Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit District

General Manager's Report – March 2019

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COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Community Outreach| Presentations and Community Events

In anticipation of reaching the 100,000-cyclist mark, the community outreach team connected with bicyclists on board and asked them share their reasons for riding SMART. The response was spectacular and more than 100 videos were collected and uploaded to SMART's YouTube channel. Cyclists were excited to talk about how the SMART train has improved their quality of life and upgraded their daily commute. The videos were used to promote the onboard 100k-cyclist celebration that took place on March 14. Conductors handed out 1,500 special passes good for free rides to cyclists with their bikes on the train. The response from the community was overwhelmingly positive and passengers and crew enjoyed taking part in the experience.

Our conductors handed out 1,500 passes for free rides to say "thank you" to cyclists who bring their bikes on board as part of their commute and for recreation.

Videos of cyclists sharing their reasons to ride SMART have been viewed more than 4,000 times across all of SMART's social media channels. You can view them all on SMART's YouTube page:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCAqmoxJO5D6ysPQAgxYyN_g

Sharing Their Reasons to Ride

Miguel from Santa Rosa takes the train with his bike five days a week, from Santa Rosa to San Rafael and back.

Brianna from Novato uses her bike to make the connection from the train to her classes at Sonoma State University.

Ben from Petaluma takes the train with his bike instead of sitting in traffic. It gives him more time and energy to play with his kids at the end of the day.

The outreach team is preparing for another busy fair season this spring and summer. SMART attended the Cloverdale Citrus Fair in February. SMART's attendance at this long-standing event gives the residents of northern Sonoma County the opportunity to learn more about how to ride the train and ask questions about service. Safety information is always circulated at community events and fairs, along with schedules, fare sheets and safety-related giveaways.

Hundreds of fairgoers and families visited SMART's booth at the Cloverdale Citrus fair to connect with the outreach team and learn about rail safety.

SMART's rail safety education program reaches out to communities along the right-of-way where trains run frequently. Students in schools and communities in close proximity to railroad tracks and crossings are a central focus for rail safety education, as well as communities where construction is taking place. This month, SMART educated students at a Rohnert Park school located near the tracks and discussed trespassing and crossing safety.

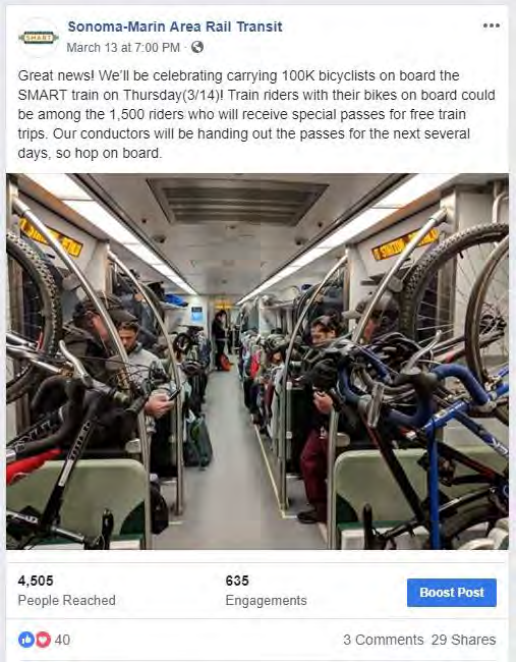
Since the last SMART Board meeting, outreach staff has participated in the following community events and presentations:

- March 24 | Group Trip: Dominican University group (Novato)
- March 14 | 100,000 Bicycle Celebration (On Board)
- March 5 | University Elementary School (Rohnert Park)
- March 5 | Sons in Retirement Presentation (San Rafael)
- February 16 | Cloverdale Citrus Fair (Cloverdale)

MARKETING

Digital Programs | Social Media

SMART's digital platforms continue to grow. The cyclist video campaign performed well on social media and increased engagement across the board. A full playlist of over 100 videos can be found on the Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit YouTube page.



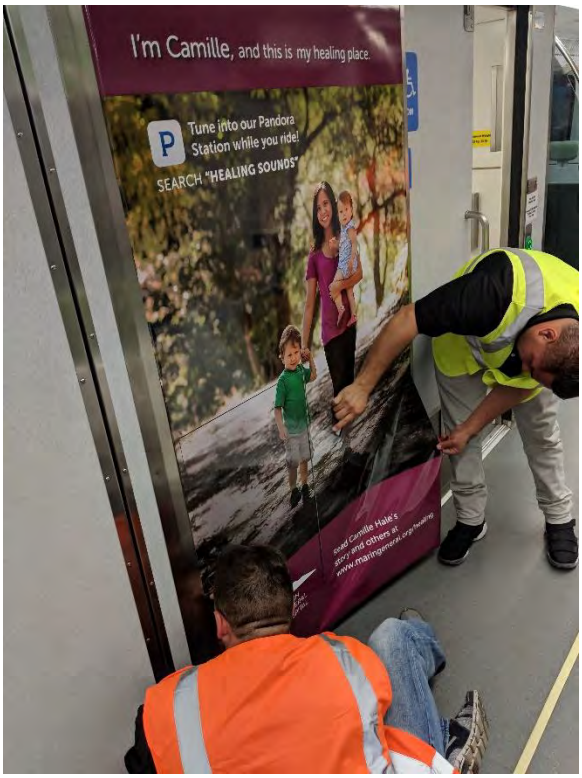
Topics of interest on social media this month included construction updates for the Larkspur extension, information on the ferry connection to San Francisco, and general safety.

SMART also uses social media to engage with the public and gather feedback, which is often regarding schedules, transit connections, and other service-related issues. Social media platforms are regularly monitored for comments and updated with new posts daily.

The most popular post since the last board meeting was the announcement for the 100,000-cyclist celebration.

Advertising Sales

SMART's revenue-generating advertising sales program continues to be strong, with several advertisers purchasing advertising space on board SMART trains for a full year in advance. With the addition of the new train cars, the Larkspur extension, and the planned opening of the Larkspur and Novato Downtown stations, advertising sales are expected grow well into 2020.



Media | News Coverage

- March 25, *North Bay cyclists feel let down by SMART bike project* (KCBS 740 AM Radio)
- March 25, *Cyclists upset over SMART's delays in completing bike path* (Petaluma Argus Courier)
- March 25, *CA: With only 16 miles finished, cyclists upset by SMART's delays in completing promised bike path* (Mass Transit Magazine)
- March 24, *With only 16 miles finished, cyclists upset by SMART's delays in completing promised bike path* (Santa Rosa Press Democrat)
- March 23, *Railroad repairs forces closure of Highway 37 in Sonoma County* (KRON TV Channel 4)
- March 22, *Green light for expanded use of electric bikes in Marin County parks* (Marin Independent Journal)
- March 21, *Prospects of Marin-Sonoma transit-oriented development: An interview with David Bouquillon of Laulima* (North Bay Business Journal)
- March 19, *SMART carries 100,000th bicyclist* (Progressive Railroading)
- March 14, *The Bay Area's 11 biggest transportation projects* (San Francisco Chronicle)
- March 13, *200 homes coming to former Healdsburg lumber mill* (Santa Rosa Press Democrat)
- March 12, *Affordable housing tops list of concerns in Marin resident survey* (Marin Independent Journal)
- March 11, *SMART lands $12.5 million grant to extend bike path* (North Bay Business Journal)
- March 11, *State and regional leaders want to jumpstart efforts to avoid more Highway 37 storm closures* (Petaluma Argus Courier)
- March 10, *State and regional leaders want to jumpstart efforts to avoid more Highway 37 storm closures* (Sonoma Index-Tribune)
- March 10, *Close to Home: Getting Highway 37 solutions right, if not right now* (Santa Rosa Press Democrat)
- March 9, *State and regional leaders want to jumpstart efforts to avoid more Highway 37 storm closures* (Santa Rosa Press Democrat)
- March 9, *SMART lands $12.5 million grant to extend bike path* (Sonoma Index-Tribune)
- March 7, *SMART lands $12.5 million grant to extend bike path* (Santa Rosa Press Democrat)
- March 6, *Hwy 37 flood woes: study to identify potential solutions* (Novato Patch)
- March 6, *Bike program expands to link with train route* (KCBS 740 AM Radio)

- March 4, *SMART's review of ticket prices could come next month — or next year* (Sonoma Index-Tribune)
- March 4, *When will SMART reconsider its fares?* (Petaluma Argus Courier)
- March 3, *SMART's review of ticket prices could come next month — or next year* (Santa Rosa Press Democrat)
- March 3, *Close to Home: Let's have North Coast rail and trail* (Santa Rosa Press Democrat)
- March 1, *Bikeshare coming to Sonoma County SMART stations* (Petaluma Argus Courier)
- March 1, *Closure of westbound Highway 37 near Novato to stretch into next week after latest storm damage* (Santa Rosa Press Democrat)
- February 28, *Westbound lanes still closed on Highway 37* (Santa Rosa Press Democrat)
- February 28, *North Bay storm aftermath includes extended Highway 37 closure* (The Mercury News)
- February 25, *Tab for Highway 37 flood repairs already at $1.8 million as next big storm arrives* (Santa Rosa Press Democrat)
- February 22, *New storm threat renews Marin flooding, Sausalito mudslide concerns* (Marin Independent Journal)
- February 20, *Caltrans says Highway 37 could fully reopen by Wednesday afternoon* (North Bay Business Journal)
- February 20, *Highway 37 reopens, but still flood prone* (Marin Independent Journal)
- February 20, *Highway 37 expected to reopen today* (The Mercury News)
- February 20, *Caltrans races to reopen Highway 37 by Wednesday afternoon* (Petaluma Argus Courier)
- February 19, *Highway 37 reopened early Wednesday* (Marin Independent Journal)
- February 19, *Santa Rosa bike path plan has big ideas, fewer funding guarantees* (Santa Rosa Press Democrat)
- February 19, *CA: Santa Rosa bike path plan has big ideas, fewer funding guarantees* (Mass Transit Magazine)
- February 18, *Closed Highway 37 lanes could open by Wednesday* (Vallejo Times Herald)
- February 18, *Santa Rosa bike path plan has big ideas, fewer funding guarantees* (Santa Rosa Press Democrat)
- February 18, *Closed Highway 37 lanes could open by Wednesday; county proclaims storm emergency* (The Mercury News)

- February 17, *Closed Highway 37 lanes could open by Wednesday; county proclaims storm emergency* (Marin Independent Journal)
- February 16, *Marin County officials issue emergency declaration due to storm damage* (SF Gate)
- February 14, *Traffic: Bay Area roads washed out by floods, wind advisories in effect* (San Francisco Chronicle)
- February 14, *Authorities warn of potential flooding after Novato levee breach* (KPIX/CBS Channel 5)
- February 11, *North Coast's Great Railroad Trail would convert decaying railway into 320-mile pathway* (Sonoma Index-Tribune)
- February 10, *North Coast's Great Railroad Trail would convert decaying railway into 320-mile pathway* (Santa Rosa Press Democrat)

LARKSPUR EXTENSION PROJECT

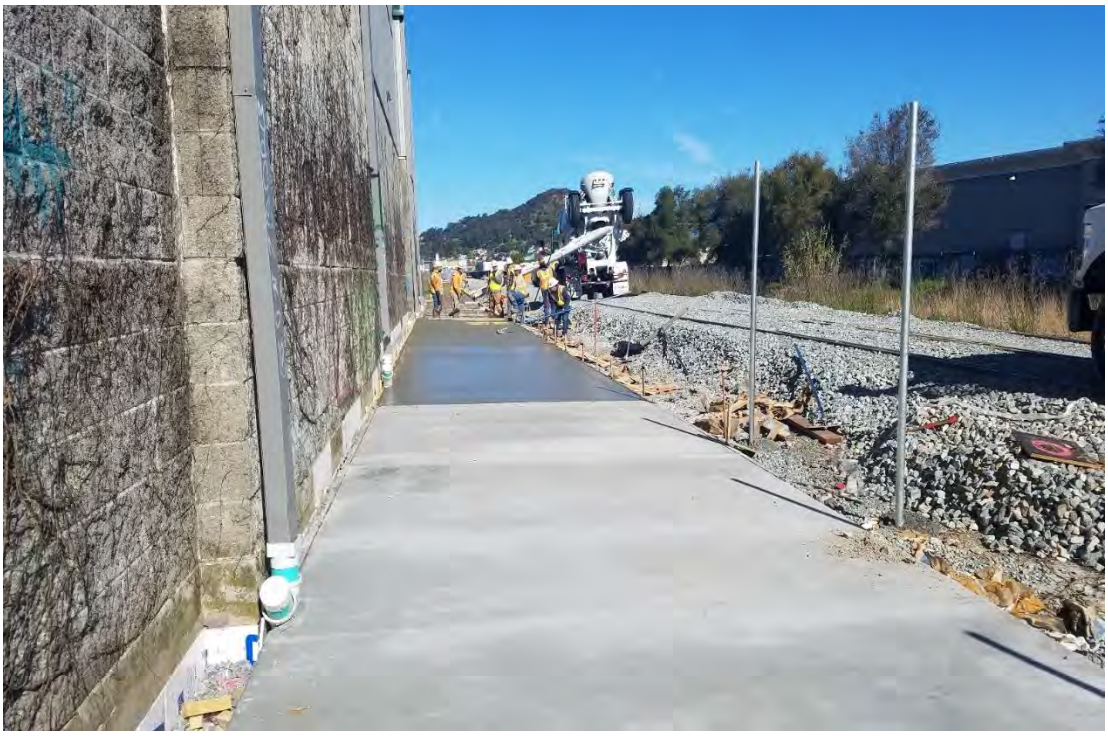
- Francisco Boulevard West roadway construction is wrapping up and the roadway is planned to open in April.
- Track construction is complete between the Cal Park Tunnel and Andersen Drive.
- The track construction is ongoing between Larkspur Station and the Cal Park Tunnel.
- The platform shelters, lighting poles and platform hand railings have been installed at the Larkspur Station.
- Modifications to the Bettini Transit Center began in November and will continue into April.
- Construction of the City of San Rafael Multi-Use Pathway from Rice Drive to Andersen Drive is ongoing.
- Train control and communications systems installation work is ongoing with the installation of pedestrian gates, signal houses and wiring devices.

Larkspur Station- Installation of platform light poles

Relocation of a water line at Francisco Boulevard West

Bettini Transit Center – reconstructing a portion of Platform B

Track construction between Larkspur Platform and Cal Park Tunnel



Multi Use Pathway-Pathway construction near Andersenn Drive (paid for by the City of San Rafael)

Installation of crossing protection gates at Francisco Boulevard West

Grade Crossing control house installation at Francisco Boulevard West

WINDSOR EXTENSION PROJECT

- Preliminary 30% design plans under development.
- Environmental permit applications are being prepared.
- Utility investigation is complete.

Existing industry spur along the Windsor Track alignment

PEDESTRIAN SAFETY ENHANCEMENT MEASURES

- Project is out to bid with anticipated contract award in April 2019.
- The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) is currently reviewing the proposed safety measures.
- SMART and PG&E are coordinating to relocate several gas vents to accommodate the proposed safety measures.

Gas vent requiring relocation at Civic Center Drive, San Rafael

Z gate, Airport Station

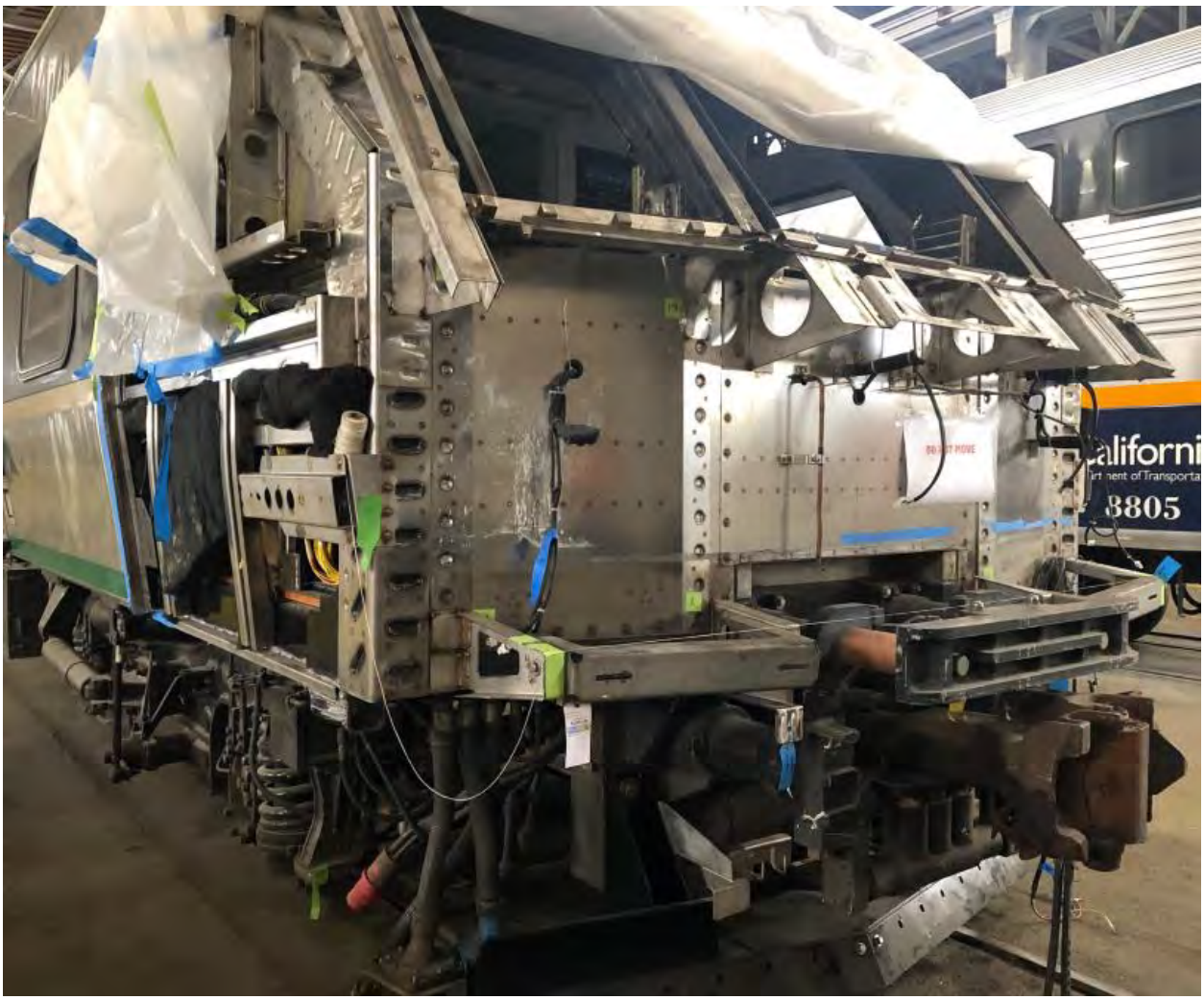
PETALUMA PAYRAN TO SOUTHPOINT MULTI-USE PATHWAY

- Project is out to bid with anticipated contract award in May 2019.
- Pre-bid meeting was held Friday March 22, 2019.
- For this project all environmental mitigation is on-site and will be completed with the construction contract.

Typical Pedestrian Crossing Bridge - a similar design will be used for the Payran Pathway

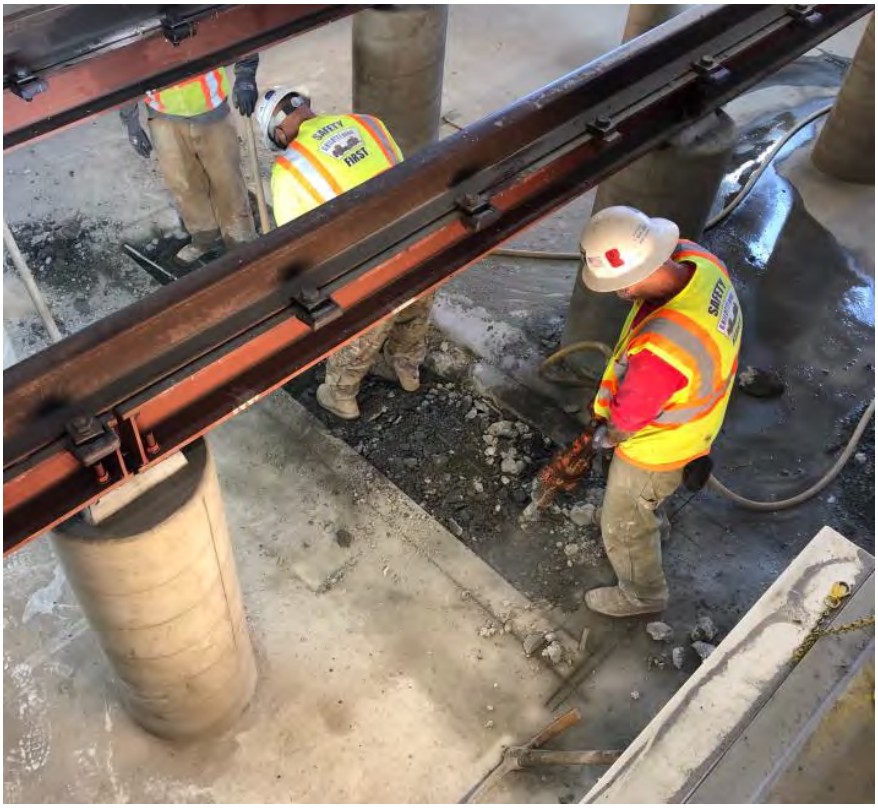
VEHICLE ENGINEERING

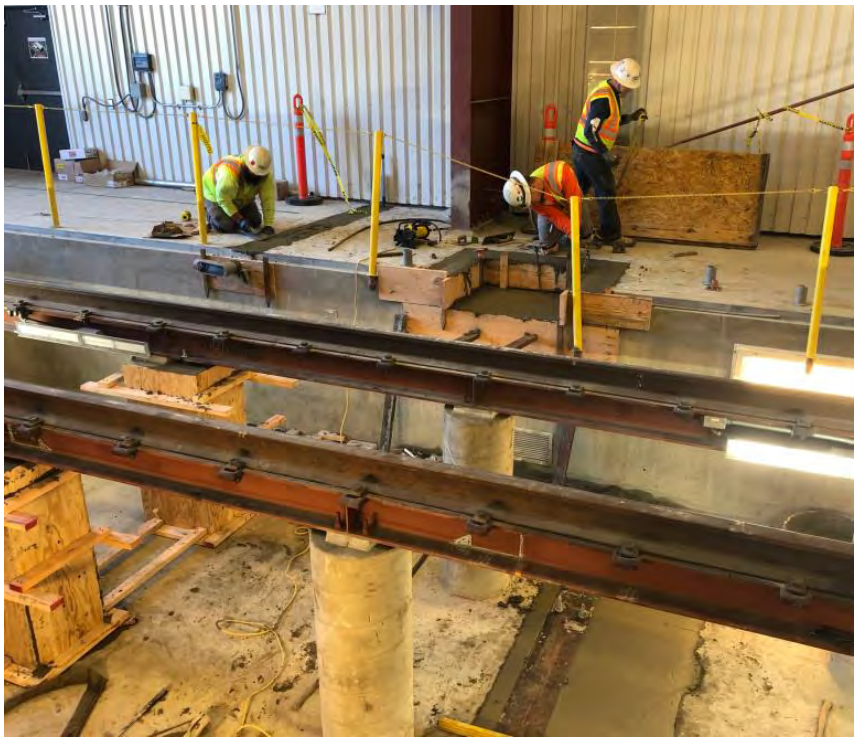
The damage DMU 110 that the Box Truck collided with it has been progressing well with subframe brackets being added to the car in preparation for the front fiberglass mask to be installed.



The SMART fleet is undergoing modifications to the drivetrain in order to prevent issues discovered on Metrolinx fleet in Toronto.

In preparation for the arrival of SMART's wheel trueing machine, Ghilotti Bros., Inc. has completed much of the required civil work to SMART's Vehicle Maintenance pit. The machines installation is planned to begin mid-April.





OPERATIONS

MAINTENANCE OF WAY:

- Maintenance of Way assisted NWPCo. with washout repairs at Novato Creek adjacent to Highway 37. We provided two employees, our hyrail dump truck, and a mini-excavator for 3 days to assist them rebuilding embankment that washed out after a levee failure.
- In late February the North Bay experienced the second major storm event of the month. SMART was impacted by high water as high as 6" over the rails at Hannah Ranch road crossing. This caused delays to service as train speeds were reduced at this location and a brief bus bridge when the water became too deep to safely travel over in a DMU. SMART personnel were continuously monitoring conditions at this location and several others throughout the two days of heavy rain. We also experienced fast moving water over the rails at Ely Road near Petaluma. This began after the last revenue train passed this location and subsided prior to the following days revenue service schedule. There was no damage to the track structure at either Hannah Ranch or Ely Road once the water subsided. A power switch machine was damaged by flood water at Hannah Ranch and will have to be replaced. Staff spent several days cleaning up debris from the track at multiple locations left behind by the storm and high water.
- Completed a successful inspection by Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and California Public Utility Commission (CPUC) Signal and Train Control Inspectors. They spent 4 days on inspecting SMART's grade crossing automatic warning devices and train control system, including an annual interlocking test at the Haystack Bridge.
- SMART hosted a test by the Federal Railroad Administration's automated track geometry test car on March 1st and 2nd. The main track was successfully tested from San Rafael station to Airport Boulevard.
- Staff completed required annual training for all Employee's in Charge as required by the Federal Railroad Administration Roadway Worker Protection Regulations.
- Two Signal Technicians attended a week-long off-site training class to receive in depth training on our signal controllers and microprocessors.

TRANSPORTATION:

- February on time performance was 96%.
- Staff continues to train 1 Controller Supervisor and 2 Conductors to become Engineer-Conductors.
- Transportation Department Training: Security Awareness Training using E-Path and First Aid, CPR & AED Training.

VEHICLE MAINTENANCE:

- Commissioning Diesel Multiple Units 115, 116, 117, 118
- Performed conduit repair on the air supply unit. This involved Diesel Multiple Units 106 and 104
- Performed annual maintenance on 6 Diesel Multiple Units
- Automatic Train Control maintenance performed on 11 Diesel Multiple Units
- Changed out wheels on Diesel Multiple Units 105, 109, 113 and 114 due to ride quality
- Performed under car inspection on Diesel Multiple Units 101- 114 (excluding DMU 110 due to wreck repair work at Alstom)
- Performed engine swap, reverse gear replacement and transmission replace replacement on Diesel Multiple Units 117, 106, 104 and 111

HUMAN RESOURCES

CURRENT OPEN RECRUITMENTS:

- Engineer-Conductor
- Real Estate Officer
- Controller Supervisor

INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED:

- Laborer
- Information Systems Specialist (internal)

MISCELLANEOUS:

- Labor Negotiations with the SMART Engineers Conductors Association will begin on March 29, 2019. The current contract is set to expire on June 30, 2019.

- HR staff conducted a complete benefits audit following open enrollment changes that went into effect at the beginning of the new year to ensure that staff were enrolled in the correct plans with correct premiums.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Code Compliance continues to conduct daily sweeps of the right-of-way and pathway. The pathway has proven to be a more attractive area for homeless camps as it's typically flat and further way from fast moving trains. Because of the increase in homeless along the pathway designed for pedestrian and cyclist use, removal of homeless is a constant issue.

STATE PROP
NO
TRESPASSING

Despite the rise camping on the pathways, there are still daily issues with trespassing on the right of way near trains and camping on the right of way.

Note the train passing next to this trespasser in Santa Rosa.

The below trespasser was under the platform at Railroad Square, Santa Rosa

Staff is gearing up for two upcoming training exercises. SMART is hosting both exercises with the first being in May. Transportation agencies, fire, police and related fields will be invited to attend this Bay Area wide exercise.

Staff met with the California Public Utility Commission (CPUC) and separately with a consultant in Downtown Petaluma to review the intersection at Washington Street to discuss ways to improve the area to prevent vehicles from driving down SMART tracks. This driving behavior is not only dangerous for the driver, but causes damage to SMART tracks, damage to equipment and delays the system.

SMART held a human trafficking training for operations staff. The training was provided by Marin County Human Trafficking Coalition and provided valuable insight as to ways to recognize human trafficking and how to report it.

SMART requested Department of Homeland Security to provide training to SMART Operations staff on IED's (Improvised Explosive Device) and suspicious packages. All of SMART's engineer and conductors received the training by a bomb technician specialist from Department of Homeland Security.

SMART is currently training all required staff in Operations for CPR training. In addition to Operations staff, support staff was also offered this training held earlier this month in Petaluma.

GRANTS, LEGISLATION, PLANNING AND REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

LEGISLATION

AB 147 (Burke & McGuire): This measure would update existing law regarding retailers engaged in business in California to comply with the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in Wayfair v. South Dakota. The SMART Board supported this bill on March 6th and transmitted via letter to the Assemblymember Burke and Senator McGuire, each Chair of their legislative body's respective revenue and finance committees. AB 147 was approved by the Assembly with a vote of 60-0, and is scheduled to be heard by Senator McGuire's Senate Governance & Finance Committee on March 27. Senate Appropriations Committee is scheduled to hear the bill on April 1, with a full Senate consideration possible on April 4. Should it be approved, the bill would also have to move back to the Assembly for a concurrence vote before going to the Governor for signature.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL PLANNING ACTIVITIES

Regional Transportation Plan Update: The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) has begun the process of updating the Regional Transportation Plan, currently named *Plan Bay Area 2040*. The updated financially constrained plan will be called *Plan Bay Area 2050*. MTC is also developing an unconstrained transportation vision plan called Horizon and has requested submittals of transit and roadway projects that have never been submitted for inclusion in a Regional Transportation Plan. MTC has released guidance for Plan Bay Area 2050's Request for Regionally Significant Projects and requested that all projects be submitted by June 30, 2019. In the coming months, the Transportation Authority of Marin and the Sonoma County Transportation Authority will be compiling local jurisdiction and single-county transit operator submittals. As a multi-county transit district, SMART will be submitting projects directly after SMART Board review. Staff anticipates SMART Board review of any submittals by the end of May.

State Route 37 Project: The Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM), Sonoma County Transportation Authority (SCTA), Napa County Transportation Planning Agency (NCTPA) and Solano Transportation Authority (STA) have entered into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to continue to jointly study needed improvements to State Route (SR) 37. The most recent meeting was held on Thursday March 7, 2019. Topics discussed included a presentation by the Napa Valley Transportation Authority on travel behavior and a transit feasibility study in the corridor, State Route 37 project coordination opportunities, and update on the Memorandum of Understanding status, an update on a Transportation Authority of Marin planning grant to study the Marin portion of SR 37, and updates on the other segments of SR 37. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday June 6, 2019.

Airport Area Specific Plan Advisory Team Meeting: The County of Sonoma has been working on a Specific Plan for the Santa Rosa Airport Area over the last couple of years. The consulting group hired to work on the plan will be publishing the draft preferred alternative in the coming weeks. Staff attended the advisory team meeting scheduled for Thursday February 27, 2019, to review the draft preferred alternative and provide input.

Local Planning Department Notification and Coordination Tracking: SMART Planning staff tracks and reviews all notices sent by local jurisdictions for projects occurring adjacent to or nearby the railroad tracks. To date in 2019 staff has received and reviewed 42 different notices.

SYSTEM ACCESS PLANNING ACTIVITIES

Transit Coordination Meetings:

- March 6, 2019 - Staff attended the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) monthly Transit Finance Working group meeting.
- March 13, 2019 – Staff attended Sonoma County Transportation Authority's monthly Transit Technical Advisory Committee meeting.
- March 13, 2019 – Staff attended a coordination meeting with North Bay Transit Operators and San Joaquin Thruway Bus regarding potential operational modernizations to the Thruway routes and service. Future meetings between operators are planned to advance implementation of any service changes.

Transit Support Programs:

Means Based Fare Discount Working Group – In 2015 MTC launched a study to determine if a transit fare program based on household income would be feasible and effective. SMART has been participating in the MTC-hosted Means Based Fare Discount Working Group, with monthly meetings and a recent launch of a Clipper-based means-based fare pilot program on selected regional transit operators. SMART staff attended the most recent working group meeting, held on Tuesday, March 12, 2019.

BICYCLE ACCESS AND PARKING

Bike Share: The Sonoma County Transportation Authority (SCTA) and Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM) submitted a joint application to the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) to receive a grant to create a bike share system in close proximity to the SMART stations. SCTA and TAM recently released Request for Proposals from qualified vendors for professional services to develop, launch and operate the bike share system. Proposals must be received by 5:00pm on March 29, 2019, and conservative estimates are that the program would launch in Spring 2020. SMART will continue to collaborate on program implementation going forward.