

DANVILLE FLYER

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Great Lakes Basin Railroad Revised Route

Great Lakes Basin Transportation, Inc. (GLBT), submitted a new route for the proposed rail project that is 21 miles shorter and avoids Boone County, Ill., where it faced strong opposition.

The new route was included in GLBT's response to the Surface Transportation Board's (STB) First Information Request on Sept. 20, 2017.

In its STB response, GLBT wrote, "When GLBT originally brought this project to [STB's] attention, it explained that the project's purpose is to construct a safe, reliable and entirely new freight bypass around Chicago that would link existing main lines entering the Chicago area, permit trains to bypass the congested terminal area, and add capacity to accommodate existing traffic and reasonably foreseeable future growth—all while avoiding major population centers along its route. That purpose continues to guide the development of the route."



The route originally ran 281 miles; the new route is 260.26 miles, which GLBT believes will result in fewer environmental issues. The new route completely avoids Boone County, Ill., where the proposal met strong opposition from farmers and other community

members. GLBT says the new route moves west around Rockford, Ill., to provide improved rail access for an industrial park south of the city airport; boasts an improved gradient and approach with an alignment over the Rock River and does not go through residential developments or near schools. The new route turns east to go between the borders of Beloit and Janesville, Wis., in an industrial area before turning northeast and north around the east side of Janesville to join the original route where it proceeds onto Milton, Wis., and connection to the Wisconsin & Southern Railroad.

"The company has utilized the public response during the [Environmental Impact Statement] scoping comment period to adjust its network design and create a new preferred

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October 16th – Monthly Meeting to be held at the Jocko's Pizza, Williams & Gilbert – 1 PM. Program by Doug and Lincoln Butzow

Nov 5th – Operating Session at Rossville – 12:30 to 4:00 PM

November 20th – Monthly Meeting to be held at Jocko's Pizza – Program by Jim Hile

Nov 20 Peoria - Peoria Train-fair. Illinois Central College, Rt 24, 1 mile east of Rt 116, East Peoria. 10-3.

December 3rd – Operating Session at Rossville – 12:30 to 4:00 PM

December 4th – Chapter Annual dinner at Jocko's Pizza, 1:00 PM – program by Rick Schroeder

About Us

The DANVILLE JUNCTION CHAPTER, NRHS, is a not-for-profit corporation organized to preserve the history of railroading in Eastern Illinois and Western Indiana and operates a museum located in the former Chicago and Eastern Illinois Railroad depot on East Benton Street in Rossville, Illinois. The museum is open weekends from Memorial Day to Labor Day and features many railroad displays plus a large operating HO model railroad. Membership in the Chapter is open to any-

one having an interest in any aspect of railroading. Dues per year are \$30.00 for Chapter membership in addition to \$50.00 for NRHS membership. Rossville Depot Museum membership is \$30 per year. Meetings are held on the third (3rd) Sunday of each month (except June July, August and December) at the Jocko's Depot Restaurant, Gilbert Street (Illinois Route 1) and Williams Street, next to CSX (former Conrail), in Danville, Il with lunch beginning at 1:00 PM Central Time followed by meeting and program.



Officers for 2016—our 48th Year

Allen Cooke – President
 Doug Butzow – Vice President
 Dick Brazda– Secretary
 Doug Nipper– Treasurer
 Dave Sherrill – Programs
 Jess Bennett – Historian
 Bob Gallippi – Museum Director
 Rick Schroeder – Editor
 Cooke Business Products - Publisher



Norfolk Southern's Bloomington District

I'd heard reports that Norfolk Southern Train D49, the nocturnal, Normal-based roadswitcher that typically makes the run to East Peoria and back five days a week, had some decent-sized consists the past three days this week. Led by a pair of SD40-2s 3270 and 3300, D49 had 70 cars (40 loads, 30 empties). The empties were those SOXX-marked covered hoppers, which I suspect are coming out of storage, but which railroad I'm not sure. Anyway, it is good to see this train with consists of 40+ cars. After Mitsubishi closed down assembly operations last November and some Iowa Interstate interchange traffic was either lost or diverted via Chicago in mid-February, rumors began to circulate that Norfolk Southern wants to rid itself of the Bloomington District, which runs from a connection with the Illinois Division mainline at Bement north-northeast to Gibson City then west to Bloomington-Normal, and northwest to East Peoria. These rumors, by the way, include sale to the Iowa Interstate (!) and abandonment west of the Evergreen FS elevator at Yuton (!). Neither make a whole lot of sense, considering Mitsubishi hadn't generated a large volume of traffic in a decade, local traffic (mostly agricultural) is still heavy, and Peoria connections provide good sources of business, including three or four monthly coal trains to the Iowa Interstate and at least several loaded grain trains from

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2016— September Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 1348 by President Cooke at the Monticello Railway Museum.

The treasurer's report was provided and approved. Power and internet were the big expenditure for the summer period.

The minutes of the previous meeting were in the newsletter.

No word yet when the National will distribute dues notices.

Dave Sherrill sold some switch keys at a meet.

Pres. Cooke has two more dates lined up for Danville Jct. talks and requested more copies of the Danville Junction book and C&EI HS publications from Rick..

Skyler indicated he would obtain 2 LED bulbs for lights at the depot.

Due to lack of sponsor personnel, the Hoopston show will not be held in 2017. The Urbana show is scheduled for April 1-2.

The meeting adjourned at 1357.

The group returned to the steam train for another ride.

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route," wrote GLBT President and CEO James T. Willson. "Among other things, the public input process allowed GLBT to move the railroad around a city boundary that was not on our maps, avoid a water well field, move further away from a middle school, gain more efficient alignments into two industrial sites, reduce some of the greenfield interruption in Wisconsin, eliminate the alignment through Boone County, Ill., and shorten the overall route by 20 miles.

"GLBT is proposing an alignment that will allow operating speeds up to 70 mph and has incorporated design objectives derived from discussions with its potential customers. In addition, GLBT is working to develop an alignment will avoid or minimize adverse effects on the environment."

Via RT&S 9-26

Editor: In a previous issue I noted that some of the Class 1 railroads had already noted they would not be a part of this new rail line. In addition we were in the area north of Kankakee in June and noted every property had a sign posted against the rail line. The article notes Boone County has strong objections but my guess is that similar objections are coming forth to the STB. My guess is that even if approved by the STB once other investors find out no Class 1 railroad will participate they will not come on board.

CSX Decatur

On the former B&O Decatur line, we see the Q594 runs eastbound three days a week and Q593 westbound three other days a week, usually sporting 4-axle power. They both used to be (and tried to be) daily trains, but crew shortages have been an issue lately. They no longer run to Terre Haute, but as Danville and Decatur turns. There also are as needed ethanol trains that run out of ADM in Decatur to the southeast on the B&O (and then eventually link up with the CE&D at Hillsdale, Ind.) using 6-axle power often. Rumor has it that the gas trains are done by the first of the year and that NS has taken over the last remaining gas train already. The local yardmaster position is said to be in line for elimination also.

Via Midwest Rail Scene



(Continued from page 2)

the Iowa Interstate per month. Traffic generated by the Tazewell & Peoria Railroad, and the Keokuk Junction Railway should be deemed important as well. When railroads see a traffic recession, they evaluate the future of secondary lines and branchlines, and the Bloomington District is probably one of these. But too many shippers and rail connections would protest abandonment of any portion now in use, and the likelihood that current operations are profitable will keep it in the fold for many years to come. A lease agreement with one shortline outfit isn't out of the question, but I wouldn't be surprised if Norfolk Southern did nothing. Traffic will return someday, and the future of a certain on-line auto assembly plant is still uncertain.

by David P. Jordan, Peoria Station, via Midwest Rail Scene

CSX Elsdon Line

The Surface Transportation Board (STB) has ordered CSX to not allow a train to enter the Elsdon Line on the Chicago's south side unless the line is clear. This ruling is effective immediately and is the result of legal action against CSX for repeatedly blocking grade crossings along the Elsdon railroad line in violation of federally imposed requirements.

The ruling also requires monthly reports for one year



from CSX that will detail the railroad's efforts to address malfunctioning gates, the number of at-grade crossing blockages that exceed 10 minutes and situations where trains are not being cut to avoid blocking crossings and why. Earlier orders from the STB had required CSX to separate trains into more than one unit if they are sitting idle at a grade crossing to allow traffic to move through those crossings. In each monthly report, CSX will also be required to provide the board with an update on the progress it has made in establishing operating protocols with other carriers on lines the Elsdon Line crosses.

"Ever since CSX secured the right to operate on this

track, residents have told us that trains along the Elsdon Line routinely cause lengthy delays that not only inconvenience residents but threaten public safety by blocking access to area hospitals," said Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel. "My administration has been working closely with 19th Ward Ald. Matt O'Shea and other local elected officials to hold the railroad accountable for their repeated violations in order to bring relief to the local community."

The city of Chicago and village of Evergreen Park in February filed a petition with the STB in order to remedy the serious harmful effects created by CSX's operations along the Elsdon Line. The petition sought a number of potential remedies, including: the imposition of sanctions, including fines; continued monitoring and additional auditing.

"I am pleased that the Surface Transportation Board is holding CSX accountable and granting relief for residents in my ward. I hope that this ruling will finally force CSX to honor the promises it made to my community three years ago and address the many public safety and quality of life issues they have created," said Ald. O'Shea.

Residents have complained that CSX trains frequently block at-grade crossings for significant periods of time, including during rush hour, despite binding conditions imposed by the STB intended to avoid this occurrence. Blockages of the at-grade crossing along 95th Street in Evergreen Park present particular concern because they impede access to two major hospitals: Little Company of Mary and Advocate Christ Medical Center.

In 2013, CSX acquired the rights to operate on the Elsdon Line (former GTW), which traverses the far southwest side of Chicago, the village of Evergreen Park and other area communities. As part of the STB's authorization allowing CSX to acquire and exercise its operating rights, the STB created requirements that would alleviate the impact of grade crossing blockages. For example, the railroad is required to break trains into two parts when a blockage is expected to exceed 10 minutes and the railroad is also required to submit quarterly reports to the STB to report on its compliance.

Via RT&S 7-6-16

Editor: While still working for URS I was project manager on the preliminary design of the new connection from the

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B&O CT to the GTW just north of the Blue Island tower, north of Broadway Street in Blue Island. This connection to the GTW was designed to allow trains on the B&O CT to move either direction to the GTW as CSX had plans to make a line swap with the GTW. This would allow intermodal trains to move via the former GTW to Thornton and connect to the UP (a connection that was built some 2 years ago) and allow trains to the former C&EI to bypass both Yard Center, Dolton Junction and Barr Yard. The design phase of the GTW/CSX project was handled by another design firm and constructed some 2 years ago.

Derailed Tavern Hit by Derailed Railcar

August 9, 2016: "DeRailed Bar" in Charles City, IA damaged by derailed covered hopper ~ Dick Wilson

Police reported that a railroad covered hopper car that derailed in northern Iowa rolled into and damaged a trackside tavern called DeRailed at 1130 N. Grand Ave. in Charles, City, IA.. Police Chief Hugh Anderson was alerted by a patrol officer that a train car had derailed into the De-railed. "It's not every day you get to say that," the police chief remarked. The accident occurred around 4 a.m. Tuesday as Canadian Pacific crews moved rail cars and changed connections in Charles City. Anderson said it appears that the track separated and the grain car tipped about 45 degrees into the back of the bar.

No one was injured. Workers were on the scene throughout the morning assessing the situation. Heavy equipment arrived at noon and workers began attaching cables to the railroad car and within 35 minutes, the car was pulled upright.

Despite the accident, DeRailed was open for business Tuesday. Since it was the talk of the town and everywhere else, patrons were stopping in and the seats at the front of the bar were full about noon. The bar owner estimates damage at \$10,000. (wire services)

NRHS and Local 2017 Dues Payment.

For those of you that are NRHS members you will be getting a notice about paying for 2017 dues. For almost everyone this will be completed on line. For your local renewal we will be sending out the notice and for payment please send your check (or pay at a meeting) to the Treasurer at PO Box 1013. Renewal is required by the April meeting to continue to receive this newsletter.



Springfield proposed hi-speed rail route to follow the existing NS and CN (IC) routes and bypass the existing UP (ex-GM&O) route



Dick Brazda got this photo of a mix of power on the Knife River local on a recent trip to the Dakota's. Not a lot of these paint schemes left.

South Shore Expansion

U.S. Congressman Pete Visclosky announced this week that the U.S. Department of Transportation's (USDOT) Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has given the West Lake Corridor (WLC) extension of the South Shore Line (SSL) expansion the green light to move into the project development phase.

"I am excited to learn that the FTA has recognized the value of the South Shore expansion through this designation. It is another successful step forward to not just expand South Shore service, but to build a regional economy that provides innumerable benefits for current Northwest Indiana residents and future generations," Congressman Visclosky said.

The SSL link connects Northwest Indiana to Chicago and Cook County, Illinois. The Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District (NICTD) suggests that the WLC project would be a southern branch extension of the SSL to serve growing areas in Lake County, Indiana. NICTD says the project is meant to expand the system's service coverage, improve accessibility for passengers and stimulate Lake County's economy.

Congressman Visclosky added that he has "no doubt" that the project's success is resultant of the resilient efforts of the NICTD and the RDA, as well as the state of Indiana and its contributing communities.

"Their collective support has generated this outstanding forward momentum. I will continue to work very hard to support the efforts to have commuter trains running on the new expanded track as soon as possible," Congressman Visclosky said.

Michael Noland, President of NICTD, said, "This is great news. We have been working closely with the congressman's office, the FTA and communities that would be served by the West Lake Corridor and look forward to advancing the project through the environmental and preliminary engineering process. Improving access to jobs by making commuter rail service faster and more convenient will lay the groundwork for new private development throughout the region."

Bill Hanna, president and CEO of the Northwest Indiana Regional Development Authority (NIRDA), said, "This is a key step toward completion of the West Lake expansion of the South Shore line. We are now closer than ever

before to the largest commuter rail investment in Indiana history—an investment that will create thousands of jobs in Northwest Indiana and provide world-class access to Chicago, the ninth-largest economy on the planet.

Hanna added that members of the NIRDA are grateful for Congressman Visclosky's support, as well as that of the state of Indiana and the NICTD, and he looks forward to continuing to collaborate through the completion of the new line.

The project aims to:

- Serve high-growth areas in central, southern and western Lake County

- More efficiently connect Northwest Indiana residents to downtown Chicago jobs and other attractions

- Establish a reliable modal alternative to driving between the two metropolitan regions

- Lower commuting travel times and costs

- Boost NICTD system ridership

- Create jobs in Northwest Indiana

- Provide a valued transportation mode for all Northwest Indiana residents

Rail Group News – 10-3-16

Union Pacific to Build on Mars!

UP stakes claim to first Martian railroad

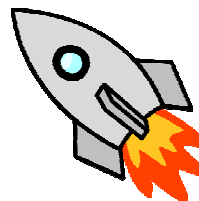
Railroad offers tongue-in-cheek response after comparisons between the first Transcontinental Railroad and outer space rockets

By Justin Franz | September 29, 2016

We call dibs on the first Martian railroad.
pic.twitter.com/YaGUnbvhO

— Union Pacific (@UnionPacific) September 28, 2016

MARS (the planet) — Union Pacific called "dibs" this week on building the first Martian railroad. The surprise announcement came just hours after SpaceX Chief Executive Elon Musk unveiled his dreams of building a fleet of spaceships to put humans on the Red Planet by 2025, a task he likened to the construction of the Transcontinental Railroad.



"It's like building the Union Pacific rail-

road,” Musk told the International Astronautical Congress in Guadalajara, Mexico, this week. “Once that transport system is built, then there’s a tremendous opportunity for anyone who wants to go to Mars and create something new or build the foundations of a new planet.”

Not long after the LA Times reported Musk’s comments, UP took to social media with the quote and wrote, “We call dibs on building the first Martian railroad.”

The post included UP’s normal tagline “Building America” with the addendum “And beyond?”

Union Pacific spokesperson Raquel Espinoza tells Trains News Wire that the railroad is always looking for ways to share its story on Twitter, Facebook, and elsewhere, and that Musk’s comments provided a perfect opportunity to do just that.

“Union Pacific is constantly looking at media and pop culture trends that resonate with the general public and help us tell our story in fun, colorful ways,” Espinoza says.



Espinoza says the railroad was honored by Musk’s shout out during the International Astronautical Federation’s annual meeting. The federation was created in 1951 as way to establish a dialog between scientists around the world about space exploration.

“We are proud to have a visionary such as Elon Musk recognize the innovation that went into creating the transcontinental railroad, which will celebrate its sesquicentennial anniversary in 2019,” Espinoza says. “That is about a year after Mr. Musk plans to send his first rocket to Mars, and it is only fitting it will take place nearly 150 years after the completion of the railroad that connects our country from coast to coast.”



UP is not the first railroad to propose leaving Earth’s orbit. In 1858, Sylvester Marsh went before the New Hampshire state legislature to get a charter to build a steam railroad up the side of Mount Washington. Officials thought the idea was so preposterous that they gave him permission to extend the Mount Washington Cog Railway all the way to the moon (the railroad fell about 238,900 miles short of that goal and have yet to complete the line beyond the three miles of track up the side of the Northeast’s tallest peak).

So far the only railroad to extend beyond Earth’s atmosphere is a 278-foot line on the side of the International Space Station, dubbed by NASA as the “slowest and fastest train in the universe” (while the train’s top speed is about 1 inch per second, the entire railroad is hurtling through space at 17,500 miles per hour). The ISS Mobile Transporter is a freight-only operation, much to the dismay of railroad mileage collectors.

TRAINS On-Line 9-29

UP Adds 2 more T4’s for Testing

CHICAGO — Two EMD SD70ACe-T4s have arrived in Chicago during the third week of September for testing on Union Pacific. EMDX Nos. 1601 and 1602 moved from Progress Rail’s Muncie, Ind., plant to Union Pacific’s Proviso yard for setup. The pair is expected to operate in local service between the major intermodal rail yards in the Chicago area initially.

This will make four Tier 4 EMDs testing on Union Pacific, as the company has been testing SD70ACe-T4s Nos. 1502 and 1503 in the Rocky and Sierra Nevada mountains and on the West Coast during much of 2016. Across the United States, there are now six demonstrators testing on various railroads. Nos. 1609 and 1610 continue to test on CSX Transportation, while BNSF has begun testing SD70ACeP4-T4s Nos. 1603 and 1604 in the upper Midwest. Still scheduled to test the new Tier 4 locomotives are Canadian National with EMDX Nos. 1605 and 1606 and Norfolk Southern with Nos. 1607 and 1608 when they are released from Muncie.

TRAINS On-Line 9-27



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We're on the Web!
www.danvillejct.org

Photo of the Month



Three MRM trains are arriving or departing from the MRM depot on Sunday September 18th. On the left the Wabash F unit is shoving the passenger train north to gain access to the former IC, The MRM 401 waiting after arriving from Monticello and the IC 8733 on a freight train waits on #401 after coming back from near White Heath on the IC line. It is a "hurry up and wait me day". Photo by Rick Schroeder