Halifax-Ayer train: Improved schedule.

CSXT: Industrial growth report, PW cooperation, intermodal service to Oak Point?


CONNECTICUT

Legislature: Budget problems doom Hartford-Providence rail study and possibly the startup subsidy for barge feeder service.

Amtrak: Crew qualifying in Massachusetts

GRS: Waterville intermodal can grow with more equipment.

Portland connection: City does not like proposed Bayside route.


MASSACHUSETTS


PW: Millville bridge clearance improvement.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Legislature: Update on bills.

GRS/commuter: Update on Kittery-Newburyport rail and 3 current, 3 former customers.

NHC/NHVT: Whitefield has two rail customers, and several more planned.

RHODE ISLAND

PW: Last bridge undercut for South Quay

QPD: Crowd rejects proposed EIS.

VERMONT

Legislature: Funding of projects such as Rutland Rail Yard, Barre work, purchase of Burlington branch.

Favorite story

Award this issue to the Whitefield NH people who are putting together an eco-industrial park with rail service. Sounds like a model!

- Chop Hardenbergh

REGIONAL ISSUES

HALIFAX-AYER TRAIN

11 June. CN WILL INITIATE A NEW TRAIN, Q183, OUT OF MONCTON TO AYER, to reduce layover time. It will fit into the Halifax-Ayer schedule, operating on Mondays and Thursdays (thus meeting Q149 departing Halifax on Sundays and Wednesdays).

Fills in for the direct train

Q183 becomes the first special part of the ‘merchandise train’, the chaining together of regular trains to move the containers. It will not replace Q185, which will still run whenever CN has at least 50
containers to move to Ayer. Q183 cuts the former 18-hour layover in Moncton to about three hours.

The direct train remains. Q185 runs if 50 or more boxes are ready to go to Ayer; it has operated a few times since March.

How this helps NYK and P&O
P&O and NYK, as members of the Global Alliance, share a vessel on the AEX service (Asia-North America via Suez Canal) which arrives in Halifax (Ceres Terminal) on Sunday. Boxes can get off the ship quickly enough to catch the CN train Q149.

NYK Line spokesperson Doug Cole said Boston area customers of NYK’s AEX service, which arrives in Halifax on Sundays, use the rail connection because they can save two days transit time compared with the container moving to New York and then getting trucked or railed back.

NYK does not save any money by using the Halifax-Ayer routing, said Cole. Alison Watson, NYK’s district manager in Halifax, said the traffic was virtually all import: very few loaded containers went back to Halifax.

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<td>Ayer</td>
<td>2030</td>
<td>316 (17.5)</td>
<td>18.1 mph</td>
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Former intermodal traffic lane

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<td>146 (5.25)</td>
<td>34.4 mph</td>
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<tr>
<td>GRS</td>
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<td>Keag</td>
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<td>2030</td>
<td>316 (17.5)</td>
<td>18.1 mph</td>
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[Presumably the same may be said of the P&O service.] Ken Kellaway, whose company Kellaway Intermodal operates the Ayer terminal, said the improved time will help intermodal customers, some of whom are looking for consistency more than shorter transit times.

Traffic on the service
Kellaway said traffic between Halifax and Ayer remained about flat, which came to about 75 containers a week in March [see 27 March issue], rather than dropping over the slack period February-June. He believed that showed traffic on the route is actually increasing, and he looked forward to a substantial increase for the autumn rush. During the rush, he looked forward to the direct train running often.

Several other lines are looking at the Halifax-Ayer service, Kellaway said, which would also add to the traffic.

Any threat posed by the CN/CSX1 service Halifax-Boston?
Kellaway looked at the new offering [see 5 June issue] as “more of a Vancouver than a Halifax product.” He did not see a chance that P&O would consolidate its equipment at Worcester, noting that P&O had signed with NS to move its mini-landbridge to Ayer [see Massachusetts].  {ANR&P discussions 11 Jun.01; e-mail to ANR&P from rail observer Mark Rushton on the new schedule 8 June.01}

CSXT

1 June, DC. CSX TRUMPETED ITS NEW OR EXPANDED CUSTOMERS as part of its second annual submission to the Surface Transportation Board reporting on how well the Conrail split of 1989 is going. Some points:

New traffic
In 2000, CSXT noted 35 companies had announced the construction of new or expanded facilities [see 19 June 2000 issue], 11 located in New England.

The 2001 report cites 34 additional new or expanded facilities, 10 located on CSXT or its short lines in New England:

| Anastasio Reload | North Haven CT  |
| Applied Tech.    | Stratford CT    |
| Naddel Ind.      | TAUNTON MA      |
| Agar Supply      | Westwood MA     |
| Barrett Warehouse| Fall River MA   |
| Cashman          | Westfield MA    |
| Eastwood Carriers| Milford MA      |
| Etarco Quebec    | Westfield MA    |
| Gas Supply Resrcs| Michigan MA     |

ANR&P discussions 11 Jun.01; e-mail to ANR&P from rail observer Mark Rushton on the new schedule 8 June.01
**SAXONVILLE USA FACILITIES**

13 June, Portland Oregon. **AN UPDATE ON SOME SAXONVILLE FACILITIES IN NEW ENGLAND** was provided by Scott Jenks, vice president-transportation for North Pacific Group, the owner of Saxonville USA [see 18 August 2000 issue].

All locations do mixing for truck delivery to contractor and retail outlets. Saxonville orders full carloads of a multitudinous array of plywood; the carload contents get delivered to the mixing centers.

**South Sudbury MA** (was CSXT served)

Considering the cost of restoring the track into town, CSXT decided against it. Saxonville and the railroad are looking for a new site. Meanwhile, Saxonville reloads through Romar in Allston, a very expensive proposition.

CSXT will pay to restore the wetlands damaged by the wreck in April 2000 [see 18 August 2000 issue], but that will cost considerably less than restoring the track.

Jenks said the two companies should settle on a new site soon, and activity at the South Sudbury facility will cease in about two months.

**Hampton NH** (GRS served)

Saxonville had its first yard in South Sudbury, the Hampton facility came next, so that with those two it blanketed Boston.

Will possible commuter service affect the Hampton facility [see New Hampshire]? Jenks agreed it could only help, by keeping the rail in place.

**Newtown CT** (HRRC served)

Saxonville occupies most of the warehouse at HRRC’s Shepaug lumber transload facility, while Weyerhauser uses most of the outside space.

**Former Allied Plywood facilities**

Nearly a year ago, North Pacific purchased out of bankruptcy two New England facilities of Allied Plywood, then a subsidiary of US Wood: one in Springfield MA on CSXT, and one in Providence RI on PW. Unlike the Saxonville facilities, which handle commodity plywood, Allied Plywood distributes specialty items such as hardwood plywood and medium-density fibreboard.

Jenks called the purchase “a great opportunity for us to get a toehold in those territories” with a different kind of product less vulnerable to market price swings.

With Newtown and Springfield relatively close, the company is looking at possibly consolidating the two facilities, but has made no decision. *(ANR&P discussion)*

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**CONNECTICUT RRs**

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

13 June, Hartford. **BUDGET WOES AFFECT TWO PROJECTS**, according to State Representative Jack Thompson.

**Barge feeder service and Transportation Strategy**

‘The governor recommended $50 million in his budget for new transportation projects and the Appropriations Committee added $5 million to that amount in its budget.

‘The Strategy Board ran into some last minute political maneuvering and died on the calendar. So did our budget act.

‘We will be going into Special Session next week. We expect to have a budget ready for a vote, and the Transportation Strategy Board will also be acted upon. The exact amount of money that will be made available for transportation initiatives is uncertain at this time.’

[So the startup subsidy for the barge feeder service, whether to Bridgeport or New Haven–see 18 May issue, appears in jeopardy. The governor had proposed the creation of a transportation strategy board–see 13 February issue, but that may not come to pass either. Editor]

**Rail study for northeast Connecticut**

Thompson wrote, as a cosponsor of SB1132, which asked the Northeast Connecticut Council of Governments to study reviving rail between Hartford and Providence [see 18 May issue]: ‘There has been criticism of our DOT for having a narrow view of the transportation needs of our state. Which is a universal criticism, whether deserved or not. In any event, I am a supporter of improved rail and passenger service and the bill presented a means of addressing both the effectiveness of DOT as the primary planner for transportation and shipping in our state, and, at the same time, addressing the feasibility of, i.e. improvements to freight and passenger rail linkages...etc’

‘The bill fell victim to a larger effort to address the overall issue of transportation in our state [meaning the budget...etc’

...continues...
problems with the Transportation Strategy Board projects - editor." [e-mail to ANR&P from Thompson]

MAINE

AMTRAK
10 June, Massachusetts. **ONE AMTRAK CREW IS QUALIFYING NOW**, consisting of an engineer, conductor, and assistant conductor. However, Guilford won't let the crew onto the GRS tracks [until the speed issue is resolved—see 5 June issue], so the crew are only operating between Boston and Haverhill, and over the Grand Junction to South Station and Southampton Street Yard.

This crew will be used to qualify other crews, run the test train (if okayed by STB), and to bring the train to different communities so that EMS units can get their hands on portion of the equipment familiarization course that Amtrak held for them earlier this year. {Paul Taylor in NERAILS 10.June.01}

GRS - INTERMODAL
13 June, Waterville. **WATERVILLE NEEDS MORE EQUIPMENT TO GROW**, said a HUB source. At this point, he estimated it handles only "a dozen loads a week," none by HUB.

The new NS service Toledo-Ayer [see Massachusetts] may give Waterville its long-sought steady supply of intermodal equipment, as long as the railroads can reposition it from Ayer to Waterville. The source said he had a major customer ready to use the terminal, but he will only move that customer to Waterville when the railroads can provide a significant amount of equipment. {ANR&P discussion}

PORTLAND CONNECTION
7 June, Portland. **MDOT PROPOSED A ROUTE THROUGH BAYSIDE** [see 5 June issue]. Commissioner John Melrose told the Bayside Development Committee that the train would run from Forest Avenue, up Kennebec Street to Somerset Street, and along Somerset to Franklin Street. [This follows the existing Union Branch alignment, whose tracks remain in place. Editor] From there, the train would continue north, over Casco Bay, to Yarmouth, where it would branch out in two directions, west toward Lewiston-Auburn and east toward Brunswick.

The state would like to get the route decided in the next 30 days. Melrose told the group the state hopes to have permits for the work by the end of the year and begin construction in 2002. {Mark Shannon in Portland Press Herald 9.June.01; David Hench in Portland Press Herald 8.June.01}

B&M Baked Beans rail service
B&M receives maybe a covered hopper a week of raw beans. SLR local 513, based in East Deering (half a mile away) usually switches the plant and several other more active customers in East Deering at 7AM before it heads west to Auburn. The train returns in the afternoon, but rarely switches then. {Bud Flaherty in NE Railfan Forum 19.Apr.01}

PORT OF PORTLAND

<table>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other*</td>
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</table>

* MDOT for confidentiality declined to divulge the products moved. The amount is calculated by subtracting from the state total of 775,000 [see 18 May issue] the bulk tonnage and approximately 50,000 tons for containers [per Jack Humeniuk of P&O Ports]. Perhaps the balance came from Turner’s Island granite? In any case, the mystery traffic enabled Portland to show an increase in dry tonnage.

26 April. **MERRILL’S MARINE TERMINAL HANDLED MOST OF PORTLAND’S DRY CARGO**, according to figures from MDOT and P.D.Merrill, owner of the terminal: about 591,000 short tons for the year 2000.

**Railcars**
The terminal, which includes a warehouse operation in Scarborough, handled about 6,000 carloads in 2000. About 1200 consisted of domestic non-marine terminal traffic, carloads handled at the warehouse.

Merrill said he has had a good relation with Guilford for rail service since he started the company, helped by his terminal’s proximity to GRS’ Rigby Yard. {ANR&P discussion 26.April.01}

Merrill traffic 2001
“We’re ahead of last year,” Merrill said later. “We’re also sitting with a large volume of product: our warehouses are full, and we just received a shipment of Austrian lumber.” {ANR&P discussion 12.Jun.2001}

April. **FORMER YARD NINE ON THE WATERFRONT IS OPTIONED TO MERCY HOSPITAL**. The site, built as the origination point for the Portland & Ogdensburg (NY) Railroad, later became Yard 9 of Portland Terminal.

Merrill’s Marine Terminal owned the eastern part of the site, and GRS the western part. The hospital, if it decides the site meets its requirements, will eventually move there from its cramped location on State Street.

**Merrill is looking for space**
P.D.Merrill, the principal of the company, said over the last 18 months the company had increased on-site storage. It had upgraded several buildings, added other buildings, and reached
a total of 125,000SF of class A space with concrete floors. “We now have all export and import pulp, and much of our newsprint, on site.” But, he said, “we need to expand by another couple of hundred thousand feet of space” to meet the demand he anticipates.

So why did Merrill sell the site, just adjacent to his own if across the GRS railroad tracks? Because, while earlier he had hoped that a part of proposed highway construction would include a tunnel under the tracks, the state decided on a different design “no more beneficial than our current off-waterfront location in South Portland.”

The company is still looking for more space, possibly on-site, possibly off. “We’re increasingly finding that public entities are financing warehouses for maritime commerce,” such as the new warehousing in New London [see 1 May issue]. “We’re totally private, and forced to look at hard-to-use remote, self-financed locations. On the other hand, our flexibility as a private entity more than offsets those advantages.” {ANR&P discussion 12.Jun.2001}

11 May. **Cianbro is operating a major assembly yard** at its facility just down river from the Merrill Terminal. Lincoln Denison, manager for projects in southern Maine, said the 25 workers were putting together steel pieces into units for power plants in Weymouth and Charlestown, Massachusetts.

Cianbro, one of Maine’s oldest and largest construction companies, won the contract to supply these units when a Belgium company proved unable to do it. Cianbro’s metal fabrication shop in Pittsfield Maine is knocking out the pieces, which travel by truck to the Portland harbor site. At this point, three units are assembled and awaiting shipment by barge to Massachusetts at the end of May.

By that time, pieces fabricated in Belgium will arrive for assembly at the yard here into large cylindrical units. These too will then travel by barge to the gas-fired power plants, owned by the Sithe company.

**More work sought**

Denison said he had long wanted to operate such an assembly yard, and plans for it to continue after the Sithe work. “We can handle large, sophisticated units which cannot be trucked over the road. We do heavy steel, and heavy large precast concrete, fabrication and assembly, and ship all over the world.” Interested? Contact Denison at: 207-773-5852 x 107.

**Rail access**

The site of about 2.75 acres has a spur off the Guilford line which runs to the International Marine Terminal. {ANR&P discussion 11.May.2001}

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**MASSACHUSETTS**

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**GRS - Ayer Facilities**

1 June, Ayer. **Norfolk Southern began intermodal service from Toledo** to this intermodal terminal. According to NS: ‘Toledo will be added to our proven 90+% on-time record into Ayer on train 206...that train will now pick up in Toledo seven days per week, for eastbound transit, per the schedule listed below. To help you get your customers’ attention, we’re offering a $50 pickup incentive during the month of June for all EMP/NACS loads tendered in this lane.’

Cutoff in Toledo happens at 10AM for availability in Ayer at 8AM second morning. {NS website}

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14 June, Ayer. **The town has asked the STB to reconsider its decision** permitting GRS to proceed with its second auto facility without passing through town regulatory bodies [see 18 May issue].

Town administrator Anita Hegarty said the Board of Selectmen also will file arguments with the US District Court against the court’s accepting the STB order. {ANR&P discussion}

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11 June. **P&O uses Ayer as the terminus for three services**, explained the line’s Dennis Messing, assistant vice-president for North Region operations.

**PAX.** At the beginning of July 2000, the VSA (vessel-sharing agreement), expired [see 4 February 2000 issue], and along with it the direct call VSA was making from Europe to Boston which P&O had shared with OOCL and Sea-Land.

After expiration, P&O employed its PAX service to serve the Europe-North American traffic; PAX runs from Asia via the Panama Canal to the East Coast to Europe and back. P&O used feeder vessels from either Halifax or New York to serve Boston, up until the beginning of 2001, when P&O switched to the Halifax-Ayer train.

P&O’s PAX arrives in Halifax on Wednesdays, and catches the CN/GRS train that night.

**AEX route.** “We started using Ayer last year for the Pacific trade,” meaning from Asia via the Suez Canal to the East Coast. This service began in July 2000 [see 28 July 2000 issue].

The AEX service arrives on Sundays in Halifax. Boxes for New England start for Ayer that night, so the new CN train cuts a day off this service [see Regional].

**Mini-landbridge.** In March, P&O stopped using CSXI’s Beacon Park (Boston) intermodal facility for its traffic to/from Asia via the west coast ports and trains across the United States. Now, by agreement with Norfolk Southern, P&O mini-landbridge
Consolidating the equipment in Ayer made more sense logistically, as Ayer received the lion’s share of the traffic. {ANR&P discussion 11.Jun.01}

PROVIDENCE&WORCESTER
13 June, Millville. THE FINAL CLEARANCE OBSTACLE FOR MIXED DOUBLES into Rhode Island should disappear this summer, according to Steve Young of the Massachusetts Highway Department.

The state has embarked on a three-stage, $7.5 million plan to replace five bridges. Stage one will emplace a temporary bridge carrying Central Street over the PW line between Worcester and Providence with three feet more of clearance by August 2000. Stage two, proposed completion sometime after 2003, will replace four highway bridges. Stage three will build a new railroad bridge to replace the temporary one. {ANR&P discussion

NEW HAMPSHIRE

GENERAL COURT
14 June. AN UPDATE ON SOME RAIL- AND PORT-RELATED BILLS. [See 18 May issue for last update.]

HB 413, permitting NHDOT to dispose of rail properties with no future. Passed by both the House and Senate.

HB 320, raising the lease fee on state rail property and defining amusement railroads and providing for their taxation like other businesses under RSA 72 (exempts them from the railroad tax, RSA 82). This has passed the House, where the language about amusement railroads was added. The Senate passed the bill, but barred all private leases of NHDOT rights of way to permit private landowners to reach lakes after 1 July 2002.

As of that date, the lease fees for existing leases—which the statute permits the state to extend for sequential five-year periods—will also increase from the existing $5 per linear foot. The amount of the fee will be determined by a conference committee, which will begin meeting soon.

HB 727 Revising status of Port Authority. The bill was signed by the governor on 11 June. It grants port authority rule-making power and establishes an advisory committee to guide on loan-making.

HB 543 Transferring the Port Authority to Pease Development Authority. The bill has passed the House, and the Senate with an amendment. A conference committee may be necessary. {General Court website

GRS/COMMUTER
30 May, Portsmouth. ANOTHER TASK FORCE MEETING ON COMMUTER SERVICE TO BOSTON heard GRS executive vice-president David Fink say GRS would be willing to allow the service on its track between Kittery and the center of Hampton. [In 1998, Fink said the service made economic sense. See 22 October 1998 issue] The section from Hampton to the state line is owned by NHDOT, and from the state line to Boston by the MBTA.

The state legislative task force has met since summer 2000, studying the possibility of re-establishing commuter rail service between Kittery and Newburyport. Estimates show that the cost of re-establishing the service, which last ran in 1964, would range between $77 million and nearly $100 million for both capital and operating expenses.

A study done in 1999 of projected ridership for the train showed there would be about 950 one-way trips on the train per weekday.

The proposal still has a long way to go before becoming a reality. {Alan J. Keays in Portsmouth Herald 31.May.01}

Local support
According to Bill Mosher, a former state representative and co-chair of the Task Force, Clifford Sinnott of the Rockingham Planning Commission presented some revised numbers on rehab costs and potential ridership.

People representing US Senator Judd Gregg and US Representative Sununu told attendees about indications of imminent economic gains once service started. They also said the towns interested must submit letters indicating that the service was wanted.

‘The task force has received strong indications that Maine communities also want the service, such as Kittery, York, the Berwicks etc. We intend that in the future meetings will also be held in Maine towns to introduce the prospect of restored commuter rail, and to garner public input to the task force and encourage residents to contact their representatives and senators regarding restoration to support this project.’ {e-mail to ANR&P from Mosher 2.June.01}

Freight customers, present and potential
GRS has three customers on the line between Kittery and Hampton. In Kittery, it serves the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard. In Hampton, it serves Foss Manufacturing and Saxville lumber. It formerly served J.D.Cahill in Hampton, Owens Illinois in Newburyport, and Keiver-Willard in Newburyport.

Foss Manufacturing. According to its website, ‘Foss Manufacturing Company, Inc. is a vertically integrated producer of engineered, non-woven fabrics and specialty synthetic fibers, for a variety of applications and markets. As the world's largest needle-punch based manufacturer, Foss is a well-known pioneer in using synthetic fibers including our solution dyed Fossfibre®, the leader in pigmented polyester. Utilizing state-of-
the-art computerized production in Hampton, NH USA, we design, manufacture, convert, package and distribute a vast array of ready-to-use products worldwide.’ Company headquarters, as well as a manufacturing facility, are located in Hampton on the rail line.

David Rowell, executive vice-president, said Foss uses fiber resins from the South, brought in by railcar in roughly two shipments a week.

Impact of commuter rail on Foss. Rowell said the existence of commuter rail on the Kittery-Newburyport alignment could help in two ways. First, it could help make deliveries “more consistent and well-planned.” The schedule at this point has been haphazard: “cars can be delayed by as much as a week when it snows.” When rail deliveries have bogged down (cars are sometimes tied up in Portsmouth for one or two days, or Lawrence for a week), Foss has had to transload from Worcester, “which costs us money.”

Second, Foss has worried that GRS might halt rail service on the Hampton branch altogether. The very possibility that commuter rail is coming will allay that fear somewhat, and provide an incentive to keep the tracks in good shape.

Saxonville USA. An official at the facility said “Hampton rail service is horrible. We get it twice a week whenever they feel like coming. If we scream together [with Foss] we can get it maybe three times a week.” Because Saxonville has five other locations in New England [see Regional], “we transfer by truck” among facilities if necessary. The facility receives maybe 500 carloads a year.

Former rail customer J.D.Cahill. Six years ago, this paperboard manufacturer closed its facility in Hampton; Rowell said it had used more inbound product than Foss up to that point. A spokesperson for Cahill said manufacturing is now done at Centralia, Illinois, and Tuscaloosa, Alabama, though its headquarters remain in Hampton at 6 Merrill Industrial Drive.

Former customer Owens Illinois. Owens (now Owens Brockway after Owens bought Brockway’s glass business) traffic of covered hoppers of plastic pellets died when freight rail died north of Beverly [perhaps after the Salem-Beverly bridge burned in the early 1980s? editor].

John Shook, the facility’s controller, said the company is now trucking both ways. It uses several suppliers of plastic pellets, and they come from all over, including by transload through Leominster.

Former customer Keiver-Willard. This hardwood distributor also stopped using rail. An official there expressed skepticism about rail ever returning, but since the company receives truckload lots of hardwood, rail would make sense. {ANR&P discussions 13.Jun.01}

Status of track between Kittery and Newburyport
Kittery-Portsmouth. Active track, owned by GRS, used 1-2 times a year to haul out radioactive material from the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard.

Portsmouth-Hampton. Active track owned by GRS and called the ‘Hampton Industrial Track.’

Hampton- Seabrook. GRS abandoned in 1999, and NHDOT bought it the same year [see 17 December 1999 issue].

NHDOT is moving to lease this track to a company which wants to test a maglev train [see 15 September 2000 issue]. The lease will last five years, with a provision for renewal of five years. Morgan said the department is not concerned that the lease will block the startup of commuter service: “That’s at least ten years away.” {ANR&P discussion 12.Jan.01}


Thorn Mead, who looked at starting an excursion train on the section from Hampton to the state line, or even using the Amesbury branch, found that the Town of Seabrook was not interested in reviving train traffic, and opposed him at every turn. {e-mail to ANR&P from Mead 2.June.01}

State line-Newburyport. Owned by MBTA, but abandoned. {EOTC rail map}

**NHVT/NEW HAMPSHIRE CENTRAL**

13 June, Whitefield. **THE WHITEFIELD ECO-INDUSTRIAL PARK IS CREATING POSSIBLE RAIL BUSINESS**, according to Jim Cross, a member of the Whitefield Planning Group. As envisioned, the park will have an energy complex, three anchor tenants, and a larger number of smaller tenants. Two anchor tenants, already committed to the park, will use rail service: Presby Environmental, a producer of septic system inserts from recycled plastic, and Cherry Mountain Lumber, a producer and marketer of hardwood lumber.

Woodchips to energy
The energy complex will include the existing 15-megawatt woodchip generating plant. Planning is also underway for two additional energy complex components. One facility would produce industrial-quality wood pellets (shipped in bulk by rail). The second would produce a liquid biofuel from wood feedstock. The biofuel could be shipped by rail, or consumed as a fuel source for power generation by other park tenants.

As the demand for wood and wood chip increases at the park, remote collection points linked to the park by rail may become economically viable.

Cross noted that all the products depend on wood. “Our region produces a lot of wood, and we’re looking for ways to keep the...
forest products industry healthy here.”

**What happened to chipping railroad ties?**

While the plant and NHDOT initially were interested in such a chip plant [see 15 December 2000 issue], when the price of natural gas got high so did the demand for ties and the supply disappeared, probably to existing paper mill boilers.

Furthermore, when Whitefield Power and Light started to get a permit to burn the ties at its biomass plant, it found out the process would end up costing over $100,000. Its owner, Thermaelectron, in meantime decided to sell its subsidiary Thermo Ecotek, to which Whitefield Power and Light belongs. So the company decided not to spend the $100,000 for permitting until the new owner could approve the effort.

The burning of ties faces another issue in addition to air pollution (which Cross labeled “probably not a problem”): what will show up in the ash. Currently ash from the biomass plant can be land-spread or sold for large composting operations, but the railroad tie ash may shown contamination.

**Fibreboard plant also possible**

Cross said that Whitefield’s park ranks as one of three finalists for the location of a medium-density fibreboard plant by New Hampshire’s Department of Resources and Economic Development (DRED). If Whitefield were selected, then the state would market the site to potential users. The medium-density fibreboard facility would be the third anchor tenant for the eco-industrial park. It would consume major amounts of power from the energy complex.

The plant would use rail: “The wood is up here, the market is south,” said Cross. {ANR&P discussion 13.Jun.01}

**QUONSET POINT/DAVISVILLE**

11 June, North Kingstown. **A 450-STRONG CROWD REJECTED THE PROPOSED EIS FOR THE CONTAINER FACILITY** at QPD. The comments came during a joint session of the House and Senate Finance Committees, which took the unusual step of meeting outside the State House to consider the $2.5-million budget request.

Speakers asked state representatives not to approve Governor Almond's request to do an Environmental Impact Statement to analyze the possibility of a cargo-container port in town. They called for the state to consider other options to develop the state-owned Quonset-Davisville industrial park, mentioning everything from a marina to a movie-production studio.

Speakers also called for the state to do a better job of figuring out whether a container port would be economically feasible before launching the environmental impact statement favored by the governor.

**Why not EIS now**

"The EIS is not the place to answer fundamental questions of economic viability and community acceptance," said Christopher Hamblett, director of advocacy for Save the Bay. "It is an expensive, time-consuming process designed to measure and address environmental impacts of a specific proposal."

No developer has come forward with a specific port proposal. Rather, Almond hopes to lure a developer by beginning the environmental impact statement and permit-application process, thereby showing that Rhode Island is serious about a container-port project. The environmental impact statement would analyze the concept of placing a compact, high-tech port on 180 acres, at either the Quonset or the Davisville portions of the industrial park. The analysis would also look at
negotiate for the acquisition or lease of the New England Central

Section 16 authorizes the secretary of transportation ‘to
purchase of NECR’s Burlington branch

The bridge over the Stevens Branch and associated track work.’

coordination with a Barre City project, including reconstructing
property to accommodate expanded rail activities in the yard in

Under section 4 (3), ‘The Barre railyard project is to purchase
WCRC: granite transfer station

project managers.

The agency and the City shall prepare and execute a
relocation project to continue design and permitting activities.

and funded by the City of Rutland, on the Rutland railyard
work in conjunction with a municipal project manager, appointed

The agency of transportation shall appoint a project manager to
transportation for railroad purposes shall be reallocated to the

$380,000. The sum of $380,000 appropriated to the agency of
VTR...deleting total and state funds of $150,000 and inserting

Section 4(1) has this language: ‘Rutland Railyard Relocation —
VTR... VTR

2 June.

Amtrak spokespeople left the question open and

they thought NECR could get the track back up to snuff in one

notify us when it’s OK to go back in the water.”

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Northeast Corridor spokeswoman Cecilia Cummings said. “But

Northeast Corridor spokeswoman Cecilia Cummings said. “But
the secretary deems necessary for present or future transportation uses.’

Section 16(b) [added] states: ‘The secretary of transportation is authorized to negotiate and execute an
agreement with New England Central Railroad which results in
restoration of AMTRAK’s *Vermonter* service along that railroad.
The agreement shall not include a direct grant to New England Central Railroad but may consist of a short-term loan or other consideration.’

Lamoille Valley corridor

Section 29 states: ‘(a) For fiscal year 2002, no expenditure of state or federal funds or developmental activity shall occur in the Lamoille Valley railroad corridor except for a portion which may be incorporated into the Three Rivers Transportation Path, St. Johnsbury, STP Bike(10) or to facilitate municipal safety improvement projects involving rail crossings. This subsection is not intended to discourage volunteer activities to improve long-term right-of-way usage.

‘(b) The Joint Fiscal Office shall review the railroad restoration proposal submitted to the Mountain Valley Corridor Consortium and provide the joint fiscal committee and the chairs of the transportation committees with an analysis of the assumptions and findings. {General Assembly website 12.June.01}

8 June, NECR corridor. AMTRAK SUSPENDED OPERATION OF THE VERMONT
north of Springfield due to track conditions on the NECR [see 5 June issue]. On 6 and 7 June, Amtrak’s Track Structure Assessment Vehicle slowly cruised the length of the state to ascertain whether NECR work in the past week had brought the track up to snuff. The vehicle takes a different set of measurements than the geometry car did on 29 May.

Generally the vehicle’s computers don’t declare a section of track “bad” unless three or more ties in a row aren’t holding tightly to the rails.

Following the vehicle’s 6-7 June inspection, "We are temporarily suspending passenger service between Springfield and St. Albans pending further track maintenance work," Amtrak Northeast Corridor spokeswoman Cecilia Cummings said. "But the ball is totally in New England Central's court. New England Central conducts inspections and maintenance, and they will notify us when it's OK to go back in the water."

While Amtrak officials were saying privately on 8 June that they thought NECR could get the track back up to snuff in one to two weeks, Amtrak spokespeople left the question open and urged reporters to contact the railroad for answers. {Eric Francis in Rutland Herald 9 June.01}

RUTHERFORD RAILWAY SYSTEM
8 June, Proctor. RAIL ACCESS TO OMYA QUARRIES WILL
**TAKE YEARS**, said Erik Bohn, OMYA’s new transportation manager.

**Middlebury quarry spur.** MOU signatories OMYA, VAOT, and the Conservation Law Foundation are trying to get this project off the ground [see 14 March issue]. OMYA and VAOT Secretary Brian Searles jointly approached US Senators Patrick Leahy and James Jeffords to get federal funding for the study, which may come in this year’s federal appropriations bill.

But funding for the actual construction from the VRS line to the quarry has not been found. The signatories to the Memorandum of Understanding, who agreed to pursue the quarry spur, were to meet on 13 June to discuss progress.

**Danby quarry.** Bohn termed this a “separate project,” yet dependent on how the Middlebury spur gets resolved. In other words, work on a rail line to OMYA’s potential quarry in Danby will not begin until after the Middlebury situation plays out. {ANR&P discussion 8.Jun.01}

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**QUÉBEC /MARITIMES**

**CAPE BRETON & CNS**

13 June. CAPE BRETON IS DOWN, OTHER AREAS LOOKING UP, said Peter Touesnard, who handles the railroad’s marketing and business development. On the island, Touesnard declined to comment about developments except to say that when the Prince mine closes at the beginning of next year [see 18 May issue], “there will be no substantial volumes on that section of the line.” Currently, trains run as the volume requires it, but at least twice a week.

As for new developments, he said, “All kinds of things are happening but nothing I’m in a position to talk about.” {ANR&P discussion 13.Jun.2001}

**Possible slacking at TrentonWorks**

Local sources say the company is preparing for a potential layoff of the majority of its workers at the rail car manufacturing plant in September. A total of 1,300 people are employed at Trenton Works and right now the only thing they do know for certain is their main product, rail freight cars, is currently experiencing a big slump in sales. {CBC news website 12 June.01}

**Dismantling of Sydney Steel**

Following closure [see 30 January issue], the province recently hired a consortium to sell off the assets of the plant over the next year and a half, earning $5 million; the consortium will earn 10%. Within three years, the Sysco property will be levelled.

The province has decided that one asset, the Sysco Pier, will not be sold just yet. It will remain provincial property. The Mayor of the Cape Breton Regional Municipality is disappointed to hear that. John Morgan says that decision will make it more difficult to rebuild the local economy [see 10 April issue]. {CBC News website 5.June.01}

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**NEW BRUNSWICK EAST COAST**

29 May, Miramichi. TWO ULTRAMAR TANK TRAINS SERVE THIS MUNICIPALITY every week. Ultramar produces petroleum products at its refinery in St. Romuald, just south of Levis across from Québec City. [I assume a switcher brings loaded tank cars to Joffre Yard.]

Every Monday, three 17-car sets (oil and gas tank cars) leave Joffre Yard (south of Québec City) on CN train #402 at 0730 for Rivière-du-Loup. There, NBEC crews take the train to Moncton. Enroute, NBEC sets off the train sets at the NBEC yard in Newcastle (Miramichi Yard?). The empty train sets return on #403 Thursdays and Fridays for Ultramar St-Romuald. {Jean-Pierre Veilleux cited by Pat Scrimgeour in OPERAIL e-mail list 29 May.01}

**Loggieville spur**

From Newcastle, part of the amalgamated municipality of Miramichi, a switcher delivers train sets one after another to the Ultramar tank farm in Chatham, by running south to Nelson Junction and then north on the line which formerly ran to Loggieville, the former Loggieville subdivision. An NBEC source said the tank train arrives about 2PM and they’re usually ready to return at about 8 the same evening. They bring both fuel oil and gasoline, in different trains. {ANR&P discussion 8.June.01}

13 June, Miramichi. NBEC HAS FOUR MAJOR RAIL CUSTOMERS HERE, two of which changed from ship to rail in recent years, according to Daryl Black, general manager of the Miramichi Region Development Corporation.

Ultramar. The tank farm lies close to the end of the Loggieville spur, which has been lifted to a point short of the Chatham Industrial Park [see above for details of rail service]. It can receive petroleum products by ship, but has essentially switched to rail. The farm is owned by Ultramar, which supplies its own distributors as well as those of Imperial Oil and Shell.

LaFarge Cement has a facility next to the Miramichi River, across the highway from the Ultramar tank farm.

Weyerhauser, formerly Eagle Forest Products, lies in Bushville, just west of Chatham.

UPM Kymmene, formerly Repap, has two rail-served facilities. The hardwood pulp plant lies on the Loggieville spur in Nelson-Miramichi. The much larger coated paper plant sits in Newcastle.

In the past the Repap coated paper facility used the Newcastle public wharf to bring in clay, wood, and paper. Black said this traffic has gone to rail. {ANR&P discussion 13.Jun.01}
PORT OF MIRAMICHI
13 June. THE MIRAMICHI REGION IS CONSIDERING REVIVING THE PORT, Black said. “We’ve gone from having four modes of transportation to two,” rail and highway, as Transport Canada has divested its port facilities, and commercial airlines have stopped using the regional airport.

Past and present public facilities
Black said that the region once had four public wharves. One in Chatham was turned over to the province, which turned it over to a private user who utilizes only the landside. Similarly, a wharf in Millbank became the property of a private owner to use the landside. Probably neither new owner would welcome a ship. The Chatham wharf facility, now private, operates as a marina.

The fourth facility, a public wharf in Newcastle, is subject to divestiture by Transport Canada.

Past and present private facilities
Black listed two:

Ultranar still operates its pipeline pier [see article above] once or twice a year to bring in petroleum products.

Weyerhauser, the former Eagle Forest Products, has a wharfside facility which was used in past years for delivery by ship.

Problems
The Miramichi River does silt up and requires dredging, according to Black. Transport Canada would like an entity in Miramichi to take over the public wharf in Newcastle, but private industry does not want to be responsible for the dredging necessary to use the wharf commercially.

Next step
Transport Canada has a deadline for divesting the property. The region has formed a port user committee which is now considering the long term viability and the financial implications of taking over the wharf facility. \{ANR&P discussion 13.Jun.01\}

ST.LAWRENCE & ATLANTIC
5 June, Bromptonville THE KRUGER PAPER MILL WILL RECEIVE AN INVESTMENT of about $78 million, of which $7.5 million came on loan from Investissement Québec. The investment will also serve to consolidate the 470 jobs at the mill.

Madam Pauline Marois, Deputy Première of Québec and Minister of Finance and Economy emphasized Kruger's contribution to the economic development of the region and the whole of Québec. “The Québec government supports this project which will have a major impact on the economy as the majority of goods and services purchased will be from Québec...Kruger is a major player in the paper industry, which contributes to the development of Québec's economy with some 30,000 direct jobs.”

This investment is aimed at improving equipment in the deinking plant in order to use a wider variety of recycled fibre and reduce the mill's production costs. It will also allow the mill to increase its capacity to generate steam and electricity at low cost from solid residue produced in the mill and surrounding area. By reducing consumption of fossil fuels and their utilization forenergy purposes, the mill’s environmental performance, which is already excellent, will be further enhanced.

In addition, major improvements will be made to paper machine Nos. 1 and 2 in order to increase their productivity and the quality of the paper produced. An employee training program will accompany the modernization projects. The work, which began in November 2000, will be completed in the months to come and, in all, will have required more than 600, 000 hours in engineering, construction and project management. At some stages in the construction more than 400 people were working on this $78-million project. \{Canadian News Wire\}

What benefit to rail?
Kruger’s plant in Bromptonville is served by the SLQ. Daniel Archambeault, the plant’s general manager, said rail should see some increase both inbound and outbound. The plant now produces 250,000 tonnes per year, which will rise to 270,000 tonnes after the work is completed sometime this year.

Outbound
Right now, Kruger averages 80% of production outbound by truck, and 20% by rail. [Figuring 100 tonnes per car, that means about 40 carloads more a year outbound.]

In the last few months the rail percentage has dropped as Kruger’s customer base has shifted closer. For example, Kruger uses truck to reach Boston. “It’s cheaper and faster.” But to Florida, or Chicago, rail makes sense.

Inbound scrap in two forms

Magazines come mostly from the Midwest, and virtually all of the 40,000 to 50,000 tonnes by rail.

Newspapers come from closer in, about 150,000 tonnes per year, only 10-20% by rail and the rest truck.

Export
Archambeault said only 2-5% of the production is exported. The company uses Montreal, or sometimes Trois Rivieres when an order is split between the Bromptonville mill and the Kruger plant in Trois Rivieres. \{ANR&P discussion 13.Jun.01\}