

WEEKLY RAIL RECAP

For the week ending SAT, March 16, 2002

By Dave Mears

(NOTE: The expression "ffd" at the end of a news item means "for further details" and usually represents what I believe to be the most helpful news resource if a reader wants more information on a particular item.)

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

(MON) The U.S. Federal Railroad Administration issued new guidelines for locomotive remote control. The guidelines detail railroad responsibilities related to training, skills performance testing and prohibited conduct. The guidelines may be found under Title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 240. (ffd: USDOT, BofLE)

(MON) Canadian National filed a bid to operate the freight services of Ontario Northland Railway. CN's bid will be reviewed by consultants from the KPMG accounting firm, who will then forward recommendations to Canada's Northern Development and Mines Commission for their selection of a preferred freight services operator. (ffd: North Bay Nugget)

(MON) A New York State appeals court ruled that any further New York City subway token booth closings must be preceded by hearings in the affected neighborhoods and then a formal vote by the Metropolitan Transportation Authority. The ruling follows a proposal by the New York City Transit Authority to close 104 of the subway system's 709 remaining token booths and to reduce hours at 18 others. (ffd: New York Daily News)

(WED) More than 100 representatives of the North American rail industry gathered at the U.S. Capitol in Washington, DC. for the fourth annual "Railroad Day On the Hill." The event, aimed at better acquainting federal officials with rail public policy issues, was sponsored by the American Shortline and Regional Railroad Association, the Association of American Railroads and the Railway Progress Institute. (ffd: ASLRRA)

(THU) U.S. Senator Ernest Hollings (D-SC.) called on the Bush Administration for guidance on Amtrak's future. Questioning U.S. Deputy Transportation Secretary Michael Jackson, Sen. Hollings said, "Why haven't you sent us something we can act on?" Mr. Jackson replied that the Administration was aware that Amtrak's financial situation was "grave" and that President Bush would shortly review the situation and provide recommendations to Congress. (ffd: wire services)

(THU) The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers announced that it had concluded what it called a "groundbreaking" agreement with Canadian National's Wisconsin Central Division. A BofLE spokesman said that the agreement was based on an hourly wage basis and job guarantees, and contrasted it with standard mileage- and rule-based agreements long in place on Class I railroads. (ffd: BofLE)

(FRI) Burlington Northern Santa Fe announced that it had placed in service 50 new air generator-powered end-of-train devices. A BNSF spokesman said that the new ETD's, which are powered by turbines running off the train's air brake line, would be used on longer runs that frequently drain battery-powered ETD's. (ffd: BNSF Corp.)

STATS:

(THU) For the week ending March 9, U.S. carload rail traffic was down 6.4 percent from the comparable week last year, down 5.5 percent in the East and down 7.1 percent in the West. This week this year versus this week last year, notable traffic increases included lumber and wood products up 14.0 percent and non-grain farm products up 13.8 percent; notable traffic increases included coke down 31.4 percent, grain down 11.0 percent, primary forest products down 10.9 percent and coal down 10.8 percent. Also for the week ending March 9, U.S. intermodal rail traffic was down 2.1 percent, Canadian carload rail traffic was down 5.1 percent, Canadian intermodal rail traffic was up 8.7 percent, Mexico's Transportacion Ferroviara Mexicana's carload rail traffic was down 18.4 percent and TFM's intermodal rail traffic was down 6.2 percent, all when ranked with the comparable week last year.

For the period January 1 through March 9, U.S. carload rail traffic was down 3.0 percent, U.S. intermodal rail traffic was down 0.3 percent, Canadian carload rail traffic was down 5.5 percent, Canadian intermodal rail traffic was up 1.8 percent, TFM's carload rail traffic was down 8.0 percent and TFM's intermodal rail traffic was down 10.6. percent, all when ranked with the comparable period last year. (ffd: AAR)

ACQUISITIONS, ABANDONMENTS AND ALIKE:

(MON) The U.S. Surface Transportation Board turned down a filing by Salt Lake City, UT. officials to compel Union Pacific to abandon an earlier idle line through the city that UP had recently reactivated and that is now used by approximately 10 to 12 freight trains daily. The STB said that the city had failed to demonstrate that present or future public convenience and necessity would be served by such an abandonment. (ffd: STB)

(FRI) CSX filed to abandon approximately 2 miles of its P&W Subdivision Line in Pittsburgh, PA. (ffd: STB)

(FRI) Canadian National/Illinois Central filed to abandon approximately 3 miles of its Heyworth Spur Line in McLean County, IL. (ffd: STB)

CHANGING PEOPLE AND PLACES:

(THU) Genesee & Wyoming appointed Robert Grossman EVP-Government and Industry Affairs and Scott Ziegler, VP-Operational Finance. Mr. Grossman and Mr. Ziegler are formerly with the Emons Transportation Group, which G&W recently acquired. G&W also appointed Shayne Magdoff SVP-Administration and Human Resources. (ffd: G&W Corp.)

(FRI) Railroad Development Corporation appointed Bradley Knapp Vice President. Mr. Knapp was most recently General Manager of RDC's Central East African Railway in the African nation of Malawi. (ffd: RDC Corp.)

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(A NOTE TO READERS: My apologies for the differing distribution dates of the last few WRR's. I've transferred to a new position with work hours and days different than my previous position, which has temporarily impacted the time I had earlier slotted to compile and edit WRR. I am working out a new

schedule, which should see WRR distributed Sundays or Mondays. I thank all of you for your patience during this time.)

Weekly Rail Recap is edited from public news sources and published weekly, usually on Monday or Tuesday, to the rail and transit industries and those interested in them. Send an e-mail to djmservices@aol.com to receive it, with my compliments.

HAVE A SAFE AND PROSPEROUS WEEK,
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