



Good News From Acting FRA Chief

"I am...honored to be here with you today and honored that I was asked to join the Obama Administration and FRA... when we're finally going to get it right," with a President, Vice President, and Transportation Secretary unified in supporting passenger train development.

Thus began Deputy Federal Railroad Administrator Karen Rae's address to NARP's Council of Representatives in Washington April 22.

Rae, who also was Acting FRA Administrator until Joseph Szabo's May 5 swearing in, ran Austin, Buffalo and Glens Falls (NY) transit agencies before leading state public transportation departments in Virginia, Pennsylvania and New York.

She called President Obama's unveiling of *Vision for High-Speed Rail in America* (May News), a historic moment and "a turning point in decades of work." She

"The Obama vision is one about rebuilding and recreating this critical network."

—Karen Rae, Deputy Administrator
Federal Railroad Administration

applauded the work her listeners had put in over many years to help bring us to this exciting moment.

"The Obama vision is one about rebuilding and recreating this critical network." She said passenger train advocates can move beyond merely trying to protect Amtrak. "We...are talking now about a national vision, of which Amtrak is a huge and significant component, but it's being driven by a much higher policy direction than we've ever seen before."

She noted the challenging atmosphere the President's special interest in passenger trains can create, with other transport modes thinking the \$13 billion identified for high speed rail would have gone to them in previous Administrations, and not recognizing that the President is "seeding a legacy that [he] intends to leave."

Rae underlined the significance of the President's proposal for \$1 billion a year over the next five years. It shows that the Administration does not see Recovery Act funds as a one-shot deal.

FRA has established four overarching principals to direct future policy:



FRA Deputy Chief Karen Rae

- ensuring safe and efficient choices for Americans,
- building a foundation for economic competitiveness (passenger and freight),
- promoting energy efficiency, and
- supporting and interconnecting livable communities.

(continued on p. 4)

Mica, Reid Honored With NARP Golden Spike Awards



Rep. John Mica (R-FL, above, second from l.) receives NARP's George Falcon Golden Spike Award, flanked by (from left) NARP Chairman George Chilson, CEO Ross Capon, and Council Member Steve Sayles. The award honors Mica's support for high-speed rail and "passion for expanding the roles of all forms of rail—transit, passenger and freight." He played a key role in the run-up to October, 2008, enactment of the passenger train reauthorization that has proved crucial in facilitating the \$8 billion high-speed rail program in the 2009 Recovery Act, a program that Mica praised. IN RIGHT PHOTO, Chilson (r.) presents award to Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) "in appreciation for his longstanding support for Amtrak and for the development and expansion of intercity passenger train service in the U.S."

Obama Administration Unveils 2010 Budget Proposal

President Obama's detailed Fiscal 2010 budget request unveiled May 5 includes the next step in his commitment to intercity passenger trains. He had promised that the Recovery Act's \$9.3 billion would be followed up with \$1 billion a year for five years. That \$1 billion is included for 2010.

There are three 1% "set-asides" from that \$1 billion: for planning, increased staffing at Federal Railroad Administration, and for related research and development.

But the Administration faces a problem with the Highway Trust Fund (HTF). User fees including gasoline taxes normally provide most federal highway dollars, and 80% of federal transit funds.

Because spending has increased while

Highway Trust Fund in Crisis

(Billions)	Trust Fund	General Funds	Total
Highway Obligation Limit			
FY 2010	\$5.0	\$36.1	\$41.1
FY2009	\$40.7	0.0	\$40.7
FTA Formula & Bus Grants			
FY 2010	\$5.0	\$3.4	\$8.4
FY2009	\$8.3	0.0	\$8.3

revenues have fallen, the HTF is running out of money. Thus, the budget request provides for a massive increase in general fund contributions to the highway and transit accounts in the event Congress does not "fix" the HTF (table at left).

This is not a policy change but an illustration of what might be necessary. A reauthorization with "revenue enhancers" could be enacted before the fiscal year begins October 1, 2009, but this is far from certain. ■

Northeastern Govs. to Obama: Help Us Strengthen NEC

The eight-state Coalition of Northeastern Governors (CONEG) wrote to President Obama May 11, offering staff and resources to ensure that intercity rail continues to improve in speed, reach, and frequency.

CONEG pointed to the Northeast's unique "network of corridors" calling it the nation's premier passenger rail system:

"The Northeast Governors have long recognized that safe, reliable, and time and price competitive intercity passenger rail service provides the connectivity essential for economic competitiveness; livable communities; and energy and en-

National Train Day 2009



—Photo: Jim Churchill

Taken in Philadelphia's 30th Street Station on Saturday's second annual National Train Day. More Train Day photos are at www.narprail.org; further coverage will be featured in following News.

vironmental sustainability."

The letter called for \$3 million to fund a comprehensive, region-wide plan, and was signed by the Governors of New York, Rhode Island, and New Jersey.

"We look forward to working with you, the FRA, and the Congress to translate (your) strategic vision into real improvements in the intercity rail corridors that serve the Northeast states and link them to the nation." ■

Proposed Fiscal 2010 Transportation Funding Compared with Previous Years

Appropriations (\$ millions)

Administration	2005 Actual	2006 Actual	2007 Actual	2008 Actual	2009 Enacted	ARRA Funds	2010 Obama Request	Obama vs. 2009 Enacted
Federal Highway [FHWA] ⁽¹⁾	33,331	34,183	39,624	42,021	41,616	27,500	41,846	+0.5%
Federal Transit [FTA]	7,646	8,504	9,010	9,492	10,229	7,650	10,336	+0.1%
FHWA flexed to FTA	959	1,368	977	1,008	TBD	TBD	n/a	n/a
Federal Aviation	13,853	14,310	14,100	14,915	15,470	1,300	15,956	+3.1%
Federal Railroad	1,425	1,503	1,479	1,581	1,798	8,000	2,705	+50.4%
*Amtrak	1,201	1,294	1,294	1,325	1,490	1,300	1,502	+0.8%

*Amtrak Grant Detail	2005 Enacted	2006 Enacted	2007 Enacted	2008 Enacted	2009 Enacted	2010 Obama Request	Obama vs. 2009 Enacted	Amtrak 2010 Request	Obama vs. Amtrak Request
Operations	570	490	490	475	475	572	+20.4%	601	-5.1%
Capital & Debt Service	631	773	773	850	850	930	+9.4%	1239	-33.2%
AMTRAK SUBTOTAL	1,201	1,294	1,294	1,325	1,325	1,502	+13.6%	1,840	-22.5%
Other Passenger Rail	19	0	0	30	90	1,000			
PASSENGER RAIL TOTAL	1,220	1,294	1,294	1,355	1,325	2,502	+88.8%		

NOTES:

1) These figures are highway "obligation limits". For years 2005-2007, numbers indicate funds expended less unobligated balances that states returned to DOT; hence the differences between these numbers and what we have published in previous annual funding tables. Not shown: funding for **Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration** (about \$500 million a year) and **National Highway Traffic Safety Administration** (about \$800 million).

Norfolk Southern's Dwayne Meadows Receives Burch Safety Award

Norfolk Southern (NS) Bridge Supervisor Dwayne Meadows won the 2009 Dr. Gary Burch Memorial Safety Award. It was presented at NARP's Capitol Hill reception April 21.

The award honors railroad employees who improve passenger safety. The family of Dr. Burch, who died in a 1991 passenger train derailment, sponsors the award.

Dr. Burch's son Michael presented the award, saying: "Dwayne has done a number of notable things to make railways safer...[His] motto is 'safety doesn't just happen, you have to work hard at it everyday and not let up.'" NS credits Meadows with replacing plywood platforms for Amtrak between Harrisburg and Latrobe "with sturdier and safer 2x10

planks...that allow water to drain and reduce the chance of ice buildup."

NS officials present included Vice Pres-Engineering Timothy J. Drake and System Director-Safety Barry Wells.

Burch spoke of his father and the love of trains which he passed on to his children. "I think my dad would be very happy to know that in his memory we have set up an award recognizing actions of railroad employees that make rail passage safer."

The Burch Family gratefully acknowledges other nominations submitted this year, two each from New Jersey Transit and Amtrak: NJT—Donald Bogen, Foreman, Environmental Services; Thomas Lang, Director, Rail Infrastructure Construction; Amtrak—



NS Bridge Supervisor Dwayne Meadows holds award with (from left) Bette, Nicole and Michael Burch, and NS's Timothy Drake.

Linwood Harris, Road Foreman of Engines, Raleigh NC; Mike Webber, Track Supervisor, New England Division (Boston Sub-division). ■

NARP's Capitol Hill Reception and Third Annual Day on the Hill

Members of NARP's Council of Representatives arrived April 21 at Capitol Hill to press the case for trains and passengers

Sixty-eight Council members visited over 100 Hill offices seeking to translate greater public interest in passenger trains into permanent policy changes. They sought a dedicated funding source for passenger trains in the next surface transportation authorization, identification of passenger trains as one use of revenues from any climate change legislation, and of course adequate appropriations.

Council members were able to refer to the association's long history of advocacy when talking with elected officials and their staffers. Among the points raised were finding a reliable, dedicated source

of funding for Amtrak in the upcoming surface transportation bill.

NARP Southeast Division Leader Jackson McQuigg said, "The reception we received at Congressional offices ranged from a brief, negative meeting with a senior Senatorial aide who told us that his boss opposes 'all transportation subsidies,' to a welcome with open arms from Rep. John Lewis (D-GA), a rail advocate who kept a former Mayor of Atlanta waiting while he talked with my delegation about Amtrak."

A NARP delegation met with Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) to present the George Falcon Golden Spike Award (front page). The group included Chairman Chilson, President Capon, Vice-Chair Robert Stewart, Sean Jeans-Gail, Eugene K. Skoropowski and Ryan Stern.

Later that evening, NARP hosted a reception at the Rayburn foyer, which offered a chance to mingle with Congressmen and staffers.

Chairman Chilson presented a George Falcon Golden Spike Award to Rep. John Mica (R-FL, front page), who responded: "A lot of things have come together—many of you have worked a long time, I appreciate that effort and I'm humbled and honored to receive this award and this honor from those of you who have toiled so long... We're just beginning and I look forward to working with you from this night forward until we finish the job" said Mica to the assembled crowd. ■

Rep. Mica is exploring options to move forward the SunRail central Florida commuter rail project (March News) even after a May 1 Florida legislature vote dealt the project a serious setback.



Rep. Howard Coble (R-NC; 2nd from right) at NARP reception with (from left) NARP Chairman George L. Chilson, Vice-Chair James Churchill and Council Member James Stevenson, one of Coble's constituents.



Rep. Mica (r.) with Rep. Bill Shuster (R-PA), top Republican on the Railroads Subcommittee, whose constituents include Burch Award Winner Dwayne Meadows (story at top).



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George Chilson, Chairman; James Churchill, John DeLora, Albert L. Papp, Jr., Arthur Poole, David Randall, Robert J. Stewart, Vice Chairs; Nicholas Noe, Secretary; Kenneth T. Clifford, Treasurer

Ross B. Capon, President; Sean Jeans-Gail, Communications Director; Douglas Kidd, Director of Finance and Administration; Tiffanie H. Childs, Coordinator of Resource Development

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OUR MISSION: A MODERN, CUSTOMER-FOCUSED NATIONAL PASSENGER TRAIN NETWORK THAT PROVIDES A TRAVEL CHOICE AMERICANS WANT.

New Orleans-Los Angeles Route May Expand From Tri-Weekly to Daily

At a well-attended May 2 NARP/Rail-PAC meeting in Los Angeles—speakers included Amtrak President and CEO Joseph Boardman, and Chief of Product Management Brian Rosenwald—it was announced that Amtrak is working towards implementation of daily service along the New Orleans-Los Angeles route. The vision is of a significantly speeded-up, daily Chicago-San Antonio-Los Angeles schedule and a connecting daily San Antonio-New Orleans coach-and-lounge-car train. Amtrak is working towards implementation of daily service along the New Orleans-Los Angeles route, possibly as early as late this year. ■

Rae

from page 1

FRA is creating a merit-based system to define the public benefit of potential projects. Vision emphasizes 100-to-600-mile corridors, which she called “the sweet spot in regional rail connections.”

Speaking at an American Public Transportation Association “Transportation Tuesday” audience May 5, she said—of the federally designated high speed rail corridors—“Let’s be honest. [The corridor designations] were a way to get grade crossing money to the states.”

Rae said those corridors should be overlaid on the solid infrastructure of Amtrak’s national system. This is how a nation the size of the U.S. will connect its cities, she said, so that one day “90% of Americans can look out and say ‘I really do have a travel option today.’”

Wayne Davis Receives NARP’s John R. Martin Award

NARP gave its third John R. Martin Passenger Train Advocacy Award to Wayne Davis, whose dogged determination over 12 years brought to life Amtrak’s successful Boston-Portland *Downeaster*. The presentation was at the NARP Council of Representatives meeting in Washington April 20.

Davis, a Council member and longtime former board member, also is Chairman of TrainRiders/Northeast (www.downeastriders.us/TRNE/).

He spearheaded successful efforts to overcome major political hurdles and has had the satisfaction of watching the major host railroad (Guilford) become one of Amtrak’s best performers.



Wayne Davis holds award, flanked by (from l.) NARP Chairman George Chilson and CEO Ross Capon and Association of American Railroads President Ed Hamberger.

He continues to work at securing permanent funding, and extension of the service to Freeport, Brunswick and a connection there with Maine Eastern services to Rockland and Augusta.

She warned that \$13 billion will not overcome 30 years of disinvestment. “Before 9/11, the federal transportation investment had been \$782 billion, of which 48% went to highways, 22% to aviation, 12% to public transportation, 12% to ports and waterways, and only 4% to rail (including Amtrak and grade crossings).” NARP notes that including state and local funds would show an even bigger anti-rail bias.

The Administration is trying to tip the balance, but she asked for NARP’s help to manage the public’s expectations, encouraging an accurate understanding of what \$13 billion can do.

FRA is looking at what investments will create the most significant public benefit. Some investments will be specific projects and some will be corridor programs.

Guidance for states is due June 17, but Rae told the APTA group that they intend to beat that deadline.

Also at APTA, when asked how much U.S. high speed rail will cost Rae asked “how much [will] the Interstate highway system cost over how many years. [HSR] will cost what it costs to get Americans the service they deserve. I can’t speculate what the inflation rate will be over the next 25 years.” ■

TRAVELERS’ ADVISORY

On select days between June 30 and Sept. 23, *California Zephyr* will detour between Denver and Salt Lake City. Substitute buses for Glenwood Springs and Grand Junction connect with train at Denver only.