

Subject: Metrolink's ridership sinks, Trucker driver found at fault for 2011 Zephyr crash.

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

To: ntbraymer@yahoo.com;

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RailPAC Weekly E-Newsletter for September 8, 2014

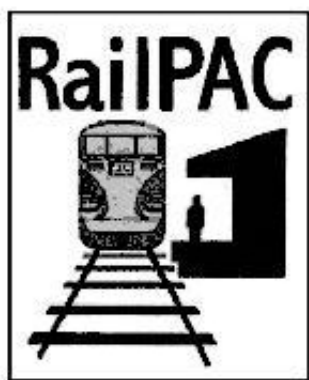
Edited by Noel T. Braymer

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

LOSSAN rail corridor ridership, revenue, and OTP are summarized in the table below:

Service	Ridership (total)	Ridership - Change from Previous Year	Revenue (total)	Revenue - Change from Previous Year	OTP (3 mo. avg)
Pacific Surfliner	692,451	-0.1%	\$ 16,698,172	8.5%	79.7%
Metrolink Ventura County Line	234,304	-7.8%	---	---	95.0%
Metrolink Orange County Line	585,456	-1.1%	---	---	94.9%
COASTER	453,615	-0.5%	---	---	98.1%
LOSSAN Total/Average	1,965,826	-1.5%	\$ 16,698,172	8.5%	91.9%
Amtrak Nationwide	7,989,175	-3.4%	\$ 577,584,838	4.7%	72.5%
Capitol Corridor	371,678	-16.6%	\$ 6,984,045	0.3%	94.9%
San Joaquin	313,990	0.6%	\$ 9,754,347	2.6%	69.5%
Coast Starlight	118,824	-1.2%	\$ 10,902,143	2.9%	79.6%

This is from an informational item in the August 14th LOSSAN Board Meeting agenda on recent rail ridership in California.

[Metrolink Ridership Update – June 2014](#)

Let's Go LA Sep 1, 2014

These numbers are bad any way you look at it. The lines that had been performing decently well and even gaining ridership (Orange County, Orange County – Inland Empire, and 91 Lines) have slipped a little recently. The lines that were already struggling (Riverside, San Bernardino, Antelope Valley, and Ventura Lines) have gotten worse, if anything.

[Metrolink's annual ridership continues to drop](#)

Los Angeles Times-Sep 7, 2014

Once hailed as the fastest-growing commuter line in the nation, the railroad has seen its annual ridership drop by almost 595,000 passengers since 2008, with resulting losses in revenue. That and other factors have left the agency squeezed between trimming service or boosting fares, either of which could prompt more defections.

[Metrolink Connections that exist or should exist Now!](#)

By Noel T. Braymer

The counties that control Metrolink need to demand that it make good connections. Right now each line on Metrolink is run as a private fiefdom for each county. As a result the emphasis is on what that county wants or will pay for, not what will produce the best ridership or greatest passenger revenue.

Connections and flexible ticketing which uses discounts to fill empty seats is common for all passenger carriers today except by rail in this country. This can be handled by on-line ticketing which is often done now by cell phone and using bar codes on emails read from passenger's cell phone. This will encourage more first time and occasional riders who are frustrated by today's often slow, confusing and sometimes broken ticket machines at the stations. This will not take away from commuter traffic on Metrolink. The extra revenues will help keep commuter fares low and attract more commuters.

[Amtrak Wins \\$4.55M for Deadly Nevada Accident](#)

Courthouse News Service-Sept 3, 2014

RENO, Nev. (CN) - A 2011 fireball that killed six people, caused by a truck slamming into Amtrak's California Zephyr, will cost a Nevada trucking company more than \$4.55 million in damages, a federal jury ruled.

Investigators for the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) blamed the June 24 accident at a rail crossing on U.S. 95, about 70 miles east of Reno, on poor maintenance and inattentive driving.

[Amtrak train makes emergency stop in Emporia](#)

Emporia Gazette-Sep 2, 2014

An Amtrak passenger train made an emergency stop in Emporia early Sunday morning. The train was carrying a sick passenger in need of medical assistance. Amtrak passenger trains have not stopped in Emporia since 1999.

[Amtrak train breaks down in Aberdeen, causes delays](#)

Baltimore Sun-Sep 3, 2014

Trains were delayed by more than an hour Wednesday when an Amtrak train to Boston broke down in Aberdeen, officials said.

The 284 passengers aboard Train 178, which left D.C. at 4:05 p.m., eventually switched trains to continue north, according to an Amtrak spokesman.

[A northbound Amtrak train collided with a car on Pembroke Road](#)

Sun Sentinel-Sep 5, 2014

The driver, Margarita Garcia, 50, "was reportedly looking down at her cellphone as she sat on the tracks with the Amtrak train approaching," Broward Sheriff spokeswoman Dani Moschella said.

[Amtrak Train Crashes Into Fallen Tree On Way To Chicago From Detroit](#)

CBS Local-Sep 5, 2014

(WWJ) — Severe storms that crossed Michigan on Friday evening caused some scary moments for travelers on an Amtrak train from Detroit to Chicago when the train hit a large tree that fell across the track.

[Amtrak demands probe of CN freight trains](#)

Voices-Sept 2, 2014

Amtrak is asking federal authorities to investigate "unacceptable" train delays it says Canadian National Railway freight traffic is causing on Amtrak's Illini/Saluki service from Chicago to Carbondale.

The line saw a dismal on-time rate of 48 percent in the quarter ending June 30, and of only 42 percent in the quarter before that, Amtrak data indicated.

[Amtrak: New tunnels needed after Sandy damage](#)

Asbury Park Press - Sep 1, 2014

NEW YORK – Structural problems in the 104-year-old Hudson River tunnels were exacerbated by 13 million gallons of salt water that flooded them after superstorm Sandy, an event that Amtrak officials confirm will require closing the old tubes for a year for a complete rebuilding.

[A New Penn Station Wing for Amtrak in New York May Be Closer Than We Thought](#)

CityLab-Sep 1, 2014

If there's anything the countless passengers moving through New York City's Penn Station this holiday weekend can agree on, it's the difficulty and general unpleasantness of moving through Penn Station.

Despite being America's most heavily trafficked transit node, Penn Station remains a grim and crowded place. You don't even need to know it once looked like this:

[Amtrak ridership jumps between Boston and Maine](#)

Boston Globe-Sep 4, 2014

“Ridership is definitely rising” on the line, which is used mostly for leisure trips, said Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority Executive Director Patricia Quinn.

Station Ridership Report			
Pacific Surfliner - FY 2012/13			
	Station	Passenger Ons/Offs	% Change vs. FY 2011/12
1	Los Angeles	1,343,253	-1.2%
2	San Diego	696,996	-2.6%
3	Solana Beach	428,414	0.8%
4	Irvine	418,893	-13.7%
5	Oceanside	367,667	10.5%
6	Anaheim	351,157	-0.9%
7	Fullerton	290,696	-8.6%
8	Santa Barbara	277,065	4.9%
9	San Juan Capistrano	243,424	1.8%
10	Santa Ana	199,802	2.3%
11	San Diego (Old Town)	118,665	211.4%
12	San Luis Obispo	73,284	7.7%
13	Goleta	69,291	21.7%
14	Oxnard	67,141	-6.2%
15	Van Nuys	66,704	2.3%
16	Chatsworth	55,718	6.1%
17	Ventura	53,232	13.7%
18	Burbank	46,845	9.1%
19	Glendale	42,247	6.6%
20	Camarillo	39,558	6.7%
21	Simi Valley	35,467	-2.9%
22	Carpinteria	24,428	20.8%
23	Grover Beach	19,213	7.3%
24	Moorpark	15,136	6.3%
25	San Clemente	11,951	25.1%
26	Guadalupe	11,520	2.8%
27	Lompoc/Surf	8,307	25.8%
Total Pax On/Offs		5,376,074	1.0%
Total Ridership		2,688,037	1.0%

Data from an informational item in the August 14th LOSSAN Board Meeting agenda.

[State Wins Latest High Speed Rail Court Battle](#)

Capital Public Radio News-Sep 2, 2014

The California 3rd District Court of Appeal today refused to grant a rehearing in a case challenging the use of bond funding to build High Speed Rail. The decision is a win for the state which is counting on selling bonds to help fund the project. The plaintiffs have already announced they will appeal this latest ruling to the California Supreme Court. If the court declines to hear the case, California could begin

issuing the bonds.

[Kings County Residents Ask California Supreme Court to Overturn Approval of High Speed Rail Bonds](#)

The San Francisco Appeal - Sep 3, 2014

A farmer, a landowner and Kings County asked the California Supreme Court today to overturn an appeals court ruling that would allow an \$8.6 billion bond sale for the state's future high-speed rail system.

[Abandoned Fresno building to be demolished for high-speed rail](#)

KFSN-TV-Sep 1, 2014

FRESNO, Calif: Crews are scheduled to gut out an old abandoned building in Downtown Fresno on Tuesday before it is demolished next week. It's all part of the prep work for high-speed rail. On Tuesday, crews from the High-Speed Rail Authority will remove unsafe areas from what used to be the old Del Monte packing house. Firefighters have gone to several large fires in the area over the past several months including a large one which happened there in May.

[Comment period extended for two California high-speed rail projects](#)

Progressive Rail Roding-Sep 4, 2014

The California High-Speed Rail Authority has extended the public comment period to Sept. 12 for the Palmdale-to-Burbank and Burbank-to-Los Angeles high-speed rail projects.

[Japanese consortium vying for California high-speed rail project](#)

The Japan Times-Sep 5, 2014

WASHINGTON – A Japanese consortium that includes East Japan Railway Co. is determined to win a high-speed rail project in California, the company's chairman said on Thursday.... The state government plans to start work next month for selecting railcars to be used for the service, and will decide on a supplier in the first half of 2015.

[Burbank seeks answers on bullet train's impact](#)

Burbank Leader-Sep 5, 2014

In a letter, the council requested the authority study station locations that maximize transit connectivity and support access to the Bob Hope Airport, while minimizing traffic impacts, as well as alternatives that minimize right-of-way requirements, such as an underground station.

[Developers Don't Want to Pay for Caltrain/HSR Extension to Transbay Center](#)

Streetsblog San Francisco (blog)-Sep 5, 2014

Developers who are building towers around the Transbay Transit Center in SoMa are fighting to reduce a special property tax that will be levied on developments in the area. The biggest loser could be the downtown rail extension to bring Caltrain and California high-speed rail into the terminal, as funds for the regional rail hub and other long-term projects would disappear.

A rendering of the Transbay Transit Center and surrounding high-rise development to come, via TransbayCenter.org The group of developers is backed by former mayor Willie Brown, who registered as an official lobbyist to work for them in July...

[Tunnelling under London - the Crossrail project \(26 photos\)](#)

Yahoo News Sep 2, 2014

The tunneling machine with a 7.1m diameter cutterhead is being used for the massive Crossrail project which will link many parts of the London transport network to cut journey times and alleviate congestion, with a scheduled completion in five years.

[High-speed dream turns sour on Milan to Rome rail route](#)

The Independent-Sep 4, 2014

For thousands of Italians making the regular – and wearing – 300-mile trip between Milan and Rome, it seemed too good to be true when not one, but two high-speed rail services emerged in the past few years to whisk them to their destination.

The journey time was slashed from six to three hours and the existence of rival firms meant lower prices. But not for the first time the dream of fair competition and a better deal for consumers is turning sour in one of Europe's most sclerotic economies.

[\\$5B Committed For Baltimore-DC High-Speed Train](#)

CBS Local-Sep 4, 2014

BALTIMORE (WJZ) — A group that wants to put in a new high-speed train between Baltimore and Washington D.C. says they've already lined up \$5 Billion to do it...

They are called magnetic levitation trains or 'maglev' developed in Japan. The super-speed trains travel at more than 300 miles per hour and could get passengers from Washington to Baltimore in just 15 minutes. An eventual expansion could travel up to New York in another 45 minutes.

[Department of Energy evaluating Nuclear Waste Train Idea](#)

Uncover California-Aug 31, 2014

The Department of Energy has asked for suggestions from companies to provide ideas for managing and shifting the radioactive nuclear waste. The shifting of nuclear waste from power plants to disposal sites is a crucial project. However, the government officials are clueless about how to proceed with the project.

[Dickinson oil train bill heads to governor](#)

Sacramento Bee-Sep 2, 2014

The bill, AB 380, orders railroad companies to provide state and local emergency officials with information about oil and hazardous materials that may be shipped through their jurisdictions.

[Federal grant to help boost Tucson's rail capacity](#)

Arizona Daily Star-Sep 4, 2014

The Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant was awarded to the Port of Tucson and Pima County by the U.S. Department of Transportation...

Since its designation as a dry seaport last year, the Port of Tucson has been able to service ocean containers rolling in on rail directly from Long Beach and Los Angeles ports.

Prior to that, imports had to be unloaded in California and trucked to Tucson. The ability to receive an 80-car, double-stacked train removes 160 trucks from the interstates, officials note.

[Rail Photos of the Month: August 2014](#)

Posted by Russ Jackson

Here are this month's photos by RailPAC photographers.

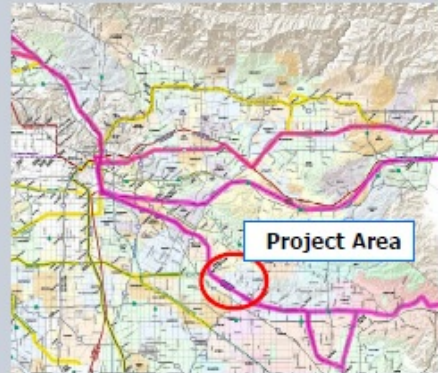
NINE (9) of them this time from everywhere!

Click on each photo to see it full size!

Contributions to this page are welcome. Send your jpg rail photos to Russ Jackson, RailPAC Photo Editor, at info@railpac.org.

Rosecrans/Marquardt Grade Separation

- > Grade separates the No.1 hazardous crossing in the state.
- > Part of the BNSF Triple Track Project.
- > Needed for safety and capacity.
- > Benefits passenger and freight rail.
- > Schedule:
 - > PS&E Feb. 2015 – Feb. 2017
 - > Constr. June 2017 – June 2019



Graphic from the PowerPoint presentation by LA Metro given on Aug 14th at the LOSSAN Board Meeting.

[Annual Steel Wheels Conference](#)

**Held by RailPAC and NARP
Sacramento, November 15, 2014
At the California State Railroad Museum**

[Southern California transportation leaders looking toward \\$2 billion cap-and-trade windfall](#)

Contra Costa Times-Sep 5, 2014

ANAHEIM >> Southern California leaders are anticipating a \$2 billion windfall in transportation dollars from the state's expanding cap-and-trade program that could be used for building more pay lanes or funding the county's growing bus and rail system.

[Future Inland Empire transportation projects discussed at summit](#)

Inland Valley Daily Bulletin-Sep 6, 2014

Major Inland Empire transportation projects, such as the 91 Freeway widening, the Colton Crossing rail overpass, and extending the Gold Line light rail system eastward, were addressed Friday as part of the annual Southern California infrastructure conference, known as the Mobility 21 Summit, in Anaheim. In the shadow of the Disneyland Monorail, transportation leaders, business community members, and elected officials from across the region met at the summit to address issues and find solutions toward creating better transportation infrastructure for the area.

[OC Transportation, Metrolink Officials To Launch Safety Campaign](#)

CBS Local-Sep 4, 2014

Spokesperson for the campaign and volunteer for Operation Lifesaver, Mark Kalina, will share his personal experience of losing his legs after getting caught under a moving train at 10 a.m. at the Orange Metrolink/Amtrak Station.

[California agencies kick off rail safety month](#)

Railway Track & Structures-Sep 5, 2014

Metrolink, Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) and Operation Lifesaver Inc., launched a combined safety campaign September 4 of "See Tracks? Think Train!" to honor Rail Safety Awareness month in California.

[State grant aims to improve safety at crossings](#)

Thousand Oaks Acorn-Sep 4, 2014

Three railroad crossings along Metrolink's Ventura County Line in Simi Valley will receive safety upgrades next year following the California Transportation Commission allocation of \$7.4 million in transportation bond funds to the regional rail company.

[Santa Cruz County passenger rail study to be sharpened](#)

Santa Cruz Sentinel-Sept 3, 2014

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission on Thursday is likely to narrow its study on a potential future commuter train.

After receiving 2,000 comments on the proposal, the commission will consider focusing an ongoing study to five scenarios offering a range of service, from limited, tourist-oriented weekend trips to a more robust schedule aimed at getting workers to and from their jobs throughout the week.

[The Problems With Putting Rail in Freeway Medians](#)

Pedestrian Observations Sep 1, 2014

North Americans are in love with trains that go in highway medians. A large fraction of urban rail construction since World War Two, both light rail and full metro, has used highway medians as cheap at-grade rights-of-way to extend train service, often deep into the suburbs.

[Caltrain grapples with ridership surge in S.F., Peninsula](#)

Silicon Valley Business Journal-Aug 31, 2014

The agency is negotiating to buy as many as 16 used passenger cars from Los Angeles' MetroLink transit agency. That deal, with an estimated cost of \$4 million to \$6 million, would allow Caltrain to run longer trains within a year. Meanwhile, Caltrain is looking at ways to tweak its schedule to add more trains during off-peak hours. This could help decrease the standing-room-only phenomenon.

[Downtown L.A. streetcar line cost estimate is shaved by \\$55 million](#)

Los Angeles Times Sep 2, 2014

But the lower price tag of about \$270 million could still complicate the city's bid for a \$75-million construction grant, a crucial portion of the streetcar funding plan. Projects that cost more than \$250 million must compete for federal dollars alongside the nation's most expensive and sophisticated transit proposals, including subway lines.

[Whittier, Commerce, Pico Rivera, Santa Fe Springs unite to lobby Metro](#)

The Whittier Daily News-Sep 1, 2014

The Gold Line will eventually be extended east, along either a 60 Freeway or Washington Boulevard route...

The Washington Blvd. Light Rail Transit Coalition, made up of representatives from Whittier, Commerce,

Pico Rivera and Santa Fe Springs, was formed in late 2013 to back the Washington Boulevard Route.

[Train collides with car in Burbank](#)

Burbank Leader-Sept 2, 2014

Metrolink lines 215, 217, 224, 226 were all canceled due to the incident. The tracks at the crossing, however, are reportedly open for trains to ride on restricted speeds, Lustgarten said.

The California Highway Patrol issued a Sig Alert at 3:54 p.m. for the northbound and southbound Buena Vista Street offramps of the Golden State (5) Freeway, which lasted about four hours.

[Metrolink adds late-night weekend trains for LA County Fair fans](#)

Los Angeles Times-Sep 2, 2014

If you're planning to take Metrolink to visit the Los Angeles County Fair in Pomona this weekend or any weekend in September, feel free to stay until closing time. The commuter rail service will run late trains on weekends between Pomona and downtown L.A. during the fair's run.

Bob Hope Airport Pedestrian Bridge



Another graphic from the PowerPoint presentation by LA Metrol to the LOSSAN Board on Aug 14th.

We Get Emails

Re: What's wrong with the Railroads?

A quick thank-you for the RailPac Newsletter. A most valuable source of information.

Sometimes you do bring one to near despair for the railroad industry. I was astonished to learn from the Omaha World-Herald story that after all the to-do about Fort Worth's Tower 51 the interchange is still at grade. I am sure that another N-S track will help and I would hope that the signaling is better, but I truly am Gobsmaeked that they have not done a grade separation. The railroads that are supplying goods and materials for 25 million Texans and running both an international and transcontinental route through that

interchange don't think it is worth grade separating? Amazing, particularly combined with the fact that money has been almost free for the last decade hence a perfect time for infrastructure projects. I just can't fathom their view.

But, again good information is why I do appreciate the Newsletter.

Tom Schlegel

San Diego

Re: ALWAYS SUCH IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Your emails are so informative, so important. Thank you for the great communication.

Bob Fisher,

Nevada Broadcasters Association

Thank You both Mr Fisher and Mr Schlegel. I couldn't do this without the internet and search engines. There is a great deal of useful information on the internet, but it is often drowned out by the background noise. Good information is critical to making good decisions. Bad information always lead to more problems. NB

Re:Metrolink Connections editorial

I was just wondering why. You didn't just Downtown Burbank Metrolink for the connections.

Between the Antelope Valley and Ventura County Line. Does Metrolink use Los Angeles

for all of its connections between it's trains?

Jerry Martin

Making connections is not easy. It took the Swiss 10 years to create a schedule for just one hour that had connections to all trains, buses and ferries. After that they just used that same schedule all day long, 7 days a week.

A quick look at the current schedules of the Ventura and Antelope Valley Lines shows some of the problems making connections. The southbound Ventura Line to Los Angeles has stations stops at Burbank with the 102 at 6:52 AM, the 104 at 7:30 AM and the 106 at 8:08 AM. The northbound Antelope Valley trains from Los Angeles arrive in Burbank with the 201 at 6:47 AM, the 203 at 7:46 and the 205 at 8:47 AM. As you can see from this small sample, if you are going from the Ventura County Line to the Antelope Valley Line, you miss your connection by 5 minutes between the 102 and 201. You have a 16 minute wait between the 104 and 203 and a 39 minute wait between the 106 and 205.

It is a lot of work trying to find what connections exist now. We can make some adjustments to the schedules to improve the connections and promote them to increase ridership. The long term solution is to so what the Swiss did and create a schedule that is the same for all trains all day long 7 days a week that connects. But that won't be possible until we have the run-through tracks at Union Station and additional tracks on more lines to improve on-time performance. NB

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

The RailPAC Mission: Passenger Rail advocacy, Publications...both print and electronic, Representation at regional meetings, and Rail education.

Join us! More memberships increase our strength in presenting the case for rail to policymakers at all levels!

You can send your comments to me at nbraymer@railpac.org

For those who would like an additional copy of the eNewsletter with plain text (minus photos and graphics) just email me at nbraymer@railpac.org with

your name and email address. NB

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