



RELEASE: IMMEDIATE

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\$500,000 in Rail Improvements Authorized
Shortline projects will improve safety, reliability and
frequency of service in four Virginia counties

RICHMOND, Va., February 15, 2006 – The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) today received approval to advance \$504,000 in rail improvements to benefit both freight and passenger trains that operate on shortline railroad tracks. The Commonwealth Transportation Board authorized funding for improvements to Buckingham Branch Railroad lines in Augusta, Bath, Hanover and Rockbridge Counties.

“Wherever possible, DRPT will emphasize projects that can benefit both passenger and freight rail operations. The Rail Preservation program goes even further to maximize the public investment by requiring a 30% match on all projects,” said Kevin Page, manager of rail development programs at DRPT.

Inoperable sidings in Augusta and Bath Counties will be put back in service to allow trains to pass one another, eliminating traffic jams and reducing delays. Track improvements in Rockbridge County along Goshen Branch will improve safety and allow more frequent service. This rail line serves Buckingham Branch freight traffic and the Amtrak Cardinal line.

In Hanover County, railroad crossing “diamonds” (the locations where tracks cross each other) will be replaced to increase track safety and integrity and a new siding will provide another point for trains to pass in that area. These improvements will help to increase the frequency and reliability of service in the I-95 rail corridor along track used by CSX, Buckingham Branch and Amtrak.

All of these projects are scheduled for completion within 24 months. Work will be carried out by Buckingham Branch Railroad, in cooperation with CSX, through grants issued by DRPT.

The total cost for these projects is \$720,000 and Buckingham Branch will provide a 30% match of \$216,000.

About DRPT

The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) is the state agency responsible for rail and public transportation in Virginia. One of six agencies that report to the Secretary of Transportation, DRPT facilitates the movement of people and goods throughout Virginia with three main areas of activity- rail, public transportation and commuter services. We help people and businesses find the smartest distance between two points. Visit us at www.drpt.virginia.gov.

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