

ATLANTIC NORTHEAST RAILS & PORTS

Helping to move rail and port traffic through New England, the Maritimes, & eastern Québec.
A weekly trade newsletter.

operating railroads + ports, intermodal facilities, and government environment

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Issue 06#08B 12 September 2006

*Article unchanged from e-bulletin.

REGIONAL ISSUES

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ST: Resisting discovery in SLC car hire case. *Box on 727s.*

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CONNECTICUT

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MAINE

Commuter: Baldacci asked NNEPRA to look at future passenger rail.*

SLR: Nappi leaving East Deering.

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PW: Coastal will resume rail in Providence soon.*

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NBSR/MMA: End of the intermodal service.*

Halifax: Halterm gets a new carrier.*

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RAIL SHIPPERS/RECEIVERS

A cross-reference to companies mentioned here.

PEOPLE, POSITIONS, EVENTS

People: Chalita Belfield, Michael Gleba.

EDITORIAL

Maine needs leadership, not steering committees.*

FROM THE PUBLISHER

A note on Sears Island

Readers may assume, based on my editorial, that I believe a container port at Sears Island could succeed. I do not; any effort by Maine to take market share from existing container terminals will generate a vigorous competitive response. I do believe, however, that Maine must make that effort—I have in the past been wrong. (That will come as no shock.)

- Chop Hardenbergh

Next issue: 22 September.

Common abbreviations: **BCLR** - Bay Colony RR, **BML** - Belfast & Moosehead Lake RR, **CBNS** - Cape Breton and Central Nova Scotia Ry, **CCCR** - Cape Cod Central RR, **CCRR** - Claremont Concord RR, **CFQ** - *chemins de fer Québec* System, **CMAQ** - congestion-mitigation or air quality (money from the US federal government for these purposes), **CN** - Canadian National Ry, **ConnDOT** - Connecticut Department of Transportation, **CPR** - Canadian Pacific Ry, **CSO** - Connecticut Southern RR, **CSRX** - Conway Scenic RR, **EOT** - Mass. Exec. Office of Transportation, **GWI** - Genesee & Wyoming Inc, **FHWA** - Federal Highway Admin., **FRA** - Federal Rail Admin., **FRTC** - Fore River Transportation Co., **FTA** - Federal Transit Admin., **Guilford (GRS)** - Guilford Rail System, formerly name for Pan Am Railway, see ST, **HRRC** - Housatonic RR, **MERR** - Maine Eastern RR, **MBCR** - Mass. Bay Commuter RR, **MBRX** - Milford-Bennington RR, **MBTA** - Mass. Bay Transportation Authority, **MCER** - Mass. Central RR, **MDOT** - Maine Department of Transportation, **MERR** - Maine Eastern RR, **MMA** - Montréal, Maine and Atlantic Ry, **MPO** - Metropolitan Planning Organization, **MTQ** - Québec Ministry of Transport, **NAUG** - Naugatuck RR, **NBDOT** - New Brunswick Department of Transportation, **NBSR** - New Brunswick Southern Ry, **NECR** - New England Central RR, **NEGS** - New England Southern RR, **NHCR** - New Hampshire Central RR, **NHDOT** - NH Department of Transportation, **NHN** - New Hampshire Northcoast RR, **NNEPRA** - Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority, **NSDOT** - Nova Scotia Department of Transportation, **Pan Am** - new name for GRS, **PVRR** - Pioneer Valley RR, **PW** - Providence & Worcester RR, **QCR** - Quebec Central Ry, **RIDOT** - Rhode Island Department of Transportation, **Seaview** - Seaview Transportation Company, **SLQ** - St. Lawrence & Atlantic Ry (Québec), **SLR** - St. Lawrence & Atlantic RR, **ST** - Springfield Terminal Ry (leases three parts of Pan Am Systems (Maine Central RR, Portland Terminal RR, Boston & Maine), **TIRR** - Turner's Island LLC, **TEU** - twenty-foot equivalent unit (measure of container traffic, equal to a 20x8x8 foot box), **VAOT** - Vermont Agency of Transportation, **VRS** - Vermont Rail System (Green Mt. RR Company **GMRC** + Vermont Ry **VTR** + Clarendon & Pittsford RR **CLP** + Washington County RR **WACR**), **WHRC** - Windsor and Hantsport Ry.

REGIONAL ISSUES

ST: GREENBRIER CAR HIRE CASE

15 August, Boston. *ST OPPOSES ATTACHMENT OF REAL ESTATE AS DAMAGING TO ITS CREDIT*, in the lawsuit where Greenbrier is seeking \$360,000 in outstanding car hire [see 06#02B]. Greenbrier has filed a motion to attach ST's property in Chicopee, Massachusetts, and in any other location in the state. ST opposes the motion first, as a remedy valid in state court but not here because of federal pre-emption; and second, because ST and its affiliates have significant immobile property sufficient to satisfy a judgement should ST lose. In the third reason for opposition, ST stated:

‘An attachment would irreparably harm Defendant’s [ST’s] financial condition and severely hinder its ability to conduct business. An attachment could prevent the Defendant, after judgement, from paying the Plaintiff in full. If the Attachment is denied, then the Defendant could pay the Plaintiff back over an extended period.

‘Issuance of an attachment could make Defendant’s lenders feel insecure and potentially call in any outstanding loans, or create a situation in which the opportunity for any future loans may be impaired.’

Greenbrier has asked permission to file a reply brief. {US District Court Boston website, Docket No. 06-10207}

ST: SLC CAR HIRE CASE

31 August, Boston. *ST IS RESISTING DISCOVERY OF ITS FINANCIAL CONDITION* by San Luis Central Railway. The latter contends that ST is deliberately not paying car hire, possibly because it is funnelling funds to Pan Am [see 06#07A, 06#07B]. SLC is seeking a court order requiring ST to pay timely.

Documents requested

SLC has requested all documents relating to car hire since 2003; all documents concerning the payment or non-payment of obligations by ST since 2003, including ‘policies or procedures of Springfield Terminal concerning the payment or non-payment of obligations’; all documents concerning financial reporting of ST since 2003; all documents concerning loans or advances between ST and its affiliates, or ST and any non-affiliate.

SELLING FIVE 727s

According to a Pan Am website, the company is selling five 727s. {[www.w.panam-services.com](http://www.panam-services.com)} ST is leasing three planes to Pan Am [see 06#07B]. Therefore, Pan Am clearly has more than the ST planes. {editor}

Interrogatories posed

SLC asked ST to supply the names of those making car hire decisions, and those making decisions on whether to pay timely. [SLC might then depose those persons. *Editor*]

Motion to compel

Under Rule 33 of the Rules of Civil Procedure, ST is required either to answer the interrogatories and document requests, or file objections thereto. Since SLC served the discovery in May, ST has missed that deadline.

SLC has requested the court to compel ST to provide the discovery. ST has opposed discovery to this point, calling it ‘premature’. A status conference on the case is scheduled for 11 September. [Perhaps the two sides will resolve this there—*editor*]. {US District Court Boston website, Docket No. 06-10554}

MMA: A VIEW OF 2006

25 August, Northern Maine Junction. *MMA HAS NOT HAD A GOOD YEAR* thus far, said Bob Grindrod, president, but “we will make it through.” The railroad has lost particular customers: Georgia-Pacific, for which MMA moved chips, and Tafisa, which made up about 10% of its business. [See 06#05A - *Regional*. Both customers will most probably return. *Editor*]

“From a railroad perspective, Maine is not experiencing the great boom in traffic found in the rest of the country.”

Markets

The lumber market has not been robust [see box]. Paper ‘overall is somewhat behind last year, directory paper at East Millinocket is doing well.’ Some mills have had production problems, putting them behind schedule to meet a press date, meaning the paper has to be trucked, at higher extra cost to the mill.

Track upgrade in Quebec

MMA had planned for a track upgrade in 2006, using funds from the federal-provincial fund. However, that funding has to yet emerge due to political problems, said Grindrod. Without that money, and the need to husband its own funds due to lower revenues, work on the track was slowed.

In May, Transport Canada forbade passenger train operation above 10 miles per hour in May [see 06#05A]. MMA got work underway in July, and continued in August, east of Lennoxville. MMA has welded rail in place from just west of Greenville to Megantic, which was laid by CP a number of years ago.

‘MMA has removed, with its own forces, fifteen miles of the slow order as of late July. MMA forces and contractor Rail Bonaventure [with offices in Lachine (part of greater Montreal) and Varennes, Quebec on the CN line Montreal-Sorel] started work in August to finish the removal of 44 miles of the remaining slow order, basically between Sherbrooke and Bromont. Based on the contractor's schedule, we expect the completion of the work by late September. When the work is completed the track will be restored to Class II.’

Trackwork Maine

MMA is also working on track in the vicinity of Jackman, using another combination of MMA forces and a different contractor.

Logistics Management Systems

This sister company of MMA has just finished a construction project, doubling the size of its Hermon, Maine facility [our *Directory* #800], adding 70,000SF. This gives the company, said Grindrod, “the opportunity to do more creative things; they have been space-constrained.”

For customers, LMS offers southbound trucking overnight to destinations in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut. {ANR&P discussion}

Cooperating with NBSR

Ian Simpson, NBSR general manager, said that “more chips and logs are moving by rail, from northern Maine and northern New Brunswick into Saint John. Working with our partners [at MMA] we are finding a way to put service in place in the forest industry, to save money.” For the forest products companies, rail “keeps their costs in line” so they do not experience the huge leaps in diesel fuel costs. {e-mail to ANR&P 30.Aug.06}

A SHRINKING LUMBER MARKET

As is often the case, Roy Blanchard provides a continental perspective on a local problem. In this case, he points out that MMA is not alone with a soft lumber market. The US national new-housing market has softened. ‘The message to shortlines is that to the extent your base traffic business is housing related – lumber, wallboard, cement, bricks, etc. – you’d better tighten your belt (WIR 8/25/2006). RMI’s RailConnect Index for Week 31 through August 5 (attached) showed lumber down 5% for the week and 11% YTD. The AAR for Week 31 (also attached) reported lumber down 3% for the week and 3% YTD, which indicates that percentage-wise shortlines are bearing the brunt of the building products shortfall.’ {*Week in Review* 1.Sept.06}

CSXT: SALE OF MASSENA LINE

7 September, Chicago. **CSXT HAS DEFERRED MAKING ANY DECISIONS ON THE SYRACUSE-MONTREAL LINE**, according to Ed Burkhardt of Rail World. Bids were due in May [see 06#05A]; it is known that of the seven railroads which looked at the property, at least Finger Lakes and Burkhardt did submit bids. {e-mail to ANR&P} GWI would not comment when asked if it had bid. {ANR&P discussion 14.July.06}

CONNECTICUT**NEW HAVEN: RAIL TO THE PORT**

3 August. **COMMISSIONERS OF THE PORT AUTHORITY DISCUSSED THE PROGRESS OF RAIL RESTORATION** at their meeting this day. Commissioner Richard Miller (also city engineer) said that he would be talking to Judy Gott at the South Central Regional Council of Governments about seeking grant funds to bring more rail line directly to the port. Jan

Okolowicz from Parsons Brinckerhoff, which is preparing a land use plan, asked why construction of the Waterfront Street rail line had stopped [see 06#02B] and Commissioner Miller said that it will resume once the New Haven Terminal warehouse has been demolished.

Land use plan

Okolowicz said that some interviews remain to be done and that he expected to produce a draft document by the end of August. Chair John Russo suggested that Okolowicz meet with North Yard operators as well. Commissioner Richard Miller suggested that north side rail service be considered. Okolowicz said that a spur located in the North Yard could be reactivated. The importance of rail service to the port was emphasized.

Chair Russo asked what the conversations with truckers serving the port district indicated. Okolowicz responded that he learned from them that they often sit in their trucks for hours waiting for their turn to enter the terminals. He suggested that it would be better to have them wait in a holding area than along the street as they do now. {minutes from Port Authority}

The next meeting, 7 September, will consider the Parsons Brinckerhoff Land Use Plan; the ConnDOT proposed additional land acquisition in the port district; and a Waterfront Street rail update. {minutes of meeting from Port Authority}

CONNDOT: New London to Worcester?

25 August. **GOVERNOR JODI RELL SIGNED THE ROADMAP FOR CONNECTICUT'S ECONOMIC FUTURE**, HB 5844, essentially a transportation bond bill. As far as rail, virtually all the language addressed passenger rail.

Commuter service between New London and Worcester?

'Sec. 25. (Effective July 1, 2006) The Department of Transportation shall develop an assessment and plan for the implementation of commuter rail service between New London and Worcester, Massachusetts. Such study shall include, but need not be limited to, (1) operating schedules and costs, (2) ridership, (3) fare structure, (4) subsidies, (5) connections to other public transportation services, (6) required facilities and equipment, including trackage, sidings, signalization, stations and parking, (7) trackage rights issues and costs, if any, (8) coordination with the commonwealth of Massachusetts and any authorities, entities or local governments of the commonwealth of Massachusetts, and (9) the potential economic and environmental impact of such service. Not later than January 1, 2008, the department shall submit its findings and recommendations, pursuant to section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the Governor and the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to transportation; finance, revenue and bonding; planning and development and the budgets of state agencies.' {text from Connecticut General Assembly website}

MAINE

EXPAND PASSENGER RAIL?

1 September, Augusta. **GOVERNOR JOHN BALDACCI ASKED NNEPRA TO LOOK AT FUTURE PASSENGER RAIL** in an executive order issued this day. Text excerpts:

....
WHEREAS, rail lines exist in the State of Maine that may be used for purposes of passenger rail transportation that could connect the municipalities of Lewiston, Auburn, Brunswick, Portland and other municipalities to each other and points south....

.....
NOW THEREFORE, I John E. Baldacci, Governor of the State of Maine, in consideration of all of the above, do hereby order:

....
 3. Planning new corridors and service. The Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority, in coordination with the Maine Department of Transportation, shall review matters relating to the development of passenger rail service north of Portland to Brunswick and Auburn, and shall report findings to the Governor by December 1, 2006. The review shall include outreach to interested parties including but not limited to freight rail advocates, passenger rail advocate, operators of existing and planned passenger feeder services, and involved municipalities. The report shall include, but not be limited to, review of:

- Rail alignment options for use in the short term and long term to extend passenger rail service north of Portland;
- Types of services – intercity, excursion, commuter, or other – for the short term and long term north of Portland;
- Types of equipment – Conventional equipment, Rail Diesel Cars (RDC), Light Rail or other;
- Reasonably foreseeable capital funding options;

- Compatibility of rail alignment options with existing and planned alignments for local transit or local light rail services, including expansions of the Maine Narrow Gauge Railroad service in Portland... {text of order}

MAINE: ROAD SALT BIDS

6 September, Augusta. **MDOT EXTENDED THE CONTRACTS OF MOST SUPPLIERS** for the 2006-2007 road salt season [see 05#08B for last year's bids]. The department asked each the price for the coming year. Only Harcros, in the Northern region, offered a price too high (a 30% increase to \$69.50); MDOT decided to rebid that region. [See table.]

In the bid, Harcros offered the lowest price (\$57.26/ton versus Cargill's \$57.73) but MDOT awarded the region to Cargill. The Harcros bid was marked 'not awarded due to poor past performance'. {e-mail to ANR&P from Kathy Paquette, senior procurement and contracting specialist, MDOT}

MAINE ROAD SALT CONTRACTS AUGUST 2006

Region	Location	Provider	Estimated tonnage	Price 2006*	Price 2005	Price 2004
Five/Northern	Aroostook	Cargill	15,040	57.73	53.44	42.52
Four/Eastern	Washington + Bangor	Cargill	28,270	53.39	49.90	42.48
Three/Western	Mountains	ISCO	19,250	54.70	52.39	48.98
Two/Mid-Coast	August-Winterport	ISCO	24,000	52.12	49.92	46.86
One/Southern	Lewiston-Kittery	Morton	15,020	50.12	45.77	42.31
Total (tonnage)			101,580			111,570
Maine Turnpike	York	Granite State#	total turnpike usage 17,823 in 05-06	48.34	44.13	39.04
Maine Turnpike	West Gardiner	ISCO#		51.68	49.89	44.29
GPCOG**	Portland et al	ISCO	~73,000	44.80	44.80	43.35

#ISCO (International Salt Company) won the bids for six of the seven Turnpike locations. Only the most southern and most northern are shown. Granite State bid \$8/ton above ISCO at West Gardiner. Harcros also bid a straight \$64/ton for all locations.

*Only the Northern region was bid—see article—the remainder were contract extensions based on reasonable increases.

{Sources for MDOT: e-mail from Kathy Paquette, bids awarded 22 June. Turnpike, e-mail from Susan Danforth, awarded 8 September. GPCOG award 29 June, discussion with Carol MacKenzie 6.Sep.05}

Pile locations and salt origins

Granite State: Portsmouth. Salt sourced worldwide.

Harcros: Portland, Pugwash, Searsport. Salt from Pugwash.

ISCO: Portland, Searsport, Portsmouth. Salt from Chile.

Morton: South Portland, Newington. Salt from Pugwash and Bahamas.

SLR: SHIPPER OUT OF PORTLAND

5 September, Gorham. **NAPPI DISTRIBUTORS WILL MOVE FROM PORTLAND TO GORHAM**, following the approval by the Gorham Town Council of a tax increment financing district to set aside up to \$72,000 in annual property taxes to cover infrastructure improvements. {Justin Ellis in *Portland Press Herald* 6.Sep.06}

Rail impact to SLR Portland traffic

Nappi [our *Directory* #903] now brings in beverages by rail, using 30-40 carloads a year, "and this year it's even smaller," said an official there on 6 September. The Gorham facility is not on rail, and will do no transloading. {ANR&P discussion}

6.Sep.06}

Note: In Portland, that will leave Burnham and Morrill [#901] and McQuesten [#902] as customers, neither of which receives many carloads, probably under 100/year for each. The SLR has ingeniously created customers moving outbound fuel oil, and inbound pulp, but those moves did not last. One wonders how long the railroad can continue to operate a 25-mile+ line from Danville Junction to East Deering. The rule of thumb would require 100 carloads per year per mile, or 2500 carloads for that stretch.

No wonder SLR and MDOT are discussing a sale! [See 06#07B.] {editor}

ST: QUARRY LOSES TAX BREAK

30 August, Embden. ***THE TOWN RESCINDED ITS DECISION TO GIVE THE QUARRY PINE TREE ZONE STATUS***, about two weeks ago. The status, which accords tax benefits, was granted in 200 [see 05#04B]. First Selectman B. Wendell Routon said on 30 August that the Board of Selectmen voted to rescind that status, based on prevailing concerns of town residents [see 06#07A].

The railroad wants to use the gravel for ballast, but will not immediately re-open the rail line as far as the quarry [see 06#06A].

Board of Environmental Protection jurisdiction?

In a letter to residents, the commissioner of the Department of Environmental Protection, David P. Littell, advised them he recommended that the Board of Environmental Protection assume jurisdiction over Maine Central Railroad's application for a variance at its rock-mining operation on Route 16. The board will consider the jurisdiction issue 7 September. {*Central Maine Morning Sentinel* 31.Aug.2006}

SEARSPORT: SEARS ISLAND

August. ***SOME STAKEHOLDERS WANT TO PRESERVE THE OPTION FOR A CONTAINER TERMINAL*** on Sears Island.

Background

In 1996, MDOT had a project underway to build new terminals on Sears Island, until then an undeveloped island just off the Searsport shore in Penobscot Bay. The EPA was resisting complete development without commensurate mitigation, but MDOT was having difficulty finding mitigation sites. The state considered a price tag of \$60 million the upper limit for the project; mitigation had pushed the total to \$70 million.

Environmental opposition and the rising price tag convinced then-MDOT Commissioner John Melrose and then-Governor Angus King to halt the project on 28 February 1996, and to instead seek to renovate Mack Point [see 7 March 1996 issue], which took seven years, with much figurative backing and filling [see 03#07A].

Work done on Sears Island before the halt included building a causeway to the island and a road to the shore, dredging off the west side for a ship berth 40 feet deep, and construction of a preliminary pier [see map]

In 2005, Governor John Baldacci placed the fate of Sears Island, owned by the state, into the hands of a steering committee composed of representatives of environmental organizations, transportation-related interests, the Town of Searsport, and other entities; industry has no representatives. The steering committee held its first meeting 30 May 2006. A divide has emerged between those who want to maintain the option of marine transportation use for some of the island, and those who want to put the island off-limits forever. [The web has further information on the Sears Island Planning Initiative—google it. *Editor*]

The viability of a container terminal on the island depends on the growth of global trade, the ability of other ports such as Boston, Saint John, and Halifax to accommodate the increase in containers, the amount of traffic which could be generated for such a terminal either in the region or in mid-America, and other factors.

The steering committee meets again 12 September. MDOT has just awarded a contract to study the viability of Maine ports [see above].

Maine Port Authority

Brian Nutter, executive director of the Maine Port Authority (formerly director of the Eastport Port Authority and in 1996 MDOT's coordinator for Sears Island), sees the opportunity for a large container terminal somewhere in Maine. He argues that to accommodate increasing container traffic, a terminal needs at least 200 acres of back land, “which is not currently

available in Halifax, Boston, or Saint John.” Good rail connections to the heartland of the country are also important.

Pointing to the Port of New York and New Jersey, Nutter reported that it would need to increase productivity by 50% and add another 400 acres of land to accommodate the anticipated growth in the next 20 years. “Where do you find 400 acres of land in New York harbor?”

He saw little likelihood that Saint John could accommodate that much growth, due to its facilities, its connections, and its operation [see *Maritimes*].

Nutter hopes that the port strategy study undertaken by MDOT [see below] will help clarify if, where, and how the state could accommodate this growth in Maine. A container terminal can bring enormous benefits. As an example, Nutter listed a new terminal in Jacksonville with 200 acres, which is capable of handling 600,000 TEUs/year, creating over 1,000 jobs, and \$600 million in economic impact.

“Carriers and stevedores are looking around,” Nutter noted, “but we have not been approached as yet.” {ANR&P discussion 23.Aug.2006}

Montreal, Maine, and Atlantic

Bob Grindrod, MMA president, said in a discussion: “The best thing to do is absolutely nothing.” No one is planning an industrial site such as an oil refinery. If a need arises to use the island, “deal with it then. The option has to remain.”

If the need for a container terminal arose, “if we look at the topography, and consider what we need to support a facility, in my opinion, there is not an appropriate location at Mack Point.”

What a facility needs. “The way I envision it,” continued Grindrod, a container vessel will lie alongside a bulkhead wharf [a ‘marginal wharf’ in marine parlance-*editor*]. The terminal needs a crane on the wharf to load and unload containers, some direct to rail, and some to a laydown area. “When I look around at Mack Point, I see no suitable place to build that bulkhead operation.” Grindrod would also like a track .75 mile or longer.

Long Cove

Grindrod pointed out that the existing piers do not offer a marginal wharf [see map]. At the north-south shoreline in Long Cove, one could build a marginal pier, but first, the cove would need massive dredging as the area has less than two feet at mean low water. Second, not enough space exists between the tracks and the shore for laydown, so some filling of intertidal area would be required. Third, the tracks extend only 1500 feet or so.

South shore. The east-west (or south) shore of Mack Point presents a second possibility for a marginal wharf. However, Grindrod said ledges there require blasting to permit access by ships, and the two warehouses already there would have to move to another location. He does not want to expand into a remote location for laydown, because that would add costs for security and for transportation. Nor does the south shore have the long track he seeks.

Sears Island. While most discussions allocate the northwest quadrant of the island, if anything, to commercial activity, Grindrod would prefer a strip along the west side of the island. Compared to the dredging needed for a Mack Point terminal, the environment would suffer much less, as significant dredging has already occurred. A terminal would need a track across the causeway, and a marginal wharf; the ships would probably require 1000 feet. The rest of the island would be left.

Sears Island compared to other ports. Grindrod argued that Halifax is remote, and could suffer from CN vicissitudes: “sometimes it feels like going there, and sometimes it does not.” Searsport is “much less congested...much less expensive” and “offers to the entire state, and more, an import-export opportunity.”

Asked about the opportunity to serve mid-America, he noted that “if there is enough volume to run a dedicated train,” MMA plus CPR could run with speed comparable to CN from Halifax to Chicago. “That’s easy.” More difficult: “Finding a carrier or customer to initiate something like this.” It would “require a public/private partnership to get the facility in place.” {ANR&P discussion 25.Aug.2006}

Eastern Maine Development Corporation

Jonathan Daniels, president of EMDC, sits on the steering committee for the future of Sears Island, and formerly served as director of the Eastport Port Authority. He echoed Nutter and Grindrod, that no decision should be made now about the future of Sears Island. But he envisions only a feeder service: “You’re not going to see post-Panamax container vessels in Searsport and Maine.” With the larger vessels, the carriers are moving to hub operations, so “Maine ports can feed into those operations.”

Daniels argued that moving the breakbulk operation off the dry cargo pier and over to the container operation on Sears Island could help both bulk and break-bulk. Both breakbulk and container work best with a continuous flow of truck traffic in a circular fashion, something not possible on Mack Point’s finger pier. With the breakbulk off the dry cargo pier, workers could transform it into a more efficient dry bulk-only pier

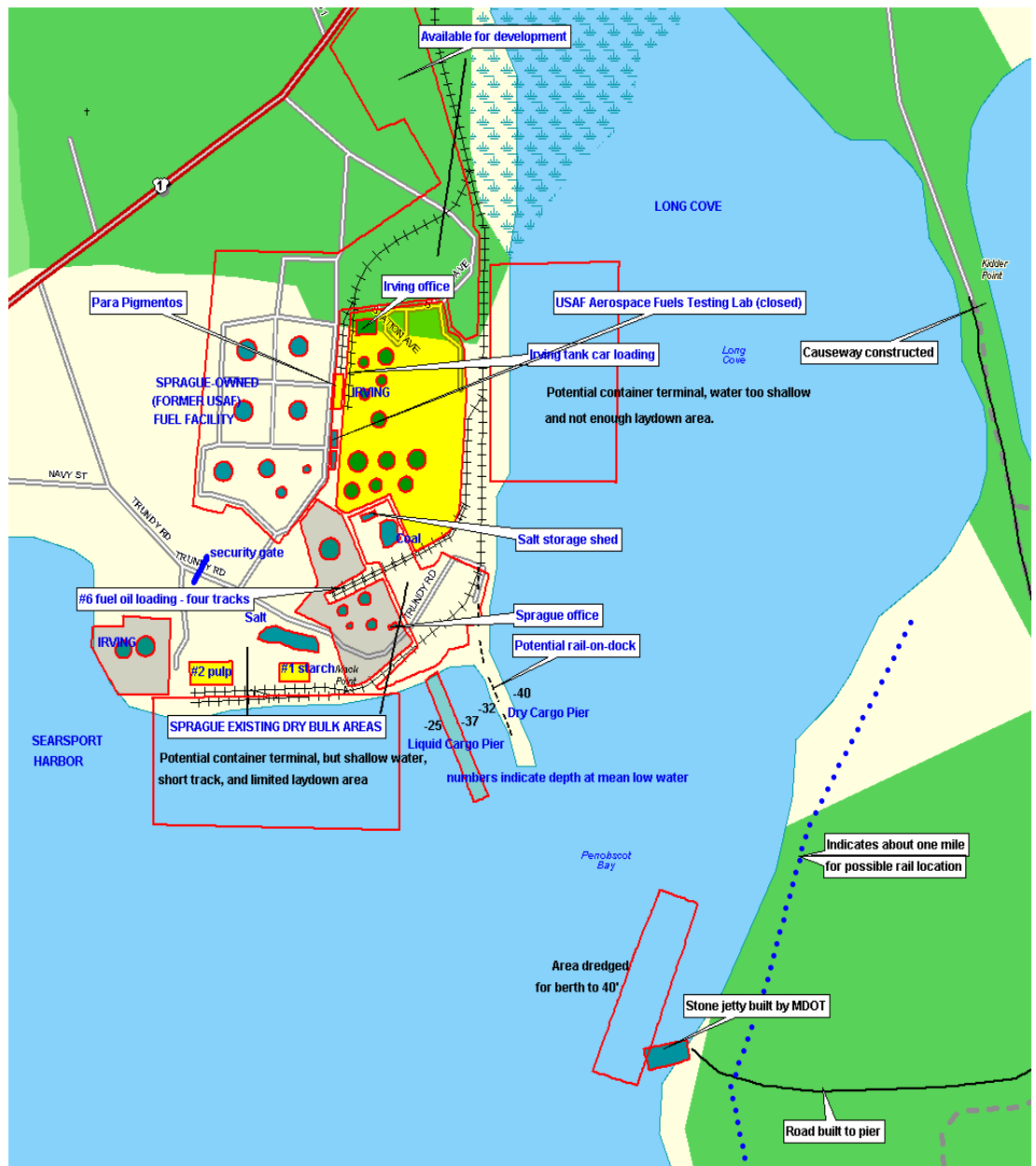
Daniels views the Sears Island decision as part of an overall policy on transportation infrastructure, without which Maine continues to lose its large-scale manufacturing. The state has already lost the opportunity to stop the loss: “Maine does not have the level of service to meet the needs of large-scale projects” in all modes: highway, rail, port, and air.

“We have only one Sears Island” which could supply some needed infrastructure. “Let’s not make any rash decisions” about its future. {ANR&P discussion 23.Aug.2006}

John Melrose

The commissioner of transportation under Governor Angus King (1996-2002), Melrose sits on the Sears Island steering committee. Although he has worked with and for many of the stakeholders, he is representing only himself: “There’s nobody paying me to be involved in this. I’m interested in the economic development of the state. This has been a part of my life, part of my career.”

His consulting firm, Maine Tomorrow, was formed in 1981 and the firm was retained by the Maine Development Foundation to work for the MainePort Council. Later, Maine Tomorrow worked directly for the MainePort Council, a booster group for ports. The firm now works with the Maine Better Transportation Association.



SEARSPORT, MAINE, showing the existing Mack Point terminal area, and the proposed area for a container terminal on Sears Island.

Melrose agreed with the others: “What is the urgency” to decide the future now? He does not know of anyone proposing a container terminal for the island, or any other transportation or industrial use. But if a carrier or terminal operator came calling, the already-existing infrastructure at Sears Island could be used. “The operator would not wait for the years required to get permits” for a different area at, say, Mack Point. While the Sears Island area is already permitted for the causeway and dredging (now done), any Mack Point area, as Grindrod pointed out, would require significant additional dredging and filling and therefore additional permitting. A new wharf would also require additional permitting.

If Grindrod, Daniels, and Nutter are wrong, and Mack Point provides a less damaging alternative than Sears Island, Melrose argued that the environmental permitting process for the additional work at Sears Island will reveal that.

While some on the steering committee believe that both shipping on Penobscot Bay, and Maine’s paper industry, are declining, recent statistics show Searsport’s port growing from 328,000 dry cargo tons in 2002 to 559,000 dry cargo tons in 2005. And the paper industry production is higher than ever [see 06#04B]. “That’s a very impressive growth. This notion that there’s no growth in Searsport is preposterous.”

Responding to the arguments of environmentalists on the committee, Melrose said building a port facility on Sears Island can actually fight global warming. “If you’re looking to be a steward, if you will, of the Earth, then you ought to have a bias toward marine transportation.” The sea does not require maintenance. “You don’t have to pave it, salt it or plow it,” all of which uses energy and produce greenhouse gases. {ANR&P discussion 23.Aug.2006; Tom Groening in *Bangor Daily News* 19.Aug.2006}

Charles Roundy

Roundy served on relevant bodies in the 1970s and 1980s, including the MainePort Council (founding member), the Eastern Maine Development District (predecessor to the Eastern Maine Development Corporation—Roundy was president), and administrative director of the Maine Public Utilities Commission. He disagreed with Melrose, writing on 26 August: ‘Despite the effective environmental actions of the past quarter century, the primary reason that the port facility has not been developed on Sears Island is the basic economic fact that despite numerous studies, the case for an economic hinterland sufficient to support a modern cargo port has never been convincingly made. Tens of thousands of dollars have been spent on these studies, and the cases still have come up as “weak and sketchy” time after time.

‘With the decline of Maine’s pulp and paper industry since approximately 1985, the former “best case scenario” for sufficient economic activity in the proposed port’s interior hinterland is further weakened. Great Northern Paper Co. of Millinocket and East Millinocket, as it existed in the late 1960s and ‘70s, was always the primary potential customer for use of the propose major port. Since the decline of Great Northern Paper, which began in early 1986, the case for the port’s development has been severely undermined.....

‘After more than 30 years of intermittent thinking about Sears Island, after a 35-year career in economic development in Maine, and after several treks along Sears Island’s shore and to some extent into its interior, I have come to the conclusion that the best future for Sears Island and for Maine people is the contribution it makes as a precious, unique natural resource for environmental preservation and well-planned ecotourism.’ {*Bangor Daily News* 26.Aug.2006}

PORTS: STUDY AWARDED

31 August, Augusta. **MDOT HAS AWARDED A CONTRACT TO THE CORNELL GROUP** of Fairfax, Virginia, to create a strategic plan for the state’s three deepwater ports. Brian Nutter, executive director of the Maine Port Authority, said the department had selected Cornell over a month ago to negotiate with, and had this day sent notices to the other bidders that MDOT had reached agreement with Cornell on the financial terms.

Nutter expected the consultants to start work in mid-October, and complete the study within six months. {ANR&P discussion 31.Aug.2006}

More on Cornell Group

According to the Group’s submission to MDOT: ‘The Cornell Group Principals have been involved in over 60 successful port master plans, strategic plans and privatizations worldwide, representing investments from US\$50 million to US\$2.3 billion. Our clients include many of the largest, world-class ports in the world, government and commercial investment banks, or companies seeking to invest in or divest out of port assets.

‘More importantly, we have a long-standing relationship with Maine DOT, as we have ...advised MDOT and MPA on a number of port projects, including (a) economic impact and development of Searsport, (b) advisory services on Eastport, and (c) advisory services to MPA on institutional structure, organization and accounting structure....

‘Pamy Arora is executive vice-president at The Cornell Group with more than 25 years of experience in Port Master Planning and Long-Term Strategy, and will be the Project Director for this assignment. Earlier he was a Principal at Booz

Allen & Hamilton, Inc.....

‘Robert Goethe is a Director with The Cornell Group with more than 40 years of experience in the port, rail and general transportation industries, and currently manages the Firm’s port and transportation consulting business.... He will be Project Manager, and be responsible for evaluating and recommending the most efficient operating systems and strategies for the ports, as well as the rail and road transportation requirements of the port system, evaluating infrastructure investments, operations problems, and recommending solutions. He will be the principal client contact and responsible for Quality Control.’ {text from Cornell Group}

MASSACHUSETTS

EOT: BCLR AND MCER

7 September, Boston. **EOT WILL PUT OUT TWO PROPERTIES TO BID LATER THIS YEAR**, reported Chalita Belfield, manager of rail properties.

Cape lines/BCLR

As stated earlier [see 06#05A], EOT will put the Cape lines out to bid “later this year,” she said. [BCLR currently holds the operating rights. *Editor*]

Ware River Secondary/MCER

MCER owns some of its lines, and operates the majority (the ‘Ware River Secondary’) under an arrangement with EOT. In 2002, EOT put the Ware River out to bid, but failed to come to agreement with any bidder, leaving MCER in place. EOT continued to negotiate with MCER [see 02#08B, 02#11B, 03#01B, 03#07B, 03#10A] (which owns track in addition to the Ware River), with a month-to-month extension of the existing contract [see 06#03A], to reach agreement on operating rights [05#04A].

Belfield said an agreement is in place, and expires at the end of 2006. EOT will put the Ware River Secondary out to bid again, “later this year.”

Gary Hoepfner, MCER general manager, said on 12 September that he continues to “negotiate in good faith” with EOT, and that he has “not heard any official word about a bid.” He expects to continue operating the Ware River Secondary.

Where did the manager of rail go?

Belfield explained that Michael Gleba, who held the title ‘manager of rail’, had left as of 5 September to become the director of planning at the City of Somerville. EOT would not replace him; some of his duties, which included overseeing the manager of rail properties, fell to her, and others, particular policy issues, will be handled elsewhere. She has held the position of manager of rail properties for more than a year.

Catherine Lynds, the manager of operations for transportation said the position of manager of rail would remain, however.

State rail plan

In 2005, EOT asked Asset Performance Management to begin work on a database [see 05#04A] for the future plan. Earlier this year [see 06#03A] Gleba said that the state had not decided how to proceed. Lynds reiterated that EOT had “no definite time frame” to do the state rail plan. {ANR&P discussions 7 & 12.Sep.2006}

ST: REDUCED IDLING

6 September, Chelmsford. **ST HAS AGREED TO INSTALL TWO POWER UNITS PER MONTH**, which will reduce the sound of idling locomotives here and in neighboring towns. Chelmsford acting Town Manager Kerry Speidel believed soaring diesel prices “definitely worked in our favor” in settling the case because the auxiliary power units conserve fuel.

ST comment

ST has already installed 10 auxiliary power units [see 06#08A *New Hampshire*], and has 90 left to go, said executive vice-president of ST, David Fink. Each unit costs \$30,000. He noted that some area communities were “threatening to write tickets” to “adversely interfere our ability to move freight.” The company visited these places and explained how railroad schedules work and demonstrated the auxiliary power unit’s performance to show that the company was working to reduce

emissions. Because the people were pleased with what they saw, the company felt there was no need to continue with the litigation.

The resolution of the litigation meant “the town is not going to tell us what to do,” Fink said. {Hiroko Sata in Lowell *Sun* 6.Sep.2006}

Lawsuits dropped

In September 2004 ST filed suit against Chelmsford, and in April 2005 against Westford and Andover. On 31 August, the US District Court in Boston granted ST’s motion (signed by Rob Culliford) to dismiss its complaint against Westford {Civil Docket 1:05 -cv-10806-MLW}, Andover {Civil Docket 1:05 -cv-10820- MLW}, and Chelmsford {1:04-cv-12069-MLW} [See 04#12A, 05#05A.]

FALL RIVER: NEW TERMINAL

30 August. *AN RFP FOR A BUSINESS PLAN FOR THE NEW TERMINAL* will go out shortly, said Rick Armstrong, executive director of the Massachusetts Seaport Advisory Council. The final design, by Cambridge Seven, will become publicly available in September; in October 2004, the Council awarded a contract to Cambridge Seven to do a study for a new multi-use terminal building [see 04#10A].

Rail to the terminal

The existing building has spurs alongside it to the south (unused) and to the north (two, in use) to serve the building’s function as a warehouse [our *Directory* #289]. Armstrong said the new terminal will retain the track to the north, but not the south.

[In addition, the Fall River yard is used occasionally for transloading, and a spur runs past the existing building down to Borden & Remington, which moves about 100 carloads a year—see our *Directory* #290.]

A new entity for the terminal

Armstrong explained that the Council wants to create a new entity to own the terminal and hire an operator, rather than using the “archaic arrangement” under which the Waterways Division of the Department of Environmental Affairs owns and operates the Fall River terminal.

A bill to do so will go to the Great and General Court in January 2007. The bill will also amend the Seaport Bond bill, which will fund the terminal work. Armstrong explained that the bill’s current language refers to ‘berths’ rather than ‘terminals’ and proponents want to ensure that they can issue bonds for the work, so the language will be amended to permit funding terminals. {ANR&P discussion}

FALL RIVER/NEW BEDFORD: SHORT SEA SERVICE

30 August. *RICK ARMSTRONG EXPLAINED HIS VIEW OF SHORT-SEA SERVICE*, amplifying on his comments of July [see 06#08A]. As did Mike Leone of Massport, Armstrong, executive director of the Massachusetts Seaport Advisory Council, does not envision short-sea service as doing feeder for overseas carriers. Instead, he is focusing on domestic moves, in particular between Massachusetts and Florida. He and others have developed a model which provides a good tool to talk to investors about short-sea, which will become available in September.

The Florida lane

Armstrong said that from the US East coast, 1.9 million truckloads a year come to Massachusetts, and 1.4 million go south. “We don’t need much of a percentage of that lane” to make short-sea work. Port Canaveral is now working with the Seaport Advisory Council on the lane [see 04#10B].

Per Armstrong, Chief Executive Officer of the Canaveral Port Authority Stanley Payne first opposed short-sea, but now supports it. Payne has joined the North Atlantic Ports Association, and is encouraging the start of a run between Canaveral and Fall River/New Bedford.

Proponents in Massachusetts are looking for a product which could go south on the feeder service. {ANR&P discussion}

RHODE ISLAND

RIDOT, PW, AND FRIP

31 August, Providence. **AMTRAK EXPECTS TO COMPLETE WORK AROUND 8 SEPTEMBER** on the FRIP (the Freight Rail Improvement Project—the third track between Pawtucket and Davisville), so that a celebratory train could occur after that date, said RIDOT spokesperson Heidi Cote. However, she noted that an agreement between PW and Amtrak ‘is still outstanding, and we’re not aware of its status at this time.’

Track ownership

The FRIP adds ‘12 miles of new track with 5 miles to remain shared from Providence to the Quonset turnoff. Ten of these miles (Track 3) are from Providence to a mile or so south of the proposed Warwick Intermodal Station. The other 2 miles (Track 4) are from the Quonset turnoff north. This portion acts as an acceleration track to allow a long freight train (one mile) to get up to speed when switching to the shared track.

‘Everything we built was required by Amtrak to be on their property and as such, they own it all. Where we needed to purchase land, we were required to deed it to Amtrak.’ {e-mails to ANR&P 1.Sep.06}

PW: COASTAL RECYCLING

1 September, Providence. **COASTAL REMAINS VERY MUCH IN BUSINESS**, despite the withdrawal of its application in Cumberland for a construction and demolition debris (C&D) recycling facility [see 06#08A], said spokesperson Stephen Cuomo. Coastal remains one of the largest trash companies in the state, doing much municipal hauling and operating an electronics facility; “we do several millions of dollars of business.”

C&D processing currently suspended

Coastal has suspended operations at its Providence C&D facility [our *Directory* #489] pending the renewal of its registration with the Department of Environmental Management. He expected that renewal “any week now.” With it, Coastal will re-start the facility and again load C&D into railcars.

Another facility?

Cuomo reiterated that Coastal had withdrawn in Cumberland in order not to jeopardize its municipal contract. “You have to do a risk/reward” calculation. The company remains interested in a C&D facility in another location, but has to deal with the NIMBY problem.

Asked whether or not Coastal had considered using federal pre-emption to shield a proposed rail facility, Cuomo responded that doing so could bring in the attorney general and front-page newspaper coverage [as has happened to New England Transrail’s effort in Wilmington, Massachusetts—see 06#07B]. That would also jeopardize its municipal contracts. Perhaps, he mused, Coastal could find other partners and work together at a site. {ANR&P discussion 1.Sep.2006}

VERMONT

NECR: BELLOWS FALLS TUNNEL

21 August, Bellows Falls. **VAOT HAD TO REBID ONE OF THE CONTRACTS FOR THE TUNNEL LOWERING**, according to Doug Zorzi, rail projects manager. Contracts among VAOT, the FHA, and NECR were ready to go in June, with work to start in July.

Unfortunately, a subcontractor who had won one of the bids turned down the contract because of a labor dispute at the company, Zorzi said. Incorporating some design changes, and rebidding the contract, meant that work will not start until September. {Claremont *Eagle Times* 22.Aug.06}

[Note: I was unable to reach Zorzi, or anyone with NECR, before press time to clear up confusion—including whether the tunnel will have full doublestack clearance after the design changes—in the original article, so the above except is vague. Editor]

VERMONT ROAD SALT

7 July, Montpelier. **THE STATE EXTENDED SEVEN CONTRACTS, AND RE-BID TWO**, for road salt. Judy Jamieson, senior purchasing agent, said based on the experience in other New England states, she had found the prices offered to extend the contracts in the seven regions reasonable. [For 2005 results, see 05#07B].

The rebids. The incumbents won the two districts the state put out to bid: Eight and Nine.

Rail bonus. A state statute requires that a bidder be given a bonus in the form of the deduction from the price bid, the amount the state receives if the salt is shipped over state-owned lines [see 24 October 2001 issue]. This did not affect the bidding for 2006, according to Jamieson. {e-mail to ANR&P 8 Sept.06} Indeed, it has not come into play at least since 2001.

ROAD SALT VENDORS 2006

District, headquarters	salt provider	pile/delivery to pile***	tonnage 2006	drayage	Price 2006	Price 2005	Price 2004
1 Bennington	Cargill	Rutland/rail	7,300		49.80	46.76	45.37
2 N.Brattleboro	Cargill	Rockingham/rail	14,000		46.84	43.98	41.37
3 Rutland	Cargill	Rutland/rail	12,700		47.81	44.89	41.42
4 White River J.	Cargill	White River J./rail	17,050	Beaudry Enterprises	44.07	41.38	36.69
5 Essex J.	Cargill	Burlington/rail	13,325	Barrett	46.92	44.06	40.85
6 Barre	ARS	Middlesex/rail	13,600	Dubois Construction	44.15	41.46	38.57
7 St.Johnsbury	Cargill	West Milan NH or White River J./rail	11,455		49.31	46.30	42.42
8 St.Albans	Sifto	St.Catherine/ship or W.Milan NH/rail	9,805	n/a	44.95	41.34	38.84
9 Newport	Morton	Montreal/ship	12,450	n/a	51.30	46.09	43.34
TOTAL			111,685				

QUEBEC/MARITIMES

NBSR/MMA: TOFC SERVICE ENDS

1 August, Saint John. **SUNBURY TRANSPORT PULLED THE PLUG ON THE TOFC TRAIN** around this time, reported Ian Simpson, NBSR general manager. Speaking on 30 August, he pointed to the US Food and Drug Administration as the problem, as had others before him [see 06#03B]. The FDA's paperwork requirements for food-grade products were never eased, even though the trailers only moved through Maine, and were never opened. Shippers with only one particular product needed only one clearance, but if the product varied slightly (Moosehead ale versus Moosehead lager, as a hypothetical example) the FDA required a second clearance for the variation.

Thus a distribution center sending 10 or so products in one railcar would require ten clearances.

The service

NBSR and MMA ran a dedicated TOFC train between Farnham, Quebec, and Saint John, New Brunswick, hauling mostly Sunbury trailers loaded in the Maritimes.

The impact on the service

The service began in late 2003 [see 03#10A]. Simpson reported that by autumn 2004, the dedicated train, five days a week, was moving 240 to 250 loads a week. But the FDA then imposed its requirement, and within seven days, the loads had dropped to less than 65 per week. “As soon as the number went past one or two clearances, any margin on the load was essentially lost.”

Since foodstuffs were the mainstay of the service, traffic continued to drop. At the end, only one or two loads a week were moving. The rest went back to CN intermodal service, or were trucked around Maine.

NBSR will now return the two locomotives which were painted in Sunbury colors [see 03#11B] to the standard green of NBSR.

The effort to change

The stakeholders initiated an effort, led by MMA, to convince FDA to grant an exception [see 05#03A]. Despite the efforts of Maine’s two senators, the FDA would not budge, and so Sunbury ended the service. “We kept it alive collectively as long as we could,” said Simpson

He called the service demise “very unfortunate.” Both NBSR and MMA had to reduce train starts and cut jobs. “It was a terrific service with a great turnaround time; it made a good alternative for shippers. It took thousands of trucks a year off the highway.” And that was back in 2004, when the price of fuel was much lower than today. {ANR&P discussion 30.Aug.06}

CBNS: TRENTONWORKS TRAFFIC

30 August, Trenton. **TRENTONWORKS WON A CONTRACT FOR NEARLY 300 FLATCARS**, but that left General Manager Bob Hickey disappointed, as manufacturing the 25-meter cars will employ fewer people than are now working there. About 600 employees are now building centre-partition cars, an order to be completed in mid-November; Hickey has no start date for the new order, for an unnamed customer. [See earlier orders 05#11B, 04#06B.]

Greenbrier, TrentonWorks’ parent, awarded the car order due to continuous improvements over the past 2 ½ years and a focus on safety, quality, efficiency and on-time delivery. Employee teams continue to work with Greenbrier’s sales department preparing bids for more orders.

Hickey listed the plant’s disadvantages as transportation and labour costs, the factory’s distance from markets, and the impact of the high Canadian dollar on the price. Two unions at TrentonWorks are negotiating new contracts. Office workers have been without a contract since November and the steelworkers’ contract expires at the end of this November. {Monica Graham in *Halifax Herald* 31.Aug.2006}

HALIFAX

31 August. **HALTERM HAS A THREE-YEAR AGREEMENT FOR A NEW SERVICE**: Europe West Indies Lines (EWL) service from North Europe to the Caribbean and South America via the Port of Halifax. It will commence in late September and will initially consist of four vessels with a Halifax call every nine days.

Additional traffic

Preliminary estimates indicate this new service will result in an increase of approximately 3% in Halterm’s annualized container volumes [assuming roughly 140,000TEUs annually—see 06#07B—that means EWL will provide Halterm with about 5000 TEUs] with potential for future growth. EWL has informed Halterm of its plans to add a fifth vessel to the service and to establish a fixed weekly call in Halifax in early 2007. {Halterm press release}

SAINT JOHN

12-13 June. **AN UPDATE ON THE PORT’S CONTAINER BUSINESS** was provided at Saint John Port Days. Andrew Dixon, vice-president of trade and operations, explained that the port had advantages: deep water, proximity to shipping routes (southward toward Latin America), and reliable land transportation. But it also had challenges:

- The port can accommodate up to about a 4000 TEU vessel currently, provided the vessel comes and goes within a couple of hours of high tide. It could potentially accommodate the deepest draft container vessels on the water today, but would have to dredge the channel and the berth deeper than they now are. Current depth is about 40’ or 12.2 metres at the deepest berths.
- The port dredges every year between July and November to maintain current depth.

Statistics

2005 saw an improvement in TEUs, up from 48,774 in 2004 to 49,950 in 2005. Tonnage went up 3% to 287,000.

Tropical Shipping

This line offers the only scheduled container service for Saint John [see 02#02A], weekly to Florida, the Caribbean, and South America. It uses two 1,118TEU vessels, and handles 40,000 containers a year. {*Port Progress* 6.2006; e-mail to ANR&P from Dixon 31.Aug.2006}

EDITORIAL

LEADERSHIP, NOT COMMITTEES

In the fast-expanding global shipping realm, Maine has two chances to play a significant role now: in LNG, and in containers. In both areas, Governor Baldacci has not provided a vision for the state, yet only the governor has the stature to provide such a vision. Yes, he will make political enemies no matter what he decides, but as my children would say, “Your point is....?” Here’s how I suggest the governor present this to Mainers:

‘Citizens, as you all know, our manufacturing base is shrinking, and with it good-paying jobs. We have before us two chances which can change that, as long as you agree with my vision.

First, we have one location, Sears Island, which offers a nearly-perfect site for a major container terminal. I propose that we offer this site to ocean carriers as a means to move containers quickly and easily to the mid-continent, on the rail. Yes, it will use one-quarter of this pristine island, but it can generate directly 500 well-paying jobs, and spin off other economic activity. [See *Maine*.]

Second, several companies are looking at our deepwater harbors to site an LNG facility. I realize that many of you consider this with horror. But if the United States does not accept new LNG terminals to receive overseas natural gas, we face a future of much higher prices, or even no gas whatsoever. Like containers, LNG can create jobs, and spinoff economic activity which uses the gas. I am today appointing a small group of stakeholders to select three sites in Maine as potential terminals. When they finish their work in six months, I will ask the Legislature to decide among those sites, or choose none at all.

My fellow citizens, these are difficult choices. I am making my vision clear to you, so that we can together make a clear decision on the direction for our economy and our society. I recommend we do both a container port and an LNG facility. If you disagree, vote me out of office this November.’

RAIL SHIPPERS

Described in this issue.

Our Directory of Rail Freight Facilities in New England has more information on the companies denoted with their directory number.

Coastal Recycling (PW, Rhode Island #489)
Fall River Terminal (CSXT, Massachusetts #289)
Nappi (SLR, Maine #903)
TrentonWorks (CBNS, Nova Scotia)

PEOPLE

Michael Gleba, who held the title ‘manager of rail’ at the **Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation**, left on 5 September to become the director of planning at the City of Somerville. He took the position in March 2005. Some of his duties fell to **Chalita Belfield**, who has held the position of manager of rail properties for more than a year. See *Massachusetts*.

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