

Rain, rain, go away



The NRC Board of Directors held a special joint board of directors meeting with the board of the Railway Engineering-Maintenance Suppliers Association (REMSA) in Banff, AB, Canada, about 80 miles west of Calgary, this past June. I would like to thank the chairman of the REMSA Board, John Fox of NARSTCO, for making our Canadian trip a reality. The NRC board worked through our agenda with detailed discussions on grassroots political events, legislative strategies, conference planning, our new NRC scholarship, safety practices and regulations and membership growth.

In addition, I would like to extend a special thank you to our railroader guests who attended this meeting and participated in productive discussions about how contractors and suppliers can best help railroads accomplish their daily missions: Brent Laing of Canadian Pacific, Dale Ophardt of CSX, Jim Carter of Norfolk Southern, Scott Linn and Ryan Ratledge of Genesee & Wyoming, Ken Koff of OmniTrax and Joe Smack of Amtrak.

The time spent with our colleagues from REMSA and our railroader guests was very informative and enjoyable. In fact, Mother Nature noted what a great time we were having in Canada and didn't want us to leave. While we were in Banff, historically heavy rains in Calgary and the mountains to the west of Calgary caused epic flooding in all of Southern Alberta. Our planned trip from Banff to Calgary was rendered impossible when the flooding washed out the CP track and washed out the main Highway 1 to Canada (the TransCanada Highway) and also washed out the two alternative highway routes to Calgary. Our group eventually re-routed about 300 miles west of Banff, over the Continental Divide, to the lovely town of Kamloops in British Columbia, where people could eventually catch flights home.

Luckily, the bus trip west provided spectacular views of the Canadian Rockies, including a few good looks at CP's famous spiral tunnels in Yoho National Park, a rail engineering and construction marvel that still astonishes today. And, in an industry full of executives who have made a living by being flexible and adaptable to changing circumstances, it wasn't surprising that the group rolled with the punches admirably and made the best of a challenging travel situation.

Now that we're back on dry land in the good 'ol USA, I hope to see everyone at the AREMA/REMSA/RSI/RSSI Railway Interchange Conference, September 29 - October 2, in Indianapolis, Ind.

Finally, don't forget to save the date: the 2014 NRC Conference will be held at J.W. Marriott in Palm Desert, Calif., from Sunday, January 5, 2014, through Wednesday, January 8, 2014. Updated information is available at www.nrcma.org/go/conference, you can now register online at www.nrcma.org/form3.cfm and you can book your hotel room at the J.W. Marriott Desert Springs by calling the resort at 877-622-3140 and mention that you are with the "NRC Conference" or go online to <https://resweb.passkey.com/go/nrcma2014>.

At the conference, we'll have senior engineering and procurement executives from the major freight railroads, commuter railroads and rail transit agencies presenting the details of their organization's upcoming capital investment plans. And, given that it's in Palm Springs in January, we'll try to leave a few minutes here and there for attendees to get outside and enjoy the weather too.

Until next time, work safe and keep those around you working safe.

by Terry Benton,
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