

# AORTA Bulletin

A publication of the  
*Association of Oregon Rail and Transit Advocates*

Issue 157

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Since 1976

## ODOT plans for Eugene stub tracks

*Jon Nuxoll*

Planning for two stub tracks at the Eugene Amtrak station is the focus of Oregon Department of Transportation planning now underway. ODOT's initial proposal will be reviewed for comment by Union Pacific Railroad and the City of Eugene, with ODOT hoping to have plans finalized by the end of 2014.

Presently, trains terminating in Eugene backtrack about two miles to rail yards for servicing. Those transfers potentially delay trains owing to interference with mainline freight traffic, and recent addition of midday Portland-Eugene trains turning at Eugene has intensified the need for this.

The current conceptual plan is that two tracks would come off of the UPRR mainline and a new platform placed between the stub tracks, according to John Schnaderbeck, ODOT project engineer. ODOT's proposal may include acquisition of additional right of way through this area to allow the possibility for a future 2nd main track if UPRR ever needs that option through the area. Due to the nature of the work and locations of turnouts, Lincoln Street, west of the Amtrak station, would have to be closed.

Schanderbeck said ODOT is working with the City of Eugene to have their concerns addressed as plans move forward.

## Eastern Oregon Report

*Dr. David Arnold*

A proposal to build a trail along the Wallowa-Union Railway came one step closer to reality with the signing of an agreement that gives the go-ahead for a feasibility study. Members of the progressive-minded Wallowa-Union Railroad Authority voted to sign a memorandum of understanding with the Oregon State Parks and Recreation Department and Eastern Oregon University to study the possibility of building a trail for biking and hiking alongside the WURA right-of-way and adjacent to the rails. If the study concludes that a trail on the 66 mile route is indeed feasible it will have to be built next to the railway since the WURA board has stipulated that the rails will remain in place in perpetuity and preserved for future economic development.

In keeping with multi-model and inter-model goals for the railroad, the railroad board is discussing the possibility of getting a designation for the depot as a Bike Friendly Business through Travel Oregon. The Wallowa-Union depot, located in Elgin, Oregon, the western terminus of the railroad, is located on a very popular route for touring cyclists and as such the designation and accompanying services will likely bring more visitors through the depot.

**AORTA** Vice-President David Arnold, a WURA board member and Engineer for the Railroad is currently a candidate for one of two

## Why has high-speed rail moved so slowly in the US?

Luncheon presentation by Dr. Anthony Perl  
Saturday, April 5, 2014 (11 am - 4:30 pm)

**Embassy Suites** (*historic Multnomah Hotel*)  
319 SW Pine Street  
Portland, Oregon 97204  
*convenient to light rail*

*See page 4. Register on-line or by mail today!*

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**Duck game train specials proposed**

*Jon Nuxoll*

The Oregon Ducks could join the Seattle Seahawks and Thanksgiving turkeys as the focus of special Northwest Amtrak trains.

Over a dozen representatives from Amtrak, the University of Oregon, tourism agencies and state and local officials discussed potential of Duck football specials in a meeting coordinated by state Rep. Nancy Nathanson (D-Eugene).

Portland-Eugene football specials have been proposed in past years, but limited equipment, maintenance needs and scheduling have made that prohibitive; addition of two Oregon-owned Talgo sets in 2013 have prompted a new look at special service.

In addition to improved transportation to Eugene, such service could introduce more people to train travel, Nathanson noted in remarks to the group. Depending on schedules and game times, arriving passengers could visit Eugene's Saturday Market, three blocks south of the Amtrak station. The UO's Autzen Stadium is about a mile northeast of the station, which Amtrak passengers could reach by foot or by Lane Transit District

game-day buses from downtown to the stadium.

Amtrak representatives indicated developing game trains might take time but a limited program could be offered for the upcoming season, perhaps within the existing schedule of trains or a chartered train for the Oregon-Oregon State Civil War game in November, according to minutes of the August 23 meeting.

Preliminary Amtrak fare estimates were \$111 for a Portland-Eugene round trip, compared with the current regular fare of \$52.

The need to return any equipment to a Seattle base for heavy maintenance would add to costs. Game times that sometimes change a week or two in advance and accommodating freight needs of track-owner Union Pacific are also considerations.

*Celebrate*

**National Train Day**

**Saturday, May 10**

Portland Union Station

10 am - 4 pm

**Ross Capon Transitions from His 39-Year Tenure at National Association of Railroad Passengers**

*Dr. Larry Scott to Take Over as Acting President*

Washington, D.C.—The National Association of Railroad Passengers announced in late February that Ross Capon will be transitioning from his 39-year career with the organization. Dr. Larry Scott will take over as Acting President.

Capon has worked for NARP since 1975, becoming Executive Director in 1976. He has been a tireless

advocate for a national passenger rail system that provides America's passengers with a safe, reliable, convenient travel choice.

"Ross has served America's passengers with great distinction during his 39 year tenure," said NARP Chairman Bob Stewart. "During Ross's time at NARP, the Association's recognition and

influence significantly increased. That's reflected not only in the recognition he has received in the industry, but in the growth of passenger rail across the nation."

"I am confident that the top-notch staff I have assembled will continue to strengthen the Association's ability to press for the improvement and growth

*Contd on pg 3 ... see Capon*

Capon... Continued from pg 2

of our nation's passenger train network and to grow membership," said Capon. "I will be working closely with Acting President Larry Scott, and I'm pleased to be able to assist Larry in ensuring the smoothest possible transition in leadership and the continued growth of NARP."

For his longstanding support of trains, Capon has been recognized with the Robert K. Pattison Partnership Award from the Intermodal Passenger Institute in 2000, and the W. Graham Claytor Jr. Award for Distinguished Service to Passenger Transportation from Railway Age Magazine in 2007. In addition, Capon received NARP's own Golden Spike Award in 1985.

NARP is the only national organization in the U.S. speaking for the users of passenger trains and rail

transit. NARP has worked since 1967 to expand the quality and quantity of passenger rail in the U.S. Their mission is to work towards a modern, customer-focused national passenger train network that provides a travel choice Americans want. The work is supported by over 22,000 individual members. **Join NARP today!**

**NARPrail.org**

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**

**AORTA** needs your help. Many of the email addresses we have on file are out-of-date. In order to help ensure we have your correct email address, please send an email to OregonRail@aol.com and include "My Email Address" in the subject line. In the text, please include your name, and if you wish, any comments or suggestions to **AORTA**.

Eastern Oregon Report contd from pg 1

NARP regional Representatives-at-Large positions to be decided at the NARP convention in Silver Spring, Maryland, April 28 - 30. As such, Dr. Arnold would represent the Eastern Oregon and Idaho region. Arnold has also represented **AORTA** as a contributing member of the Oregon Department of Transportation State Rail Plan Committee and continues efforts to bring passenger rail service back through Eastern Oregon.

**Visit the  
Oregon Rail Heritage Center  
Now Open!**

**Thu-Fri-Sat-Sun, 1-5 pm**  
2250 SE Water Avenue  
Portland, Oregon  
Near OMSI

**Coast Starlight Bus Connector for Rogue Valley**

2-16-14 dlm

Miles	Northbound			Destination	Miles	Southbound		
	morning	mid-day	evening			READ UP morning	READ UP mid-day	READ UP evening
0	8:00 am	11:25 am	6:30 pm	Ashland	186	1:10 pm	5:55 pm	10:20 pm
14	8:30 am	11:45 am	6:50 pm	Medford	172	12:50 pm	5:35 pm	9:50 pm
44	9:20 am	12:30 pm	7:40 pm	Grants Pass	142	12:05 pm	4:50 pm	9:00 pm
114	11:00 am	2:10 pm	9:20 pm	Roseburg	72	10:25 am	3:10 pm	7:20 pm
164	12 pm	3:20 pm	10:30 pm	Cottage Grove	22	9:15 am	2:00 pm	6:10 pm
186	12:30 pm	3:50 pm	10:50 pm	Eugene	0	8:45 am	1:30 pm	5:40 pm
	Delivers passengers to 12:36pm N-bound Coast Starlight	Delivers passengers to 5:10 pm S-bound Coast Starlight or 4 pm N-bound #508	No rail connection			Picks up passengers from 8:35 am #503 <b>NOTE</b> Both bus and train should be at least one hour later	Picks up passengers from 12:36 pm N-bound Coast Starlight	Picks up passengers from 5:10 pm S-bound Coast Starlight

**Mileage**

From	To	Mileage	Travel Time (45 mph)
Eugene	Cottage Grove	21.2 mi	28.3 min
Cottage Grove	Roseburg	50.1 mi	66.8 min
Roseburg	Grants Pass	69.0 mi	92 min
Grants Pass	Medford	29.4 mi	39.2 min
Medford	Ashland	13.2 mi	17.6 min
Ashland	Redding, CA	135 mi	180 min

Oregon's beautiful Rogue Valley needs to be connected to our intercity rail system. Ideally that connection would be a rail connection. But because significant and very expensive rail line improvements are needed before implementing passenger service, an interim solution must be implemented. This draft schedule could be an important first step in moving toward that vision. If you have suggestions, please send them to OregonRail@aol.com.

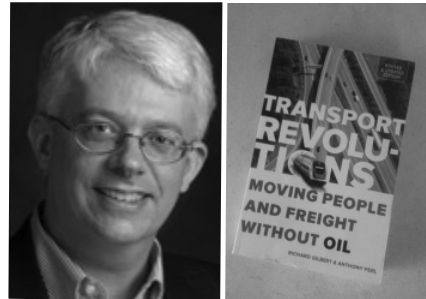
This is a rough draft and does not take into consideration specific traffic issues related to local bus stops.

You are invited to join us on April 5 to investigate ...

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**Anthony Perl**  
Director of Urban Studies Program  
Simon Fraser University, British Columbia

Dr. Perl also served at City University of New York, University of Calgary, and Université Lumière in Lyon, France. He has authored or co-authored four books, most recently *Transport Revolutions: Moving People and Freight Without Oil* (2008). Anthony's research crosses disciplinary and national boundaries, exploring policy decisions affecting transportation and the environment. He is published in scholarly journals such as *Energy Policy*, *Transportation Research*, *Transportation Quarterly*, *World Transport Policy and Practice*, and *Scientific American*, served on the Board of Directors for Via Rail Canada, and received the 2013 NARP Academic Award.

**Robert J. Stewart**  
Chair, National Association of Railroad Passengers

Previously served as Vice Chairman—Mission Accomplishment. He has been a member of the association since 1970, joining the board in 2002 and becoming vice-president (later vice-chairman) in 2004. "I am particularly interested in growing the association's membership, continuing to expand strong grass roots efforts across the country, developing future leaders for our association and getting a greater diversity of members on our council." A native of New Jersey, Stewart holds a bachelor of business administration from Baldwin-Wallace College (Berea, Ohio). He served in the U.S. Marine Corps 1962-68. Stewart resides in Franklin, Tennessee.



**Northwest Division, National Association of Railroad Passengers**  
(Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon & Washington)  
Cosponsored by **AORTA** (Association of Oregon Rail and Transit Advocates) and **AAWA** (All-Aboard Washington).



More information and registration online at **AORTA**rail.org

### **AORTA**

Association of Oregon Rail and Transit Advocates  
Portland Union Station, 800 NW 6th Avenue, Suite 253  
Portland, Oregon 97209-3715

Register On-Line or by mailing this form to **AORTA**, Post Office Box 2772, Portland, Oregon 97208-2772

Name(s)	Registration @ \$39	<input type="text"/>	Enclose check payable to " <b>AORTA</b> "
Address, City, State/Province, Zip Code	Patron @ \$59	<input type="text"/>	
Phone	Donation	<input type="text"/>	
Email (optional)	Total Enclosed	<input type="text"/>	
Includes Italian buffet luncheon with Antipasti Tray, Eggplant Parmesan, Chicken Cacciatore, Fussilli Pasta (seafood), Tiramisu			