



August 6, 2015

OneRail Coalition Panel Highlights State Transportation and Rail Public-Private Partnerships

As part of the OneRail Coalition's mission to raise the visibility of passenger and freight rail, the Coalition is organizing panels on state/railroad partnerships at the regional meetings of state transportation departments.

At the Western Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (WASHTO) meeting in Boise, ID, Clint Schelbitzki, General Director of Network & Business Development at Union Pacific participated on a panel with Oregon DOT Director Matt Garrett and CalTrans Rail Division Director Bruce Roberts. Both state DOTs highlighted state programs that provided critical funding support for projects which improved the fluidity and productivity of the freight rail network.

In Oregon, Union Pacific's Hinkle Yard was expanded, reducing average dwell times from 4.2 to 2.7 hours. Director Garrett made the point that Oregon's partnership with Union Pacific served the interests of both the state and UP to meet growing freight rail demand in an economical, environmental friendly, and safe way.

In California, the Colton Crossing rail-to-rail grade separation cleared up a major chokepoint between Union Pacific and BNSF rail traffic. With the parallel I-10 freeway already carrying a large amount of truck traffic and with no reasonable options to expand its capacity, fixing this chokepoint to improve rail movements was a logical step to keep freight moving efficiently in and out of the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach.

Both states have dedicated funding sources for freight and multimodal projects. In Oregon, dedicated funds from the ConnectOregon program support dozens of non-highway investments, with Hinkle Yard being but one example.

California's Trade Corridors Improvement Fund (TCIF) focuses on corridors with high freight volumes. This program was an important tool in enabling the partnership with Union Pacific and BNSF and a strong point in securing federal TIGER funding for the project. Funds for this program initially came from a voter supported referendum and now are part of the state's cap and trade program.

At the Southern Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (SASHTO) meeting in Nashville, Jay Westbrook, AVP of Passenger Operations of CSX, partnered with Jennifer Mitchell, Director of the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transit (VDRPT), to discuss their partnership involving multiple improvements to the I-95 rail corridor between Richmond and Washington, DC. Separately, Rick Crawford, Director of Public-Private Partnerships from Norfolk Southern, partnered with Brian Speight of Hatch Mott MacDonald representing the North Carolina Department of Transportation to discuss rail improvements in the Charlotte to Raleigh corridor.

OneRail believes these partnerships are win-wins for the state DOTs and their partner railroads - leveraging public funds for public benefits, improving the flow of freight, improving the rail network - adding up to better

rail service for shippers, new opportunities to secure good paying jobs, safer freight movements, lower roadway maintenance costs, and reduced emissions.

As a growing number of companies are looking to locate in communities with efficient rail access and service, both freight and passenger, it is in states' economic interest to have the ability to partner with private rail operators to provide the necessary rail infrastructure and roadway connections to the rail network. In the NC and VA situations, improvements aimed at increasing and improving passenger rail services also have benefits for more efficient movement of freight.

The key lessons learned from these projects include the importance of committed funding, clearly understanding the public benefits to be achieved, the private sector's need for an acceptable return on investment, and that investments that provide new capacity for passenger rail services also provide benefits for moving freight as well as a range of community benefits.

All of the panels demonstrated how partnerships between public and private sector entities can provide mutually beneficial outcomes for both public citizens and private railroads.

The next panel will be at the Mid America Association of State Transportation Officials (MAASTO) meeting on August 12 in Kansas City, KS, and the final panel will be at the Council of State Government's Eastern Regional Conference on August 18 in Wilmington, DE, focusing on the rail supply industry and the many good paying jobs this sector of the rail industry provides.

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The OneRail Coalition is a diverse group of rail stakeholders representing all facets of the rail industry. The Coalition works to expand the awareness of the value and benefits of a strong freight and passenger rail system. Our members include:

- public transportation and passenger rail organizations: American Public Transportation Association (APTA), Amtrak, States for Passenger Rail Coalition (SPRC);
- freight rail associations: American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association (ASLRA), Association of American Railroads (AAR);
- rail supplier and contractor associations: National Railroad Construction and Maintenance Association (NRCMA), Railway Supply Institute (RSI);
- rail labor: Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen (BRS), the Rail Conference of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (BLET/BMWE), Transportation Communications International Union/International Association of Machinists (TCU/IAM), United Transportation Union (UTU);
- rail advocacy and transportation reform organizations: National Association of Railroad Passengers (NARP), Surface Transportation Policy Project (STTP);
- environmental organizations: National Resources Defense Council (NRDC); and
- rail engineering and supply companies: AECOM, Alstom, Caterpillar, General Electric, HNTB, Parsons, Parsons Brinckerhoff and Siemens