are not likely to be sizeable investors, if at all.

Both these matters suggest desperation among hard-core HSR folk as the crucial court decision nears.

Fred Matthews

The Legislature this June approved a guaranteed income from future Cap and Trade revenue for High Speed Rail. The Authority is planning to use this money to borrow a great deal more, which they can do. This will allow them to quicken the pace of construction of the HSR project. If a party can make the monthly payments, lenders are only too happy to lend. The main court battle right now is over issuing the Bond Money approved with Prop 1A. Judge Kenny didn't stop construction of High Speed Rail. He is withholding release of the bond money until the High Speed Rail Authority can produce a financing plan showing how it will pay to build the first 300 miles of High Speed Rail (from Burbank to Merced). If such a plan is presented which is to the Judge's satisfaction that it is in compliance with Prop 1A, he will release the bond money. Many believe the Cap and Train money will meet the Judge's expectations. Even if this court case isn't quickly resolved, the Authority still has funding to continue construction. NB

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