



The Trainwire.



Railroads and Freight Congestion

by: Bruce Lutheran

The following article appeared in the Plain Dealer on Sunday, June 15, 2008 in the Business section. I know that this is a business

article more than a railroad article; however, it shows how much the railroads still matter. I found it very interesting to hear about how bad the current railroad situation

is in this country. The railroads again prove they are the cheapest way to ship cross country, yet they are being ignored by government. The prices we are seeing today are only going to

get worse as time goes on. The article points out how each method of shipping depends on and interacts with each other. Enjoy the read! ☘

Railroads face crisis from freight congestion.

Chicago – Railway executive Matthew Rose stood before fellow industry leaders, pointing to a map meant to tell the future of the U.S. rail freight network. It was drenched in red – east to west, north to south. **The** blotches illustrated areas where, by 2035, traffic jams could be so severe trains would grind to a halt for days with nowhere to go. “For those of you who’ve ever seen a good rail meltdown, this is what it looks like,” Rose, CEO of Burlington Northern Santa Fe Corp., said

as the crowded hall shifted uncomfortably in their chairs. “It’s literally chaos in the supply chain.” **While** the nation’s attention is focused on air travel congestion and the high cost of fuel for highway driving, a crisis is developing under the radar for another form of transportation – the freight trains used to deliver many of the goods that keep the U.S. economy humming. **The** nation’s 140,000 mile network of rails devoted to carrying everything from cars to grain by freight is already groaning under the strain of congestion, with trains forced to stand aside for hours because of one-track rail lines. **And** it’s probably going to get worse over the next two decades, according to an analysis of government and industry projections by the Associated Press and interviews with experts on rail freight. **The** damage to the U.S. economy could climb into the billions of dollars. Higher shipping

costs would raise prices for everything from lumber to grain. One analyst said the rail crunch could add thousands of dollars to the price of a car. “**It’s** not rocket science to see we have a calamity coming down the road,” said Paul Bingham, a transportation analyst at research firm Global Insight. **Congestion** around the country has remained chronic, even as the ailing economy has led to a 3 percent dip in freight train traffic in the first few months of this year compared with last year. A new U.S. Chamber of Commerce report also warns that demand for freight trains is expected to double over the next 25 years. **The** problem is that there’s no room. “**Even** if the estimates are half wrong, we can’t put even 25 percent more freight in the system right now without serious implications,” said Randy Mullett, an analyst for the nonprofit Transportation Research Board. **Already**, delays hamper the existing rail freight network. A lone train stopped in Chicago

Michael Tarm Associated Press

can force other trains to stop or slow as far away as Los Angeles or Baltimore. “**It’s** a ripple effect,” said Scott Haas, a vice president for United Parcel Service, which uses 3,000 freight cars every day, more than any other U.S. business. “Everything in my system backs up.” **Atlanta-based** UPS hasn’t determined the total cost of freight route congestion, but says that just five minutes of daily delays for each of its drivers amounts to \$100 million in company losses a year. **Other** modes of transport can’t take up the slack:

Trucking faces its own congestion problems, a shortage of drivers and high fuel prices.

Ships and barges can’t reach large parts of the country.

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UPCOMING DIVISION 5 MEETINGS

Division 5 monthly meetings normally start at 7:30 PM.

July **No Meeting**

August 1st

Location: Hambden Town Hall
Program: Interurban Slide Show
Bring & Brag: What you are working on.

September 5th

Location: Willoughby Town Hall
Program: Frontier Days
Bring & Brag: No Bring and Brag

October 3rd

Location: Hambden Town Hall
Program: (open)
Bring & Brag: (open)

The Western Reserve Model Railroad Museum

7471 Tyler Blvd. Unit "L"
Mentor, Ohio 44060

Summer Hours

Monday	9:00 AM - 3:00 PM
Wednesday	9:00 AM - 3:00 PM
Friday	9:00 AM - 3:00 PM
Tuesday	5:00 PM - 9:00 PM
Thursday	5:00 PM - 9:00 PM
Saturday	10:00 AM - 5:00 PM
Sunday	Noon - 5:00 PM

Contact Rick @ 440-251-0350 for more information.

www.wrmrrm.org

SCHEDULED EVENTS

Division 5 Family Picnic Hambden Township Park Pavillion #4	July 12th
NMRA National Convention Anaheim, California	July 13 - 19
No BOD Meeting	July 21
Willoughby Rail Days Downtown Willoughby	Aug. 9 - 10
Frontier Days Willoughby Town Hall Willoughby, Ohio	Sept. 4 - 7
Fall Open House WRMRRM Mentor, Ohio	Sept. 13
NCR Convention Toledo, Ohio	Sept. 19 - 21
Railroad Night Collinwood Masonic Lodge #582 Euclid, Ohio	Sept. 20
NMRA Promotional Day WRMRRM Mentor, Ohio	Nov. 1
Holiday Open House WRMRRM Mentor, Ohio	Dec. 6

Railroads and Freight Congestion cont.....

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Airplanes couldn't begin to carry the millions of tons of coal, waste, chemicals, grain and cars hauled by trains.

And hauling freight by rail remains far more fuel efficient than trucking.

Many politicians are joining rail executives in sounding the alarm. "The amount of money we're investing nationally is pathetic," Rep. Peter Defazio, Democrat of Oregon, said during a recent congressional hearing on congested

freight routes. "We're heading toward fourth-world infrastructure." Others suggest the railroads are being alarmist. Kenneth Kremar, another Global Insight analyst, said talk of a looming crisis serves industry interests as rail companies jockey for more money from Congress. He said investment in larger, high-tech train cars and computer systems that better pace trains should help avert logjams. "It's illogical to assume nothing will be done," He said. "Railroads have an

inherent interest in doing something. The market will respond. There's no reason to think they're headed for the abyss." Amtrak, which shares the rails with freight trains, is also feeling the pinch. Its long-distance trains were on time just 42 percent of the time last year, according to a report by the U.S. Department of Transportation's inspector general. The problem on the shared tracks has worsened in recent years as freight traffic has soared. Passenger trains move much faster than

most freight trains, and in many areas there is only a single track, forcing trains to pull over onto side tracks and wait while trains coming in the other direction pass. A solution won't come cheap. The chamber says expanding capacity on the more than 150-year-old U.S. rail system would cost \$148 billion over 30 years. Private rail companies would have to pay most of it, with federal and state tax dollars covering much of the rest. ❁



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Division 5 Meeting Minutes.

June 6th, 2008

Meeting called to order by new superintendent Al Cap

New Members/Guest Lawrence – models in HO

Trainwire – had everyone received and read it – any corrections

July Picnic – July 12th – Hambden Township Park - \$5.00 each/ \$10.00 max family - farthest Pavilion to the right when entering the park across from the Hambden Townhall – from 2PM – Dark; eating at 5:30 PM. Dinner will be catered – Hamburger, Brauts, Potato Salad, Baked Beans, Cole Slaw, Chips, Sauerkraut, Assorted Pies, Coffee; division will provide the pop & water. You must be signed up by July 5th with Dale Smith – 440-286-4932. Harley Smith's layout will be open after super prox. 6:30 PM.

NO MEETING – JULY

Region Freight Houses – still available – Al picked up those that were pre-ordered, he has an extra N-scale freight house.

Frank Russell – nothing new has been heard lately – hope you are doing well

Willoughby Heritage Days – the Pullman Car on Erie Street will be open - it is very interesting to see, next to the Willoughby Coal & Feed.

2011 MCR Convention has been awarded to Division 5

Looking for comments & suggestions

Dale has been in contact with the Geneva State Lodge

Some questions that were brought before the Region Board

Did it have to be in the Spring?

Does the awards have to be at dinner on Saturday or could they be on Sunday Morning Brunch?

The Convention Committee will be formed in about 6 months or so

Division 10 has been awarded the 2010 MCR Convention – to be held in Charleston WV

They are asking for opinions for the hotel choices

Holiday Inn - \$99.00/night

Embassy Suites - \$139.00/night Includes – breakfast and manager's reception for lunch

Was decided that if these are the only two choices then we would chose the Embassy Suites

Financials were read by Bonnie

2009 Railfest –

We will have Gym A available for setup – the college got the State to change the dates of the playoffs

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Division 5 Meeting Minutes cont.....

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Some ideas to be investigated

Will keep the food line the same as it was 2008

Will get a lists of jobs needing done and have people pre-signup

Will be having some of the extra rooms again

The Dance Room hall doors will be open (Room D)

Flyers will be ready and out by September – members are asked to help with handing them out

GATS

Other divisions have had problems previously with them holding their show at the same time

GATS offered \$2000 for us to change our dates - we are not going to change

IX Center – admission \$7-\$10/per person + parking fees

Promo Day

2008 will be November 1st at the Western Reserve Model Railroad Museum

2009 will be at Lakeland College

Having the Museum as part of the layout self-guided tour

Ideas are still being ironed out – doing a layout to be awarded to a visitor

Modules

Have not had any meetings lately

Track Plan is laid out and have started to work on the buildings and scenery

Researching the different buildings and what kits would work the best

Museum

Neil Zirker & wife came in on Tuesday – he is going to put an article about the museum in the Ohio Motorist Magazine and Plain Dealer.

Channel 8 came out on Thursday and did a 45-55 minutes video to be edited and be included in their newest program of Family Activities to do in the area

Going to talk to Kenny Krumpston or Robin Swaboda to have something done on their segments or show.

AP Program – Scale Rails – MMRR – had a feature article in the last issue.

Bring N Brag – Sugar Shack unplugged

Bill Berger

Don Bittner

Al Cap

Rob Bowers

Bill Brodie

Table for Sale – Don Thomas & Al Cap had items available

Food - Raffle

Program – Bull Session ☘

Division 5 BOD Meeting Notes

June 16th, 2008

Attendance: Al Cap, Dale Smith, Bonnie Lette, Wayne Lette, Bruce Lutheran, Lenny Kessler, Don Bittner, Harley Smith, and Matt Kross.

Discussed upcoming Division 5 meeting programs and Bring & Brag themes through the end of the year.

Month - Location	Meeting Program	Bring & Brag Theme
July – no meeting	None	No theme
August – Hambden	?	Open
September – Willoughby	HO module setup viewing	No Bring & Brag
October	?	?
November	Video	Your Best Model
December – no meeting	None	No Bring & Brag

Discussed possibility of holding Division 5 monthly meeting at some special location. Dale Smith will investigate some possibilities.

Reviewed upcoming calendar of events.

Division 5 Christmas party is scheduled in place of our regular monthly meeting on December 5th. Location to be determined.

2009 BUDGETS: Each area of Division 5 that wishes to spend money in 2009 needs to submit their budget request to the BOD in time for the September 2008 BOD meeting. The 2009 budget will then be put together, reviewed in October, and finalized at the November 2008 BOD meeting.

We would like to start contacting those Division 5 members that don't come to the meetings or activities and find out why. If it is an issue of transportation, we would like to work on getting people to volunteer to give them a ride.

The BOD discussed the need for an organized calling list in case we need to contact all members such as when we have to cancel a meeting due to the weather.

The Division 5 picnic is set for Saturday, July 12th. We don't have very many people signed-up so far. Members have until July 5th to contact Dale Smith to sign-up.

Division 5's 50th anniversary will be in 2011. We should start thinking about ways to celebrate and any special things we want to do. Division 5 will be hosting the Mid Central Region convention that year.

The BOD is considering holding a convention naming contest. Details still need to be worked out.

Discussed ideas for 2009 Promo Day at Lakeland Community College. One of the ideas that we have been seriously considering is to have live demonstrations that show the different stages of building a small layout. At the end of the day, we will give the completed layout away as a door prize.

Talked about the need to do a better job of welcoming guests, new members, and long-time members that do not attend very often.

Emphasized the need for a New Member Packet to send to new Division 5 members that provides information about the Division, the benefits we offer our members, membership roster, etc. Matt Kross to work on putting this together.

There will not be a Division 5 BOD meeting in July.

Next Div 5 BOD meeting: Monday, August 18, 2008, 7:30 pm at Hambden Town Hall. ☘

Team Track**www.MCR5.org**

Division 5 Officers

(Terms expire June 2010)

Superintendent	Al Cap	440-729-1458	Super@MCR5.org
Asst. Superintendent	Dale Smith	440-286-4932	AstSuper@MCR5.org
Treasurer	Bonnie Lette	440-298-3075	Treasurer@MCR5.org

Division 5 Trustees: (Terms expire June 2010)

Mike Buehner	440-428-0137	Bruce Lutheran	440-257-2105
Wayne Lette	440-298-3075	Don Bittner	440-257-7555

Division 5 Board of Directors: BOD@MCR5.org**Division 5 Appointed Positions:** (Terms expire June 2010)

Clerk	Matt Kross	440-729-3045	Clerk@MCR5.org
Railfest Chairman	Rob Bowers Jr.	440-942-3039	Railfest@MCR5.org
Promo Day Coordinator	Bruce Lutheran	440-257-2105	PromoDay@MCR5.org
Achievement Program	Bill Brodie	216-780-0938	AP@MCR5.org
Contests	Bill Brodie	216-780-0938	Contest@MCR5.org
Auditors	Mike Schaab Matt Kross	440-255-2530 440-729-3045	Audit@MCR5.org
HO Module Coordinator	Rick Montgomery	440-251-0350	ModuleCoordinator@MCR5.org
Trainwire Editor	Lenny Kessler	440-478-6661	Trianwire@MCR5.org
Refreshments	Ron Biddell	440-352-3730	Refreshments@MCR5.org
Membership Roster	Matt Kross	440-729-3045	Membership@MCR5.org
Division Tripmaster	(open)		Tripmaster@MCR5.org
Webmaster	Wayne Lette	440-298-3075	Webmaster@MCR5.org
Company Store	Al Cap	440-729-1458	CompanyStore@MCR5.org

July Division 5 Meeting

2008

There will be no meeting in July.

The next meeting will be in Hambden on August 1st, 2008.

Super's Message by: Al Cap

I was pleasantly surprised with the participation level at the June meeting. For a "bull session" we had some good ideas put forth. Now we have to pursue the feasibility of the ideas. For those who could not attend, most of the suggestions were on how to attract and retain members. If you have some ideas, let someone on the Board know what they are.

Reminder, if you are going to attend the picnic July 12th, call Dale Smith by the 5th of July. We need a head count for the food.

We need a name for the 2011 convention we are hosting. That year will be

the Division's 50th anniversary. It has been suggested we make the naming a contest. Start thinking about it.

If you wish to attend the meetings, but are unable to get there yourself, we want to know. We will try to arrange a ride for you. We are all getting older and if you don't feel comfortable driving at night, call us. Car pooling is not a bad idea given gas prices.

Another reminder, if you have a few items you want to sell and don't want to wait for Railfest, you can bring them to the monthly meetings. Just remember if it doesn't sell **you** have to take it home.

Have a happy and safe 4th.

**August Trainwire
Deadline July 20th.**

The Trainwire Newsletter

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The Western Reserve Division 5



www.mcr5.org

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