

<b>Subject:</b>	SNOW stops Amtrak,More Metrolink Problems,Why LD Train Travel is worth it,BART in the new.
<b>From:</b>	Rail Passenger Association of California (noelnoelt@cox.net)
<b>To:</b>	ntbraymer@yahoo.com;
<b>Date:</b>	Monday, November 24, 2014 9:30 AM

## RailPAC Weekly E-Newsletter for November 24, 2014

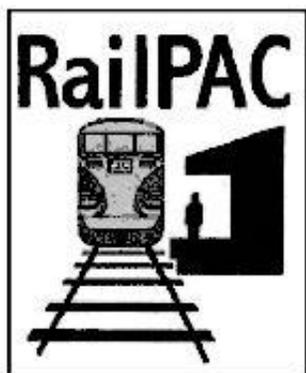
Edited by Noel T. Braymer

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



The nearly completed Anaheim Regional Transit Intermodal Center (ARTIC) getting the last finishing touches before its grand opening on December 13th. Photo by Noel T. Bryamer

### [Whistle-blower: INDOT wasted time on alternative](#)

Journal and Courier-Nov 18, 2014

The Indiana Department of Transportation expects to reach agreement with Amtrak to continue operating the Hoosier State passenger rail service between Indianapolis and Chicago, INDOT spokesman Will Wingfield said.

### [The Indiana Toll Road and the Dark Side of Privately Financed Highways](#)

Streetsblog USA Nov 18, 2014

At a time when government and Wall Street are raring to team up on privately financed infrastructure, a look at the Indiana Toll Road reveals several of the red flags to beware in all such deals: an opaque agreement based on proprietary information the public cannot access; a profit-making strategy by the private financier that relies on securitization and fees, divorced from the actual infrastructure product or service; and faulty assumptions underpinning the initial investment, which can incur huge public expense down the line. Though made in the name of innovation and efficiency, private finance deals are often more expensive than conventional bonding, threatening to suck money from taxpayers while propping up infrastructure projects that should never get built.

### [The Great Traffic Projection Swindle](#)

Streetsblog USA Nov 20, 2014

This is the final piece in a three-part series about privately-financed roads. In the first two parts of this series, we looked at the Indiana Toll Road as an example of the growth in privately financed highways, and how financial firms can turn these assets into profits, even if the road itself is a big money loser. In

this piece, we examine the shaky assumptions that toll road investments are based on, and how that is putting the public at risk.

### [Amtrak still stalled in Rochester](#)

Rochester Democrat and Chronicle-Nov 19, 2014

Amtrak officials, citing on-going problems related to Buffalo's mega-snowfall, said Wednesday they didn't know when most passenger train service would be restored to Rochester.

The railroad's service across upstate New York was halted at mid-day Tuesday as snow began to pile up in Buffalo.

### [Nearly 3 Feet Of Snow Falls On Buffalo Area; Amtrak Service Snagged](#)

CBS Local-Nov 19, 2014

Amtrak trains that run through upstate New York will be halted at Albany through Wednesday afternoon, after a snowstorm described as being among the worst in recent memory pounded the Buffalo area.

### [Amtrak restores service through Buffalo, says other lines remain suspended](#)

The Post-Standard - syracuse.com-Nov 19, 2014

BUFFALO, N.Y. -- Passenger service provider Amtrak said Wednesday night that it would be restoring some train service through Western New York.

Beginning Thursday, service will be restored with trains 63 and 64, the Maple Leaf, between New York City and Toronto, via Albany-Rensselaer, Rochester, Buffalo and Niagara Falls.

### [Amtrak to restore full service west of Albany on Saturday](#)

Albany Times Union (blog)-Nov 21, 2014

Amtrak said it expects to operate all scheduled trains west of Albany on Saturday, but cautioned passengers that some trains may face delays because of the heavy amounts of snow in the Buffalo area and resulting traffic congestion on the rails.

### [Amtrak blames freight operators for hours-long delays](#)

Detroit Free Press-Nov 18, 2014

In a complaint filed Monday with the U.S. Surface Transportation Board, Amtrak said in a news release that Norfolk Southern Railway and CSX Transportation caused "unacceptable delays" effecting its Capitol Limited service for the quarter that ended Sept. 30, "down from an already substandard 33.6% the previous quarter."

### [Patience is helpful virtue among Amtrak's riders](#)

Pittsburgh Post Gazette-Nov 22, 2014

America has the world's best railroads for moving freight and some of the worst for moving people — the trains slicing through Pittsburgh epitomize that truth.

Amtrak, which runs only three passenger trains a day out of Pittsburgh, filed a federal complaint last week saying Norfolk Southern freight trains aren't getting out of the way between here and Chicago, as federal law requires.

### [Amtrak vital to our economy](#)

Albuquerque Journal-Nov 22, 2014

Amtrak's proposal to maintain the line is for Kansas, Colorado and New Mexico is for each to contribute \$4 million annually for 10 years, with an additional annual commitment of \$4 million each from BNSF and Amtrak. The two letters state the request is for \$7 million.

The overall impact of the Southwest Chief to New Mexico is outlined in a study released by the N.M. Department of Transportation on Nov. 6. NMDOT estimates that total output (labor income and gross

regional product – a measurement of newly created value through production in a region) at \$22.4 million. Direct and indirect (e.g., hospitality industry) employment is 283 people. State and local taxes paid by BNSF for the northern route are \$1.7 million.

What is impossible to measure in dollar amounts is the increased mobility the daily train provides to the residents of New Mexico.

### [6 Reasons Why Long Distance Train Travel Is Worth It](#)

Huffington Post Nov 23, 2014

Taking a long-distance train is not the fastest mode of transportation, but it's certainly much more relaxing than being crammed into flying metal tube with 150 of your closest friends. As long as you're not in a hurry, it's a great way to unplug, de-stress and maybe even meet some new friends. It's something everyone should experience, because there are few better ways to experience the country.

### [Don't be quick to bash rail — an engine of the economy](#)

The Seattle Times Nov 21, 2014

Washington's exports originate from more than a dozen states and provinces with a combined gross domestic product of about \$2 trillion, equal to Italy's or Australia's. The bulk of trade volume comes by rail.

It is no exaggeration that without freight rail, the Pacific Northwest would be a sparsely populated backwater with only a subsistence economy. Operators of inland farms, forests, mines and manufacturing plants simply could not get products to customers. Anyone living farther than a truck trip from a seaport would be cut off from the global economy.

### [Options for B&P tunnel replacement narrow as Amtrak considers future](#)

Baltimore Sun-Nov 19, 2014

State and federal officials narrowed the options for replacing an old Baltimore tunnel that bottlenecks East Coast passenger rail to two, one of which could displace residents of a poor west-side neighborhood already plagued by vacant homes. The two proposals, both of which would require extensive tunneling, were shortlisted recently as part of an engineering and environmental review aimed at replacing the nearly 150-year-old Baltimore & Potomac Tunnel, which twists under the city, slowing traffic along Amtrak's Northeast Corridor.

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

SFBay-Nov 21, 2014

Anticipating a rush of travelers over the Thanksgiving holiday, Amtrak and the Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority are adding extra trains and buses to accommodate more passengers, Amtrak officials said Thursday. Amtrak will add 7,300 seats to the Pacific Surfliner route and will require reservations for travel beginning Tuesday through Dec. 1.



Seen here speaking at the Steel Wheels Conference in Sacramento on November 14th is Jeff Morales, CEO of the California High Speed Rail Authority. Picture by Bruce C. Jenkins

## [Steel Wheels in California Conference Presentations](#)

### **Presentation Files:**

#### [NARP Update](#)

Robert Stewart, Chair, NARP

#### [NARP Today ... and Tomorrow!](#)

Jim Mathews, President, NARP

#### [ACEforward and San Joaquin JPA](#)

Dan Leavitt, Manager of Regional Initiatives, San Joaquin JPA

#### [Latent Opportunities of the National Network](#)

Andrew Selden, United Rail Passenger Alliance

#### [Las Vegas Railway Express \(OTCMKTS:XTRN\) Monday Stock Spotlight](#)

MicroCap Daily-Nov 17, 2014

Las Vegas Railway Express (OTCMKTS:XTRN) is an exciting story developing way down in sub penny stock land on the OTCBB. The stock has captured investors imaginations and is currently exploding skywards on record breaking volume.

XTRN has seen a significant reversal after the stock hit an all-time low of \$0.0011. The recent explosive move up comes after XTRN drifted downward for months on little volume or interest ever since it was trading over \$1.50 per share back in February of this year.

#### [Del Monte demolition in downtown Fresno uncovers old tunnel](#)

Fresno Bee-Nov 17, 2014

Workers demolishing the old Del Monte plant in downtown Fresno to make way for California's high-

speed rail network recently uncovered an old industrial tunnel once used to move raisins under Tulare Street from one processing plant to another

### [High-speed rail agency seeks builders for Kern County route segment](#)

Bakersfield Californian-Nov 21, 2014

The California High-Speed Rail Authority Friday issued a request for qualifications to contractors that might be interested in building Construction Package 4, a 30-mile stretch of the bullet-train route through Kern County northwest of Bakersfield. The request represents a pre-screening step that will eventually lead to establishing a short list of contractor teams that will be deemed eligible to bid to design and build the project.

### [Cleaner machines for rail construction](#)

Fresno Bee-Nov 19, 2014

The California High-Speed Rail Authority is requiring contractors to use the latest, cleanest-burning diesel heavy equipment for construction of its bullet-train route, including the first 29-mile segment in Madera and Fresno counties. Video by Tim Sheehan with photos by John Walker, The Fresno Bee

### [Dec. 2: Next Meeting on Bullet Train Burbank-Palmdale Route](#)

SCVNEWS.com-Nov 20, 2014

The California High-Speed Rail Authority will hold another round of public meetings in December to discuss and gather public input on alternative Burbank-to-Palmdale routes.

The first meeting is on Tuesday, Dec. 2, 2014 in Santa Clarita.

Since holding the public scoping meetings in the same corridor in August, the Authority has made more refinements for its proposed alignments.

### [Rail congestion sends more grain to market on barges](#)

Green Bay Press Gazette-Nov 20, 2014

MINNEAPOLIS – Railroad bottlenecks, congestion and high freight prices have frustrated Minnesota farmers this year as they try to sell their corn and soybeans.

Now some are turning to an alternative: barges instead of railcars. They are bypassing rail terminals and driving to river ports, giving the barge industry a modest but significant bump in business.

### [Are Hybrids the Future for Locomotives?](#)

**By Noel T. Braymer**

The Diesel-Electric locomotive has been around since the 1930's. Since the 1950's it has been the standard locomotive for most American Railroads. The Diesel-Electrics drove out the Steam locomotives for simple economic reasons: one Diesel-Electric could do the work of at least 3 steam locomotives. Will economics again drive out the Diesel-Electric with a new challenger?

### [Advanced Rail Energy Storage \(ARES\): Using Trains to Store ...](#)

Big Picture Agriculture-Nov 21, 2014

This system, called Advanced Rail Energy Storage (ARES), is being tested right now in Tehachapi, California. It uses a diesel engine and carries a four ton concrete pad. Its developers have patented the system and it has been peer reviewed.

### [California sees reserves growing more than \\$4 billion over two years](#)

Reuters - Nov 19, 2014

(Reuters) - California's state budget will accumulate more than \$4 billion of reserves in the next two years, the budget watchdog estimated on Wednesday, a sign of significant progress for the debt-ridden state.

California's Legislative Analyst's Office said much of the extra money would most likely go toward education, the state's rainy day fund, and potentially paying down liabilities.

### [Caltrain delayed by tunnel fire at 18th Street](#)

abc7news.com-Nov 21, 2014

SAN FRANCISCO --Several trains operated by Caltrain were delayed by more than 20 minutes Friday after crews doused a minor fire in a tunnel at 18th Street Friday afternoon, a Caltrain spokeswoman said.

### [New Oakland airport BART service starts Saturday](#)

San Jose Mercury News-Nov 21, 2014

OAKLAND -- BART on Saturday opens a \$484 million new rail extension providing airline passengers a speedier and more convenient way to reach the Oakland International Airport.

Transportation officials say the tram makes the Bay Area more connected because now it will have two airports -- Oakland and San Francisco International Airport -- accessible by rail.

### [BART's Oakland Airport shuttle gets rave reviews](#)

SFGate-Nov 23, 2014

#### **Image 1 of 24**

Jordan Olling photographs an Oakland Airport Connector train pull away from the airport station in Oakland, Calif. on Friday, Nov. 21, 2014. BART'S new rail link providing a seamless connection from the Coliseum station to Oakland International Airport begins regular service Saturday.

### [BART line to San Jose lurching into view, in fits and starts](#)

SFGate-Nov 18, 2014

Long considered a good idea, getting BART to San Jose continues to be a struggle — despite the generosity of South Bay voters, who have twice raised their sales taxes, and support from the tech industry.

After already curtailing plans for a Silicon Valley BART extension once, South Bay transportation officials are retrenching and considering cutting back again, this time by eliminating two stations from a future extension now seeking funding.

### [BART transbay service recovering from major delays](#)

SFGate-Nov 20, 2014

BART was recovering from major delays Thursday night after an equipment problem on a train snarled transbay service, officials said. The delay was reported around 8:35 p.m. between the West Oakland and Embarcadero stations.

### [Graphic: How much more renters pay to be near BART stations](#)

San Francisco Business Times (blog)-Nov 21, 2014

How much is it worth to live next to a BART station?

A study by apartment listing and rental payment app RadPad found that 1-bedroom apartments near San Francisco's Embarcadero BART station averaged a whopping \$3,548 per month — about twice as much as similar apartments further away from the downtown core.

### [Metrolink auditor probing irregularities at railroad is put on leave](#)

Los Angeles Times-Nov 20, 2014

Metrolink's chief auditor, who was probing financial and management irregularities at the six-county commuter railroad, has been placed on leave by the board of directors, an action that could prompt her resignation.

In a sign of continuing problems at Metrolink, the board took the action last Friday against Barbara

Manning during a closed session before its regular meeting. The reason was not disclosed.

### [Hop the Metrolink for easy ride to Los Angeles](#)

San Bernardino County Sun-Nov 21, 2014

I don't get to travel much by rail these days as Southern California is a motorist's area, so I was looking forward to a trip to Los Angeles the other day aboard the Metrolink out of San Bernardino.

As I tried to figure out the ticket machine, I was wondering if this is an age challenge problem — as in, young people always seem to understand them, while we older ones need to read the instructions first.

Fortunately, the station wasn't very busy.

### [Number of suicides reduced on Metro, Metrolink train tracks since 2012](#)

The Pasadena Star-News - Nov 19, 2014

Since March 2013, Hirsch has been working with the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority and Metrolink to extend a lifeline to people contemplating ending their lives. For example, pedestrian deaths, including suicides, grew at alarming rates on the Blue Line light-rail system from downtown Los Angeles to Long Beach since the line opened in 1990.

### [Garcetti motion encourages affordable housing at Metro stations](#)

Streetsblog L.A. Nov 13, 2014

Earlier today, the Metro board of directors passed a motion [PDF] encouraging Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) and affordable housing.

The motion may give some indication of where the board's newest chair, Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti, hopes to take the agency. Garcetti has been a vocal proponent of siting affordable housing along transit lines. Garcetti authored the motion and shepherded its passage in the face of concerns expressed by other Metro boardmembers. The motion helps Metro to play a greater role in fostering affordable housing at its rail stations and along its transit corridors

### [LACMTA ridership — October, 2014 data](#)

Let's Go LA Nov 16, 2014

Ridership was generally up a little bit on all lines. The Green and Blue Lines remain well below their peak ridership months in the second half of 2012, as is the Red Line below peak months in 2013. Gold Line ridership remained near all-time highs, while Expo Line was flat except for Sunday ridership. Expo Line ridership was flat in the second half of 2013 as well, so we'll have to see if 2015 brings another surge. Trends were similar across weekdays, Saturday, and Sunday, except for the Red Line on Sundays, which had some of its best numbers on record.

### [New Metro Bus Line To Connect NoHo, Burbank, Glendale, Pasadena](#)

Burbank Leader Nov 19, 2014

The proposed expansion of bus service would connect the Metro Red and Orange Line station in North Hollywood to the Gold Line station at Lake Avenue in Pasadena, with a stop at the Burbank Bob Hope Airport.

**This provides a connection from these place to Metrolink and Amtrak at Bob Hope Airport. NB**

### [Gold Line Extension Arcadia Transit Center Ready To Go](#)

Crown City News Nov 17, 2014

Mayor John Wuo said "Going back to the early stages of the Gold Line Project, when this triangle piece of land was deemed unusable for parking and would likely end up being a pavement access-way to the station, the City decided that this would be a great opportunity to make the area not just a usable space, but also an attractive space for future Gold Line patrons and the Arcadia community. "



Recent photo of construction at the Arcadia Station on the extension of the Gold Line in the San Gabriel Valley in Los Angeles County. Photo by Noel T. Braymer

## We Get Emails

### Re: Railroad employee Pay

Story 3, on the Amtrak engineer beaten by gangsters in Sacto, said,-- actually the linked Sac Bee story said that he made \$83 000 / year. I was in the wrong business.

Yorkman Lowe

**The issue may not be that rail employees are overpaid, but that many of us are underpaid. An apartment that rented for \$200 a month in Los Angles in 1970, can now go for \$2,000 a month At least the railroads are busy and I believe are hiring. NB**

### Re:Everything Starts in California

Wikipedia says the Pennsylvania Turnpike "opened October 1, 1940, as the first long-distance limited-access highway in the United States, leading to the construction of other limited access toll roads and the interstate highway system."

JDR

**According to Wikipedia "The Arroyo Seco Parkway (opening in 1940), formerly known as the Pasadena Freeway, is the first freeway in the Western United States." Freeways by nature are "toll-free" while Turnpikes are toll roads. California started much of the "car-culture" in this country centered around freeways and urban sprawl. The first "limited-access highways" were the German autobahns started in the 1930's. NB**

### Re: Milwaukee ROW letter of Nov 17

As a Montana resident of 34 years, having worked for BN and MRL on the ex-NP main [train/engine service] and having seen the last of the Milwaukee west of Miles City die, I can only say if the Milwaukee were ever to be reactivated most of it would likely have to be built all over again, if any ROW still has rails [?] I doubt it would be up to current, super heavy train standards.

I can offer that the connection between BNSF ex NP line and Milw. at Terry Montana was activated and coal trains were run there beginning in the early 80's, thru South Dakota and a state rail authority ownership of tracks, have HEARD that BNSF owns the line now. Whether it goes thru to Minnesota or what part thereof.. Twin Cities? I have no idea. But I wouldn't expect to see the whole line restored and activated again for a long time into the future..but who knows.

Ed Davis Sr,  
Boise Idaho

### **Re: Milwaukee ROW letter of Nov 17**

You had a question in the weekly newsletter about the status of the abandoned Milwaukee Road right of way over the Cascades in Washington. My understanding is that BNSF owns it, and has it banked for possible (far-) future railroad use. BNSF reacquired the ex-Northern Pacific line through Yakima and re-built and re-opened the NP's Stampede Pass line about 15 years ago to provide additional capacity over the Cascades. BNSF also uses the SP&S line vis Pasco and Vancouver, WA as a third line. I suspect it will be a very long time before it would make sense to invest the billion or more dollars it would take to re-create a main line railroad over the Milwaukee's grade over Snoqualamie Pass and its two-mile summit tunnel.

Andrew Selden

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