



News From The Rails

In this issue:
Undercutting Wrap-up
Locomotive Overhaul Update

AUGUST 2019

Regular Shore Line East Schedule to Resume on August 5

Following completion of Amtrak’s track undercutting program, an extensive rail maintenance project, CTrail Shore Line East service will resume regular schedule operations on August 5, 2019.

Undercutting serves a critical purpose in maintaining the overall strength and safety of the rails themselves. For CTrail Shore Line East riders, this project has meant adjusted schedules and delays in service. With completion of the program, replacement bus service for trains will no longer be necessary.

According to Jon Foster from the CTDOT’s Office of Rail, “Amtrak’s undercutting project was vital to restoring the track bed to ensure a safe and reliable operation.” Over time, heavy use of the rail network and the constant exposure to changing New England weather causes the stone ballast of the track bed that the rails sit on to shift, settle, or wash out. The track bed required the removal of the worn crushed stone ballast and replacement with new crushed stone to allow for proper drainage and for the rails to absorb the impact of heavy trains without causing damage to the rails. With a restored track bed, passengers will experience a better ride.

As Foster noted, “When certain track areas get wet and contaminated with sand and soil, it doesn’t perform as well. The ties remain in good shape by keeping them clean and dry.” Without properly aligned and properly draining rail beds, trains can’t operate at their full speeds safely for a given area, ultimately causing delays in service that affect CTrail Shore Line East customers. One of the challenges with undercutting is that it takes one track out of service at a time, in an area of the corridor that is mostly two tracks. As a result, service had to be adjusted to accommodate the work.

According to Foster, there are plans to add an additional interlocking in Clinton within the next few years, which will provide another point for trains to switch tracks. “Once that’s complete, that will help with future trackwork projects, minimizing future service impacts,” Foster explains.

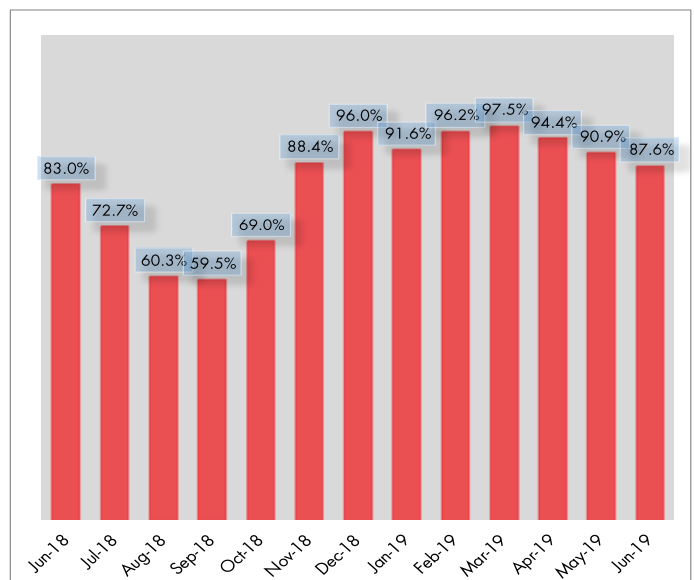
CTDOT thanks all its customers for their patience during this critical maintenance project.



Undercutting is the process whereby ballast is scooped out from beneath a track, vacuumed up and cleaned, and returned to the roadbed, which is realigned to ensure a smooth surface and correct profile.

On-Time Performance

Summer 2018 performance suffered due to increased track work and increased stress on the locomotive fleet. Summer 2019 will see the end of track work, and CTDOT is optimistic for an increase in on-time performance.



Locomotive Overhaul Program Targets Remaining P40 Fleet

Since 2018, CTDOT has been overhauling its locomotive fleet. Now that the first six locomotives are back from their overhauls and in regular service, CTDOT has begun work on the remaining fleet of 12 locomotives. We spoke with Marci Petterson from CTDOT's Office of Rails to learn more about the second phase of the overhaul program and how it differs from the first phase.

GE's P40 locomotives, part of CTDOT's fleet, were built in the early 1990's as passenger locomotives specifically for Amtrak. In 2005, CTDOT leased 8 of these units, ultimately purchasing them outright in 2008. As service was predicted to expand with the then proposed CTrail Hartford Line, CTDOT purchased 4 more from NJ Transit in 2016, bringing the total number of P40 locomotives to twelve.

The P40 overhaul is expected to be more extensive than the GP-40 overhaul, including rust repair, new engines and equipment, and a full re-paint. Petterson says that, "the locomotives are the face of the service, and I'm happy to say that the face of the service is getting an uplift!"

Once refurbished locomotives come back into service, they undergo rigorous testing for safety and performance. As the six P40s currently in Amtrak's Beech Grove, Indiana shop return to service, CTDOT will continue to send groups of two P40s to Amtrak

until all 12 have completed refurbishment. Once back in service, standard railroad maintenance includes a daily inspection, and more detailed inspections every 3 months. Every 4 years, locomotives also undergo an in-depth inspection. Ultimately, having more reliable, safer locomotives means more reliable, safer service for CTrail Shore Line East customers.

The first of the six P40s currently out for overhaul is anticipated to return to CTDOT for testing in early 2020.



A worker in Amtrak's Beech Grove, Indiana facility works on a dismantled CTDOT P40 Locomotive

Shore Line East Notes

- New CTrail Shore Line East weekday timetable takes effect on Monday, August 5, 2019.
- CTrail Shore Line East will run on a holiday schedule on Labor Day, September 2, 2019. Visit www.ShoreLineEast.com for more detailed information.
- The CTrail monthly presale date has been changed to the 25th of each month to provide consistency with Metro-North. This change affects any customer purchasing CTrail Hartford Line, CTrail Shore Line East, and New Haven Line UniRail monthly tickets.
- Customers may sign up at shorelineeast.com/service-alerts for either text or email alerts for specific trains that they regularly use. Customers can also designate stations for which they would like to receive service updates.
- Follow Shore Line East on Twitter at @ShoreLineEast and @SLEAlerts and Facebook @ShoreLineEast for further news and alerts.
- Please contact CTrides at 1-877-CTrides (1-877-287-4337) or at info@shorelineeast.com with any questions or comments.

