SOUTHWEST CHIEF COMMISSION

THE SOUTHWEST CHIEF RAIL LINE
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, RURAL
TOURISM, AND INFRASTRUCTURE
REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE
COMMISSION
PURPOSE

• Established by HB 14-1161 in 2014
• Encourage Amtrak to continue its Southwest Chief Rail Line Service at all current Colorado stops,
• Expand such service to include a stop in Pueblo,
• Study the potential benefits of expanding such service to include a stop in Walsenburg, and
• Create a fund to receive moneys for future appropriations and funding sources.

An Act
CONCERNS

• 50-65 year old jointed rail track in need of replacement, upgrade along 600 mile portion of Southwest Chief route, western Kansas-Colorado-eastern New Mexico
  • Approximately 200 route miles in each state part of impacted route
• BNSF, “host” railroad, only needed to maintain track to 30 MPH for its own freight business in western Kansas, eastern Colorado
• Amtrak as passenger railroad needed track quality for up to 79 mph
  • Maintain schedule requirements at Chicago, Los Angeles endpoints
• 2012 options to resolve difference between 30 mph and 79 mph:
  • Cancel the Amtrak service altogether
  • Reroute Southwest Chief from Colorado to Oklahoma and Texas
  • Work to find the funding for repairing the track and keeping the service in Colorado: initial estimated cost of $97 million capital, $110 million in on-going maintenance
SUCCESES

- Partnerships: 35 partners in three states make a strong coalition!
  - 3 states / state Departments of Transportation
  - 1 willing private sector partner: BNSF Railway
  - 1 willing public passenger rail operator: Amtrak
  - 30 municipalities including cities and counties in KS, CO, NM
  - Advocates such as Colorado Rail Passenger Association (ColoRail)
- Funding Successes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Miles of Track</th>
<th>Federal Funds (Millions)</th>
<th>Matching Funds</th>
<th>Total Funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TIGER 6</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>$12.4</td>
<td>$9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TIGER 7</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>$15.2</td>
<td>$9.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Repair
  - TIGER 6 Track Work completed in June 2016
  - TIGER 7 Track Work scheduled to be completed in Oct/Nov 2016
  - BNSF Railway agreed to maintain track with new rail installed
  - 60 miles of repair, $41 M needs remain, with <5 years to find funds
NEXT STEPS

- Pursue environmental “clearances” on last 60 miles to increase project readiness and grant competitiveness
- Evaluate service options to Pueblo
  - Spur-line or through-service between La Junta and Pueblo as start
  - Speed up service schedule in synch with track improvements
- Pueblo to Trinidad, including Walsenburg as a second effort
- Explore extending through service to Colorado Springs
- Pursue funding opportunities at local, state, multi-state, and federal levels...TIGER 9 or similar