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Issue 03#12B 5 January 2004

*Article unchanged from e-bulletin.

Regional Issues

NY-Boston feeder: SCOOP looking for funds.

Connecticut

Bridgeport: Money arriving soon.

Maine

Legislature: Bond for Merrill and five-person [sic!] crews proposed.

MDOT: IRAP proposals due 16 January.

Amtrak: Incremental improvement leads to speed?*

BAR/CN: NITL and Fraser comment on dispute.

CSXT/HRRC: HRRC may get a C&D facility, and CSXT an MSW facility, in Pittsfield.* Waste-to-energy does not use rail.*

CSXT: Gallo moves to Pennsylvania, Tighe loses traffic.

GRS: Wilmington & Woburn refiles.*

MBTA: Legislators favor North South Rail Link.

Massachusetts


CSXT/HRRC: GRRC may get a C&D facility, and CSXT an MSW facility, in Pittsfield.* Waste-to-energy does not use rail.*

GRS: Wilmington & Woburn refiles.*

MBTA: Legislators favor North South Rail Link.

New Hampshire

Commuter: Report from Task Force.

MBRX/GRS: STB denies sanctions.

NHN: Possible wallboard customer.*

Portsmouth: Sprague deciding how to move chips.*

Rhode Island

QPD: Bond issue could pay for track rehab.*

Vermont

Rail Council: Infrastructure priorities, trespass legislation, LVRC update, VTA.

Maritimes/Québec

MMA/NBSR: Sunbury intermodal 5 times a week.*

Halifax: More on service standards scorecard.*

Rail Shippers/Receivers

A cross-reference to companies mentioned here.

People, Positions, Events

Jim Howarth, Jay Baird. PW hiring.

Editorial

End of the year

OK, so I am a little late, but not short. Unlike last year’s final issue, this is loaded with news, and more to come. GU is making the case for Boston Railway Terminal to come to Milford, even though the town does not like it.

What makes New Year’s Day so important, anyway? Two reasons: it ends the two-week Holiday Season, and it closes out the financial year for most of us.

- Chop Hardenbergh

Next issue: 20 January.

REGIONAL ISSUES

NEW YORK - BOSTON FEEDER

24 December, Manhattan. A NEW GOVERNMENT-INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIP IS PUSHING THE BOSTON-NEW YORK SHORT-SEA ROUTE. The Short Sea Shipping Cooperative Programme (SCOOP), advocates maritime solutions for the increasing congestion, and the resulting inefficiencies, in the US transport system. MARAD formed the cooperative in October 2003 out of the MTS Short Sea Shipping Conference series. Many members of the Coastwise Coalition are also members of SCOOP. The Coastwise Coalition still exists, said Bob Kunkel, vice-president operations at Apex Marine Ship Management and SCOOP chair.

Because of the high congestion on I-95 between New York and Boston, SCOOP is targeting this lane, as well as the Detroit/Windsor crossing, the San Francisco/Oakland corridor, and the US Gulf. Following the National Ports and Waterways Institute (NPWI) research [see 26 June issue], SCOOP would use a ship design, already proven in Vancouver, to move trailers at 18 knots between a terminal in New York harbor and Providence, Fall River, or Boston.

Funding

Kunkel believes that the Boston-New York short-sea operation will cover operating costs, but funding will have to come from elsewhere for the ship and for the terminals. “Europe did the same, and after two to three years of operation the short-sea services are self-supporting. We are asking the federal government for congestion mitigation support in the form of set-aside financing, subsidy-type arrangements, and fully-funded demonstration projects.”

Rick Armstrong, executive director of the Massachusetts Seaport Advisory Council, agrees. Advocates want to get a chorus of voices calling for the service, so that government will fund part of it. Kunkel noted that while SCOOP aimed to take trucks off the highway, “the trucking side is starting to see that we are not going to steal their business, but move to a short-haul mentality at either end.”

Next step

SCOOP has a design package done for the ship. It is going out for bids to mid-size yards around the United States now. Once funding arrives and building begins, “we will have a ship in the water in 18 to 24 months with proper government support,” said Kunkel.

Bridgeport too?

Kunkel reported that SCOOP intends to continue the discussions with Bridgeport initiated by NPWI. Bridgeport is already making arrangements for barge feeder service [see Connecticut]: “It’s time to start looking past barge, if we are going to support DOD and DOT congestion mitigation policy.” {ANR&P discussions 24.Dec.03; John McLaughlin in Lloyd’s List 23.Dec.03}

CONNECTICUT

BRIDGEPORT

2 January. THE BOND COMMISSION WILL DECIDE ON THE BOND FOR BARGE FEEDER SERVICE to/from New York harbor on 30 January, said Joe Riccio, executive director of the Bridgeport Port Authority. He has approval of the state for the $7 million project [see 31 October 2003 issue]. Once the bond is approved, issuing it will require “a couple of months,” but the Authority will begin to solicit vendors for the tug and barge operator, and for a ‘master operator’. {ANR&P discussion 2 January 2004}
MAINE

MAINE LEGISLATURE

THE LEGISLATURE WILL ENTERTAIN TWO BILLS OF INTEREST.

Ports

One (LD1647) will permit a $3 million bond issue for the new warehouse P.D.Merrill said he needed [see 31 October issue].

Five workers on each train

The other (LD 1734) will require ‘[e]ach railroad company or rail authority operating within this State...to have, at a minimum, 5 employees located on each of its trains traveling on a railroad line within this State.’

Neither has a hearing scheduled yet. {Legislature website}

MDOT/IRAP

23 December, Augusta. POTENTIAL APPLICANTS HAVE REQUESTED MEETINGS WITH DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS, reported MDOT’s Rob Elder, for the Industrial Rail Access Program (IRAP) process; applications are due 16 January. While the railroads are familiar with the program, others may not be: “We are glad to meet with towns or others unfamiliar with the program” in advance of the end of January due date. If demand existed, MDOT would hold a general information session. {ANR&P discussion}

[See Guilford and MMA for two applications.]

AMTRAK MAINE

18 December, Augusta. SHORTER TRIP TIMES FOR THE DOWNEASTER MAY COME FROM INCREMENTAL STEPS rather than moving to 79 miles-per-hour operation, said Ron Roy, director of passenger transportation for the MDOT. “One objective everyone is looking at is reducing the operating time to two hours and 30 minutes. This can be done by incrementally increasing the current operating speed.” Now the train averages 42 miles per hour; “if we could bring it up”, that would yield fifteen minutes in savings.

Amtrak is reviewing the options for interlockings and passing sidings to reduce the trip time. The slow order at Kennebunk also could be looked at. Amtrak head David Gunn clearly knows about the Downeaster and has also talked to the MDOT commissioner and other officials, Roy noted.

How about the GRS appeal of the 79mph decision?

Roy said his attorneys had thought the appeals court would decide in November, and he still expects a decision “soon”. But, he commented, even if the train could operate at 79 miles per hour, it would only save six to 15 minutes. {ANR&P discussion 18.Dec.03}

BAR/CN

11 December, DC. MDOT DID NOT SUBMIT A COMMENT ON BAR’S EFFORT TO ANNUL THE AGREEMENT WITH CN which gives CN direct access to Fraser Paper in Madawaska [see 31 October issue]. Rob Elder, chief of freight transportation, said the state believed the matter “could be worked out between the parties” so “we encouraged them to talk.” {ANR&P discussion}
National Industrial Transportation League did file
NITL, a national organization of industries interested in transportation, consisting of the largest industrial corporations, did file in opposition to BAR, calling the request to annual ‘extraordinary, unprecedented, and disturbing.’ The thrust of the filing inveighs against the attempt to re-establish monopoly rail service to Fraser. NITL questioned the Trustee’s contention that with the income from service of Fraser, MMA could keep all its rail lines open.

NITL argued that even if MMA served Fraser directly, most traffic would continue to run to St. Leonard and out over CN. Fraser traffic would not help the former CDAC line because it would not travel that route.

And so did Fraser
Interesting facts emerged from the comment which Fraser filed in the matter, facts contained in the Verified Statement of Austin Durant, vice-president materials management of Fraser Papers, Inc (d/b/a Nexfor Fraser Papers), a subsidiary of Nexfor Inc.

The Madawaska mill produces 1200 tons a day; it employs, along with the pulp mill in Edmundston, 1600 people, and accounts for $8.5 million in Fraser revenue per week. It receives clay from Georgia and specialty chemicals from the Midwest, among other materials. About 50% of inbound material arrives by rail, and 70% of the paper goes out by rail.

Since MMA took over, the railroad has won an increased market share of Fraser traffic [see 26 February Regional]. MMA is now routing all inbound clay over its own lines, and outbound traffic share has increased from 1% to 10%. {STB Docket No.AB-279 (Sub-No.3 - filings made 11 December}

GUILFORD RAIL
2 January, Skowhegan. COUSINEAU MAY START USING A RAIL TRANSLOAD, according to Jim Batey, executive director of the Somerset Economic Development Corporation. The company wants to use rail to access its facility in North Anson; Batey is getting funding to rehab the track from Madison to North Anson [see 26 November issue].

He is preparing the IRAP application. EDA money will not be available until FY05 (after 1 October 2004) so Cousineau may use a siding in Madison and truck to/from North Anson.

Officials are also seeking an in-kind contribution from Guilford. Batey say he would know by mid-month whether GRS could do that. {ANR&P discussion}

3 December, Lisbon Falls. THE FIBERBOARD PLANT HERE COULD GENERATE 240 CARLOADS A YEAR, said plant manager John Robinson [see box]. New owners, naming the plant Knight-Celotex Fiberboard, want to keep the plant in operation: ‘The resumption of rail service to our facility remains an important strategic business element to us, and to this end we are pursuing all available avenues of assistance, including a request to Governor Baldacci for whatever support he may be able to provide. We believe 240 rail cars per year is a modest starting point, and could grow as much as 50% if rates are attractive.’ {e-mail to ANR&P from Robinson 19.Dec.03}

The state of rail service
In 1992, MDOT bought from Guilford the track which runs through the Knight plant, beginning in Brunswick and terminating in Lewiston, known as the Lewiston Lower. Guilford reserved the freight rights, but in the 1990s did not provide service to a customer seeking rail connections, Grimmell Industries [see 20 May issue]. In May, the STB finally decided that GRS improperly denied service, and in November reaffirmed its conclusion that GRS improperly denied service.

The STB conclusions were provided to the US District Court in Maine (Docket #: 2:99-cv-00112-GC), where the judge is deciding Grimmell’s suit seeking monetary damages. {Editor}

Rob Elder, head of MDOT’s Office of Freight, said he had met with the Knight-Celotex people. He noted that the company has a “good potential for rail.” {ANR&P discussion 2.Jan.04}

Lisbon’s Masonite sold
The plant in Lisbon Falls has made fiberboard since 1984. International Paper owned the Masonite Corporation, which operated the plant. In 2001 International Paper sold the Masonite Corporation to Canadian door manufacturer Premdor, which changed the company name to Masonite International. Premdor this autumn sold the company to Knight Industries, a Chicago building products firm. In announcing the sale on 2 December, Knight said the company would become part of its Knight-Celotex division; operations at the Lisbon facility where 118 people are employed will remain.
Knight-Celotex is working with Androscoggin County and state officials to designate part of Lisbon as a Pine Tree Zone to encourage development. That possibility made the purchase attractive to Knight. {Lewiston Sun-Times}

**MONTREAL, MAINE & ATLANTIC**

12 December, Augusta. Goveror Baldacci announced Fort Fairfield had won a grant to upgrade its rail system. The town, which will receive $500,000, joined 25 other winners among the 33 applicants for the money.

Fort Fairfield must come up with the balance of the $2,320,000 for the project [see 21 August issue]. According to Tony Levesque, economic development officer for the town, the project will rehab the main line and three sidings: one for Boralex, and one each for two new shippers which he declined to name. The project includes one facility adjacent to the rail for one of the shippers.

Preliminary estimates indicate that, figuring three trucks to one railcar, the project will take 6,000 trucks off the highway [meaning generate 2,000 carloads a year! editor].

**Funding**

Levesque said $1 million still must be raised. He’s applying to IRAP for $400,000 to $600,000, and is looking to rural development funds for the balance. `{ANR&P discussion 2 January 2004; Tess Nacelewicz in Portland Press Herald 16.Dec.03}`

27 December, Millinocket. Katahdin Paper may reopen its Millinocket mill next year. The company is working to identify the lowest-cost option for buying pulp, he said, but shaky market conditions in the paper business mean the plans aren't definite. According to spokesperson Glenn Saucier, the company still wants to restart the No. 11 supercalendered paper machine and over 12 to 18 months build a new bleach chemi-thermo-mechanical pulping operation; the two would employ up to 150. The operation would need a significant wood supply.

The Millinocket facility is staffed now by a crew of eight who are maintaining heat to the area surrounding the No. 11 machine, the administration office, and the engineering and research facility.

**Should help MMA**

Katahdin opened in June [see 6 May issue], employing 400, out of the bankruptcy of the Bowater ownership of the former Great Northern mills. In 1999 Great Northern had provided more than 50% of BAR carloadings; it was shuttered in January 2003 [see 14 January issue]. It once had 17 paper machines, and now has three: two in East Millinocket, and one in Millinocket. `{Paper Age 6.03; Anthony Saucier in Bangor Daily News 26.Dec.03}`

**MASSACHUSETTS**

**BAY COLONY RAILROAD**

29 December, Braintree. BCLR will buy and operate CSXT’s Dartmouth Industrial Track. Following the derailment in June [see 26 June issue], BCLR and CSXT began negotiating how BCLR could serve CSXT’s two customers, Colonial Beverage [our Directory #295] and Dartmouth Building Supply [our Directory #296]

**The STB filing**

On 18 December the Surface Transportation Board received a verified notice of exemption from BCLR stating that it would acquire and operate the Dartmouth Industrial Track from Milepost QND 0.08 (end of the wye connection with the New Bedford Subdivision) to Milepost QND 6.0 (where CSXT and BCLR currently interchange cars for BCLR customer Mid-City Scrap [our Directory #298]).

Bay Colony ‘is purchasing the assets comprising the Rail Line, and leasing the underlying real property from CSXT....After the purchase, BCLR intends to rehabilitate the Rail Line, and control of the Rail Line will allow BCLR to handle its traffic safely and more efficiently. These benefits will allow BCLR to justify incurring the cost of the rehabilitation that the Rail Line needs.’ `{STB Finance Docket No. FD-34446}`
The takeover
While the STB announcement stated BCLR will begin operation on 1 January, Bernie Reagan, BCLR’s senior vice-president, marketing, said this day that the deal ran into one glitch, and he expects BCLR to begin operating on or about 15 January. Even with the extra customers, BCLR’s revenue will remain under the $5 million mark.

BCLR and CSXT will interchange on the wye at Nash Road. BCLR will serve the two new customers under a revenue division arrangement, just as it serves Mid-City Scrap.

The agreement will have a long term.

History
Bernie Reagan said that the line had been a light density line for some time, with only four customers: two beer companies, a scrap yard, and a lumber company. Early in 2003, the two beer companies combined into Colonial Beverage. Their business was not growing and the lumber company’s (Dartmouth Building Supply) is very small.

“CSX remains committed to the wholesale business, and the line looked very much like a retail line. Before the derailment of June, they offered it to us because we were a retail short line.”

BCLR agreed to take over because the line offered an immediate growth in business, and the chance to rehab the track so that service to Mid-City would be secure. The line needs “almost emergency maintenance” and BCLR will do the work as soon as the ground thaws.

CSXT will then only need to run over the FRA Class 2 track to the New Bedford wye, and not venture onto the Dartmouth Industrial Track, on which CSXT was running at five miles an hour.

The ‘Watuppa Line’
BCLR operates the track from the end boundary of the Dartmouth Industrial Track to the end of track. This Watuppa line, the Taunton section, and the Cape trackage form a package which BCLR leases from EOTC. It expires in 2006.
Future service
Currently CSXT provides service to its two customers twice a week, and BCLR coordinates service to Mid-City to coincide with the visit of the CSXT locomotive. Reagan anticipated that with better track, BCLR will give Mid-City the chance to grow its rail traffic. With growth, CSXT will increase its frequency.

“A good interchange numbers 12 to 15 carloads. If we can double that, CSXT will increase the interchange frequency.”

BCLR will add a second locomotive to the one now serving the Watuppa Line.

Financials
While declining to state the purchase price, Reagan stated that the railroad would make back the cost of the rehabilitation of the track over a ten- or 15-year period, from the increased income. “Railroading is always a long-term business.” {ANR&P discussion 29.Dec.03 & 2.Jan.04}

24 December. **THE MBTA FINALLY ISSUED THE RFP FOR THE MILLIS LINE.** A legal ad appeared in the *Boston Globe* this day.

New traffic?
One potential bidder on the Millis line has two additional customers. Traffic to Tresca Brothers Concrete [our Directory #232] could increase to 25 cars a week by building it a siding [so that the operator would also have quick access to the GAF facility – our Directory #233–at the end of the line - editor]. The bidder could also site a light aggregate distributor there.

What happened to the Plymouth line freight rights?
According to Mark Boyle, MBTA real estate director, the Plymouth line was not included in the RFP because T operation officials said freight could not co-exist with passenger traffic. {e-mail to ANR&P from source close to the bidding 31.Dec.03}

Schedule for bidding
Questions due 7 January.
Pre-bid conference 14 January.
Names of bidders read 2 April.
Financial offers read 16 April.
{text of RFP}

30 December, Hyannis. **THE CAPE COD RAILROAD IS LOSING MONEY.** In a divorce case this year involving co-owner Timothy Bilouris [see 6 May issue], the judge quoted Bilouris stating that the business had been drain on his resources ‘of at least $50,000 for 2002...it is likely that the business will generate a similar loss in 2003 if it is not placed into bankruptcy or otherwise liquidates sooner. Moreover, the court finds that the relationship between the plaintiff [Bilouris] and his business partner [Phi Doherty] is strained and that it is unlikely that the business will continue to operate throughout 2003 and that it is likely that the only way to avoid further losses is to sell the business if a buyer can be located.’

In a brief interview, Cape Cod Central Railroad president Scott Himstead expressed confidence the train would roll out of the station again in April, when the season is scheduled to resume.

EOTC and CCCR negotiating new lease
In 1998, when CCCR acquired the license to operate on about 38 miles of tracks, the company agreed to pay $10,148 a year for three years to use them. In the past two years of the five-year deal, the fee increased to $12,072. The contract was supposed to expire 21 December, but the state has given the company until early January to iron out unfinished details, according to John Carlisle, EOTC spokesperson.

Affect on BCLR
BCLR’s Reagan said he was unaware of any changes in his company's operating agreement with CCCR. BCLR has its own agreement with EOTC for freight use. Under a separate agreement with CCCR, BCLR provides track maintenance, dispatching and federally-mandated inspections, as well as access to the track.

What’s to prevent BCLR from charging exorbitantly for its services, since neither state law nor EOTC regulations govern
the BCLR rates? Reagan depicted EOTC as expecting BCLR “to play nice.” {Frederick Melo in Cape Cod Times 30.Dec.03; ANR&P discussion 2.Jan.04}

HOUSATONIC RAILROAD / CSX TRANSPORTATION

9 December, Pittsfield. **WHAT’S THE CHANCE OF A RAIL-SERVED TRANSFER STATION HERE?** The City of Pittsfield has proposals for two facilities:

**C&D facility on HRRC**

The Valley Mill Corporation of Lee, Massachusetts, in November 2002 filed an environmental notification form (ENF) to construct a facility to handle construction and demolition debris (C&D) on Industrial Drive off South Street (Route 7). The company, led by Steve and Tom Garrity, purchased the 13.2-acre site (300 feet wide and 2000 feet long) in October 2002; only two acres in the south and east will be used by the facility.

Valley Mill plans to accept up to 250 tons of C&D at the facility, to sort out asphalt, brick, and concrete for local recycling, and then ship the balance in railcars to a landfill in Ohio. Historically, the site was used for storage by the New Haven Railroad. The site now has a 9600SF warehouse used for non-railroad storage; Valley Mill plans to add 16,700SF.

Although Valley Mill obtained a permit from Pittsfield’s Conservation Commission, and has obtained all state environmental permits, local NIMBYs still object to the site. Valley Mill still needs a site assignment permit under state law. That permit is given by a municipality’s Board of Health, but Pittsfield lacks one and must create it. {ENF on Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act office website; ANR&P discussion with Bret Kaminski of SKDesign, the firm doing the engineering for the facility 10.Dec.03; Berkshire Eagle 14.July.03}

CSXT North Adams Junction Yard in Pittsfield November 2003. On left, HRRC locomotive making up train (HRRC interchanges with CSXT here, and runs north on Coltsville Terminal track around to the left). On far left, Crane and Company rail-served warehouse. In the background, plastics cars on supposedly ‘abandoned’ yard tracks. Proposed site for BFI waste transfer facility. On right, CSXT main line toward Boston. {Courtesy Chris Parker, who took picture from Junction Road bridge, facing east}
Solid waste transfer station on CSXT
In December 2003, BFI of Massachusetts filed a ENF to build a waste-to-rail transfer station in the North Adams Junction Yard, accessed via Laurel Street off Merrill Road. It will accept up to 300 tons per day of municipal solid waste (MSW) and 20 tons a day of recyclable material. The 24.3-acre site was ‘previously used as a rail equipment storage and maintenance area for the adjacent railroads [CSXT and HRRC]...Several abandoned, open-ended sets of tracks, formerly used to allow access to rail cars from the railroad, are on the site.’ [Abandoned? See photo. Editor]

BFI now collects all residential recyclables in Pittsfield, and trucks them to commercial recyclers in Springfield and New York. It also offers collection to businesses. In the region, it offers waste recycling. The proposed facility ‘will enable BFI to centralize its regional business and utilize railway and truck transfer of waste to allow more efficient operations and accommodate a growing service area.’

MSW will go into 22-ton containers which BFI will load onto railcars. Each railcar can hold four containers, meaning the 300 tons will fill three railcars a day. Recyclables will be aggregated for shipping by truck or rail to end users. {ENF}

Existing waste to energy facility
Some time ago, the City of Pittsfield chose to use waste-to-energy to dispose of its waste, rather than local landfills or export. Originally managed by the Vicon Company, the plant at 500 Hubbard Avenue is now owned and operated by EAC Operations, a subsidiary of EnergyAnswers. It combusts about 240 tons a day, heating water to produce steam, which is sent via pipe to nearby Crane and Company paper mills. The ash residue is processed and sent to New York and or Massachusetts via truck.

Meg Morris, manager of government and community relations for EAC Operations, noted Crane formerly used oil, which creates more emission issues than the EAC facility. Moreover, the facility gets rid of the Pittsfield waste, and employs 36 people. She had concerns about maintaining the supply of waste if BFI opens its facility. “There’s a limited amount of waste in that isolated part of the state, and the waste that’s there we are handling now.” Her company will decide whether to comment on the BFI proposal once the officials have full details. {ANR&P discussion 11.Dec.03}

MORE ABOUT THE COMPANIES

EnergyAnswers
The website states: ‘EnergyAnswers Corporation has a successful history of operating and managing solid waste facilities with a sensitivity to the communities we serve, the employees we hire, and the environment we work to protect. We are committed to efficient, safe, and environmentally sound operation of our facilities, and we have a dedicated staff that fulfill this commitment on a daily basis. The company's current operations include resource recovery facilities, composting operations, transfer stations, and landfill closure projects.’ In New England, the company also operates the Pioneer Valley Resource Recovery Facility waste-to-energy facility at Agawam, Massachusetts.

Construction and demolition debris from the Pittsfield and Agawam facilities is separated out before combustion and trucked to EnergyAnswers’ Canaan NY facility for recycling or disposal. [The CSXT line from Pittsfield to Albany runs by the facility though it does not use rail. Editor] Residue from the incineration, including ash, is also trucked out. {ANR&P discussion with Morris 11.Dec.03}

Crane and Company
This company makes fine stationery and banknote paper for the federal government. It has several facilities in the area: a paper mill in Pittsfield which is supplied by steam from EnergyAnswers, three large warehouses in Pittsfield [one of which receives pulp by railcar, our Directory #419], and a mixed use building for sales and marketing in Pittsfield. In Dalton, Crane has three paper mills (also supplied with steam from EnergyAnswers), a stationery converting facility, and administrative offices. It has recently purchased two former Beloit buildings, one of which it is now using for storage. The other has no use yet, but does have a rail siding not recently active. {ANR&P discussion with Crane spokesperson Peter Hopkins 12.Dec.03}
CSX TRANSPORTATION

21 December, Mansfield. **TIGHE WAREHOUSE LOST A MAJOR CONTRACT WHEN GALLO PULLED OUT.** According to a source, Gallo decided to institute a Regional Distribution Concept and serve the Northeast market out of a distribution center in the Allentown, Pennsylvania area on Norfolk Southern. All Gallo wine will move by truck from there to New England. ‘Although they won't be saving much if any money on transportation, they claim most savings will come from keeping inventory levels lower. I guess we'll find out in due time if this is the case.’ {e-mail to ANR&P} The wine had arrived by boxcar at Tighe’s facility [our Directory #264] in Mansfield.

GUILFORD RAIL SYSTEM / WILMINGTON & WOBOURN

3 December, DC. **THE WILMINGTON AND WOBOURN TERMINAL RAILROAD REFILED FOR COMMON CARRIER STATUS.** It sought exemption from the standard requirements for a railroad to come into existence in 49 USC 10901, ‘as this is a minor transaction involving the reconstruction and construction of about 4,000 feet of track on formerly industrial land and will result in a carrier-operated reload center interchanging with the Boston and Maine Railroad.’

The applicant noted that normally such a small railroad would be granted exemption, ‘except that the applicant, in addition to acquiring existing track, will be adding track and reload facilities including a proposed new junction if an agreement can be achieved with the [MBTA].’

**Only an attempt to avoid state regulation?**

Per the application, ‘The Board has rejected the argument that creation of a small railroad on former industrial tracks by a petitioner which is a non-rail operator for the purpose of obtaining the legal benefits of rail carrier status is a sham transaction. See Bulkmatic Railroad Corporation-Acquisition and Operation Exemption-Bulkmatic Transportation Company FD-33414 (19 November 2002).’

**Ownership**

Robert W. Jones III, Clifton New Jersey, managing member 25%
Ronald Klempner, Teaneck New Jersey, managing member 25%
Jack Lyons
Carl Jones.

Carl Jones and Lyons are the sources of all financing. WWTR is 50% minority owned, according to the application.

If the approval process takes longer than three months, ‘the applicant will be subject to a non-refundable payment to Olin on the Option.’ The investors paid a $55,600 filing fee to the STB with the application, and asked the Board for an expedited schedule. The application had a supporting letter from US Representative Nick Rahall of West Virginia.

**Operation**

WWTR has an option to purchase 53+ acres formerly occupied by Olin Corporation, including a Y-shaped set of tracks which served the company.

It anticipates traffic in aggregates, sand & gravel, stone, lumber, plastics, steel, scrap steel, recycled paper and plastic, newsprint, paper products, clay, construction debris, brick, non-hazardous solid wastes, liquids, and dry chemicals....The facility will not handle hazardous waste or other hazardous materials.

WWTR will not take title to any material. It will handle about 20 cars per day initially. It has no agreement with GRS to serve the cement facility, or to use the branch line as a switching lead.

**Public interest**

According to the application, the greater Boston area falls short of rail-truck transload facilities, so the rail market has only 14%, compared with 59.6% nationally. Because of MBTA passenger traffic on the MBTA New Hampshire Route, GRS can use the track for only four hours at night.

If WWTR operates and builds through tracks, that will permit GRS trains to avoid backing out, giving it more time to switch other customers.

The railroad included a table showing that per ton-mile, rail cars’ public impact costs only $0.0021, while trucks’ impact...
costs $0.0364. For example, moving 20 tons 750 miles costs the public $546 by truck and $31.50 by rail.

Moreover, redevelopment of brownfield sites as rail facilities is environmentally benign. ‘The supply of property available for additional rail terminal infrastructure within urban areas consists predominantly of such brownfield sites.’

Local opposition
The applicant reported that the STB’s Section of Environmental Analysis has received ‘a volley of letters from local citizens and their elected representatives.’ These did not identify any issue not addressed in the environmental record.’ {text of application STB Docket No.FD 34391 filed 3.Dec.03}

MBTA
22 December, Boston. **A MAJORITY OF THE GENERAL COURT FAVORS THE NORTH SOUTH RAIL LINK,** at least enough to request that it be added to the ‘anticipated future efforts’ of the T’s Capital Investment Plan [see 17 December issue: Fall River/New Bedford].

Working intensely since last fall, former state Rep. John Businger (D), a director of the National Corridors Initiative and its vice-president for the Rail Link project — along with other transit allies, including former Governor Michael S. Dukakis (D) — have secured the support of 121 Bay State senators and representatives. They comprise a majority in both houses, and are asking Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney (R) to add the project to the state’s long-term transportation plan. {Destination Freedom 22.Dec.03 - see for more detail}

NEW HAMPSHIRE

COMMUTER RAIL
19 December. **A REVIEW OF THE LEGISLATIVE TASK FORCE ON RAIL** was submitted by Representative Bill Mosher, chair, to the New Hampshire General Court. Among its points:

Need to double-track north of Plaistow?
According to Mosher’s report, the Rockingham Planning Commission had looked at using the existing line from Plaistow to Rockingham Junction to reach Portsmouth. ‘The line now services both Amtrak and GRS...It was thought that the cost of required signalling, additional track, passing sidings, maintenance, and administration would be somewhat greater than restoring the Eastern line [through Newburyport], not to mention that the line would be severely congested with three classes of service competing.’

New Hampshire Transportation Authority
The report also noted that the Task Force is looking at such an authority, which would work with the regional planning commissions, agencies, and NHDOT to facilitate commuter projects and programs, coordinating rail, bus, and air passenger services.

Seacoast coordination
The Task Force suggested that seacoast communities get together, identify properties for industrial development with access to rail, air, and interstate access, stress the importance of rail development, and other activities. {text from Mosher}

MILFORD-BENNINGTON
23 December. DC. **THE STB DENIED THE MBRX MOTION FOR SANCTIONS** against GRS [see 17 December issue]. ‘Complainants’ motion will be denied because they have not shown that BM/ST attempted to influence any employee to testify untruthfully. In support of their allegation of undue influence, complainants rely primarily on the verified statement of Mr. Leishman. In his statement, Mr. Leishman asserts that Mr. Zompa told him privately that his deposition testimony was not truthful in certain respects and that he feared losing his job if he had not testified as he did. However, in a statement submitted with BM/ST’s reply, Mr. Zompa denies being coerced in any way or communicating the existence of any coercion
to Mr. Leishman. Mr. Zompa provided a detailed explanation of what he says transpired between the parties and why Mr. Leishman may have mistakenly concluded that Mr. Zompa was being less than truthful. In view of Mr. Zompa’s denial of the testimony of Mr. Leishman, the Board lacks sufficient grounds for granting the relief sought by complainants.’ {STB Docket No. 42083 23.Dec.03}

NEW HAMPSHIRE NORTHCOST
23 December. **NHNDID A TRIAL LOAD OF WALLBOARD FOR A NEW CUSTOMER.** The northbound train also had eight to nine LPG cars [for Eastern Propane, see 27 January issue] and two loads of rebar [presumably for MacFarlane Steel, see 00#23]. {e-mail to ANR&P from Steve Arnold, NHN general manager 29.Dec.03; NERAIL post 23.Dec.03}

PORTSMOUTH
15 December. **SPRAGUE IS DETERMINING THE METHOD TO LOAD CHIPS INTO SHIPS** at its Newington facility, following approval by the Town [see 14 November issue] for the use of a pneumatic system. Bruce Atkins, who is handling the project for Sprague, said engineers were looking at a conveyor also, and would decide the best way in a matter of weeks. Following 90-120 days for construction, Atkins hoped to begin moving chips by late spring [for customer Cousineau - editor]. {ANR&P discussion 18.Dec.03}

RHODE ISLAND

QUONSET POINT/DAVISVILLE
18 December. **THE PORT WILL LIFT SOME RAIL AND REHABILITATE SOME TRACK** if the proposed $48 million bond issue passes next November [see 17 December issue]. Jeff Grout, managing director of the Quonset Point Davisville Port and Commerce Park, planned to rehab the main lines to the bay at both Quonset and Davisville. For an estimated $5.6 million, a total of 27,000 feet will be lifted, and 36,000 feet will be renovated.

Users of the spurs off the two main lines will pay for renovation or construction, Grout noted.

New track for auto unloaders?
Grout said discussions had taken place, but the Volkswagens landed at Davisville do not now move far enough out of the Rhode Island for rail to make sense. Any rail improvements for the site depended on future discussions. [P&O Ports does the stevedoring, and NORAD handles the facility. VW in 2002 expressed interest in sending vehicles across the country. See 30 September 2002 issue.] {ANR&P discussion 18.Dec.03}

VERMONT

VERMONT RAIL COUNCIL
10 December. **TOPICS THE RAIL COUNCIL DISCUSSED,** according to a missive from VAOT, “Highlights from the Vermont Rail Council Meeting December 10, 2003.” [Note: These are highlights only; the minutes have not been approved.]

Report of the Subcommittee on Infrastructure Improvements
‘In the course of looking at a statewide rail system versus individual rail lines with individual needs, the Subcommittee identified two top priorities as bridges and 286,000 pound rail capacity (should be a minimum for rebuilding). Cost estimates for each priority will be developed. The committee will produce a statewide prioritized list of work for the Secretary’s consideration.’

Trespass Legislation
‘Discussion involved [the Agency of Natural Resources] issue of understanding the terms “yard” and “structure” as well as Fish & Wildlife concerns. [Anthony Otis, Vermont Railway Association] lobbyist, assured the Council and railroads that he
has not lessened his attempts at getting a bill passed, and the Council reaffirmed support for trespass legislation adoption.

LVRC Update
'A question was raised on when the RFP for the dismantling of the Lamoille Valley Railroad line would happen. The response was that until the railbanking process is complete, the RFP would not go out....[VAOT expects that] the material salvaged would pay the cost of the removal and still have sufficient rail and perhaps ties left to move to other railroads in the State....[T]he section in Swanton currently in use by NECR is not being dismantled. The STB (Surface Transportation Board) deliberations are proceeding.

'John Pennington made a motion to support action to remove the track, except for the 45-mile segment between Morrisville and Swanton. The motion did not pass.

Vermont Transportation Authority (VTA)
'The VTA Board of Directors is discussing the oversight by the VTA of the operation of Vermont's Amtrak Stations. A presentation is anticipated at the next Rail Council meeting. {VAOT}

Next meeting
No date yet set.

QUEBEC/MARITIMES

MONTREAL, MAINE, & ATLANTIC / NEW BRUNSWICK SOUTHERN
17 December, Brownville Junction. THE SUNBURY INTERMODAL RUNS FIVE DAYS A WEEK NOW, an increase from the weekend-only trial operation earlier [see 14 November issue]. {e-mail to ANR&P from Joey Kelley 19.Dec.03} NBSR/Sunbury chief Dale Thibodeau will discuss the new service within the next two weeks. {ANR&P discussion with Thibodeau assistant 19.Dec.03}

HALIFAX
MORE ON THE SERVICE STANDARDS SCORECARD
was provided by Michele Peveril [see 17 December issue]. She provided these examples of standards on the scorecard.

Percentage of containers loaded to rail within 48 hours (provided by terminals).

Percentage of railcars stripped of containers within terminal work periods, meaning a 24-hour work period (provided by CN).

Percentage of import slots on outbound CN trains utilized by terminals (provided by CN).

Sunbury-painted units [see 26 November issue] haul a Sunbury trailer through Brownville Junction, headed east on 17 December. {Courtesy Joey Kelley}
Vessel arrival times provided by Halifax Port Authority, through pilots.

Use of daily scorecard
The Port Authority’s manager of cargo operations verbally reviews the daily report with CN and the terminals for purposes of planning and addressing current operational issues. CN produces its own daily report that contains a number of the same measures which the Port Authority receives from CN each day. On a monthly basis, four weeks’ worth of reports are then provided to CN, both terminals, and the shipping lines. {e-mail to ANR&P from Peveril 17.Dec.03}

RAIL SHIPPERS

Described in this issue.

Our Directory of Rail Shippers & Receivers in Southern New England has more information on the companies denoted with their directory number.

BFI [MA CSXT], Boralex [Maine, MMA], Colonial Beverage [MA BCLR #295], Cousineau [Maine, GRS and New Hampshire, Portsmouth], Crane & Company [MA CSXT #419], Dartmouth Building Supply [MA BCLR #296], Eastern Propane [NH, NHN], Fraser Paper [Maine, BAR/CN], Gallo [MA CSXT], Katahdin Paper [Maine MMA] Knight-Celotex Fibreboard [GRS, Maine], MacFarlane Steel [NH, NHN], Merrill Marine Terminal [Maine Legislature], Mid-City Scrap [MA BCLR #298], Sunbury [Quebec/Maritimes MMA/NBSR], Tighe Warehouse [MA CSXT #264], Tresca Brothers Concrete [MA - BCLR #232], Valley Mill [MA HRRC].

EDITORIAL

NIMBYs and the survival of railroads
The various struggles in New England over locating transfer and transload stations, as reported in this issue and previous ones, go to the heart of the survival of railroads in New England. To understand that contention, take a step back to looking at the health of railroads. In the United States and Canada, rail freight traffic has grown slightly, 1.4%, over 2002, with intermodal traffic showing a significant increase to 6.5%. {AAR report through 6 December}

Now look at railroads in New England, where non-Class I railroads predominate, as pointed out in the editorial in the previous issue. Intermodal traffic plays a significant role only with CSXT, our Class I. We cannot look to intermodal traffic to help our railroads survive; we must rely on regular freight.

Next point in this logic: New England, like the rest of the United States, is watching its manufacturing base shrink. What is growing? Personal consumption, and railroads can get some of that growth by carrying large items such as automobiles; GRS (Ford) and MMA/NBSR (Chrysler Canada) do so. Most consumption items move out of large distribution centers, and those may be located outside New England. Recently Tighe Warehousing lost significant rail traffic when Gallo decided to locate its distribution facility in Pennsylvania. We also continue to construct homes, so distribution facilities for forest products open up, such as that for Lowe’s in Westfield [see 26 November issue].

New Englanders have not stopped consuming energy, and new gas facilities, such as AmeriGas on GRS in Plainville, are opening up. One other bulk sector remaining at least stable: agricultural products. Both grain and fertilizer are moving.

What else? Railroads are participating in the growing shipment of waste out of New England. The pages of this newsletter are filled with stories of transfer stations proposed or a-building. Certainly, moving waste will probably only provide a medium-term solution, as the country moves away from landfilling (Massachusetts waste to old Ohio holes in the ground) and to closed-cycle use of materials. But for now, waste is providing perhaps the only growth product for New England railroads.

Waste needs transfer stations located on rail lines. Because railroads run through towns, residents get upset by transfer
stations and even transload facilities which don’t involve waste [see Grafton & Upton in 17 December issue]. NIMBYism arises even though the stations are proposed for existing industrial areas, and even though the facilities will be clean, and even though the alternative of trucking the waste is far more environmentally damaging.

Now and until the American economy is running on a closed-cycle system, NIMBYism versus rail-served facilities has got to stop. Here’s why:

- The Volvo crowd must understand that they generate waste. That waste must go somewhere, and what better place than out of the state, by environmentally-correct rail?

- NIMBYs must accept current zoning. If the site the waste company selects is already an industrial site, fighting a keep-out battle only burns up energy and dollars better spent on worse enemies.

- If residents bought next to an industrial facility or a rail line, they had notice that something noisy, such as a train, could run by. Real estate professionals could help by pointing out the possible negative implications.

- Lastly, most of the Volvo crowd likes railroads, and want them to survive, for various reasons. Those who want railroads must accept the fact that railroads survive moving freight - not passengers - and therefore need to pick up and drop off freight cars at industrial facilities.

Railroads can play a role in bringing those messages to the public. As a colleague told me, ‘All railroads, but especially the short lines and their trade association, have done an abysmal job of public relations.’ Time for the New England short lines, and the shippers who want to use them, to step out and advocate for themselves. They have an excellent message to convey.

PEOPLE & POSITIONS

On 11 December, CSX Transportation officials completed working their way down to level 3 of 11 levels with Michael Ward being level 1. Twenty-two vice-presidents were let go. The remaining 55 will now restructure level 4 and decide how many jobs will be needed to staff that level; all told 800 to 1100 people will lose their jobs. Jim Howarth, vice-president, merchandise and industrial marketing, lost his. Jim has spoken at the Northeast Association of Rail Shippers several times; he is extremely well liked at CSXT and by the short lines, as well as by your editor. Officially retired but not choosing to remain so, he will “wind up in railroading somewhere.” [See Don Phillips article in Washington Post 16.Dec.03 for more on the CSX management restructuring.]

Provport has a new marketer. Jay Baird took over the marketing of the Providence port facility in early December. He formerly was based out of Chicago, working for the Vladivostok-based Far Eastern Shipping Company.

PW wants people for the running trades
[In the 14 November issue, I noted that PW had no job listings. This recently appeared.] Regional railroad looking for applicants for train & engine service. Must have HS education, valid drivers license with clean record and reliable transportation. Must be able to work in all weather and flexible shifts.
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