



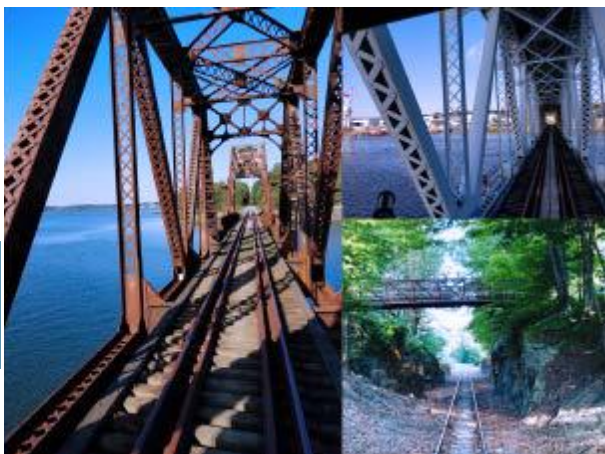
NORTHERN NEW ENGLAND
PASSENGER RAIL AUTHORITY

Annual Report FY2020

July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020

Northern New England
Passenger Rail Authority

75 West Commercial Street
Suite 104
Portland, ME 04101





Our Mission: To develop and manage a quality passenger rail system that meets the transportation needs of our customers, delivers value and enhances economic development within the region we serve.

The Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority (NNEPRA) is a State of Maine public transportation authority created in 1995 by the Maine State Legislature to develop and provide passenger rail service between Maine and Boston. NNEPRA provides the funding and oversight for the operation of the Amtrak Downeaster passenger rail service.

The NNEPRA Board of Directors, appointed by the Governor of the State of Maine, is supported by the collective efforts of the staff to develop the operating strategies, marketing programs, community relations, food service and service planning activities for the Amtrak Downeaster.

The NNEPRA staff is actively involved with the daily operation of the Downeaster and strives to meet and exceed ridership and revenue goals by promoting the Downeaster; achieving maximum financial efficiency by controlling expenses; and maintaining strong collaborative partnerships with stakeholders and local communities.



The NNEPRA Team

FY20 Board of Directors

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Dana Connors, Vice Chairman
Ronald McKinnon, Treasurer
Brian Hobart, Director

Ex-Officio Directors

Maine Department of Transportation
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Jennifer Brickett, Alternate
Nathan Moulton, Alternate

Maine Department of Economic and
Community Development
Commissioner Heather Johnson
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Brian Beeler
Manager of Passenger Services
Natalie Bogart
Marketing Director
Jennifer Crosby
Sales & Marketing Coordinator
William Gayle
Grant & Policy Administrator
Leslie Guerrette
Finance Manager
Stephen Houdlette
Data Specialist
James Russell
Manager of Special Projects

Amtrak Downeaster

The Amtrak Downeaster operates five round trips daily between Brunswick, ME and Boston, MA along a 143-mile corridor serving 12 stations in 3 states with a travel time of 3 hours and 20 minutes.

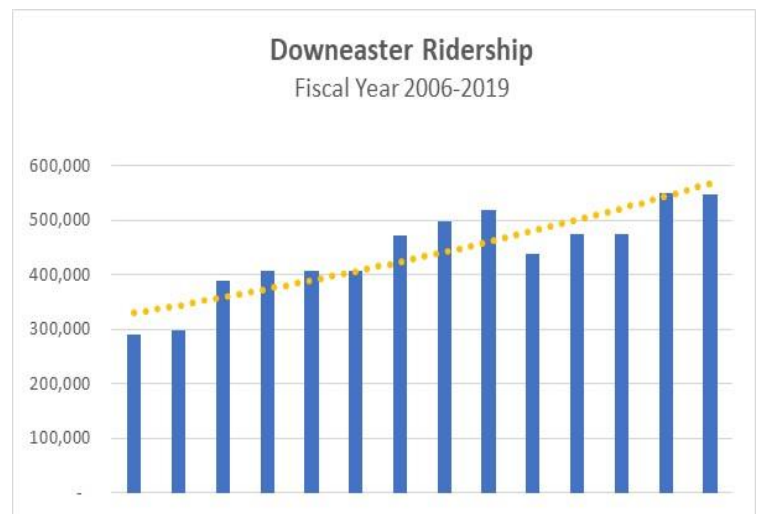
Amtrak operates the Downeaster and provides the train equipment, crews and ticketing services as part of a multi-year service agreement with NNEPRA.

Downeaster service is provided with three trains sets which are fully accessible and have seating capacity for up to 306 passengers. Each train is staffed by three Amtrak crew members to assure the safety and comfort of passengers. Amtrak ticket agents are available in Portland and Boston, and most stations have self-service Quik-Trak Ticketing Kiosks.



NNEPRA coordinates with Downeaster station communities to assure passengers have access to platforms and parking, as well as amenities and services provided by communities in various station facilities. NNEPRA contracts with NexDine to staff and operate the Downeaster Café onboard each Downeaster train. Train equipment is cleaned, fueled and stored at the Brunswick Layover Facility, owned and maintained by NNEPRA. Marketing, planning and capital projects to support Downeaster operations are primary responsibilities of NNEPRA.

Downeaster ridership increased by more than 90 percent between FY2006 and FY2019. The Downeaster carried more than half a million passengers annually, including commuters, business travelers, college students traveling to and from school, youths on educational trips, patients receiving medical treatments, families attending sports and theatre events, shoppers, visitors to Maine and more.

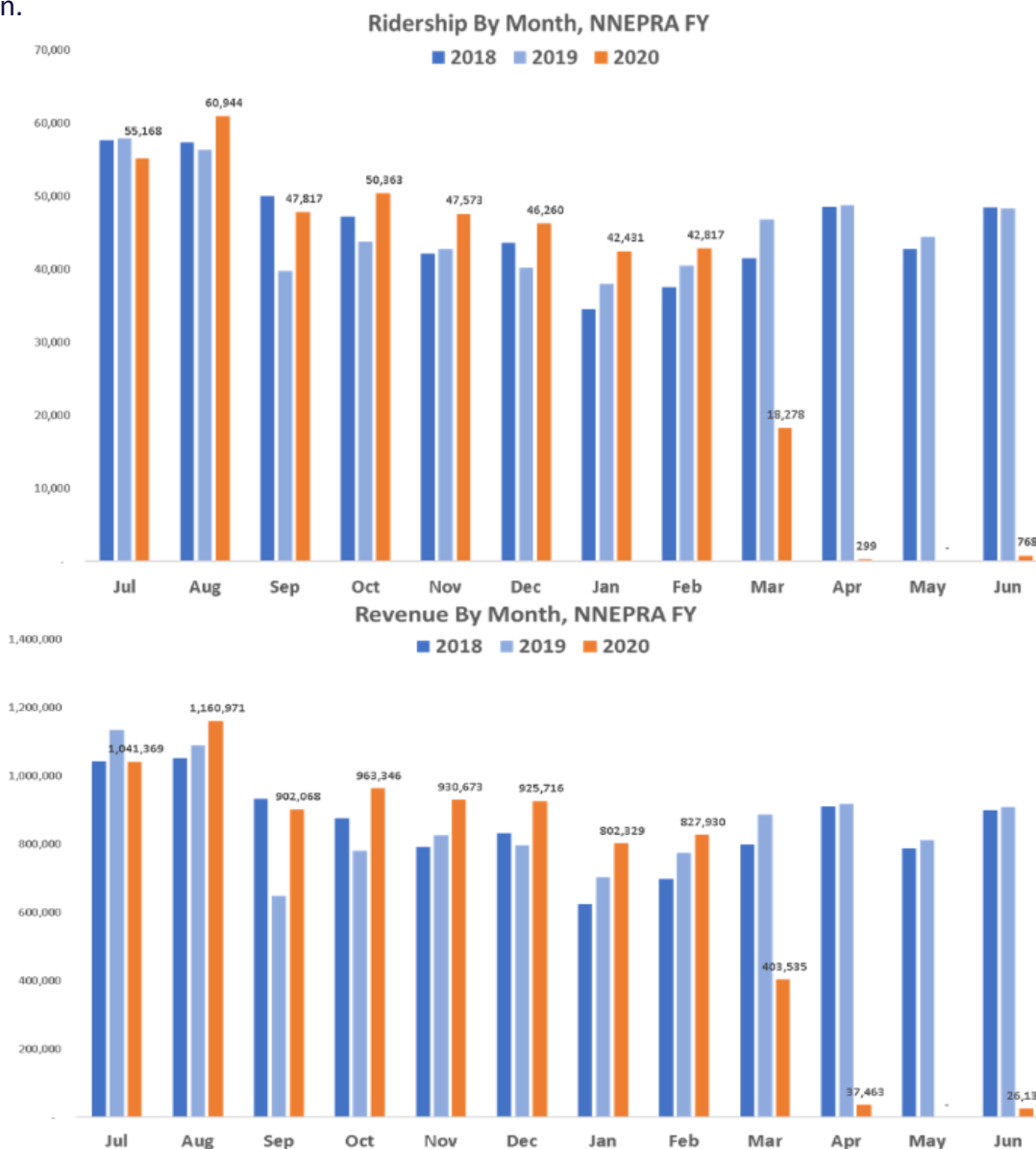


FY20 – The Year In Review

Downeaster Performance

Following record breaking revenue and ridership in FY2019, expectations were set high for FY2020 (July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020). At the onset of the year, NNEPRA projected that ridership would eclipse 570,000 passengers with ticket revenue hitting \$10.9 million, surpassing all previous records.

Fiscal year 2020 got off to a great start with performance far ahead of projections shown in the tables below. Ridership and revenue records were broken in six of the first eight months of the year. In February 2020, fiscal year ridership was on pace to reach nearly 600,000 and ticket revenue was projected to exceed \$11.7 million.



By mid-March 2020, the realities of the COVID-19 Pandemic became apparent. Significant travel restrictions were imposed not only in Maine but in New Hampshire and Massachusetts, commuting patterns shifted dramatically as telework rapidly increased, and events and activities were cancelled. As a result, Downeaster ridership declined sharply ultimately leading to reduced services levels. While the federal CARES Act, signed into law on March 27, 2020, provided funding to offset the reduced ticket revenue to help support Downeaster operations, in an effort to promote public safety the NNEPRA Board voted to temporarily suspend service entirely effective April 13, 2020.

On June 15, 2020, one daily round trip was restored with enhanced train cleaning measures and other COVID-related protocols in place, although Downeaster stations remained closed. Three additional round trips were added early in FY2021



Planning for a Bright Future

During the first half of FY2020, NNEPRA continued to progress various planning efforts for service enhancements and infrastructure improvement projects to further various strategic initiatives that included:

- Inbound Commuter Service
- Portland Station Relocation
- Amtrak Downeaster Coastal Connection
- West Falmouth/Exit 53 Station Stop

In August 2019, Amtrak hosted an inspection trip on the Maine-owned Rockland Branch to evaluate whether track conditions could support summer excursion service which was proposed by NNEPRA to be operated on weekends during summer months.

In the fall of 2019, hundreds of people participated in a series of public engagement events hosted by NNEPRA and GPCOG to gather feedback about travel patterns and preferences. Open houses were held in Portland, Brunswick, and Wells to solicit public input on NNEPRA's strategic initiatives. This opportunity allowed NNEPRA to hear from a diverse array of views and concerns from stakeholders across the service area in Maine.



Additional Downeaster station planning studies in FY2020 included Maine DOT's evaluation of a potential relocation of the Downeaster Station in Portland and the consideration of a new station at Falmouth Crossing. An alternative location for the Portland Station on the mainline would significantly reduce travel times and increase connectivity of the Downeaster. In partnership with the Town Council in Falmouth, NNEPRA began the consideration for a potential stop in West Falmouth at Exit 53 to provide greater connectivity from the I-95 corridor and

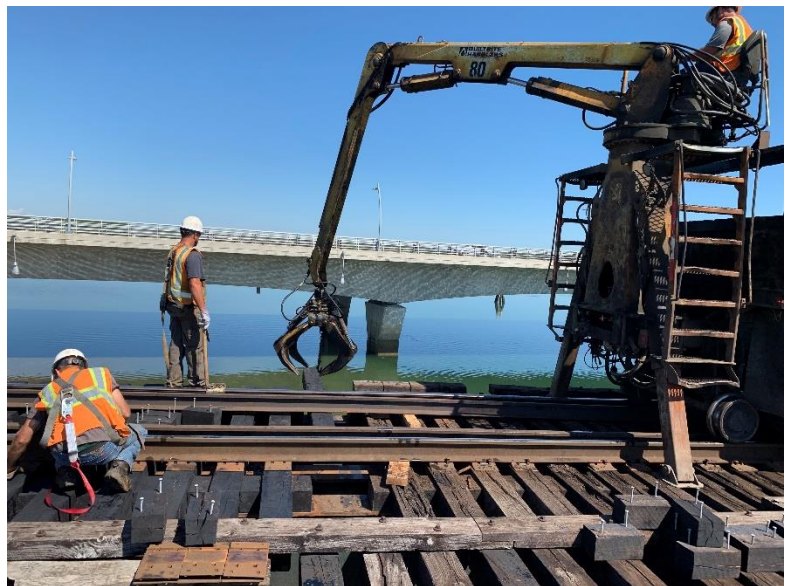
reduce parking demand in Portland. Both planning efforts were significantly delayed due to the challenges from the pandemic.



In early March 2020, Senator Susan Collins announced that NNEPRA had been awarded a \$16 million CRISI Grant from the USDOT for the Well Siding Project, designed to improve Downeaster service reliability and expand the Wells Station facilities to support more Downeaster service to transport Mainers traveling to work in the greater Portland region.

In an effort to take advantage of the unexpected suspension of service, NNEPRA coordinated with Pan Am Railways to expedite some routine maintenance projects which were scheduled for fall of 2020 and would have caused significant service interruptions. As a result, more than 15,000 railroad ties were replaced on the Downeaster corridor between Dover and Plaistow, NH, and bridge timbers were replaced in Saco and Portland during the service suspension period, all without adversely impacting the travelling public.

Earlier in FY20, the new four-mile Royal Siding in Falmouth and Cumberland, ME was completed and put into service, Rockingham Siding in New Hampshire was rehabilitated and returned to full service, and the MaineDOT completed the rehabilitation of the Main St. bridge at grade crossing in Saco, ME.



Looking Ahead to FY2021

The NNEPRA team remains committed to the service recovery of the Amtrak Downeaster and providing safe mobility options for the travelling public.