REGIONAL ISSUES

GRS: Unpaid creditors, slow track conditions, crew and equipment shortages, more paper production slacking off.


Columbia Coastal: Boston service once a week; Albany service seeking major participation.

CONNECTICUT

PW: First revenue run over Wethersfield Secondary. Mid-State Recovery doing well [see Massachusetts]. Map of Hartford area.

Amtrak: Extension to Brunswick needs permitting.

BAR estate: Update on CN trackage rights, Fort Fairfield trackage sale, IRR move.

GRS: Railstar begins interim excursions.

BML: Biodiesel consignee. Good and bad news on paper customers.

Lower Road: Track relaid in Augusta.

Rockland Branch: MDOT to decide by 1 August? Possible C&D traffic?

SLR: Gets port of entry status at Auburn.

Searsport: New pier opening, but no new traffic until 2004, awaiting warehouse.

Portland: Improved road and rail access pushed.

MASSACHUSETTS

CSXT: Champion City starts like a champ.

CSXT/MBTA: Details on the Beacon Park Yard deal. Map of easements and yard.

MBTA: MBCR starts pretty well on 1 July. Governor foresees delays in South Coast and Greenbush service. Sierra Club pushes for North-South link. CSXT says better Worcester service requires more tracks.

GRS: Customer Curtis Paper to close.

WWR: Withdraws notice of exemption.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

MBRX: Files with STB about GRS contretemps. Pike Industries not getting paid.

NEGS: GRS service bad.

VERMONT

VTR: Trailer service coordination with MMA?

WACR: Official opening of Connecticut River Division.

RAIL SHIPPERS/RECEIVERS

A cross-reference to companies mentioned here.

PEOPLE, POSITIONS, EVENTS

John McClellan, new president at Sprague. See Searsport.

I wish.....

GRS is having a hard time. Witness the stories in this issue. Perhaps the owners should entertain offers from non-Class I carriers, even if that would risk the buyers showing the current managers that the railroad can be run better, and more profitably.

- Chop Hardenbergh

Next issue 8 August
REGIONAL ISSUES

GUILFORD RAIL SYSTEM
July. **THE RAILROAD HAS GOTTEN BEHIND ON PAYING BILLS.** In addition to the money owed Pike Industries [see New Hampshire: MBRX], two other companies reported similar problems. In both cases, GRS has not paid for six months. “If we don’t get that money eventually, we will be in big trouble,” said one. {ANR&P discussion 16.July.03}

Track conditions
GRS also has apparent problems keeping up track conditions. MBRX and NEGS both complained of slow track speeds. [See New Hampshire.]

Crew time and equipment shortages
In addition to poor service for NEGS [see New Hampshire], GRS trains continue to run "long" but still only once a week in and out of Plainville, Connecticut, due to crew and equipment shortages. {NERAIL posting 15.July.03}

Loss of paper traffic
Paper mills, which supply a large portion of Guilford traffic, continue to shutter machines. [See Massachusetts and Maine.]

No news on a possible sale
No hard news has emerged since the office special of late June [see 3 July issue].

DELTA BULK/JP NOONAN
13 June, West Bridgewater MA. **THESE COMPANIES OPERATE TRANSLOAD FACILITIES** at four rail-served facilities in Massachusetts and Connecticut, all on leased land [see issues 99#24 and 00#02]. According to Larry Noonan, Delta does most of the rail transfer operation (chemicals and dry bulk), while J.P.Noonan Transportation Inc. operates “one of the largest tanker truck fleets in New England,” about 180 trailers.

Delta operates most of the facilities because it has an interstate trucking license. Bruce Voight, manager of the West Springfield terminal, serves as the contact point for the four rail facilities. Voight said all four facilities were informally known as “Delta Bulk”. The terminals handle plastics, casting sand from western New York, soda ash, and most any other commodity requested.

Leominster MA. Served by CSXT, this has 30 car spots, mainly for plastics. Noonan uses the company Delta Bulk and Warehousing, Inc to operate it, as well as a warehouse and packaging service. Plans in 1999 to increase to 70 car spots were shelved due to low business. Voight estimated the traffic here as two cars a day.

Mansfield MA. J.P.Noonan operates this rail/truck facility served by CSXT; it offers 30-40 spots - “essentially unlimited” - in the yard. It does minerals such as soda ash, sand, and cement.

Larry Noonan said that this facility is operated under the JP Noonan Transportation Inc. name as it is better known in the area, and it is managed from company headquarters in West Bridgewater. CSX Transflo lists it as an independent terminal on its website. Voight estimated the traffic here as two cars a day.

Westfield MA. Delta Bulk offers services at the PVRR Bulk Terminal, where it leases track. Voight estimated the traffic here as two cars a day. The West Springfield office manages the work.

Worcester MA. This facility, located in PW’s Southbridge Street Yard, offers unlimited car spots and steam heat. According to Noonan, it also offers the only location in New England for handling flammables. Voight said that this terminal is managed from his West Springfield office. It has only a short spur, and handles about two cars a week.

Plainfield CT. This facility served by PW handles primarily soda ash. Voight estimated the traffic here as two cars a day.
The Noonan terminal in Danielson, Connecticut, manages the rail work.

Delta has a truck terminal and offices in West Springfield, adjacent to the CSXT railyard, but no rail access at this point. It formerly had transload facilities in Hartford CT, Burlington VT, and Rutland VT, but these are all inactive. \{ANR&P discussion 13.Jun.2003 with Noonan; 16.Jul.2003 with Voight\}

**Waste handling subsidiary**

Noonan recently opened Noonan Waste Service, whose website indicates it caters to downtown Boston customers.

---

**COLUMBIA COASTAL**

17 July, Boston. *THE BARGE SERVICE HAS ONLY ONE SAILING A WEEK* between here and New York, according to Executive Vice-president Tom Delaney, down from two. “Geez, Chop, that happened 18 months or almost two years ago!” Reasons he gave: The steamship companies have added more direct calls to Boston; consignees have increased the direct-to-door deliveries; and most significantly, rail deliveries to the Worcester intermodal terminals have increased.

**How goes the Albany service?**

Columbia operates the new service to Albany [see 23 December 2002 issue] from New Jersey weekly. Delaney said participation is still low, but “the companies we have served have stayed with us. They say, ‘It’s seamless to us, it’s a great idea, and it’s environmentally friendly.’”

The company continues to seek a major user for the service. Delaney praises New York State and the Port of Albany for sticking to the service: “Even if we have only five boxes on a run, that shows that we will run the service.” Interest is high: “We’ve had nothing but positive comments. Now we need to convert that level of interest into a level of participation.” \{ANR&P discussion 17.Jul.2003\}

---

**CONNECTICUT**

**PROVIDENCE & WORCESTER**

10 July, Wethersfield. *PW RAN THE FIRST REVENUE TRAIN ON THE WETHERSFIELD SECONDARY*, since it rehabbed the line in 2002 [see 30 September 2002]. The train, CT-1, runs daily out of Cedar Hill Yard in New Haven to Middletown.

**The route and traffic**

PW runs over this stretch because in 1998 it acquired the Connecticut Central Railroad (CCCR), which had operating rights over several state-owned tracks radiating from Middletown totalling about 28 miles. That included about 11 miles from Middletown to Hartford, which PW subsequently rehabilitated, helped by some state funding. [See 23 December 2000 issue.]

According to CSO’s Mark Bromirski, the seven stone hoppers northbound from Tilcon’s quarry in Reeds Gap brought stone purchased by the CSO ‘to resurface a portion of our Windsor line.’ \{e-mail to ANR&P\}

**The interchanges**

The Interchange Agreement between PW/CSO spells out the track location. PW turned the train over to CSO in South Hartford on a runaround track just inside CSO, a 20-car siding which CSO rehabbed on the west side of I-91, almost opposite Hartford Market, in the vicinity of an old aggregates operation. \{e-mail to ANR&P from PW’s Mary Tanona\}

PW could interchange traffic with CSO bound for other railroads if it could overcome a paper barrier created by Conrail [see 29 March 2002]. Per a source, talks are occurring to do just that. \{ANR&P discussion\}

[See map.]

*For story on Portland customer, see Massachusetts CSXT.*
AMTRAK
17 July, Augusta. **AMTRAK TO BRUNSWICK WILL TAKE SOME TIME.** Ron Roy, director of the Office of Passenger Service at MDOT, said at this time the department seeks to finish the Environmental Assessment by the end of July or early August. It would finish the FTA-required companion business plan sometime in August.

Meanwhile, Multimodal Project Development continues to work on the permitting for the new trestle across Back Cove in Portland.

Roy noted that the department wants to finish getting Amtrak to Brunswick, and then engage the task of getting passenger service to Auburn. \{ANR&P discussion\} The proposed transportation bond [see 26 June issue] has a few million dollars for the service to Brunswick.

BANGOR & AROOSTOOK ESTATE

*Even though MMA purchased most of the assets of the Bangor and Aroostook System at the closing on 9 January [see 14 January issue], many properties, rights, and possible accruals remain.*

Comment by Trustee Jim Howard

‘The winding up process is moving along. We are attempting to sell approximately 100 parcels of real estate that were not sold to MMA, and we are attempting to reduce other assets to cash, including the Canadian National matter [see below]. We are also resolving claims of creditors.’ \{e-mail to ANR&P 16.July.03\}

Iron Road Railways

The parent company of the system remains a creditor. It recently changed addresses from Alexandria, Virginia to Towson, Maryland.

CN trackage rights

On 14 July, Howard asked for a second consultant, John Pinto of RailTrac, to help him in the effort to overturn the agreement assigning trackage rights and the Fraser traffic to CN. Howard in December 2002 asked for, and was granted, the assistance of consultant James Heller. Howard said both would assist him in this complicated matter; both sides are fighting hard not just about the $5 million which CN paid to receive the trackage rights, but also about the stream of revenue into the future.

On 27 May, the Bankruptcy Court entered an order transforming the matter into an adversarial proceeding. Then CN asked for, and was granted (no party objected), removal of the matter to US district court.

Per Howard, the estate takes the position that STB would only advise the bankruptcy court or the district court in deciding about nullifying the trackage rights agreement. Because the STB proceeding had gotten bogged down in discovery and other matters, he had asked the bankruptcy judge to treat anything from the STB as advisory. Judge Haines had agreed, for the time being.

Now, with the matter in district court and CN disagreeing with Howard’s position, the District Court will make its own decision on the role of the STB. \{ANR&P discussion 18.July.03\}

Fort Fairfield right-of-way

In June, the estate received court permission to sell the right of way from Milepost 10.0 in Easton to Milepost 18.55 in Fort Fairfield, together with certain other abutting land, personal property and appurtenances to non-profit Frontier Development Corporation No. 5. No track remains. The price came to $230,300. \{website\}

The right of way ends at the former B&A passenger station and the present Frontier Heritage Historical Society museum of railroad rolling stock. Out of service for several years, the line is obstructed by a washout and needs track work. B&A announced a few years ago that this track would be taken up, prompting the town to begin negotiations to buy the line intact. Fort Fairfield envisions the rail line, with its four sidings, as an economic development tool and would restore it to serviceable condition once in municipal ownership. This information is courtesy of Dan Foster, Fort Fairfield Town Manager. \{DownEast Rail Newsletter\}
Sale of Mack Point tank farm
[See Mack Point.]

BELFAST & MOOSEHEAD LAKE

14 July, Belfast. **THE BML PURCHASER IS RUNNING INTERIM TRAINS** here, in advance of the closing date around 21 July [see 3 July issue]. Ron Trottier, Railstar vice-president and general manager, said he has “not yet developed a plan for August,” but Railstar intends to “ramp the operation back up,” including running out of Unity. Unity houses Maine’s only operational steam locomotive, and Railstar is aiming to “run steam excursions late this year.”

The company can boast of turning around a tourist operation in Rome, New York. Railstar bought the Erie Canal Village there from the city, and operates canal boat trips and train excursions. Rome city official John Sorbello reports Railstar is doing well in its second full year of operation. {ANR&P discussions}

While the price was not publicly disclosed, two separate sources indicated that Railstar paid very close to the asking price of $3.5 million. {ANR&P discussion 14 July.03; website on BML history}

GUILFORD RAIL SYSTEM

30 June, South China. **BIO-DIESEL ARRIVED BY RAIL** at the end of April, billed to Frontier Energy, a sister company to Frontier Oil of South China. Joel Glatz, vice-president, had a hard time finding a transloading site. Guilford told him it does not unload liquids at the Waterville Yard, and offered him access to a private siding owned by Industrial Metals Recycling in Augusta. For an extra $100, Glatz rented the siding for a week.

The siding in Augusta has two drawbacks, said Glatz. First, the car reached Waterville on Wednesday, but GRS did not spot it in Augusta until the following Monday. “At that time, I had already been out of fuel for two weeks.” Second, the diesel will not flow in winter’s ambient temperatures; Glatz needs either to unload it quickly, or to have a heater on hand, “It can’t sit in Waterville for four days.”

Glatz is looking at other options, such as SRP in Bath. He did ask the Kennebec River Development Park (formerly Kimberly-Clark in Winslow), but the park became wary when it heard that Guilford declined to unload the product in Waterville.

The first car held 24,000 gallons of biodiesel. By mid-June, Frontier had sold half of the product. Glatz anticipates getting another car by the beginning of October. {ANR&P discussion 30.Jun.2003}

Environmentally-friendly fuel

Glatz tried using the railroad for the same reason he promotes biodiesel: the alternative fuel burns cleaner and emits fewer pollutants into the air than regular diesel. Users in Maine include the Downeast Biodiesel Co-op. {Rich Hewill in Bangor Daily News 28.June.03}

July. **MIXED NEWS ABOUT PAPER CUSTOMERS.** All mills are GRS customers:

SAPPI Westbrook

“Westbrook No. 14 paper machine and No. 70 coater are at risk as they have recently been curtailed off and on as a function of market conditions,” said Stephanie Hall, communications manager for SAPPI Fine Papers North America.

Hall said SAPPI has made no final decisions concerning the shutdown of paper machines or major capital investment at any of its Maine facilities. However, union officials say SAPPI executives told them last month that the No. 14 paper machine will be shut down. “We were told it was not a matter of if, but a matter of when,” said Tom Lestage, president of the Paper, Allied-Industrial, Chemical and Energy workers union at SAPPI.

Lestage said 65 to 70 employees would lose their jobs if the paper machine shut down. He said the mill already had plans to cut 30 to 35 jobs this fall. SAPPI has about 550 workers, a number that has sharply declined since the former S.D. Warren mill employed 2,300 in 1990. The union, which once represented 1,200 employees, now represents 305. {Selena Ricks in Portland Press Herald 12.July.03}

International Paper Jay

The company plans to invest $112 million to rebuild the No. 3 coated paper machine at its Androscoggin Mill and carry out
other improvements. A key element in winning corporate approval of the project was its strong support from townspeople, Mike Craft, mill manager, said 10 July. Jay voters last month voted 356 to 79 to support a 20-year tax break for the company.

In addition to rebuilding the No. 3 machine, which makes paper for magazines and catalogs, the project includes upgrades in groundwood mill operations, the bleaching plant, and the transformer system. “International Paper's intent for the coated papers business has been and will continue to be to invest in projects that increase efficiency, lower manufacturing costs and allow us to produce the innovative products that our customers demand,” Craft said. “This investment in the No. 3 paper machine will accomplish all three objectives.”

The project is expected to be completed next May. {AP in Portland Press Herald 12.July.03}

**Eastern Pulp and Paper**

The company announced the closure of a machine in May at its Brewer mill [see 4 June issue]. On 14 July, it received permission from a U.S. Bankruptcy Court judge to borrow from one of its primary lenders. The $500,000 will cover expenses through 31 October and is an additional installment on loans already secured by the paper company through Congress Financial Corporation. Eastern Pulp and Paper has been operating under Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection for nearly three years. The company operates plants in Brewer and Lincoln and employs 555 unionized workers. {AP in Portland Press Herald webposted 16.July.03}

**LOWER ROAD**

June, Augusta. **TRACK REPLACEMENT ON THE LOWER ROAD SOUTH OF THE MEMORIAL BRIDGE IN AUGUSTA APPEARS ESSENTIALLY COMPLETE.** Some of the lower Augusta yard track has been removed and replaced by a new short passing track. Just north of Memorial Bridge new single track is reconnected to double track at the Augusta station location with a new switch. Gravel remains on the track between Winthrop Street and the west end of the Kennebec River railroad bridge; if the new operator [see Rockland Branch] re-establishes service to East Augusta customers, it must be removed.

**Cobbossee Branch**

Track between the switch off the Lower Road in Gardiner and the Route 201 crossing is now removed to prepare for a trail. The branch formerly served a paper mill in Gardiner. {DownEast Rail newsletter 7-8.03; e-mail to ANR&P from editor Jack Sutton}

**ROCKLAND BRANCH**

7 July, Augusta. **MDOT HOPES TO DECIDE ON THE NEW OPERATOR BY 1 AUGUST,** following the meeting of the selection committee with Finger Lakes Railway this day. It had already met with the other candidate, Morristown and Erie Railroad [see 3 July issue]. {ANR&P discussion with Allan Bartlett 15.July.03}

The Finger Lakes has a local connection in George Betke, a principal in Finger Lakes and in Farmrail, an Oklahoma railroad. Betke lives in Damariscotta and operates his own consulting firm there, Transport Economics. He stressed that the economics of the line “require an aggressive marketing emphasis on freight. Passenger service cannot be the principal driver.” {ANR&P discussion 15.July.03}

15 July, Rockland. **COULD THE BRANCH SEE SOME C&D TRAFFIC?** While Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut are moving construction and demolition debris by rail, Maine has no rail-served facility yet.

The City of Rockland entertained accepting C&D from in-state and out-of-state sources at its quarry landfill. On 15 July the City Council postponed a decision on whether to accept the waste at a rate between $55 and $75 a ton. City Engineer David Chittim reported that the quarry will run out of room as early as 2008.

**FMC filling the quarry**

‘The overall trend [of fill at the quarry] has been significantly upward, driven largely by increasing utilization by FMC (BioPolymer),’ Chittim wrote in a memo to City Manager Tom Hall. Over the last three years, the quarry has accepted 61,100 cubic yards of FMC waste, including 37,000 cubic yards alone in 2002. By comparison, C&D has an incoming rate of 31,000 cubic yards over the same three-year period. Roughly 530,000 cubic yards remain in the quarry as of March. {Anthony Ronzio in Villagesoup.com 16.July.03}
Does that rate make sense?
Mark Bourgeois of the Transrail Group has long worked in the C&D area. The $55-$75/ton rate ranks with the rate in New Hampshire and Connecticut, meaning no one from any distance would use the quarry. “If they can get $35 to $50 at the gate they will be lucky.” {ANR&P discussion}

[Perhaps a rail operator will get traffic outbound, if FMC, already a rail customer, has to haul out its waste when the quarry fills. Editor]

ST.LAWRENCE & ATLANTIC
8 July, Auburn. THE INTERMODAL TERMINAL GETS CUSTOMS PRESENCE as a port of entry, a long-sought goal of the railroad [see 26 July 2002 issue]. Under the previous system, rail shipments arriving in Auburn had to be sent by truck to Portland, where they were inspected. Homeland Security Director Tom Ridge signed the order this day, and it took effect immediately. {AP}

SEARSPOINT
14 July, Mack Point. THE NEW PIER WILL GET IMMEDIATE USE, according to Burt Russell, vice-president of terminals and transportation for Sprague. The Portsmouth-based company will operate the remaining bulk pier, the new pier, and a warehouse for break-bulk [see 4 June issue], with the assistance of Merrill’s Marine Terminal for break-bulk products.

Payment and ownership
Construction and dredging cost about $13.5 million, and the total project came to $16.2 million. Sprague will pay wharfage fees to Maine Port Authority for cargo over the new pier, and over the liquid bulk pier. When the fees total $16.2 million, Sprague has the option of acquiring the new pier. Wharfage fees for cargo over the liquid bulk pier end at that point.

Dry bulk to move
All dry bulk handling will switch to the new pier, so that it will receive the coal and salt and other products currently handled by the steam cranes and conveyor system on the Sprague pier [see photo and map in 19 February 1998 issue]. Ships’ gear will unload the cargoes directly into trucks, which will dump the product onto one of several pads located at the site. “This is more efficient than building a new conveyor,” said Russell, because the pads are scattered.

The historic steam cranes, the only such still operating on the East coast, will work twice more, Russell believed, in September. “We are offering them to museums now” as Sprague will remove all three from the pier which will handle only liquid bulk.

Dividing the cargoes has immediate benefits. Russell reported that although schedulers endeavor to avoid overlaps, sometimes ships must anchor in the Penobscot to await a berth at the Sprague pier. “An oil ship requires only 12 to 24 hours to discharge, whereas a dry bulk vessel may take four to five days.” With two piers, ships will not wait, and parties will not need to pay demurrage (a fee for having the vessel or rail car just sit).

What about new cargo?
The state and Sprague have invested a large chunk of money to construct the new pier, entitled ‘Mack Point Intermodal Cargo Terminal’, so that shippers and receivers have a modern mid-coast facility to handle break-bulk and eventually containers. Russell noted that none of the speakers at the Grand Opening on 25 July will announce a contract for new cargo. “We’re close on some deals, but cannot say definitely we have a deal.” Mack Point does have competitive rates and service, but many potential customers are locked into longer-term deals at other terminals, or have a good rail rate set up, or an existing agreement with a shipping line to use another port. {ANR&P discussion 14.Jul.2003}

Warehouse needed
Brian Nutter of the Maine Port Authority is also marketing the new facility. “We have a number of parties very interested, but to serve their needs” the proposed warehouse must be operational. The state hopes to use a federal Economic Development Administration grant for 60-70% of the construction price, and bond fund proceeds for the balance [see 20 May issue] though the Legislature has yet to pass the bond bill [see 3 July issue, editorial] and the voters must agree in November. So the new warehouse will not become operational until 2004, and the pier will not see much break-bulk traffic until then. “We
may have a few loads here and there,” said Nutter. The state is currently demolishing an existing salt shed, and an existing small warehouse. The new warehouse, in its first stage, will have about 50,000SF of space, and eventually become about 90,000SF.

**Purchase of former BAR property**
In addition to selling its pier to Sprague, BAR was in the process of selling an additional parcel of land to the state. Now, Nutter, said, the state will buy three parcels of BAR property from the bankruptcy estate for $750,000 [see above]. All contain petroleum storage tanks currently leased to Irving, and the state intends to continue the lease to Irving.

**Why have the Grand Opening now?**
Two reasons: first, July provides a good chance for good weather for the ceremony. Second, when the pier is ready for vessels at the end of August, it can go right into operation without interference from a ceremony. {ANR&P discussion 16.Jul.2003}

**Speakers at the Grand Opening: new Sprague president**
The Maine Port Authority has lined up three speakers: David Cole, as MDOT commissioner *ex-officio* chair of the Maine Port Authority; Governor John Baldacci; and new Sprague President John McClellan. Sprague is a wholly owned subsidiary of Axel Johnson Inc., a member of the Axel Johnson Group of Stockholm, Sweden, with interests in energy, as well as the environmental and telecommunications industries.

McClellan became president in April 2003; before that he served as president of EPIK Communications in Orlando Florida. Previous to that, he worked 16 years for consulting firm Monitor Company in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Axel Johnson recruited him as new president of Sprague because Sprague “needed to return to a customer-centric focus.” Based on McClellan’s track record at EPIK, where he had created a customer-driven culture, he was hired into a completely new field (though with a tangential connection in that EPIK was once owned by Florida East Coast).

To get up to speed in materials handling, McClellan has met with about 150 customers in the last three months. {ANR&P discussion 16.Jul.2003}

**PORTLAND**
May, Portland. *A REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN CALLED FOR IMPROVED PORT ACCESS*; it was webposted in early July. *Destination Tomorrow*, the update of the Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation Committee's Regional Transportation Plan (PACTS is the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the greater Portland region), makes these statements:

**Sea to Land Connection**
The Port of Portland is the largest seaport in New England in terms of tonnage. Its position as a successful seaport will require the provision of safe, efficient connections to landside distribution systems – both highway and rail. Most often these connections are made via truck. Truck traffic is often perceived as having negative impacts on residential or commercial areas. The conflict between the need for trucks in the movement of goods and the often-negative perception of the impacts of truck traffic on residential and commercial areas is an issue that needs to be managed.

The proposed SEA-21 federal legislation focuses on the maritime network and includes money for the mitigation of the impacts of trucks and port operations on adjacent areas. Goods arriving in port by water may often be affordably and efficiently shipped via rail. This makes rail access to the port critical to avoid the need for drayage to a remote railhead location. In addition, there is a need for the development of expanded container cargo storage and throughput/loading capacity at the International Marine Terminal.

**Rail to Land Connection**
As traditional manufacturing and natural resource extraction and processing have declined, the use of rail as a means of goods movement has also been diminished. Current rail service is able to provide affordable service for larger bulk commodities that are less time sensitive. As rail accessibility has declined so has rail service meaning that fewer businesses are served by rail spurs for direct door-to-door service.

When direct rail access is not available to a facility, rail- intermodal service offers businesses the opportunity to achieve the some of the savings in shipping via rail service. Containerization, piggy back, break bulk, and other less-than-carload service variations are available to provide businesses an alternative to truck only shipments.
Component 5. Freight System
Freight system recommendations will continue to make improvements to freight facilities and improve access to these facilities. Recommended freight system investments include:

- Improvements to port facilities.
- Improvements to intermodal facility access and port access.
- Additional rest stops on interstate highways.

No specific recommendations about improvements were made in Destination Tomorrow. {ANR&P discussion with PACTS’ Eric Ortman 17.Jul.2003}

MASSACHUSETTS

CSXT
16 July, Brockton MA. THE TWO REGUS C&D FACILITIES ARE DOING WELL, according to Jim Christie, regional vice-president. Here at Champion City [see 26 June issue], it is “going along wonderfully, we’re moving 12-15 cars a day.” He said CSXT is providing “excellent service, in fact all service providers including our own employees” have done well to start up a new facility and move 700-900 tons a day so soon.

And how goes the operation in Portland?
Christie said PW had some issue with regular deliveries, due to a fatality on its track and to the high heat preventing the operator from closing the bridge over the Connecticut River. But he underscored that the railroad has been “very supportive”, providing extra switches to make up for the irregular service, at no cost to Mid-State Recovery [see 12 March issue]. “We’ve been able to do what we wanted to do, in part because of the tremendous support from the railroads; they’ve been right there.” {ANR&P discussion 16.Jul.2003}

MORE DETAILS ON THE ALLSTON LANDING SALE
I have already reported the bare outlines of the transaction when Harvard University bought the land (the ‘fee simple’) underlying the Beacon Park yard and the Turnpike interchange, but left the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA or T), the Executive Office of Transportation and Construction (EOTC), and the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority (MTA) with easements to continue their current rail or highway use on the Allston Landing parcel. See 4 June issue.

This article provides details elicited from the participants as well as from the deeds describing the easements.

Historical background
On 27 December 1962, the New York Central (NYC, a predecessor to CSXT) traded the rail yard (then 91 acres), as well as its four-track line from South Station nearly to the Newton-Weston line, to the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority which wanted the right-of-way for a turnpike extension. The Turnpike built the existing interchange on about half of the rail yard.

In return, NYC received a brand-new double-track main line on a permanent easement, and a permanent easement on the 47 acres for continued rail use at Beacon Park Yard. {Harvard->MBTA Easement Agreement, page 4} That permanent easement is the key to this entire story.

In 2003, CSXT has the NYC rights though the change of ownership to Penn Central and then Conrail, held under the name New York Central Lines LLC. Under the easement terms, CSXT may not sell the easement. Beacon Park houses an intermodal facility, a major garbage container-to-rail transfer point, a CSX Transflo bulk terminal, and just adjacent a chemical customer and a private transfer facility. All told, traffic probably comes to 75,000 intermodal units and 10,000 other cars.

The MBTA and Amtrak conduct passenger operations over the CSXT easement under trackage rights agreements. While the T and Amtrak use both tracks over most of the stretch, through the Beacon Park Yard they are limited to
using only one track, the southmost one, track two.

The existing CSXT easement area is shown on the map outlined in red.

MASSACHUSETTS TURNPIKE AUTHORITY

What the Turnpike gave. The fee (the ownership of the underlying land) of 91 acres at Allston Landing, already encumbered by permanent easements belonging to CSXT, along with newly-created easements. The actual purchaser has the name ‘Harvard University Beacon Yards LLC’.

The Turnpike also gave an easement to the MBTA [see below] over land outside the parcel acquired by Harvard, to permit the T to better operate commuter trains.

What the Turnpike got and retained. The Turnpike received $75 million from Harvard, as well as a permanent easement over a portion of the property for highway purposes. The easement is currently used by a section of the Massachusetts Turnpike (I-90) plus ramps.

If CSXT extinguishes or abandons its easement, then Harvard may request that the Turnpike relocate the highway easement within the 91-acre parcel under certain conditions:
- The Turnpike agrees that the proposed relocation is satisfactory.
- The relocation meets all federal and state highway requirements.
- Harvard will pay for any costs of relocation.

MASSACHUSETTS BAY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

What the T gave. The T gave nothing, as it had no ownership rights in the parcel. It already had a trackage rights agreement with CSXT to operate commuter railroad trains over the parcel (but only one track) and as far as Weston. The T owns the right-of-way from that point to Framingham.

What the T received from Harvard. After the Harvard-Turnpike agreement, Harvard granted to the T an easement to ‘install, repair, replace, maintain, operate, inspect, and remove’ in the

(i) Main Line Easement Area, ‘the NYCLL Main Line and the Additional Main Line (if constructed) for commuter rail purposes and freight rail purposes.’

(ii) Layover/Layup Easement Area, ‘Layover/Layup Tracks (which will not consist of more than four layover/layup tracks) for the storage of passenger rail trains for temporary periods, provided that such trains are actively used daily (except weekends and holidays) by MBTA in its passenger rail operations.’

(iii) Grand Junction Easement Area, ‘the Grand Junction Track for freight and passenger rail access to Grand Junction Bridge from the Main Line Easement Area.’

Harvard reserved the air rights, but it will conform to applicable building code requirements. Harvard reserved the right to relocate the easement areas as long as it provides to the T new easement areas which are ‘of similar utility.’ {section 3.5}

If the T ‘ceases to actively use’ the easement area, ‘such cessation shall constitute prima facie evidence of a termination of the Easement Agreement.’ {section 12}

T easement over Harvard fee takes effect later. ‘MBTA shall only be entitled to exercise its rights under this Easement Agreement’ after the ‘NYCLL Termination Date’. The date occurs when CSXT or its successor ‘has fully abandoned, released, or otherwise terminated the NYCLL Main Line’ and ‘the NYCLL Rail Yard’. {section 5.1}

What the T received from the Turnpike. ‘[A]n irrevocable and perpetual right and easement’ over an area west of Beacon Park Yard ‘to construct, install, maintain, repair, replace, use, and operate... passenger rail main line track or tracks and layover track or tracks.’

The Turnpike reserved the air rights. If the T ‘ceases to actively use’ the easement area ‘for a twelve-month consecutive period, such cessation shall constitute an absolute abandonment of the’ easement area.
Also, the Turnpike has the right to relocate the easement area ‘so long as the relocated MBTA easement provides...in the reasonable judgement of MBTA, a similar utility.’

Easement over Turnpike fee subject to CSXT. Unlike the Harvard-MBTA agreement, the Turnpike-MBTA agreement has no specific clause indicating that the easement takes effect only when CSXT abandons the Beacon Park Yard. Instead, the agreement notes that the MBTA easement is subject to the NYCLL easement. {section 4} When that is extinguished, then the MBTA easement will remain and can be used.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF TRANSPORTATION AND CONSTRUCTION
What EOTC gave. The agency gave nothing, as it had no ownership rights in the parcel.

What EOTC received.

Study funds. Harvard agreed to spend up to $1 million for a regional transportation study to look at all transportation issues relating to the parcel, encompassing freight, commuter, long-distance passenger rail, and trucking. Stephen Hines, director of development for the Turnpike, said the study was “driven largely by rail use” and will be a “forward-looking study.” EOTC will lead the study, which will start as soon as possible. Astrid Glynn, EOTC deputy secretary for multimodal transportation, said the agency had not yet decided whether to hire a consultant or to do the study in-house.

Easement for freight yard. EOTC also received from Harvard the option to purchase an easement over a approximately five-acre parcel within the existing rail yard [see map]. The easement is limited to the specific use of a container rail terminal to serve the port. The agreement fixes the price for the easement at $5 million, adjusted by the Consumer Price Index.

As for freight rail access, MBTA Deputy Director/Legal Counsel of Design and Construction James Atkinson noted that EOTC would ensure through its oversight of the MBTA that freight trains could access the container yard, even though CSXT had pulled out.

Glynn commented: “We hope that CSXT remains at Beacon Park for a long, long time. But if it concludes that rail markets no longer exist within the Boston area, Massport will still have a need for a rail terminal.” {ANR&P discussions 14&15.Jul.2003}

MASSACHUSETTS PORT AUTHORITY
What Massport gave. The agency gave nothing, as it had no ownership rights.

What Massport received. Via EOTC, Massport got the study, which will include the possible extending of freight rail to the port. Also via EOTC, Massport may continue to market its ‘near-dock’ rail because it has the right to create the five-acre container terminal should CSXT leave town.

Mike Leone, head of the maritime division of Massport, said his agency is “pleased at the result.” The size of that yard would permit Massport to move a significant amount of containers–several hundred–per week. That amount would suffice to give ocean carriers calling Boston access to the Midwest.

In addition, Leone was pleased that Harvard offered to look at doing rail “right.” Running rail to the port would eliminate the need for the five-acre yard at Beacon Park. “We’re finally going to really study” the idea of getting rail to Conley, underlined Leone. {ANR&P discussion 3.Jun.2003}

HARVARD UNIVERSITY
What Harvard gave.

- $75 million to purchase the fee in 91 acres.

- $1 million for a transportation study to be supervised by EOTC, and to start immediately.

- To EOTC, an option to purchase an easement for a five-acre yard for which EOTC must pay, if CSXT leaves. [See above.]
- To the MBTA, easements for a second main line track, a layover area, and access to the Grand Junction bridge. [See above.]

What Harvard received. The fee interest in 91 acres, encumbered by the easements outlined above.

**MBTA EXPANSION PLANS**

1 July, Boston. *THE FIRST DAY OF MBCR’S COMMUTER RAIL OPERATION WENT FAIRLY WELL*, according to spokesperson Tara Frier. The morning went very smoothly, with a 97% on-time rating. In the afternoon, Massachusetts Bay Commuter Rail (MBCR), which is operating the commuter rail trains for the MBTA, “hit a few bumps” with engine failures on two trains requiring bussing of people to destinations. PM on-time came in at 91%. “We have room to go up and we intend to go up.”

Frier said MBCR had inherited existing equipment and had reviewed pieces of the inventory in the runup to 1 July. Now that it has assumed responsibility, MBCR will review the whole inventory. The engine failures of this day resulted from problems such as overheating and leaky hoses.

To introduce itself, MBCR stationed “ambassadors” at Back Bay, North Station, and South Station in the morning and afternoon rush. It also did a literature drop on some trains. *(ANR&P discussion 2.Jul.2003)*

7-8 July, Boston. **CSXT RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL YARD TRACK TO ASSIST THE WORCESTER MBTA SERVICE**, in *At State House hearings, CSXT presented representatives of the Central Massachusetts Caucus and the MBTA with the ‘Worcester Service Expansion Study’ that called for construction of 6.5 miles of new track costing $20-30 million to enable the MBTA to add two more midday trains to the westernmost stops on the Worcester-Boston line.*

The tracks between Worcester and Boston are at full capacity for both passenger and freight trains, the study said. To maintain the existing quality of service without causing more delays, CSX recommended the MBTA construct the new track in rail yards in both Framingham and Worcester. “This would allow us to move trains around without putting them on the main track,” said Joe Pesaturo, MBTA spokesperson.

“The capacity study provides sobering information, but the reality is that the rail infrastructure is outdated and does not meet existing passenger and freight demands,” said state Representative Karyn Polito, R-Shrewsbury, House co-chair of the Central Massachusetts Caucus. “It is imperative that all local, state and federal officials work collaboratively...with the MBTA and CSX to make improvements to the rail a priority.”

CSXT recommended the MBTA further investigate the possibility of expanded service by conducting a preliminary engineering study to better estimate the costs of the project, which could be up to $30 million, said Bob Sullivan, CSXT spokesperson. “It’s not a number that has a science behind it that says we've done detailed engineering.” Sullivan said. High costs are expected because the construction areas may pose challenging obstacles, including environmental issues and land acquisition. The possibility of wetlands in Framingham and excavation of ledge areas in Worcester also could add to the project's cost, Polito said. The MBTA hopes to hire an engineering firm in three to six months, Pesaturo said. *(Geoff Mosher in *MetroWest Daily News* 10.July.03)*

16 July. **RAIL PROJECTS WON’T HAPPEN FOR AWHILE**, Governor Mitt Romney said. Both Greenbush and Fall River/New Bedford need massive capital, which is not available.

**North-South rail link**
The Massachusetts Sierra Club will begin an ad campaign on the northside commuter trains, asking ‘Why doesn’t this train go to South Station?’ *(press reports)*

**GUILFORD RAIL**

16 July, Adams. **CURTIS FINE PAPERS WILL CLOSE ON 7 AUGUST.** The mill, which employs about 100, operated for decades as Brightwater, Budd Co., James River-Rochester, James River, Crown Vantage, and finally, Curtis Fine Papers. *(Susan Bush in *Berkshire Eagle* 17.July.03)*

[The mill received pulp by rail, but probably less than 100 carloads a year.*Rail Shippers and Receivers of Southern New England*]
WOBBURN-WILMINGTON RAILROAD
July.  **WWR WITHDREW ITS NOTICE OF EXEMPTION.** The STB granted the exemption on the existing trackage, but noted WWR need to file another application to construct trackage. WWR then said GRS found a flaw, and withdrew the notice. [See 3 July issue. More in a future issue.]

NEW HAMPSHIRE

MILFORD-BENNINGTON
16 July, Wilton.  **THE NATURE OF THE DISPUTE BETWEEN GRS AND PIKE INDUSTRIES** was described [see 3 July issue] by Jim Reger, regional manager. GRS has not paid Pike for deliveries of stone in 2002, “a fairly substantial sum” which he declined to state.  His company has striven to get it paid, including calling the bookkeeper, contacting the treasurer, sending duplicate invoices, and so forth. Pike has received no indication that GRS will pay. “Like any business,” Pike has declined to provide further product to GRS until the bill is paid. But, concluded Reger, when the past-due bill is paid, Pike is ready to resume doing business with Guilford.

Reger has been able to “work the bill down” by using GRS railcars to deliver product for other customers. {ANR&P discussion}

11 July, Milford. **MBRX FILED A FORMAL PETITION WITH THE STB,** said owner Peter Leishman [see 3 July issue]. GRS offered to change the operating window to 4AM to 1PM, but MBRX rejected that. “We need an unlimited operating window and we need track speed of more than five miles per hour.” For the past 11 years MBRX has had unrestricted hours, and has granted GRS unrestricted hours.

MBRX’s principal customer, Granite State Concrete, has the capacity to accept four trains a day of rock delivered to its Milford processing plant. Due to the slow speed on the GRS segment east of Wilton and the quarry’s restricted hours, MBRX can run even with unrestricted hours only three trains a day. With a higher speed, said Leishman, he could run four trains a day and has done so in the past.

The new window meant MBRX could add a second train, but that is still not enough. “B&M claims the hours are more than efficient window, but that’s absolutely false,” argued Leishman. On his track, MBRX can run at 25 miles per hour. {ANR&P discussion 17 July 2003}

17 July, DC. **THE SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD DID NOT RESOLVE INFORMALLY THE DISPUTE** between MBRX and GRS about a derail and operating windows [see 3 July issue]. A source close to the situation said Clemens at the STB had worked hard. {ANR&P discussion}

NEW ENGLAND SOUTHERN
16 July, Concord. **“OUR TRAFFIC IS GOOD BUT GRS SERVICE IS SUFFERING,”** said NEGS President Peter Dearness. “Guilford is suffering from lack of crews, restrictions on hours,” and bad track. GRS formerly provided service to Manchester six days a week, and NEGS was able to increase its service to six days a week, smoothing traffic out and giving it a 15% boost.

Then GRS dropped Manchester service to only three times a week, Monday-Wednesday-Friday. Recently, it has gone to “any three days, or even two days.” That means, Dearness explained, that the traffic is still getting through, but the irregularity produces a flood of cars hard to handle for both his railroad and the customers.

Track conditions have required a reduction in speed from the former 25 miles per hour down to 10 miles per hour. {ANR&P discussion 18 Jul. 2003}
VERMONT RAILWAY/MMA
15 July, Bangor. VTR/MMA ‘have a common interest in establishing a joint trailer service,’ reported MMA’s Vice-president Marketing Bill Schauer. The two ‘are having good progressive discussions toward that end. However we haven't come to commercial terms including target markets, service offerings and equipment specifics yet.’ {e-mail to ANR&P}

WASHINGTON COUNTY RAILROAD
1 July, Burlington. WACR BEGAN THE LONG-TERM OPERATING AGREEMENT. An inspection train was to run on 18 July to celebrate.
Management
Customer Service, Operations, and Maintenance are handled out of the VRS office at Bellows Falls, Vermont. Sales and Administrative support are managed at VRS headquarters in Burlington, Vermont. {VRS press release and invitation}

The operation will become WACR’s Connecticut River Division, composed of the Lyndonville subdivision (Newport to Wells River–formerly CPR) and the Bradford subdivision (Wells River to White River Junction–formerly B&M). {Scott Whitney in BLHS Bulletin 7.03}

RAIL SHIPPERS
Champion City (CSXT), Delta Bulk (various), Curtis Fine Papers (GRS MA), Eastern Pulp and Paper (GRS Maine), Frontier Energy (GRS Maine), Granite State Concrete (MBRX), International Paper (GRS Maine), JP Noonan [see Regional], Mid-State Recovery (PW CT), Pike (MBRX), SAPPI (GRS Maine).