

**NRHS**

Publishers of the Minnesota Rail Calendar

Northstar News

BNSF Action at Maiden Rock WI



L: BNSF empty tack train WB in July 2014.

R: BNSF EB Stack Train meets a WB Grain Train at Maiden Rock WI In July 2012.

Photos: From Video by R Tubbsing



Table of Contents

Meeting Notice	Page 1
Officer Contact Directory	Page 1, 2
Editors Column	Page 2
March 2016 Meeting Minutes	Page 2,3
Amtrak Budget and Menu Essay	Page 3
Missouri Pacific Ozarker	Page 3
UP #3985 25th anniversary (from Camrail club)	Page 4,5
Lt Rail Trip in June Schedule	Page 6
M&StL Picture	Page 7
Railroad History in April	Page 7
High Speed Rail report in Minnesota	Page 8
Amtrak Accident Report	Page 8
Case for Short Line Grants	Page 9
Train Watching River Balcony	Page 9
Two Man Crews article	Page 10
CN fixing Oliver Bridge	Page 11
Development along the Green Line	Page 12
NP Twin Ports Bridge History	Page 12,13,14
Railfan Events	Page 15
DVD's For Sale	Page 16

Meeting Notice

Next business meeting will be held on **Saturday May 21 2016 6:30 pm**, at Roseville Lutheran Church at 1215 Roselawn Avenue, midway between Lexington and Hamline Avenues in Roseville. See map on page 2.

Program after the meeting –

Historic Railroad Slides on Philippine Sugar Railroads by Jim McLean. Jim McLean has spent many months in the Philippines investigating possible improvement projects for the Philippine People.

There will be a pre-meeting get-together May 21, 2016 at the Keys Cafe and Bakery at the northeast corner of Lexington and Larpenteur starting about 4:45 pm. PLEASE CALL Bob Clarkson at 651-636-2323 and leave a message with your name and the number of persons coming with you.

Our annual picnic will be held at Maiden Rock Wisconsin, Saturday July 9th 2016. It will held in the park adjacent to the Mississippi River and the BNSF railroad in the shelter area. Electrical outlets are available in the shelter. Details and a map will be provided in the July Newsletter.

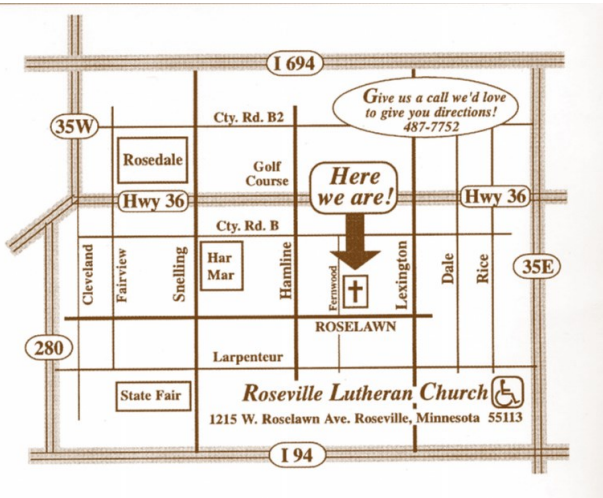
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Meeting Location: From the east or west take MN 36 to Lexington Avenue. Drive south on Lexington Avenue to Roselawn Avenue and turn right. The large lighted parking lot is on your right as you travel west on Roselawn. Use the lower entrance to the church and turn left through the commons area. We'll be in room 40, The Diamond Room.



From the Publisher:

Thanks to Greg Smith for his power point presentation. His presentation covered the 1950's and 1960's timetable and consist of the Great Northern 'Dakotan', sometimes called the GN 'Stub' train. He also showed a presentation on the Milwaukee 'Olympian', from its early years to the termination of service west of Deer Lodge in 1961. We look for more presentations from him in the near future!

The NRHS Convention will be held in Denver from July 19 thru Sunday July 24. Activities include a ride on the Denver light rail and commuter rail system, visit to the Forney Museum, Platte Valley Trolley and Caboose Hobbies in Denver, ride on the Royal Gorge Scenic Lunch train, bus trip to ride on the Georgetown Loop Railroad and then visit and ride on the Colorado Railroad Museum, night photo session at the Colorado Railroad Museum, seminars, a ride on the Leadville, Colorado & Southern Railroad, wrapping up with a ride on a chaser bus of the UP business train from Denver to Greeley, Colorado. You can register for the convention and book the various trips at their website at NRHS.com. So far, due to John Goodman's diligence as NRHS Convention Committee member, and his work, the convention activities have been well received.

Program for the May meeting is Philippine Sugar Railroads slides by Jim McLean.

Note, Next Newsletter will be out around July 1 2016. Look for the brochure and mail-in form for our August Bus trip to Duluth!

Northstar Chapter NRHS Meeting Minutes April 16 2016.

The meeting was called to order by chapter president Richard Tubbesing at 6:33 pm at the Roseville Lutheran Church with 25 members and guests present. Those present were asked to introduce themselves. President Tubbesing motioned for approval of meeting minutes of the last two months in the April newsletter. Members approved. Treasurer Russ Isbrandt gave the treasurers report. We have two accounts, and more money is in a bank that pays more interest. We have 39 members and about 20 subscribers who paid dues for 2016. Dawn Holmberg reported on the calendar project; picture selections have been made, and there will be about six more weeks of work before a mockup will be sent to the publisher. John Goodman reported on planned programs, Greg Smith this month, Jim McLean pictures of Philippines Sugar Railroads in May, Glen Holmberg railroad photos in September, and Gary Rumler slides in October. Possibility of a show of Minnesota Railroad promotional films (donated by the Minnesota Streetcar Museum) from the 1950's in November. John has not begun his search for a speaker at our Holiday Banquet. John reported that June 18 is our Metro transit trip and July 9th is our picnic at Maiden Rock WI, and our August trip will be a bus trip to ride behind the Steam engine #28 at the Lake Superior Railroad Museum(if running by that time). We have reserved the W24 combine for our group on the Duluth trip and the cost will \$89 per person. The John reported on the NRHS Convention July 19th to July 24 in Denver. Many activities at the convention are filling up. In addition to the Convention BOD meeting, a fall BOD meeting is scheduled for Portland OR.

Continued on next page

Continued from previous page. Richard Tubbesing said that the May newsletter will have details on our Light Rail trip in June and that the July Picnic is the 2nd Saturday in July due to the NRHS Convention later in the month. The next newsletter after the May issue will be about July 1 and will contain the sign-up form for the Duluth trip on August 20th. Participation in the spring flea markets are not planned, as sales material we have does not sell well and offset the cost of tables and labor to staff and move the material to these flea markets. Most likely, we will only do the Fair Grounds train show, and do two or three more in the fall when our calendar is available. John Cartwright reported on Library activities, where we are cataloging our slide collection and viewing more of William Cordes movies we received from the Streetcar Museum, thanks to Russ Isbrandt. Dan Meyer reported on the Chapter web site. Progress is being made on developing a chapter web site to sell online calendars and DVD's. Richard Tubbesing reported on the BOD meeting held earlier on April 16th. As a result, Richard Tubbesing stated planned chapter trips have been finalized (as noted above) and that Dan Meyer has volunteered for the nominating committee for nomination of 2017 officers. Nominees will be presented at the September or October meeting and election of officers (if any BOD positions are contested) at the November meeting. Cheer Committee, Marty Swan sent a card to Gary Rumler's wife who underwent major surgery. Announcements: The St Paul Union Depot 90th Anniversary celebration will be April 30 and May 1 and for a nominal fee, one can attend RR slide shows by many prominent photographers. A night photo session is planned. Otherwise the Event is free. Bob Ball has volunteered to reserve space for our membership brochure at the St Paul Union Depot Anniversary Train Day. John Goodman announced that we have a lot of slides at the library, mostly commercial. St Paul Union Depot's only Restaurant will be closing its doors at the end of May. No new Business. Meeting was adjourned at 6:59PM, Seconded by John Goodman.

Respectfully submitted: Dave Norman Secretary



Congress Appropriations for Amtrak April 19 2016, Menu Comment

from John Goodman

Today the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development (THUD) passed \$56.5 billion legislation to fund its programs for FY 2017. It's got a long ways to go before the final version comes out of Congress.

The Amtrak portion: \$345 million for the Northeast Corridor and \$1.075 billion for the National Network.

Menus: Mitch Wahlsten Brainerd, Minnesota. April 15 2016. I believe the Auto Train, Cardinal, City of New Orleans, and Pacific Parlor Car of the Coast Starlight are the only long-distance trains that still have a menu unique to the train. Everything else has had a standard non-train-specific menu for a few years now, following increased scrutiny by Congress toward Amtrak's losses on the food & beverage side of business. Generally there's been a "summer" and "winter" version of the standard menu.

The only reason the City of New Orleans has a different menu is probably because that train now uses one person for the entire diner, necessitating the use of meals that require only a small amount of preparation. That said, when I rode in a roomette on the City of New Orleans back in October, the sleeping car attendants did help out some in the diner when things got busy.



Missouri Pacific Ozarker Consist

-from John Goodman

Missouri Pacific train #3 was the Ozarker, primarily a mail and express train operating between St. Louis and Little Rock, with MP bus connection to Texarkana. In October 1950, No. 3 was scheduled to depart St. Louis at 7:22am, Poplar Bluff at 12:40pm, arriving Little Rock at 5:45pm, after making many stops en route.

The consist of No. 3 on October 14, 1950 (from conductor train book)

6614 4-6-2

MP 88232 box express (mail) Built 1941

REX 6216 refrigerator express (mail)

MP 2579 baggage-mail (30-foot RPO)

MP 4183 70-ft baggage (mail)

MP 4212 70-ft baggage (baggage & mail)

MP 6554 80-seat coach -Built 1920's

MP 8184 68-seat coach -chair car built 1920's

MP 10910 42-seat cafe-parlor-coach Built 1927

MP 6556 80-seat coach -Divided Coach, Built 1920's



Note: car 88232 does not appear in the 1950 or 1951 ORPTE. It is unknown whether this was a standard MP boxcar, or whether numbers were transposed. The MP box express series was 88300-88324.



3985 – 35 Years Ago !

by Bob Krieger

It was Christmas of 1977 as a group of us gathered at the Nystrom's home for a celebration when John Boehner sprung his idea on us to take on the 3985 that was in the Cheyenne depot parking lot and restore it back to service – the 3985 Restoration Committee was born! He had obtained (and studied) the railroad records of shopping; and the "Big Boy" 4004, which he had hoped for, was not in as good of a shape as the Challenger. Besides, pulling 4004 out of Holiday Park could be quite a daunting task. So we began inspecting the locomotive on site at the depot until we were sure we had all the information we needed to go to Omaha and present our plan to the top railroad management. As it turned out we were given permission to begin restore the locomotive despite the disagreement from the head of the Mechanical Department. We began doing all we could on depot site to the locomotive to prepare it for movement to the roundhouse, should we gain permission. We did receive permission and the 3985 was removed from its display location on September 24, 1979. The remainder of our restoration work was finished there and on January 18, 1981 we prepped the 3985, moved it outside the roundhouse and built a fire in it. This was to be a stationary boiler test inspection and 3985 it passed!



Cheyenne, boiler test, January 18, 1981 – Bob Krieger photo

It was on March 18th that we moved the locomotive around the yard exercising it and making sure it was well lubed and ready for service. For it was scheduled to make a break in run on March 25th from Cheyenne to LaSalle, Colorado and return. We fired it back up that morning under the auspices of the mechanical department employees. For you see, it was they who were responsible for operating the steam locomotive 8444 on the railroad and now 3985 would be theirs to do the same with as well. The engineer for the day would be Frank Accord, Chief Mechanical Officer, and the fireman would be a couple of the mechanical department staff, and Cal Rote - Road Foreman of Locomotives. They had a train set up with the locomotive, fully loaded with water and coal, the snow plow diner bunk car, 11 empty coal hoppers from the yard and a couple of cabooses.

Train consist:

UP	3985	steam engine
UP	904842	snow plow car
CNW	135293	coal car
WP	70204	coal car
UP	44488	coal car
CNW	135369	coal car
UP	44619	coal car
CNW	133975	coal car
UP	45681	coal car
CNW	135841	coal car
CNW	136289	coal car
CNW	136279	coal car
CNW	136285	coal car
UP	25196	caboose (cupola)
UP	25874	caboose (bay window)

You see we were ready for special riders for the trip from the various departments. We departed Cheyenne and headed out four track for Speer Junction where we turned south toward Colorado. The restoration committee rode in the snow plow diner bunk car and in one of the cabooses, except for John Boehner who was invited to spend time in the cab as the restoration committee head. The 3985 was impressive on the head end as the mighty steed it was designed to be. We headed down the grade from Speer, at first at a cautious pace. As we worked our way further south the hogger allowed the locomotive to gain speed. I didn't think to check the times on the mileposts but we were increasing speeds approaching an impressive rate. I am sure the ole gal was fast approaching what may have been the suggested top speed when the air was set to control it. Indeed, the 3985 was ready to fulfill its place in the stable of steam with the 8444.



Arriving La Salle, March 25, 1981 – Dave Seidel photo

At LaSalle we wye'd the train on the Julesburg subdivision and spotted by the depot to lube the rods and check the lubricator levels for the return trip to Cheyenne. Now we would see what she was capable of on the climb back to Cheyenne. On the north end of Greeley we began the climb up out of the Poudre River Valley on up onto the front range prairie. We rolled into Carr, Colorado, and there the 3985 was truly tested with the heavy climb back to Speer Junction. The engine's exhaust barked as it attacked the grade. We continued to keep our speed up and it made for an impressive site! From Speer we drifted down that portion of Sherman Hill back into West Cheyenne and eventually back in through the Crow Creek switches leading back to the roundhouse. Upon our return John and Cal told us of the way Mr. Accord ran the engine; doing all he could to task it with the reverse lever all the way down in the hole (forward) to make the running gear work at the maximum and how it survived his attempts to possibly make sure his department would not have to maintain or operate it. The only problem on the test run was a spring hanger that had broken. After returning to the roundhouse, and we worked with

a couple of machinists in the shops to fix it because now the 3985 was to be committed for a trip to Sacramento, California, in April to help open the California State Railroad Museum in the company of the 8444. We got the hanger fixed, serviced all the lubes to make sure the 3985 would not be left behind for the double header.



Cheyenne, the double header, April 23, 1981 – Dave Seidel photo
Six of us from the 3985 Restoration Committee were selected to travel along as the guests of the Mechanical Department. We became the traveling maintenance men for the two locomotives, lubing and servicing them at all the designated locations on the roundtrip. Mr. Accord ran his 8444 and Tom Stuart, an Operating Department employee assigned to the Mechanical Department, ran the 3985 and occasionally he would invite me up to ride with him. In time the operations of the steam locomotives would move to be under the Executive Department and I was lucky to be a part of the operating crew under the management of Steve Lee. And, in the happy world of retirement, how thankful I am to have been a part of the beginning of this operation. So you see; here we are now. This March of 2016 will mark 35 years since the 3985 Restoration Committee brought the articulated Challenger back to service that lasted until 2011 when it was placed in stored serviceable status where I believe it remains today. The Challenger proved its value as it traveled to most every corner of the Union Pacific system, pulling a 143 car APL doublestack train in 1990 and a special side tour of the CSX railroad when we were requested to pull their 50th Anniversary Santa Claus train in the east on the old Clinchfield Railroad in 1992. Both steam locomotives served the Public Relations of the Union Pacific Railroad very well over the years.

Happy 35th Anniversary 3985!



Light Rail Trip June 18 2016 -Schedule by Russ Isbrandt Come join us!

Pictures by R Tubbesing

June 18 2016 Northstar Light Rail Ride				
<i>Train</i>	<i>Station</i>	<i>Departure Time</i>	<i>Arrival Time</i>	<i>Arrival Station</i>
Blue Line	28th Ave Station, Bloomington	10:16 AM or 10:53 AM	10:26 AM or 11:03 AM	Target Field
Northstar	Target Field	11:30 AM	12:22 PM	Big Lake
Lunch (Bring your own!) cannot eat on the train!		12:50 PM	12:22 PM	Big Lake
Northstar	Big Lake	12:50 PM	1:42 PM	Target Field
Green Line to StP	Target Field	1:53 PM	2:38 PM	SPUD
Green Line to Mpls	SPUD	3:02 PM	3:39 PM	US Bank Stadium
Blue Line to Bloomington	US Bank Stadium	3:45 PM	4:12 PM	28th Ave Station Bloomington



Great photo of the long gone M&StL "Misery and Short Life." Thanks to Gary Nelson for sharing. From John Goodman

April 26 in Railroad History: Containerized Freight By Joseph.Lechner@mvnu.edu

From Rick Krenske

Intermodal containers, well cars and double-stacks are integral parts of the contemporary railroading scene. They have helped railroads to recapture some of the traffic that was lost to long-distance trucking beginning in the 1950s.

Intermodal shipping as we know it began sixty years ago today, when a converted World War II tanker, the S.S. Ideal-X, left Newark NJ with fifty-eight containers bound for Houston TX. Freddy Fields, an official of the International Longshoremen's Association, was on hand to witness the ship's departure from the Port of Newark. Fields was overheard to say "I'd like to sink that son of a bitch". One could readily see his point; in 1956, unloading a ship using manual labor cost \$5.86 per ton of cargo. Mechanized unloading of containers cost only 16 cents per ton. Employment prospects for stevedores would never be the same.

Ideal-X was the brainchild of trucking magnate Malcolm Purcell McLean. He had originally intended to carry his firm's trucks on ships up and down the Atlantic coast. After being persuaded that the trucks' running gear would waste valuable cargo space, McLean modified his concept to load only the container without the chassis. Since federal regulations prohibited a trucking company from owning ships, McLean sold his trucking business and purchased the Pan-Atlantic Steamship Company.

In the 1970s, McLean collaborated with ACF Industries and the Southern Pacific Railroad to develop the double-stack intermodal car. In 1984, SP and American President Lines began operating the first coast-to-coast, all-double-stack train.

Most toy and model trains that have been manufactured since the late 1990s came to North America on a container ship, then continued their journey to the U.S. distribution center in their same container via road or rail.

Comment Period Opens on High-speed Rail

By [Michael Brun](#) on Apr 2, 2016 at 5:00 p.m Red Wing Eagle

A Bill introduced by State Sen. Matt Schmit to form an advisory group for high-speed rail in southeastern Minnesota advanced Thursday, a day after a private rail developer opened the public comment period for a proposed Twin Cities-to-Rochester line. Minnesota-based North American High Speed Rail Group will accept comments through April 29, either submitted online at www.nahsr.com or mailed to 8009 34th Ave. South, Bloomington, Minnesota 55425 "NAHSR is currently in a preliminary study process to assess if there is a business case to pursue the project further," according to a news release. The business says it will incorporate comments and input from planned public meetings when making a decision to proceed. A spokeswoman announced previously the rail line would follow the U.S. Highway 52 corridor and be "elevated as needed" to avoid conflicts with roads and other crossings.

Advisory group

Schmit, who hosted a town hall-style meeting on high-speed rail Feb. 16 near Cannon Falls, has called for public engagement in the project. His bill would form a 15-member advisory working group to "observe and report" on its development. "The proposed advisory working group is an opportunity for structured and transparent public discussion involving all the necessary stakeholders," Schmit wrote in an email statement Friday. "It would serve as a neutral venue promoting reliable information and accountability — and, importantly, it would occur without taxpayer expense." he group would be composed of two senators appointed by a Senate subcommittee, two House of Representatives members appointed by the speaker of the House, two members appointed by the governor, the state transportation and public safety commissioners or designees, a representative appointed by the University of Minnesota Center for Transportation Studies and one resident each from Dakota, Dodge, Goodhue, Hennepin, Olmsted and Ramsey counties appointed by county boards. The bill passed with recommendation this week through the Senate committees on Transportation and Public Safety and State and Local Government. Its next stop is the Committee on Rules and Administration.

Zip Rail

Zip Rail, a separate, publicly funded high-speed rail proposal, was suspended earlier this year by Minnesota Department of Transportation and Olmsted County Regional Railroad Authority. Zip Rail and NAHSR's proposal have attracted criticism from the grassroots group Citizens Concerned About Rail Line, including concerns over eminent domain and potential disruption of farmland. MnDOT issued permits to NAHSR in February for a non-invasive study of the



Feds: Amtrak Failed to Follow Safety Rules in Fatal Train Crash

Updated: APRIL 7, 2016 — 11:58 AM

by [Jason Laughlin](#), Staff Writer [@jasmlaughlin](#)
Philadelphia Enquirer

A federal directive issued to Amtrak Wednesday night confirms the rail agency's workers weren't following basic safety rules when a weekend train crash killed two people in Chester.

The directive of action from the Federal Railroad Administration is the first official confirmation that safety rules weren't followed in the Sunday crash. Specifically, it highlighted concerns about the way personnel working on tracks follow safety standards. It stated both federal regulations and Amtrak's internal rules were not being followed at the time of the crash, according to information provided by a senior FRA official.

In a statement issued Thursday, Amtrak President and CEO Joseph Boardman did not dispute the FRA directive and said the company would design a new "internal compliance program" to push for more consistency in protection for rail workers.

Sources with knowledge of the crash near Booth Street have said a communications lapse between changing shifts contributed to the crash. Two veteran Amtrak workers in or near a backhoe directly in the path of an oncoming train were killed. Multiple federal and agency rules and regulations are designed to prevent trains from traveling on tracks occupied by workers and their vehicles. The FRA ordered Amtrak late Wednesday night to require all railroad maintenance workers and their supervisors to review safety rules applicable to their jobs. The regulatory agency also required Amtrak to review the rules governing communication between rail workers, their foremen and dispatchers. FRA also recommended that the rail agency conduct a similar safety review for all safety sensitive workers.

Amtrak framed the FRA directive as a benefit for the rail company in to Boardman's statement.

Read more at

<http://www.philly.com/philly/blogs/in-transit/Feds-confirm-Amtrak-failed-to-follow-safety-rules-in-fatal-train-crash.html#bhosa3WLJjyMpszV.99>

Case for Grants to Short-Lines

Editorial in April 21 St Paul Pioneer Press –provided by Rick Krenske

Advocates for Minnesota's "short-line" freight railroads base their case for public funding of infrastructure repairs where it counts: on jobs. Without needed repairs, they're concerned that lines — several hundred miles of track that branch from major routes, connecting manufacturers and other businesses enterprises, as well as towns in Greater Minnesota— would be abandoned and jobs lost. Around the state, they're "tracks less traveled," says Rep. Matt Dean, a Republican from Dellwood and author of a measure that would create a \$4.5 million fund for grants for repairs. The big rail companies take care of their major connections but "lease out these 'orphan' links to small, independent operators," Dean explains. The conundrum: The small rail companies don't own the land, so they can't borrow against it to improve the tracks. An example in the east metro is the 6.5-mile line from White Bear Lake to Hugo for which \$1.1 million is being asked from state lawmakers for new ties and the "ballast" on which they're laid.

The line is cited as a critical component of the regional economy, important for the continued viability of three major employers and nearly 500 jobs. Advocates highlight perspective from Hugo business representatives. It matters in a state that relies on business retention and jobs to keep its competitive edge: "If the permanent repairs necessary to keep the line safe and reliable are not made soon, that fact will certainly weigh heavily on our decision whether to expand in our Hugo location or relocate to another state where we can be assured of dependable freight rail service," says James Paboucek, president of Loadmaster Lubricants Inc. "Although moving the operations would be difficult and a major disruption to our businesses, we would have no choice but to look for an alternative location that can assure permanent access to reliable rail," says John Schwieters, president of the building products firm J.L. Schwieters.

St. Paul-based Minnesota Commercial Railway Co., which leases the line from BNSF Railway, faces several challenges, company officials told the editorial board. They explain that there's typically not enough revenue to be earned on such lines for the major carriers, so they give them up to others to run. Meanwhile, lease restrictions deter financing of repairs in the private marketplace.

The result in such situations: "It is not always clear who owns the physical assets being used and which entity has the responsibility for their maintenance," Frederick Zimmerman, an emeritus professor at the University of St. Thomas, says in a message to lawmakers supporting attention to the matter.

Advocates — including chambers of commerce, commodity groups and government entities— argue that no other good alternatives exist: "Without access to affordable capital needed to repair, replace and update our rail systems, there is really only one alternative: abandoning these troubled lines, in whole or in part, and ending service to the communities with which they provide vital economic connections." As lawmakers deliberate, the public good, industry economics and private ownership all come into play. When it comes to transportation infrastructure, our waterways and roads are supported by taxpayer dollars.

In Wisconsin and Iowa, many short-line rail miles are under state ownership, advocates say, noting that our state's system of rail lines is all privately financed and maintained.

Minnesota's short-line railroads — small businesses, most of them family owned — have put everything they have on the table, they argue. Grants are usually set at 80 percent of the total cost of a maintenance or capital project. Railroads and their shipper- customers must provide the remaining 20 percent.

They cite an efficiency argument, as well: One modern rail car holds the equivalent of four-and-a-half to five truckloads, keeping traffic off roads and helping reduce wear and tear.

Transportation investments need to cover all modes, including railroads, St. Paul Area Chamber of Commerce President Matt Kramer told us. "When we devalue their access, we by default drive that traffic elsewhere and, in many cases, tacitly encourage those manufacturers to look elsewhere for their growth opportunities. We cannot afford to be driving jobs out of the Twin Cities."

To many small towns beyond, Dean told us, addressing short-line rail infrastructure is a matter of economic survival.

His bill, Dean said, is "a practical solution to a practical problem."



Train Watching River Balcony from Rick Krenske

Pedestrian balcony would link area to downtown

St Paul:

City gives update on 'river balcony'.

St. Paul is hosting a community meeting Thursday to update the public on the latest plans for the proposed river balcony project in the city's downtown.

Mayor Chris Coleman is expected to make remarks at the event, which will be held from 5 to 7 p.m. Thursday in the Discovery Room at the Science Museum of Minnesota.

Imagined as a "dramatic public promenade," the river balcony seeks to link the Science Museum and the Union Depot via a 1.5-mile elevated walkway.

Located along the river bluff, it would connect key downtown development sites with restaurants, offices, shops and open spaces.

While still in the conceptual stage, the city envisions the project rolling out in phases over several years with public- private partnerships financing the balcony.

A master plan for the project is expected to be completed sometime in 2016.

The city recently requested members of the public submit ideas for the balcony as part of a contest. The Knight Foundation is offering up \$25,000 to be shared among the contributors with the best ideas so that their concepts can be developed into installations that will be on display during a prototyping festival this September.

The winners were expected to be announced in mid-April.

Crew Size Matters. Railroad Industry Groups are Clamoring for a Public Hearing Over Proposed Rules Requiring Two-People in Locomotive Cabs

Trains Newswire by Justin Franz April 18, 2016 Provided by Rick Krenske



With grip in hand, this crew member happened to be walking alone as his shift ended on a dreary October day in Altoona, Wis., in 2010. Union Pacific, like most railroads, still use two-person crews, but there has been a growing industry push toward experimenting with one-person crews on more and more freight trains. Travis Dewitz

WASHINGTON — A month after the Federal Railroad Administration announced it would require two people aboard most freight trains in the United States, two of the nation's largest railroad lobbying groups are requesting a public hearing.

On April 13, the Association of American Railroads and the American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association filed a joint comment to the FRA asking that the federal agency host a hearing on the matter as well as extend the comment period. Now, railroads, unions and other stakeholders have until May 16 to submit a comment on the proposed rule.

“The FRA has never before regulated crew consist size, which has long been a matter addressed through collective bargaining between railroads and their employees,” the two groups said in their letter posted on the Federal Register's website. “As the notice of proposed rule making acknowledges, there is no empirical basis for starting regulation now. The railroad industry would like the opportunity to be heard on the question of whether the proposed rule in this area is necessary or appropriate.”

The FRA's minimum train crew size rule would require most trains to have two people in the cab at all times, with exceptions for helper locomotives, work trains, tourist railroads, and others. Other railroads, like commuter operators and Amtrak that already use single-person crews, would be able to continue such operations with federal approval. Union groups lauded the proposed rule, although they were concerned about what possible exemptions could be issued. Railroad groups, such as the AAR, have been critical, saying that technology like positive train control makes a second person redundant.

In its proposed rule making, the FRA said it believed it could implement the rule without having to hold a public meeting but AAR and ASLRRA disagree. So far, more than 60 parties submitted comments on the Federal Register, many in support of the rule.

“I don't see how a train operating with less than two crew members could possibly be safe,” wrote R. Dennis Jacobs, a retired Amtrak conductor.

CN to Begin Major Minnesota Bridge Work on April 27. *Trains Newswire April 20 2016*

A Canadian National freight train southbound at the Oliver Bridge in 2014. The railroad will close the bridge to automobile traffic throughout much of the summer to repair the top, railroad deck. Steve Glischinski

DULUTH, Minn. — Canadian National is planning to overhaul its ex-Duluth, Missabe & Iron Range Railway Oliver Bridge throughout the summer. Work will begin April 27 on the bridge that spans the St. Louis River between Gary-New Duluth, Minn. and Oliver, Wis. The bridge has two decks, with the upper one carrying rail traffic and the lower deck used for automobile traffic.

Work will include full replacement of two 90-foot spans at the east and west ends of the bridge, steel strengthening of 30 bridge spans and upgrades to the bridge deck and rail, CN says in a news release.

The Interstate Transfer Railway Co. built the Oliver Bridge across the St. Louis River in 1910. The company opened the highway portion in 1916. The upper deck connected the Spirit Lake Transfer Railway in Minnesota with the Interstate Transfer Railway in Wisconsin. The steel truss bridge is 1,900-feet-long and was built by the American Bridge Co. It includes a swing span that hasn't been used in decades, which rests on a center-bearing pivot mechanism anchored to a reinforced-concrete center pier. The bridge was built to handle double track, although it has always been single-track. Today it is a key link in CN's Winnipeg-Chicago corridor, linking its former DM&IR and Duluth, Winnipeg & Pacific lines to its ex-Wisconsin Central main line to Chicago.

The bridge will be closed to automobile traffic while CN does the work. "It's a pretty substantial project," CN spokesman Patrick Waldron told the Duluth News Tribune. "We'll have crews working on top of the rail portion and don't want cars passing underneath."

Waldron said CN expects there will be two extended road closures to accommodate span replacements at each end of the bridge in the fall. The bridge is on the same line as CN's recently completed \$40 million Steelton Hill double track project, which extended double track from the Gary-New Duluth area to the Interstate 35 overpass in Duluth's West End.

The road deck was originally wood. It was modernized in 2000 when the Minnesota and Wisconsin departments of transportation cooperated with the DM&IR to jointly fund reconstruction of the roadway surface, which now features a steel-and-reinforced concrete deck.

Development Along Minnesota Transit Line Soars into the Billions of Dollars.

Development Along The Green Line

Trains Newswire April 21, 2016 Provided by Rick Krenske

ST. PAUL, Minn. — Economic development in Minnesota's Twin Cities has soared along Metro Transit's Green Line, according to the Metropolitan Council. The local economic organization says that development along the agency's light rail line has totaled \$4.3 billion, a jump from the calculated \$3.2 billion last fall.

"The continued development along the Green Line tells a story of how transit investment can transform communities while better connecting people to the entire region," says council Chair Adam Duinick. "The Green Line success story illustrates exactly why transit is such a good investment for our communities. At a cost of \$957 million — half of that covered by the federal government — the Green Line has provided a serious return on investment for Minnesotans."

Projections show that development investments could total \$7 billion along the line over 30 years.

The council says it is also seeing similar initiatives along the planned Southwest Light Rail Transit project where \$430 million has been invested in local commercial development as well as the agency's Blue Line Extension where \$358 million of development is being invested in various stages.



The Northern Pacific Railway

Part Two: Bridging the Twin Ports

By [Jeff Lemke](#) • Published February 22, 2016 Provided by Chuck Lavallee



This photograph was taken from high atop the Great Northern's grain elevator complex in Superior. The Wisconsin Draw (closest) was a double track bridge while the Minnesota Draw was single track. This was the most direct rail route between Duluth and Superior. Built and rebuilt between 1884 and 1896 both bridges and all of the trestlework between them were removed during the late 1980s. The bridges were determined to be detrimental to navigation of the newer and much larger thousand-foot lake boats. The bridges and trestle work were also incredibly expensive to maintain. But it sure was a grand structure to behold. (Image: Library of Congress)

As [the first part of this story](#) explains,

The Northern Pacific Railroad is the lynchpin to understanding all of Twin Ports rail history. From its early roots with the Lake Superior & Mississippi Railroad in the 1860s throughout its ultimate absorption by what is today's BNSF Railway the NP's influence still dictates the paths used by all trains coming into or out of the Twin Ports today. In the 1880s, the NP first bridged the communities of Duluth and Superior.

The NP's Second Subdivision

The NP's Second Subdivision is *unofficially* known by modern local railroaders running out of Duluth-Superior as the *Staples Line*. When completed, the line ran from [Duluth's Union Depot](#) to Staples, Minnesota, via Superior, Wisconsin. The first portion of this line was actually built from Carlton, Minnesota (then called Northern Pacific Junction), to Nettleton Avenue in Superior's East End in 1881; operations began on September 1, 1882. This was in fact the very beginning of track laying on the NP. The line joined up with the First Sub Ashland Branch at Nettleton Avenue, thus completing a continuous run from Carlton to Ashland. This marriage of the First and Second Subs got the NP from Carlton to Superior's East End and on to Ashland, Wisconsin, but it didn't get the NP into Duluth. That accomplishment required several more construction projects. In 1885 the NP built a 2.43-mile line from the tip of Rice's Point across St. Louis Bay to West Superior. It opened for traffic on July 6, 1885, and eventually included two substantial draw bridges called the Minnesota and Wisconsin Draws, each initially built of iron and wood in 1884 and 1885 respectively, and by 1896 completely reconstructed of iron and steel. While the majority of this line was single-track, double-track was installed from Central Avenue in South Superior all the way to the Minnesota Draw. The Wisconsin Draw was double tracked, as was the stretch of track that sat on pilings between the two bridges. The Minnesota Draw was always a single-track bridge.

Continued on next page:

Continued from Previous Page: In 1888 NP constructed a separate 4.06-mile line to connect the Second Subdivision at Central Avenue with West Superior and the route across St. Louis Bay using the Minnesota and Wisconsin Draws. This line became a main route that brought NP and GN passenger trains to Superior Union Depot then across the bay to Duluth Union Depot. The NP maintained several freight yards along this part of the line, including the Central Avenue Yard, Belknap Yard, Winter Street Yard, and the Skally Yard. Each yard had a specific use predetermined by commodity and seasonality.



For passenger trains destined for Duluth coming off the NP's First, Second, and Third Subdivisions, this was the end of the line. It's 1957 and we're looking directly down the tracks into Duluth Union Depot. The complicated arrangement of track switches allowed arriving and departing trains to get to any track they needed to use. On the far left is the Soo Line's Duluth passenger depot. The Omaha's smaller depot is far right in the shadows of the overpass. (Photo by Russ Porter courtesy of Twin Ports Rail History.)

The Minnesota and Wisconsin draw bridges became something of a problem in the late 1980s. They were originally designed with a section that swiveled, creating a 175-foot space on either side of the swivel span that allowed lake freighters of the day to pass on either side of the center span when it was in the "open" position. The Duluth Ship Canal, reconstructed in the 1890s, is 315 feet wide; today's modern thousand-foot ore boats pass through the canal with great ease. As ore boats became larger, the space allowing them to pass the old railroad draw bridges became tighter, and consequently it took longer and longer for the large boats to squeak by. Train traffic also limited the bridges' operations: Bridges couldn't be opened for boats if a train was operating across the bay and trains themselves had to be limited in length to about 33 cars to fit the space between the two bridges. By 1988, these operating constraints helped to seal the fate of these two draw bridges. As both the Midwest Energy coal facility in Superior and Duluth's ore docks needed to berth more and more of these giant boats, the shipping companies wanted to traverse this portion of the river in an easier, faster fashion than the old bridges allowed. Plus with two bridges and a mile-long mainline to maintain atop pilings high above the water surface, this route over the St. Louis River became far too expensive for the railroad to maintain indefinitely. Union agreements also conceded that when the group of men who operated these bridges retired, they needn't be replaced, and more savings could be realized by eliminating those jobs when that time came. All of these conditions contributed to the removal of the Minnesota and Wisconsin draws. Train traffic was then forever rerouted over the only remaining railroad bridge over the St. Louis River, the NP's Grassy Point Draw Bridge, that still links Superior with West Duluth.

West Duluth to West Superior: NP's Sixth Subdivision

The NP's [Sixth Subdivision](#)*, known as the West Superior Branch or the Grassy Point Line, was a 3.49 mile-long line built in 1888 to connect West Superior with West Duluth Junction. West Duluth Junction was located on the western edge of Grassy Point where several NP-owned or controlled lines connected, including the branch line to Fond du Lac, the Duluth Transfer Railway, and the NP's Skally Line. The Grassy Point Line included yet another bridge across the St. Louis River: *Continued on next page:*

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the St. Louis River Bridge, also known as the Grassy Point Draw, built in 1887–88. Like the Minnesota and Wisconsin draws, the Grassy Point Draw was originally built of iron and wood and later rebuilt of iron and steel. The most modern version, built in 1912, is the same bridge used today. When complete, the line ran from New Duluth to Riverside Junction and then from 72nd Avenue West to West Duluth Junction, where the tracks headed toward the Grassy Point Drawbridge and across the river into Superior. The line opened for traffic in May 1888.

Looking at today's railroad operating scheme within the Twin Ports it quickly becomes apparent that much of the track is missing from these original NP entry points, so one might wonder how the trains of today get to and from Duluth.

Here's the answer: NP owned most of the track in Duluth and also controlled a line called the Duluth Transfer Railway, or DT for short, designed to run between Rice's Point and West Duluth. According to city records, the DT was organized on May 24, 1890, and was partially constructed during 1892. Today the line runs underneath Canadian National's old Missabe ore docks and is the "mainline" that connects Duluth with Superior—and the rest of the outside world. This is accomplished via a connection between the DT and the old Sixth Subdivision, across Grassy Point Bridge, and into the west side of Superior.

From Superior heading south, the BNSF track used today is mostly of ex-GN origin, as most of the old NP lines leading out of the Twin Ports have been removed in favor of these old GN lines. But within Duluth and West Duluth the old Northern Pacific domination is still in effect with remaining lines being a combination of the NP's old Second, Third, and Sixth Subs, plus most of the original NP controlled Duluth Transfer Railway too.

Long Live the Northern Pacific!

The old NP constitutes more than 80 percent of the track that *ever existed* within the City of Duluth. Of all the railroads in the area, NP and its predecessor lines clearly played the most significant role in the early development of the local communities of Duluth, West Duluth, and Superior. It was also instrumental in the development and rise of Ashland, Carlton, Cloquet, and the small communities that connected all of these places to each other. On March 1, 1967, NP folded the entire Lake Superior Division into its St. Paul Division with all of the former Lake Superior Subdivisions becoming St. Paul Division Subdivisions. NP then became part of Burlington Northern (BN) formed in 1970 by the merging of the NP with GN, Burlington Route (CB&Q), and the Spokane, Portland & Seattle (SP&S). In 1996 BN merged with Santa Fe to become the BNSF Railway. While BNSF operates more than 24,000 miles of track in 27 states, none of it is more important to Duluth than the former NP lines that started the era of modern railroading within the Twin Ports.

Northern Pacific essentially controlled all train traffic coming into Duluth and certainly constrained it on the Superior side. It owned the Grassy Point, Minnesota, and Wisconsin draw bridges. Even the small amount of train traffic coming off the Duluth Winnipeg & Pacific Railway from Canada had to pass over NP rails to run the last few miles between West Duluth and Duluth. Virtually every railcar coming into Duluth had to pass over NP rails to get in or out of town. This territorial dominance displayed by NP in Duluth was unequalled by any railroad in Superior. From its roots with the Lake Superior & Mississippi Railroad, NP arrived first and made the most of the best land opportunities. Even the challenging geography of Duluth played a major role in further helping the NP to limit its competition on the Minnesota side of the bay.

When the other railroads arrived they grabbed what land was still available and made the best of their situations. In Duluth, no railroad was more important or omnipresent than the NP. Mergers aside, that really hasn't changed much since 1870. The old Lake Superior & Mississippi, St. Paul and Duluth, and Northern Pacific are *still* the major underpinnings of today's BNSF Railway on the Duluth side of the Twin Ports.

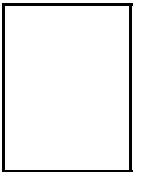


NP 1791, a Class W-3 2-8-2 steam locomotive, at Duluth in 1957. The 2-8-2s handled general merchandise trains, coal trains, and iron ore trains and made the majority of steam powered long-haul freight runs between the Twin Ports and Twin Cities. (Image: Twin Ports Rail History)

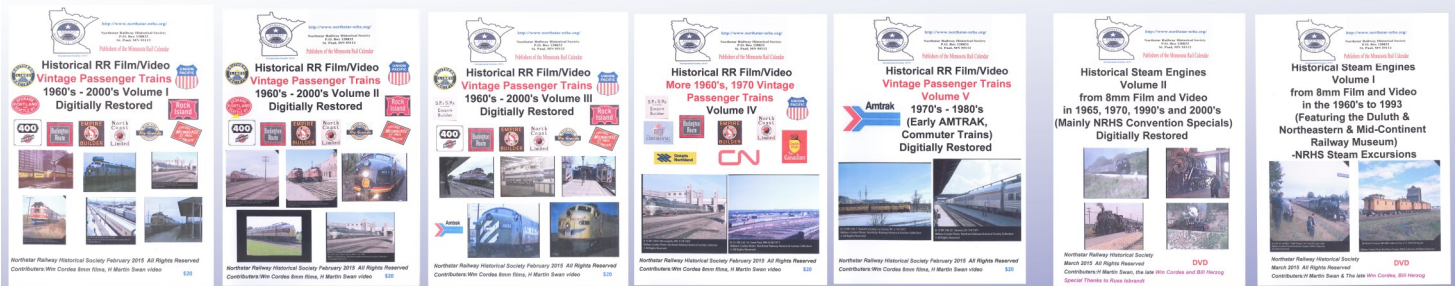
Railfan Events (Thanks to Rick Krenske, Cy Svobodny, Russ Isbrandt)

2016 C&NWHs Annual Meet	May 12-15, 2016	Ramada Plaza Minneapolis 1330 Industrial Blvd NE - Minneapolis, MN 55413	C&NW Historical Society Members have special Hotel rates and registration fees
Twin City Model Railroad Museum Model Railroad and Toy Train Spring Hobby Sale	Saturday May 7th 2016 9 AM - 4 PM	Education Building Minnesota State Fairgrounds St Paul MN	\$7
Duluth Trip from Mpls Powered by Milw #261	Saturday June 4th Lv Mpls 9:00 AM Sunday June 5th Lv Duluth 11:00 AM	Depart Harrison St Shops in Minneapolis Depart Duluth at Duluth Depot, (Lake Superior RR Museum)	See 261.com for more information. (Premium Class is now full) Special Rates at the Holiday INN and Radison Hotels in Du- luth.
Northstar Light Rail Trip and Northstar Commuter	Saturday June 18th About 10AM	Depart the Blue Line Bloomington 28th St Station	Metro transit Fare paid by each individual

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More New DVD's are planned from Wm Cordes Film collection of the Northstar Railway Historical Society Archives, and some Modern Railroad Video from the 2000's.