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Oakland, CA
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CZ-29

Christina Watson
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55-B Plaza Circle
Salinas, CA 93901-2902

SUBJECT: MAKE a LEFT TURN at OAKLAND

Hi Christina:

Greetings from Oakland, CA.

Enclosed is a copy of my write-up for extending the CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR to and from, Emeryville, CA to Los Angeles, along the California Coast. This would give us a "night train" between the Bay Area, Monterey County, and the Los Angeles Basin!

This would give back to the California Coast a night train that it lost more than 40 years ago, and that had connected the San Francisco Bay Area to the Los Angeles Basin. It would connect the Salinas Valley and the City of San Jose (California's fourth largest city) to the America Middlewest. It would connect the California Coast from Burbank, CA to San Jose directly to Reno, NV, Salt Lake City, Denver, and the Central Middlewest, or vise versa, and travelers would not have to layover at Emeryville, CA for 12 to 18 hours!

Having an inter-regional passenger train from the East serving the five coast counties of California is not new either! For the two decades between World War One and World WarTwo, the **SUNSET LIMITED** traveled between San Francisco and Los Angeles each night, and then it went on to New Orleans, LA.

By moving the **CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR's** terminal to Los Angeles, it would open a spot to store a late **AFTERNOON DAYLIGHT** at Oakland. Both the **CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR** and the **AFTERNOON DAYLIGHT** would serve Salinas/ Monterey Bay, but also Soledad and/or King City! The **AFTERNOON DAYLIGHT** would run on schedule of the former **DAYLIGHT**- 9 hours and 45 minutes, terminal to terminal, or faster.

The report may be of interest to the Cities of Salinas, Soledad, and/or King City!

Thanks for keeping on the TAMC e-mail list!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bob Mac Donald". The signature is written in a cursive style, with the first letters of each word being capitalized and prominent.

Robert F. Mac Donald
The "Retired" Plant Rat

Retired: Engineer Plant Rationalization,
Southern Pacific Transportation Company
Former: Transportation Planning Manager,
Transportation Agency for Monterey County, CA

CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR

**Make a Left Turn at Oakland, CA
And Be
The California Coast Night Train**

**Robert F. Mac Donald
The "Retired" Plant Rat**

**Retired: Engineer Plant Rationalization,
Southern Pacific Transportation Company
Former: Transportation Planning Manager,
Transportation Agency for Monterey County, CA**

Oakland, CA

**July 1, 2013
Rev. Feb. 15, 2014
Rev. Sept. 22, 2014
Rev. May 6, 2015
Rev. Feb. 15, 2017**

CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR

Legend has it that "Bugs Bunny" did not turn left at Albuquerque, NM and continued on to Hollywood to become a movie icon. History does not tell us whether Bugs stayed on one of the Super Chiefs, or just hopped along Route 66. We can expect that Bugs would have been a BBQed Conejo if he had continued south from Albuquerque and across the Rio Grande!

Decades later, it is time for **AMTRAK, CALTRANS-Division-of-Rail, Union Pacific RR,** and the Cities and Counties along the Coast to come together, and have the **CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR** make a left turn at Oakland, CA and continue on to Los Angeles, CA as the coastal night train. The **SUNSET LIMITED** made this nightly trip from San Francisco, along the coast, to L.A., and on to New Orleans, LA for about two decades between World War I and World War II. Fifty years ago, there were five passenger trains each way, between San Francisco, CA and Los Angeles, along the Coast.

Railroad operating practices have changed drastically in the past 30 years. As an economy measure, the freight railroads have reduced their train crew size from 5 or 6, to 2 persons. The train order stations (depots) have been closed and the dispatching of trains is done by radio from a central location (in the case of Union Pacific- Omaha, NE). The Timetable has gone the way of the buggy whip. Both AMTRAK (**THE CAPITALS**) and Caltrain operate their passenger trains with 3-person crews- one in the cab operating the train, and two handling passenger matters. The main line freight trains have no one riding on the rear end of the train (no caboose), and thus there is no one to line the switches when another train is to be met or overtaken. It should be noted that certain freight trains are limited to a maximum speed of 40 MPH by the U. S. Department of Transportation (FRA) due to restricted cars in their consist

With one complete train set for an inter-regional train, herein are the details of a suggested "Dream/Scheme" of how get better rail service between the Bay Area and the Los Angeles Basin, i.e., tie the 15,000,000 people in California's south to the 8,000,000 + people in the Bay Area and Delta Region. In my letter to our California State Senator, Loni Hancock, I stated: *There is a need to close the gap between San Jose and San Luis Obispo with more frequent, daily rail service. This gap needs to be upgraded to twenty-first century railroad standards and speeds.* In other previous correspondence, I have suggested that the **CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR** make a left turn at Oakland, CA and continue south to Los Angeles via the Coast Route. It would also serve several million coast side residences.

With the needed train set, here is a "Game Plan"!

The **CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR** would become the night train connection between the two regions between Los Angeles and Sacramento, CA. This can be done by **adding one train set** to the Zephyr's fleet of trains and by moving its West Coast terminal to Los Angeles. It should be noted that this extra train set and its on-board crew may be all ready based in Los Angeles.

The Chicago bound train would leave the LA UPT about 8:45 PM and assume the old **LARK** (S.P.- 1956) schedule to Emeryville, CA via Santa Barbara and San Jose, CA. It would assume its current "cross county" schedule at Emeryville of 9:15 AM. The Los Angeles bound train should

not leave Oakland/Jack London before 6:40 PM, so as to not cause problems at San Jose with the Peninsula JPB's commuter trains (evening rush). If it too assumed the old **LARK** schedule, it could arrive at LA UPT about 6:45 AM.

The Oakland bound Zephyr will need a schedule change between Chicago and Emeryville, CA. This schedule change should about two hours to two hours and thirty minutes later than the current Timetable. Between Salt Lake City, UT and Reno, NV, the current night time station stops are at unmanned stations. These stations are effectively "flag stops"!

Having set the route, and the time of train operations over that route, it is time to look at the paper work!

THE PAPERWORK

The **COAST STARLIGHT** is operated over this train's proposed route from Los Angeles to Sacramento, CA by existing agreements between Union Pacific Railroad, Metrolink, and AMTRAK. The Union Pacific Railroad supplies the tracks and the dispatching of the trains from Sacramento to Moorpark, CA (M.P. 421.1) in Ventura County, and Metrolink supplies them from Moorpark to the LA Depot. Why not have the **CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR** operate as second section of the **COAST STARLIGHT** under these existing agreements?

Between Sacramento, CA and Los Angeles, CALTRANS-Division of Rail could lease each set of the **CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR** for its run from AMTRAK. The lease would be for all the train's equipment, the complete on-board crew, the two sets of operating crews, and all on-board supplies needed for this segment of the Zephyr's trip. Income from this portion of the **CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR's** trip would go to the CA Division-of-Rail to help finance its Lease.

Next, turn the operation and support of the **CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR** between Sacramento and Los Angeles over to the CALTRANS-Division of Rail and its two subdivisions, i.e., Capital Corridor JPB, and the Surfliner. The Surfliner currently serves San Luis Obispo, CA. Let the two subdivisions meet at San Luis Obispo with the Surfliner group supporting that depot and yard. The CAPITAL CORRIDOR JPB would support this train north of San Luis Obispo to Sacramento, CA.

ON-BOARD SERVICES

The on-board services listed for the **CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR** in the current AMTRAK Timetable would be available between Emeryville, CA and Los Angeles. The exceptions would be that the dining car on the Los Angeles bound train would close for dinner seating about one-half hour after leaving San Jose, CA and would not reopen in the AM. Beverages and snacks would be served in the Sightseer Lounge in the AM beginning at Santa Barbara, CA until Los Angeles.

Checked baggage would be handled to and from Oakland, CA-Jack London, San Jose, Salinas, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Oxnard, and Los Angeles. So would be the baggage from or to east of Sacramento, CA

A couple of the coaches should be designated as "quiet cars" between 10:30 PM and 5:30 AM.

LABOR

The Labor Agreements for both the on-board crews and the Coast station agents will have to be modified! It is recommended that the rosters the crews for the **CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR**, **SOUTHWEST CHIEF**, and **STARLIGHT** and possibly the **SUNSET LIMITED**, be consolidated at Los Angeles.

Because the **CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR** would be the night train between Emeryville, CA and Los Angeles, it may be necessary to add a three person agency crew at San Luis Obispo and possibly one agent at Salinas and one at Santa Barbara.

The Capital Corridor JPB has some perks in its contract with the Union Pacific Railroad for maintaining its tracks and signals on part of its route at Class V Standards. Because of the coming of Positive Train Control, and the up-grading of the signal system to CTC from Santa Margareta to Gilroy, CA, these "perks" should be examined, and possibly applied to this new area. To get this 200 miles of track and signal up-grade done ASAP, beside grants and line changes, the maintenance perks may need to be applied on the Union Pacific Railroad from San Jose, CA south to Moorpark. In the future, the extended **SURFLINERS**, aka **DAYLIGHTS**, would need and use them, too!

TRAFFIC SOURCES

With California's current population (2017) at about 39,000,000 people and headed toward 50,000,000, this night train would have at least four sources of passenger traffic.

First there are at least 22 State and private universities and colleges between Sacramento and Burbank with tens of thousands of students needing Transportation. The media has had an article stating that "The young today driving less, using transit," The new "Transportation and New Generation" reports that the teens and young adults are using their feet, their bikes, or mass transit to move around.

The second group of train riders would be the State and Federal workers who are traveling between Sacramento, the Bay Area, along the Coast, or to the Los Angeles Basin. Taking the train would down size their "Car Pools" and eliminate "driver stress".

The third group of train riders would be the business and/or professional people who do not want to lose time going to the airports, finding a hotel, and a place to eat. This train can also take these people to a number of locations which do not have frequent, or have no airline services.

The fourth group is the tourist/vacationer, some of them foreign, who want to get between the areas served, quickly! This overnight train would connect the California Coast directly with Central Nevada and the Rocky Mountains, Denver, and the central Midwest. For the couple of million Coast residents, there would be no need for an overnight layover in Emeryville, CA, before going east. The south bound Zephyr would serve San Jose and the Monterey Bay Region (Salinas, CA) in mid evening!

OTHER LOGISTICS

Like the **COAST STARLIGHT**, the **CALIFORNIA ZEPHER**, south bound, would take on water at Sacramento, and food supplies at Oakland, CA. It would take on fresh pastries daily for the early morning Continental Breakfasts. The east bound **CALIFORNIA ZEPHOR** could take on water at Sacramento, if necessary.

With the **CALIFORNIA ZEPHER** traveling at night, **THRUWAY** Buses 4768 and 4785 could be eliminated between Oakland, CA and San Luis Obispo, provided that the Zephyr could make a "flag stop" at King City, CA. A short loading platform might be needed just south of Pearl Street. The City of Soledad, CA is also seeking a "Stop", and would need a short loading platform, too. Either or both these stations would be "Flag Stops" and un-manned. "Flag Stops" could also be scheduled for Paso Robles, CA and Guadalupe, CA. The station areas would be leased from the Union Pacific and be built, maintained, and policed by its City.

It is suggested that the two **THRUWAY** buses be rerouted from San Jose, CA to San Luis Obispo, CA, via Santa Cruz, Monterey, Big Sur, Cambria, and Moro Bay. These buses would operate mid day. Between Santa Cruz and Moro Bay, this route would be along the scenic CA. State Highway One. Parts of this route have bus service supplied by Monterey/Salinas Transit and San Luis Obispo County. Part of this route might be seasonal. The buses would have facilities for carrying bicycles and camping gear. On weekends, a bike trailer maybe needed during certain parts of the year!

It should be noted that **THRUWAY** bus service will continue to be needed between San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara to serve the inland communities, such as Santa Maria, Lompoc, Solvang and Buellton, CA and to connect them to the **SURFLINERS** as well as these two inter-regional trains.

HISTORY

As stated before, railroad operating practices have changed drastically in the past 30 years. Both the **CAPITAL CORRIDOR** and **CALTRAIN** operate their passenger trains with 3-person crews- one in the cab operating the train, and two handling passenger matters.

There was a time when the **SUNSET LIMITED** used Coast Route as a night train for about two decades before World War II. The Southern Pacific's **LARK** and its **COASTER** used this route nightly from the post war until **AMTRAK** established the **COAST STARLIGHT**. This route also supported two day time trains each way: the **MORNING DAYLIGHT** and the **NOON DAYLIGHT**. The post war **COASTER** and **LARK** each had a schedule of about 12 hours between LAUPD and San Francisco, Third Street. The two sets of **DAYLIGHTS** had a much faster schedule between Los Angeles and San Francisco. Their scheduled time between these stations was 9 hours and 45 minutes. They made this run "on time" about 90 % of the time. Both the **MORNING DAYLIGHT** and the **LARK** had a connecting train between San Jose, CA and Oakland Pier, where they made connections Sacramento and north, to Reno and east, and to the San Joaquin Valley.

The idea of having the **CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR** operate as a night train from Emeryville, CA (Oakland, CA) and Los Angeles, along the coast, was put forth by Dr. Adrian Herzog of the United Rail Passenger Alliance, Northridge, CA. It is one of the suggested up-grades or extensions, listed in his document entitled Strategic Routes for Amtrak dated October 25, 1998. (See: <http://www.unitedrail.org/pub/strategic-routes-for-amtrak/>).

It should be noted that the **LARK**, the **COASTER**, and the two sets of **DAYLIGHTS** ran this 472 miles of track between Los Angeles and San Francisco, operating by Timetable, Train Orders, and Semaphore way-side signals. During the past two decades, CTC has been installed between Tamean Station (San Jose) and Gilroy; between Watsonville Jct. and Salinas and between Burbank Jct. and San Luis Obispo, CA. Also, many miles of new ties have been installed to bring the main line up to Class IV standards. Between Salinas, CA and Santa Margarita, CA, about 120 miles, the trains are now dispatched by radio, but most sidings are controlled by "hand-throw" switches. The Union Pacific's freight trains have a two-man crew on the head end, only! While the freight trains can take a siding, they do not have the facility to close the switch behind them, thus they need to "hold" the main line while the passenger train goes through the siding!

FUTURE ALONG THIS ROUTE EXTENSION

First, the **CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR** would serve Oakland's Jack London Station! Then heading south, it would go via Niles Jct. to Warm Springs and San Jose.

The San Francisco Chronicle's issue of September 20, 2014, had a front page article about the building of the new BART station in the Warm Springs district of Fremont, CA. The BART extension is due to open in 2017. This station is adjacent to the Union Pacific's Milpitas main line (CA. PUC DA line). About 900 acres of land is available for development around the Warm Springs BART station. BART will have parking lots, and possibly bus transfer stations, on each side of the Union Pacific tracks. The City of San Jose is the fourth most populous city in California. If the development of the area goes as planned, 20,000 new jobs may be created and 3,000 new housing units would be built. By 2025 the area of Fremont, Union City, and Milpitas could have a population of about 500,000 people that could be served by the interregional passenger trains too.

It is recommended that the **CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR** be routed via Warm Springs station (Fremont, CA) between Oakland, CA. and San Jose and make a station stop to serve this city. Because the Warm Springs area of Fremont already has a major auto assembly plant and other industries, this station could become a rail passenger hub if some of the **ACE** trains and some of the **CAPITAL CORRIDOR** trains could be rerouted by way of Warm Springs. The **COAST STARLIGHT** should be re-routed to this corridor, too, and stop at a new Warm Springs Station opposite the new **BART** Station so that this new rail hub could give direct service north to Seattle, WA and south, along the coast, to Los Angeles.

Within the past year or so, the State of California has made a grant to the Transportation Agency of Monterey County (TAMC) for rearranging tracks and signals at Gilroy, CA so that **CAPITAL CORRIDOR** trains could have access to the Gilroy station, but they then can continue on to

Salinas, CA. It is recommended that the **CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR** make a stop at Gilroy, and serve both southern Santa Clara County and San Benito County.

Between Gilroy and Salinas, the CTC signal system must be upgraded, and on the two sections of double track, signals must be constructed for double directional running on each track. The **COAST STARLIGHT** may stop at Gilroy. The proposed **DAYLIGHTS** certainly will!

South of Salinas, flag stops might be made at Soledad and/or King City. Time required for the new station stops of Warm Springs, Gilroy, Soledad, and possibly King City can be made up by completing the two line changes for which the property has all ready been purchased. A third line change at Bradley needs to be re-evaluated using twenty-first century mapping, and because the Salinas River has been tamed since circa 1950.

To add capacity for at least six new passenger trains each day, and added freight trains, especially additional unit trains, several sidings should be extended or built. The sidings at Soledad and King City should be extended northward; the siding at McKay should be extended southward.

South of San Luis Obispo, CA the Pismo line change should be built ASAP. The property for it was acquired about 50 years ago. The two **COAST STARLIGHT**s and the four **SURFLINERS** would use this line change as soon as it is opened for travel.

NEW TRAIN SET

The new train set need not be "new" cars. Repair and/or upgrade about 20 cars from AMTRAK's "bone yard" in Pennsylvania. ASAP repair 10 coaches, 5 Superliner sleeping cars, 2 dining cars, 2 lounge cars, and 2 baggage cars! Lease three locomotives. If AMTRAK shops can't do the repairs in six months, put the repairs out to rail car builders or rail car repair shops.

THE FUTURE-Now

It should be noted that the **CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR** and California's **HIGH SPEED RAIL** will meet at two locations only- Los Angeles and San Jose! The **California HIGH SPEED RAIL** bonds do provide for using some of the **California HIGH SPEED RAIL** funds for upgrading connecting passenger rail lines! Use these funds to upgrade the Coast Line between San Jose and Burbank Jct.

First, ASAP, upgrade the Centralize Traffic Control (CTC) signal system between Gilroy, CA and Salinas, and add to it Positive Train Control (PTC). Extend the double track eastward at Corporal by upgrading the "Old Sargent Siding" to main line standards and reconnecting its east turnout (Use **California HIGH SPEED RAIL** bond funds.).

Second, ASAP construct and put into service, the Pismo Line Change (Use **California HIGH SPEED RAIL** bond funds.).

Third, construct and put into service, a CTC signal system with Positive Train Control (PTC).

between the west end (north) of Salinas siding to and including King City siding. Reconstruct the Metz siding with CTC controls. (This 47 miles of line's signal system and sidings can be upgraded in about 18 months if **California HIGH SPEED RAIL** bond funds are used.).

Fourth, upgrade the Santa Margarita siding to CTC for its full length, upgrade the two crossovers with power operated switches, and construct a 700 foot "hold" track for storing "helper engines" off of the Main Line at the west end of the siding. (Use **California HIGH SPEED RAIL** bond funds.).

Fifth, at Carnadero, convert the junction switch and derail of the Hollister Branch to power operated and CTC controlled. West (north) of the junction switch construct # 20 double crossovers between Main Lines that are power operated and CTC controlled. (Use **California HIGH SPEED RAIL** bond funds.).

Sixth, at Tajiguas (M. P. 345.7), acquire property for 100-foot Right-of-Way; extend existing tangent both east and west; construct a concrete bridge over creek east side of Tajiguas; construct a viaduct type bridge over the raven west of Tajiguas; construct two sections of track and connect them to existing Main Line. Note that both structures will provide access to the ocean beaches and may need California Coastal Commission approval and authority and need California P.U.C. authority for public access to the beaches.(Use **California HIGH SPEED RAIL** bond funds for these two line changes and their structures.). This project may be *Environmentally Sensitive*.

Government agencies that may be involved in this project are: Federal- Department of Transportation; U. S. Army- Corps of Engineers/ State of California- CALTRANS- Division of Rail, Coastal Conservancy; Fish and Wildlife Department; Parks and Recreation Department; Public Utilities Commission/ Local- County of Santa Barbara.

Seventh, Moss Landing/ Elkhorn Slough- This project will be *Environmentally Sensitive*.

Raise about 4 miles a maximum of 5.6 feet (66 inches) due to "Climate Change" and forecasted rise in the ocean's surface level! It is forecasted that in the next 80 years the Pacific Ocean might raise as much as 66-inches due to the melting of the Arctic snow pack! Elkhorn Slough is an inland tidal estuary off of Monterey Bay and the Pacific Ocean. Government agencies that may be involved in this project are: Federal- Department of Transportation; U. S. Army- Corps of Engineers; Bureau of Indian Affairs/ State of California- CALTRANS- Division of Rail; Coastal Conservancy; Fish and Wildlife Department; Parks and Recreation Department; Public Utilities Commission/ Local- County of Monterey; Moss Landing Harbor District. There will be Other Interested Parties- Audubon Society; Farm Bureau; Elkhorn Slough State Marine Reserve; Elkhorn Slough Foundation; and Others! (Use **California HIGH SPEED RAIL** bond funds for the first raise of about three feet and widening of berm for access!).

Eighth, ASAP construct and put into service, Templeton Line Change (Use **California HIGH SPEED RAIL** bond funds.).

FUTURE- Design and Fund

First, Bradley Point Line change.

Second, construct second main track from Niles Tower to C.P. Julian, San Jose with CTC signal system and PTC. Construct commute station at Milpitas for transfer to VTA.

Third, construct second main track from Niles Tower to Elmhurst with CTC signal system and PTC.

Fourth, design, fund and construct line change and grade change east of Welby, Monterey County.

Fifth, design, fund and construct line change and grade change east of Oceano, San Luis Obispo County.

CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR

South Bound Roseville to Salinas, CA

Station	Miles	Time	Existing	Proposed
Roseville (dp.)			12:57 PM	3:17 PM
	14	0:29		
Sacramento (ar.)			---	3:57
Layover **		0:20		
Sacramento (dp.)			2:13	4:17
	14			
Davis			2:44	4:32
	44	0:42		
Martinez			3:26	5:16
	19	0:33		
Richmond			3:59	5:49
	11	0:11		
Emeryville			4:10	6:00
	5	0:15		
Oakland-J L (ar.)			---	6:15
Layover ***		0:30		
Oakland-J L (dp.)			---	6:45 PM
	30			
Warm Springs		1:00		7:45 PM
	12			
San Jose			---	8:22 PM
	30			
Gilroy		0:39	---	9:00 PM
	41			
		1:02		
Salinas (dp)			---	10:15 PM

**.: Take on water & smoke stop

***.: Take on food supplies, etc.