CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Rail Conference

The Rail Conference held at the University of New Hampshire in May really set the tone for the remainder of the year. The conference was a huge success, despite the fact that New Hampshire Commissioner of Transportation, Charles P. O'Leary, used the conference as a platform for his anti-train rhetoric. Aside from the panel we invited him to participate on, he did not attend one other event during the two day conference. Fortunately, other commissioners of transportation and staff members, including Maine DOT Commissioner Conners, approached the conference with an entirely different attitude.

The conference generated extensive press - most of it positive and supportive - despite the initial headline, "... rather die than support trains..." made concerning O'Leary. Letters to TrainRiders generated by the conference reached an all-time high, and we answered them all.

North-South Station (Boston) Rail Link

In 1989 we wrote a letter to Senator George Mitchell asking why the rail link, which had been proposed as part of Boston's Central Artery/Tunnel Project, had been suddenly eliminated. That letter, and subsequent contacts with other members of the Maine delegation have kept us actively involved in the issue ever since. Most recently, we were invited to attend a scoping session on the link in Boston conducted by the Federal Transit Administration. The FTA, in accordance with a provision in the new Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA), is preparing to conduct a feasibility study of a proposed rail link between the two stations. The study will develop "Order of Magnitude" estimates of costs and benefits and identify the pros and cons of alternative alignments and major design features. The study will not produce a decision on: whether a rail link should be built; a preferred alignment and major design; who should pay for the tunnel, if built; and preliminary engineering drawings or environmental documents.

The study is to be completed in 8 to 10 months and we intend to remain involved in this important issue which has the potential to affect the economic growth of not just Maine and New Hampshire, but Northern New England and maritime Canada as well. The link, if constructed, will effectively extend the Northeast Corridor through (Continued on Page 2)

We'll Miss You Sam

In Memoriam

Samuel E. Stokes, Jr., of Alstead, New Hampshire, died on July 18th at the age of 70. Sam was a generous supporter of TrainRiders/Northeast. He served as a member of our first Board of Directors in 1989 and continued as Director-at-Large until Lou Gehrig's disease - which destroys the muscles and leaves the brain untouched - began to take its toll. He was active in the creation of this organization, providing much of the background materials used in our presentations, press releases and our current "Trainfacts" brochure.

Sam served the National Association of Railroad Passengers as a Director and member of the Executive Committee of NARP from its inception in the early 1970's until his death.

Sam's letters and published articles have made politicians at the federal and state level aware of his position on balanced transportation for over 20 years. Surely there isn't a Commissioner of Transportation anywhere who is not familiar with Sam Stokes. His letters to occupants of the White House and key members of Congress were legendary. He managed to raise the public awareness of the importance of passenger rail service when many were saying that trains were "old fashioned". An editorial in the Keene [NH] Sentinel in 1989 supported Sam's work, concluding with: "Someday, and it may not be too far in the future, we expect a lot of people are going to wish they'd listened to Sam Stokes."

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Volume 3, Number 1, Summer 1992
Fourin "Buc" Powell, Editor, Rockland, ME.
CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Boston to Portland, and should benefit travelers and the economy of the entire corridor, which currently extends from Boston to Richmond, VA.

Rail Funding Fairness Proposed

Joseph Vranich, the author of Supertrains, has recently asked for assistance in removing legal barriers to the use of private financing for high-speed surface transportation systems. Tax-exempt bonds, long used to finance airports and seaports which benefit private carriers, are not allowed to be sold to finance ground transportation. This has effectively eliminated the private sector from involvement in the passenger rail system. Please contact your Senators, asking that they support Senators Graham of Florida and Symms of Idaho in their effort to put high-speed rail tax-exempt bonds under the same rules as airport bonds. Ask them to put fairness and equity into the law. At the moment, the proposed amendment is included in H.R. 776. There seems to be no reason to exclude freight railroads' bonds, since their truck competition often travels over highways constructed with municipal and state tax-exempt bonds. The financial health of freight railroads is vital to Amtrak's continued existence, since Amtrak is unlikely ever to own its entire network of passenger rail lines and must continue to operate over freight railroads. Ed.]

Jobs Bond Vote

A big “Thank You” to the Maine members who took the time to vote in June. As you now know, the Jobs Bond Bill passed, which included $3 million as Maine's match for the authorized federal funding of $30 million. Of course, the next hurdle is to see that the authorization becomes a $30 million appropriation. The $30 million was included in the Senate version of the bill on July 30 and will be under discussion in the House-Senate Conference Committee. Even though the funding has the full backing of Senator Mitchell and the rest of the Maine delegation, it is important that TrainRiders members everywhere continue to urge their congressional members to support a $30 million appropriation for the Boston-Portland service.

What follows is a quick lesson in how bills are processed in Washington. (Courtesy of National Association of Railroad Passengers)

Normally, a bill is considered in subcommittee, then in full committee and finally on the floor. Bill-writing committee sessions are called "mark-ups." A joint House-Senate "conference committee" including, among others, the committee and subcommittee chairmen and ranking minority members, resolves differences between House and Senate passed bills. Both houses usually approve conference reports as is.

Members should concentrate efforts on their own members of Congress. They are better able to influence members from their own district than members from another state or district. Of course, a representative contemplating statewide offices listens to everyone in the state and would-be Presidents listen to everyone. Telephone (202) 244-3121 reaches any Capitol Hill office. Senate ZIP code: 20510; House of Representatives ZIP code: 20515.

Reaching for Dollars

TrainRiders is now reaching out to the business community for more support for our efforts. There are promotional brochures ready to be published concerning the proposed service and we also have a series of advertisements created by David Strauss in Camden which should appear in magazines and local newspapers as well, promoting passenger train service to Maine. We must raise the public's awareness in order to keep our original schedule of "Trains by fall of '93".

ISTEA (It's more than just a summertime drink!)

Something for everyone?

A recent communication from Washington, D. C. points out that opponents to the use of federal highway funds for public transportation are beginning to make noises. The following is taken directly from a memo directed to, "Groups Concerned with the Flexible Funding Provisions of the ISTEA-91" (The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991.)

"The first official request for the 'flexing' of highway funds to a non-highway use has surfaced in Omaha, Nebraska, where $400,000 of Surface Transportation Program funds would be used to partially fund the purchase of seven buses. [Sounds like some sort of disease has surfaced, doesn't it?]

"We can expect considerably more activity of this type as the metro areas become more familiar with the flexibility options available to them under the ISTEA-91. [Wouldn't it be awful if communities actually began to do something about congestion and air pollution!] It is imperative that highway supporters be prepared to provide information and support to our members located in those metro areas which are most likely to transfer their highway funds to other uses." [That support, as you might imagine, will come in the form of lots of $$$.

Imagine, how awful ... to use the incredible sum of $400,000 from Federal Highway Trust Funds to assist in the purchase of seven buses in Nebraska, a state which already has one AMTRAK train per day! I share this with you to show you that the battle for a balanced transportation system is far from over. Though we are very close to success, we don't have the Portland-Boston train service yet. Without that service, we will never be able to push for expansion of passenger rail service into other areas of Northern New England.

To continue our work, we need more members as well as continued support from our existing membership. Please, it's never too late to renew your membership. We need you, your friends and neighbors now. Remember, we have no paid staff and no paid lobbyists - we're all volunteers. All membership funds go to offset costs of office supplies, postage, telephone and printing. Let's all be part of the group that makes things happen, instead of just watching things happen, or worse - wondering what happened!

We welcome your letters and participation. Did you know that we have some 900 members located in 26 states, 3 Canadian provinces and Japan?

Citizen Planner of the Year

The Maine Association of Planners, at their Annual Meeting in June, awarded Wayne Davis their Citizen Planner of the Year Award, "... based on his remarkable and continuing achievements in the effort to reestablish passenger rail service in Maine."

The workshops at the meeting included many transportation-related subjects. The one concerning the Boston to Portland Rail Link noted that public education is required about rail transit (most younger people have never traveled by train); that intermodal connections are vital to the success of rail and must be carefully studied; and that the environmental benefits of the rail system should be emphasized, including reduced energy use and air pollution. MAP Newsletter
TRAINRIDER ACTIVITIES

New Hampshire Members

Residents and visitors alike have been watching developments leading to our first Boston-Portland passenger train since 1965. The New Hampshire DOT has given the job of selecting primary and secondary railroad station sites to the two planning commissions involved. Of the 114 miles between Portland and Boston, 35 miles are within New Hampshire, between Atkinson on the south and Rollinsford on the Maine border.

The Rockingham County Planning Commission chose two sites within in-town Exeter. The Exeter Station Committee meeting since March 1992 and has closely surveyed potential locations between Main and Front Streets. The proposed site is just a short distance from the former Exeter railroad station, a short walk from Phillips Exeter Academy and has adequate parking available.

The Strafford Planning Commission chose Dover as its primary site. A downtown location on Third Street which has parking potential and a short walk to businesses is recommended. The secondary site is Durham, the former B&M station, now the UNH Dairy Bar, with most of the architectural features of its passenger station heritage still in place. Durham is recommended for weekend service especially for the 10,000 plus student population at the University of New Hampshire.

The C.O.A.S.T. Bus System can easily meet trains in Durham and Dover, along with C&J Transportation. This will give the tricities of Portsmouth, Somersworth and Rochester and the developing former Pease Air Force Base easy access to Boston-Portland trains.

A special public hearing regarding the Boston-Portland train was held at Dover City Hall on the evening of August 27, 1992. All members of the public were invited to attend and give testimony. Ruth Griffin, our Seacoast Executive Counselor and Charles O'Leary, Commissioner of Transportation, were in attendance. Bill Hunt submitted 3,000 signatures supporting rail passenger service, in addition to the 7,000 already collected. The meeting was sponsored by the Strafford Regional Planning Commission.

The political season is well underway in New Hampshire. We urge all New Hampshire voters to investigate candidate's positions on TrainRiders/Northeast's goals and objectives. Remember to take time to vote in the Primary on September 8 and the General Election on November 3. Let's send people to Concord and Washington who support modern balance in transportation. Bob Hall.

Along The Track

NARP Region I Annual Meeting in New London, Connecticut

The National Association of Railroad Passengers, Region I, held its 1992 Annual Meeting on Saturday, March 7th in New London, Connecticut. The major item of interest to TrainRiders members concerned the extension of Northeast Corridor (NEC) electrification from its present end in New Haven, Connecticut to Boston. This will eliminate the need to change engines in New Haven and, when combined with the faster travel times made possible by the greater acceleration of electric powered equipment, as compared to diesel-electric locomotives, will result in reduced travel times between Boston and New York. Also, a Swedish X-2000 trainset is to be tested on the NEC, among other locations, and could apply to Boston-Portland service, if used with diesel power, as its design allows greater speeds over existing track, thereby avoiding the major capital costs of straightening or easing curvature on railroad lines which, in nearly all cases in New England, were laid out well before the turn of this century.

In conjunction with the electrification, the Rhode Island Association of Railroad Passengers has been working to ensure that the overhead wire "catenary" be placed high enough to permit "double stack" containers to travel on the NEC and to provide a third track where needed to allow continued freight service and to provide adequate track for expansion of passenger traffic in the future, particularly commuter trains. The height of the wire is very important to allow the use of bi-level commuter equipment (already serving the Boston area on the MBTA), AMTRAK Superliners, and dome cars. All aboard.

Roxie Island

Maine Track Improvements On Schedule

Thanks to Maine voters' approval of the "Jobs Bonds" on June 9th and the continuing efforts of Mike Murray of the Maine Department of Transportation, work on improvements to the Guilford Transportation Industries, Inc. main line between the Massachusetts-New Hampshire State line and Portland is expected to begin on time. State funds are to be matched by about $30 million in federal funds, anticipated to be approved in the near future. The money will be spent to improve the track to allow 79 mph operation of passenger trains. Amtrak has appropriated $20 million for the cars and locomotives, leaving only funding for stations and related parking and intermodal connections to be funded from other sources.

Maine Coast Railroad Passenger Service

Although scheduled passenger service to on-line towns is still in the future, the Maine Coast Railroad, operator of the state-owned former Rockland Branch of the Maine Central Railroad, has seen more than just freight cars rumbling over the line between Brunswick and Rockland.

The 470 Railroad Club operated very successful excursions over the line between West Bath (Hardings) and Rockland on May 30 and at 1, 1992. The Maine Coast Railroad & Navigation Company's combined railroad excursions to Newcastle and boat trips on the Sheepscot River from Wiscasset began on Memorial Day weekend. They operate daily from June 22 through Labor Day with a somewhat reduced schedule after Labor Day through Columbus Day. Other excursions have been operated from Rockland.

At Rockland, a local volunteer organization, the Rockland Share The Pride Committee, has cleaned up the railroad yard in Rockland and planted trees to improve the appearance of the area, which lies adjacent to Route One. On August 12, Maine DOT officials met with city officials to discuss possible state purchase of the former Rockland station, now used as Rockland's City Hall. While Deputy Transportation Commissioner Russell Spinney noted that regular passenger train service could be, "ten to twenty years away or possibly never", the state's willingness to talk of $345,000 as a "reasonable starting figure" for state purchase of the building may indicate that use of the line for scheduled passenger service could be considerably closer. The Courier-Gazette

Transportation Policy Advisory Committee

TrainRiders/Northeast is well represented on the Transportation Policy Advisory Committee (TPAC) which is developing transportation policies for Maine as a result of the November 1991 referendum vote for the Sensible Transportation Policy Act. Furtin Powell is on the Steering Committee. TrainRiders Sylvanus Doughty and Steve Mac Isaac, along with Dave Kuschwitz of the Bangor & Aroostook Railroad and Tom Bamford of the Aroostook Valley Railroad who represent the interests of Maine's freight railroads, are members of TPAC's Advisory Committee. TPAC and its
Trainrider Activities

Building Regional Rail: The Track to Economic Recovery

The keynote address by Senator Mitchell set the tone for an outstanding transportation conference, held at the University of New Hampshire's New England Center in Durham on May 26-27, 1992. Noting that Boston will again become a true "Hub" once a North-South Station connection is constructed, Mitchell stated that, like good public education, all will benefit from improved rail service. He indicated that the Interstate Highway system would also benefit from improved rail service, which could relieve some of the truck traffic and automobile overloads in urban areas. The questions, and Mitchell's responses, gave some indication of the political forces arrayed against the rebirth of rail passenger service in the U.S.

Tim Gillespie, AMTRAK's spokesman for the Northeast Corridor Extension, indicated he would advocate electrification to Portland and beyond. The North-South Station connection in Boston would add significantly to revenues for the Boston-Portland train service. AMTRAK's goal from the NEC electrification is a major revenue increase, with over 3 million riders annually anticipated once the project is complete. He urged passage of the "Ampenny" legislation which would create a trust fund for AMTRAK. Rail is the only federally funded mode without such a fund.

Attendees were treated to four distinct views on the Renaissance in Rail. Harriet Parcells, of NARP, noted that New England is only part of a growing interest in rail passenger service, that 75% of our 1991 Trade Deficit was due to imported oil, and that trains produce a more social environment. Vukan Vuchic spoke on multimodal systems, noting that we do not have a system, we have a collection of uncoordinated modes. Auto ownership segregates U.S. citizens into two classes; those without automobiles are second-class citizens. Rail must be fed by good connections with other modes (auto, bus, light rail, pedestrian, bicycle). James McQueen, FRA, speaking on interstate and provincial cooperation, conveyed the Bush Administration's opposition to the Boston-Portland AMTRAK extension while praising the anticipated privately funded Orlando, Florida Magnetic Levitation line and the Texas TGV. David Aschauer spoke of the economic and industrial impacts of rail service. While the benefits of transportation investments are long term (greater than 10 years) and not all those benefits are picked up by standard cost-benefit analyses used by economists, the benefits include higher investment, improved worker productivity, better access to labor and higher wages for workers.

A series of panel discussions followed. While most had positive things to say about rail passenger service, New Hampshire Transportation Commissioner Charles P' O'Leary blasted the concept of restoring passenger service between Boston and Portland. He advocated buses as the answer to the single-occupant vehicle, calling trains "elitist" and saying they were environmentally "unethical". In contrast, at another panel, Ross Capon, of the National Association of Railroad Passengers, cited the success of California in coordinating bus services with train schedules, a concept he felt would apply to the Boston-Portland train as well. Guy Rossmarin, whose firm has worked on the Old Colony (MA) project, noted the necessity of New England governments to work together to achieve a true transportation system. He characterized the Central Artery/Third Harbor Tunnel Project in Boston as an urban renewal project, using federal highway funds to benefit real estate developers. He advocated the rail link as part of the project, so that the delays now experienced in New Haven (due to engine changes) are not simply transferred to Boston (due to lack of a rail link). Joseph Vranich, author of Supertrains, called Boston the single biggest gap in the U.S. rail network. While Spain opened its first high speed rail line, compatible with the French TGV's, on April 20, 1992 and is talking of a railroad tunnel under the Straits of Gibraltar to Morocco, we seem unable to link two stations in Boston! A lesson transferable to New England is Michigan's experience, which has, over 21 years, seen gradual, incremental improvements in rail passenger service with the eventual aim of creating a network of high speed rail lines served by conventional rail lines and feeder buses. J. Scott Hercik of Michigan DOT noted that in 1970, Michigan's trains only generated 20% of their operating costs from ticket sales; tickets covered 90% in 1990. He emphasized that Michigan had no grad, "20 year plan" for rail service, but that each step was taken as prior steps proved their worth. They have worked closely with intercity and local bus operators.

TrainRiders is proud to have been one of the sponsors of this conference, which pointed out that trains are not run just for their own sake, but serve an important regional economic function. Northern New England needs to have passenger rail service as part of its transportation system to thrive in the future. A number of TrainRiders members attended the conference. This report was prepared with the assistance of Nellie Blagden.
Along The Track

North of the Border

The Canadian Pacific Railway, operated by the Canadian Atlantic Railway east of Megantic, Quebec, through northern Maine, is rumored to be thinking of selling or abandoning its line from central Canada to the port of St. John, New Brunswick. CPR, through its recent acquisition of the former Delaware & Hudson Railway, has access to container ports in New Jersey, Philadelphia and Baltimore. Freight traffic between McAdam, N.B. and St. John, N.B. is now less than one-third of what it was ten years ago. Many branch lines within New Brunswick are also proposed for abandonment. The health of freight railroads can have a dramatic effect on passenger service. It would seem unlikely, if the line across Maine is abandoned, that VIA Rail Canada would continue to operate over the route. This would eliminate a possible future connection with rail passenger service from southern Maine via Bangor and Brownville Jct. or Mattawamkeag.

MITCHELL NAMES WAYNE DAVIS TO NATIONAL COMMISSION ON INTERMODAL TRANSPORTATION

Washington, D.C. — Senator George Mitchell has named Wayne E. Davis of Yarmouth to the National Commission on Intermodal Transportation.

"Wayne Davis has worked tirelessly in efforts to bring passenger rail service to Maine and New Hampshire. His experience and his dedication to efficient, alternative transportation will be important assets to the Commission," Mitchell said.

Davis is chairman and founder of TrainRiders/Northeast, an all volunteer organization of approximately 900 persons established in 1989 to work to expand passenger rail service into Northern New England. Senior vice-president and chief operating officer of BankEast Mortgage Corporation in Falmouth from 1986-1990, Davis also has served as Development Officer and Finance Officer of the Maine State Housing Authority from 1975-1980.

Davis currently is a board member of both the National Association of Railroad Passengers and the Northeast Corridor Initiative, and serves on the Transportation Committee of the Greater Portland Chamber of Commerce as well as the Mayor's Transportation Advisory Committee in Portland.

The National Commission on Intermodal Transportation was established by a 1991 law to study the status of all forms of U.S. transportation and examine ways to improve the nation's transportation system.

The Commission is to make recommendations to Congress in 1993 concerning ways to achieve the national goal of an efficient, interconnected national system. The Commission is an independent body comprised of eleven members named by Senate and House of Representatives leaders and the President. Original release issued by Senator Mitchell's office.

NEW HAMPSHIRE CITIZENS GROUP PRESENTS CHECK TO TRAINRIDERS/ NORTHEAST

Representatives from Citizens For Alternative Transportation, an organization of New Hampshire bicycle enthusiasts, gathered on June 10th at the former B&M Railroad Station in Durham, New Hampshire, for a $500 check presentation to TrainRiders/Northeast. (The station is presently owned by the University of New Hampshire and is used as a dairy bar.) The group was formed some years ago and recently decided to disband. The money that remained in their treasury was designated for the building of bicycle racks at the station once passenger service is restored. Participants included Joan Darlington, Shirley Glanz, Cicely Buckley, Joe O'Reilly, Brenda Probert and Chris Brew, all of Durham, and TrainRiders Chairman, Wayne Davis.

A Career of Advocacy

Reprinted from Amtrak 1990 Annual Report

Samule E. Stokes, Jr., recipient of Amtrak's first Consumer Advocate Award, looks at the nearly 20 years he has spent advocating improved rail passenger service as a second career.

Having retired in 1972 from a successful career teaching French language and literature at some of the country's leading universities, Stokes turned his time and energy to building support for rail service improvements. He has been a persistent correspondent with editors, legislators and other opinion leaders to try to make the country up to the folly and danger of continued dependence on petroleum resources. Stokes has argued that not only are trains more fuel efficient than the automobile, but they are also many times safer. The billions of dollars the government, as well as private business, would save by reducing auto accidents could be better spent expanding the nation's intercity rail system, argues Stokes.

Stokes was among the first to advocate that a penny a gallon of the gas tax be allocated for intercity rail improvements, a proposal that is gaining support.

The Alstead, N.H., resident was also instrumental in helping Amtrak get the support needed to resume service on the Washington-Montreal "Montrealer" route after it had been suspended due to poor track conditions. Stokes has been a frequent visitor, as well as passenger, at the Bellows Falls, Vt., passenger station and has obtained community support for facility improvements there.

In presenting Stokes with the Consumer Advocate Award, Amtrak President W. Graham Claytor, Jr., said "It will be a long time before we present this award to anyone so deserving as Sam Stokes."
development and environmental “affinity groups” have been meeting frequently since April 13th to develop rules which will guide the future efforts of the Maine Department of Transportation in meeting the needs of Maine’s citizens for all forms of transportation.

Commuter Rail Developments

The Virginia Railway Express, linking Washington, D.C. with northern Virginia suburbs, began its service from Manassas, VA on June 22, 1992. The first day’s trains, four in each direction, carried 825 passengers, about 100 more than had been anticipated. Because of highway congestion, the train trip will save much time for commuters.

Critics have complained about the $131 million capital cost of the system, which includes track reconditioning, construction of 11 stations (a total of 16 are served), 59 new and reconditioned railroad cars, 10 locomotives and parking for 4,700 automobiles. However, supporters of the approximately 85 mile long system point out that Virginia is spending $375 million to extend a single car-pool lane 19 miles south to Springfield! Service to Fredericksburg, VA began on July 20th.

The Washington, D.C. area, where the 103 mile Metro subway system is nearing completion, has plans for further extensions of commuter rail service to both Virginia and Maryland suburbs. The Washington Post, Rail Pace.

South Florida’s Tri-County Rail Authority began in 1989 as a 67 mile north-south rail line paralleling I-95 to offset the congestion caused by the reconstruction of this Interstate highway. It was the first rail system built with federal highway money. Current ridership, with 24 trains a day, is about 9,000 daily passengers in the off-season and 11,000 passengers in peak season. A $59 million project is now underway to create a second track on the mostly single track line, with a capacity for 40 trains and 20,000 daily riders by the year 2000. A major increase in ridership occurred when mid-day trains were added to the schedule, as commuters then realized they could return home at mid-day if needed. The Washington Post

The MBTA has released $3.4 million for final design work on restoring commuter service from Ipswich to Newburyport, Mass. Federal funding for the Old Colony commuter rail project south of Boston was assured by U.S. Transportation Secretary Andrew Card on June 12th. The lines will link Boston to Plymouth and Middleboro, upgrading facilities which have been freight-only since 1959. The 470

Volunteer Assistance Welcomed

If you would like to assist with any of the goals, objectives, programs or activities please contact any committee member or call us at (207) TRY RAIL (879-7245)

Wish List:

- A personal computer with hard disk.
- Someone to regularly service our recently acquired Xerox 1025 Copier (a gift of Kinko’s Copy Center in Portland).
- A corporate sponsor for our quarterly newsletter (or better still, a bi-monthly newsletter).
- Morning office coverage on Tuesdays and afternoon coverage on Thursdays.

The Trainrider
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Forward & Address Correction Requested

TrainRiders/Northeast is an organization of current and potential train users, interested citizens, associations and businesses who are committed to bring modern and efficient passenger trains back to Northern New England