

## WEEKLY RAIL REVIEW

For the week ending SAT, November 29, 2003

By Dave Mears

### THE WEEK'S TOP NEWS (in chronological order):

(SUN) Port Authority Trans Hudson subway service resumed to the former World Trade Center site. Service had been suspended since PATH's earlier station at the site was destroyed in the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack. The new station is temporary and will eventually be replaced by a permanent station, once plans for rebuilding the site are settled and approved. Additional to the station, restoration of service included rebuilding the PATH access tunnels to and from the site and relaying 7,000 feet of track. (ffd: wire services)

(TUE) Canadian National was selected by the government of the Canadian province of British Columbia to operate BC Rail, which the province owns. Under a 60-year lease, CN will assume responsibility for rail transportation and infrastructure maintenance. A CN spokesman said that, while the workforce required to operate BC Rail would be reduced from 1,380 to 950, CN will establish a new BC North Division office in Prince George, BC. and also open a wheel shop there to service all of CN's Western Canada operations. (ffd: wire services)

(TUE) The Railroad Retirement (RRR) trust fund posted a 19.9 percent return on its investments during the most recent fiscal year ending September 30. The improved return related to provisions of the Railroad Retirement Improvement Act of 2001, which permits a portion of the fund to be invested in non-U.S. Treasury financial instruments. Fund investment decisions are made professional investment advisers, who report to a 7-member joint labor-management RRR board of directors. (ffd: UTU)

(WED) Railroads prepared for the forthcoming Thanksgiving Holiday period. Among railroads adjusting service for the period were CSX, which discontinued through train operations 6PM Wednesday through 7AM Friday, and Norfolk Southern, which reduced scheduled operations beginning late Wednesday and through Sunday. However, Amtrak, which experiences its busiest travel period during the Thanksgiving Holiday, announced that it would add service throughout its system, including running 70 extra Northeast Corridor trains between Tuesday and Sunday. (ffd: Amtrak, CSX Corp., Norfolk Southern Corp.)

(WED) Rail information services provider RMI announced the availability of a new web-based service called "ShipperConnect." An RMI spokesman said that the new service can provide rail shippers with an interface that enables them to manage a rail shipment at any point in time. The spokesman added that it also allows shippers to communicate switching instructions to a railroad simply by clicking on a car number and then selecting an appropriate action code. (ffd: AAR)

(FRI) VIA Rail Canada was awarded "Best Business-To-Consumer Website" for a large Canadian enterprise. The award was made by the Canadian Chamber of Commerce. In making the award, VIA's website was recognized for such advanced and helpful features as downloadable electronic schedules for handheld devices, 3-D tours of train cars and stations, a "virtual community" through which more than 70,000 members receive targeted information on new products, services and promotions, and "AskVIA", an intelligent system providing real-time responses to email queries. (ffd: VIA Rail Canada)

(FRI) A bipartisan group of U.S. Senators introduced a 6-year, \$42 billion national rail improvement bill. The bill would create a nonprofit, public-private partnership to issue \$30 billion in tax-credit bonds to fund rail infrastructure development. The partnership would also award grants to pay for new high-speed train services, as well as rail freight improvements. The bill will be the subject of congressional debate in 2004. (ffd: wire services)

### STATS:

(THU) For the week ending November 22, U.S. carload rail traffic was up 0.5 percent from the comparable week last year, up 1.6 percent in the East and down 0.4 percent in the West. This week this year versus this week last year, notable traffic increases included coke up 43.4 percent, stone, sand and gravel up 12.8 percent and waste and scrap materials up 10.7 percent; notable traffic decreases included metallic ores down 14.8 percent and coal down 3.6 percent. Also for the week ending November 22, U.S. intermodal rail traffic was up 11.9 percent (at 211,337 units, a new weekly U.S. record), Canadian carload rail traffic was up 9.1 percent, Canadian intermodal rail traffic was down 6.1 percent, Mexico's Transportacion Ferroviaria Mexicana's carload rail traffic was down 7.2 percent and TFM's intermodal rail traffic was down 4.7 percent, all when ranked with the comparable week last year.

For the period January 1 through November 22, U.S. carload rail traffic was down 0.1 percent, U.S. intermodal rail traffic was up 6.8 percent, Canadian carload rail traffic was up 0.3 percent, Canadian intermodal rail traffic was up 6.2 percent, TFM's carload rail traffic was down 2.5 percent and TFM's intermodal rail traffic was up 12.9 percent, all when ranked with the comparable period last year. (ffd: AAR)

### ACQUISITIONS, ABANDONMENTS AND ALIKE:

(WED) The Allegheny Valley Railroad filed to lease, from CSX, and operate 1) approximately 33 miles of CSX's W&P Subdivision between Glenwood Jct., PA. and Washington, PA. 2) approximately 13 additional miles of CSX's W&P Subdivision from Field, PA. to Glenshaw, PA. and from Glenwood Jct., PA. to East Schenley, PA. (ffd: STB)

(WED) RailAmerica announced its intended acquisition of the Central Michigan Railway, which operates approximately 100 miles

of line between Midland, MI. and Durand, MI. (ffd: RailAmerica Corp.)

(WED) The Wallowa Union Railroad Authority filed to acquire, from Wallowa County, OR., and operate approximately 63 miles of line between Elgin, OR. and Joseph, OR. This line is presently operated by the Idaho Northern & Pacific Railroad. (ffd: STB)

(WED) CSX filed to abandon approximately 5 miles of its Woodland Subdivision between Rossville Jct., IL. and Henning, IL. (ffd: STB)

PERSONNEL CHANGES:

(WED) CSX announced the retirement of its SVP-Service Design, Frank Pursley, effective January 1, 2004. A CSX spokesman said that Mr. Pursley, a 40-year veteran of CSX and its predecessor railroads, would be replaced by Alan Blumenfield, currently president of CSX-Intermodal. (ffd: CSX Corp.)

(WED) Former rail executive Darius Gaskins was appointed CEO of Delta Airlines. Mr. Gaskins, who was CEO of Burlington Northern and then Burlington Northern Santa Fe from 1987 through 1995, replaces Leo Mullin, who was SVP-Strategic Planning at Conrail in the late 1970's. (ffd: Fort Worth Star-Telegram)

(WED) Rail manufacturer and supplier Bombardier Transportation announced that Pierre Lortie had resigned as president and COO to pursue other interests. A Bombardier spokesman said that its CEO, Paul Tellier, "would head the Management Committee of Bombardier Transportation until a new president is named." (ffd: Railway Age)

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Weekly Rail Review is edited from public news sources and published weekly, usually on Sunday or Monday, to the rail and transit industries and those interested in them. Send an e-mail to [weeklyrailreview@aol.com](mailto:weeklyrailreview@aol.com) to receive it, with my compliments.

HAVE A SAFE AND PROSPEROUS WEEK,  
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