



# Amtrak Fact Sheet, Fiscal Year 2015

## State of Vermont

### Amtrak-Vermont partnership

- Grants from the State of Vermont help support the daily *Vermont* service from St. Albans to New York and Washington
- State grants also help support the daily *Ethan Allen* express service from Rutland to Albany and New York
- Over 12,000 Vermont residents are members of the Amtrak Guest Rewards frequent user program
- Vermont completed a federally funded track improvement project along the *Vermont* route in 2012

### Amtrak Service & Ridership

Amtrak operates two State Supported trains in Vermont, the *Vermont* (Washington, D.C.-New York-St. Albans) and the *Ethan Allen Express* (New York-Albany-Rutland).

During FY15 Amtrak served the following Vermont locations:

<u>City</u>	<u>Boardings + Alightings</u>
<a href="#">Bellows Falls</a>	4,828
<a href="#">Brattleboro</a>	18,963
<a href="#">Castleton</a>	4,587
<a href="#">Essex Junction</a>	21,315
<a href="#">Montpelier</a>	8,818
<a href="#">Randolph</a>	2,073
<a href="#">Rutland</a>	16,539
<a href="#">St. Albans</a>	4,096
<a href="#">Waterbury</a>	5,891
<a href="#">White River Junction</a>	14,810
<a href="#">Windsor-Mount Ascutney</a>	1,208
<b>Total Vermont Station Usage:</b>	<b>103,128</b>

(down 4.2% from FY14)

## **Procurement/Contracts**

Amtrak spent \$1,153,679 on goods and services in Vermont in FY15, most of it in Burlington.

## **Employment**

At the end of FY15, Amtrak employed 3 Vermont residents. Total wages of Amtrak employees living in Vermont were \$274,221 during FY15.

## **PRIIA Section 209 and State Supported Services**

The Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-432) required, by October 2013, an equitable arrangement of cost sharing between Amtrak and state or public agency partners that provide funding for short-distance, intercity train services. Agreements were reached with all parties, including Vermont, by the deadline, and the services continued to run without interruption.

Both the *Vermont* and the *Ethan Allen Express* are supported by the State of Vermont. In Fiscal 2015, *Ethan Allen Express* ridership was over 52,000, and *Vermont* ridership was over 92,000.

## **Stations**

In 2013, the State purchased the station at White River Junction, which previously had been privately owned. This will enable the State to plan rehabilitation and economic development efforts at the station and surrounding property.

New platforms were installed in 2013 at St. Albans and Waterbury as part of the Accessible Stations Development Program, providing improved train boarding, platform access, and lighting.

## ***Vermont* Route Improvements**

In October 2012, the State of Vermont completed a \$70-million track rehabilitation project along the route of the *Vermont* on track owned by the New England Central Railroad. This project was funded through the ARRA Stimulus program which provided \$50 million in grant funds along with \$20 million in funding being provided by the State. The project consisted of replacing jointed rail with continuously welded rail, new cross ties, grade-crossing safety improvements, and other track improvements along a 190-mile section of track from St. Albans to Vernon (just north of the Massachusetts border). These upgrades will allow trains to travel up to 59 mph (79 mph in some sections). Maximum speeds were raised from 55 to 59 mph from St. Albans to White River Junction; and from 59 to 79 mph White River Junction to the Massachusetts state line. Effective March 18, 2013, the *Vermont* schedule was reduced by 28 minutes as a result of these improvements.

In January 2010, Massachusetts was awarded \$70 million in federal stimulus funds for final design and construction of the “Knowledge Corridor” along the Connecticut River in western Massachusetts. Track restoration began in 2013 and was completed in 2014. Starting December 29, 2014, Amtrak’s *Vermont* service was rerouted to this line, which was served by Amtrak until 1987. This provides a faster service by

its shorter distance and by eliminating a reversal in train direction at Palmer. At the same time, the *Vermont* began serving the former Amtrak station in Northampton and a new stimulus-funded intermodal transit center in Greenfield. A station in Holyoke was constructed by the City of Holyoke, where work continued after the change in route. Service to Holyoke began in summer 2015.

### **Western Corridor improvements**

In September 2013, the State of Vermont was awarded an \$8.9 million federal TIGER grant to rehabilitate a portion of the western corridor between Rutland and Burlington. This grant funded Phase 1 of the project, including installation of seven miles of welded rail and surfacing upgrades to the rail bed between Rutland and Leicester, completed late in 2015. In October 2015, Vermont was awarded another TIGER grant for \$10 million. The State will provide matching funds and proceed with Phase 2 of the project, completion of which will allow restoration of passenger rail service along the corridor. The state-owned rail line will be improved by installing new, heavier-gauge (weight) rail, ballast, and ties between Leicester and Burlington; also new crossing gates, a new passing siding in Pittsford, and new crossover in Leicester to allow for increased operational flexibility. There will be new platforms at Vergennes and Middlebury. Vermont hopes to extend the *Ethan Allen Service* north to Burlington by late 2017.

### **Boston-Montreal High Speed Rail Corridor**

Feasibility and Planning Study: The Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTTrans), in partnership with Massachusetts and Connecticut, is conducting the Boston-Montreal High-Speed Rail Corridor Alternative Alignment Feasibility and Planning Study to identify upgrades and improvements along the Boston-to-Montreal corridor.

The study focuses on the possibility of using the “Inland Route” from Boston to Springfield, then turning north along the Knowledge Corridor and up through Vermont to Montreal. The Inland Route will be studied concurrently under a single consultant contract to ensure that the evaluation of infrastructure improvements and future operations will incorporate both proposed passenger rail services. The study is funded partly with two grants from the Federal Railroad Administration to Vermont and Massachusetts and will follow, predominantly, segments of the Northern New England High Speed Rail Corridor.

