

2.4 RAIL TRANSPORTATION

Rail Transportation on Cape Cod has a history of over 150 years. Currently, there are 53.8 miles of track on Cape Cod, with different segments owned by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation and federal agencies.

2.4.1 HISTORY OF RAILROADS ON CAPE COD

In 1848, the first railroad tracks on Cape Cod were laid from Middleboro to Sandwich by the Cape Cod Branch Railroad. After tracks were built as far as Hyannis and Yarmouthport in 1854, the Cape Cod Branch Railroad became the Cape Cod Railroad. In 1865, railroad tracks were built from Yarmouthport to Orleans. These tracks were acquired by the Cape Cod Railroad three years later. As rail service increased during the mid-1800s, sailing packets and stage coaches became less numerous. Tracks reached Woods Hole and Provincetown in 1872 as Cape Cod Railroad merged with Old Colony



FIGURE 1 - EXISTING RAILROAD BRIDGE SPANNING THE CANAL

and Newport to become the Old Colony Railroad. The Harwich and Chatham Spur, which was the final segment of rail track built on Cape Cod, was completed in 1887. The Old Colony Railroad was leased to New York, New Haven, and Hartford Railroad in 1894. In 1910, the Buzzards Bay Railroad Bridge was completed over the first Cape Cod Canal, which was under construction. After the canal was widened in 1933-35, a new railroad bridge was constructed. At the time, the vertical lift railroad bridge was the longest of its kind in the world.

After a century of expansion, rail on Cape Cod saw a dramatic decline. The introduction of the automobile, a poor economy, and war led to the decline of rail service on Cape Cod. Regular passenger service to Provincetown was suspended in 1938. Then, between 1950 and 1959, the Mid-Cape Highway was constructed between Sagamore and Orleans. The Mid-Cape Highway allowed automobiles greater access to the Cape than before, and greater competition with rail services. In 1957, rail service to Woods hole was discontinued. Two years later, decreased ridership put an end to year round passenger rail service on Cape Cod. Freight trains continued service until the mid-1960s. Cape Cod railroad tracks were traded to the bankrupt Penn Central in 1969 and purchased by the

Wareham, Buzzards Bay, and Sandwich. During the summer of 1988, Amtrak also offered service from New York City to Falmouth, but discontinued the service when state subsidies were discontinued. Low ridership prevented the continued success of the “Cape Codder” service. In 1995, Amtrak forced passengers to transfer in Providence, leading to a drop in ridership of almost three-quarters. The Cape Cod Transit Task Force’s Five-Year Public Transportation Plan states the “Cape Codder” service was discontinued in 1996. According that report, resumption of this service is not economically feasible for the foreseeable future due to financial and equipment constraints, as well as a lack of subsidy.

The Commonwealth had contracted with the Cape Cod & Hyannis Railroad to provide service to Boston from Hyannis and Falmouth for approximately 3-5 years in the 1980s. Service was discontinued when the state went into recession.

2.4.2 RAIL INFRASTRUCTURE

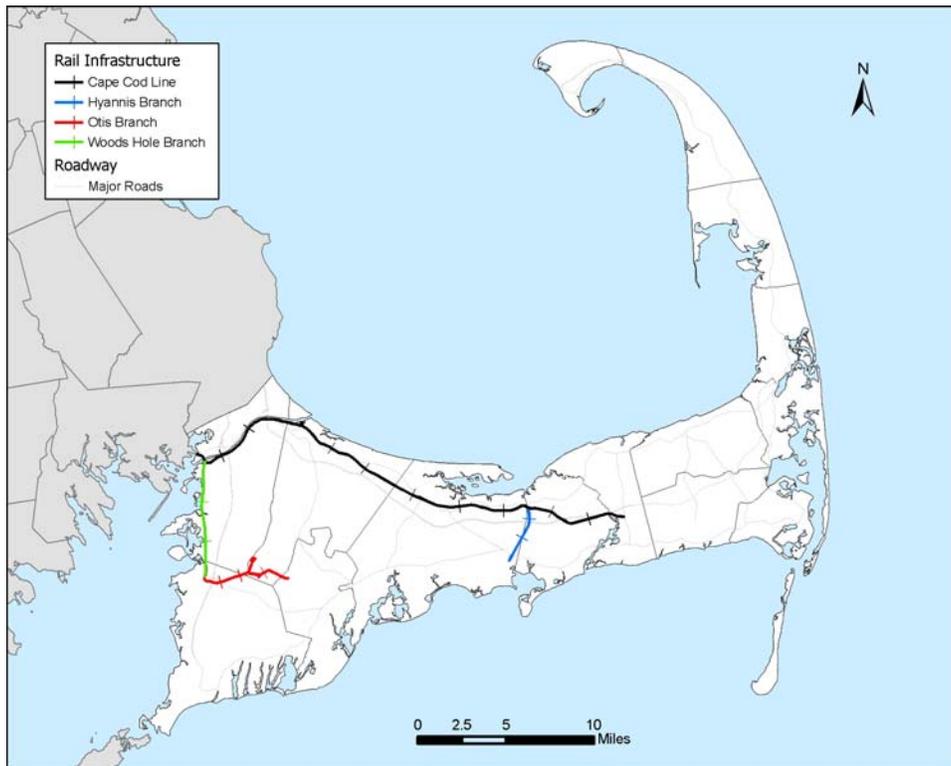


FIGURE 3: CAPE COD RAIL LINE AND BRANCHES

There are many ways to consider rail infrastructure on Cape Cod. One way is to think of rail tracks as a series of lines and branches. Much like the way the roots of a tree feed the trunk with nutrients and water, the branches of a railroad feed the mainline with rail traffic. Cape Cod has a single rail line, the Cape Cod Line, with three branches.

Together, they form a network of rail infrastructure which serves the freight and recreational needs of Cape Cod residents and visitors.

TABLE 1: RAIL TRACKS ON CAPE COD

| | | Total Mi. | Percent of Total |
|----------------|-------------------------|--------------|---------------------|
| Cape Cod Total | | 53.8 | |
| By Rail Line | Cape Cod Line | 32.0 | 59.5% |
| | Hyannis Branch | 4.4 | 8.2% |
| | Otis Branch | 10.4 | 19.3% |
| | Woods Hole Branch | 7.0 | 13.0% |
| By Owner | Federally Owned | 9.8 | 18.2% |
| | Army Corps of Engineers | 0.2 | 0.3% |
| | MassDOT | 43.8 | 81.4% |
| By Town | Barnstable | 11.2 | 20.8% |
| | Bourne | 14.4 | 26.8% |
| | Dennis | 1.2 | 2.2% |
| | Falmouth | 4.0 | 7.4% |
| | Mashpee | 0.4 | 0.8% |
| | Sandwich | 14.8 | 27.5% |
| | Yarmouth | 7.8 | 14.5% |

2.4.2.1 Cape Cod Line

Waterways and railroad branches divide the Cape Cod Line into four segments. The first segment is located in Buzzards Bay in Bourne. Tracks start at a bridge over the Cohasset Narrows and run to the foot of the Cape Cod Canal Railroad Bridge (Figure 4 and Figure 5). This segment is owned by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) and leased to Cape Rail, Inc. According to a study done for the Cape Cod Transit Task Force, these tracks are rated for 30 MPH travel. The Bourne Chamber of Commerce currently occupies the former Buzzards Bay Station building south of Main Street (Figure 6). The rail platform at this station is still in existence, as well as a switch leading to an out of service side track. Formerly, a short spur ran east into what is now Bridge Park. In total, the segment is 0.71 miles long, has two bridges over the Cohasset Narrows and Cape Cod Canal, and one road crossing at Academy Ave.

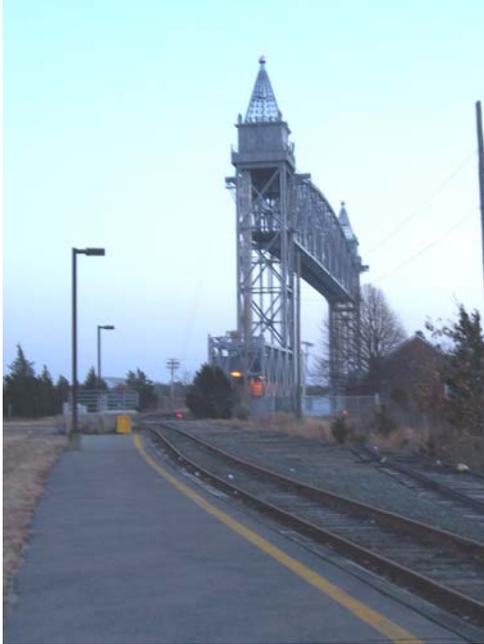


FIGURE 4: RAIL TRACKS LEADING SOUTH TO THE CAPE COD CANAL BRIDGE



FIGURE 5: RAIL TRACKS LEADING NORTH TO THE COHASSET NARROWS



FIGURE 6: OLD DEPOT STATION, CURRENTLY BOURNE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Cape Cod Line continues over the Cape Cod Canal Railroad Bridge to the Canal Junction where the Woods Hole Branch splits off the south. It is here that the second segment of the Cape Cod Line continues, following the Cape Cod Canal and then running alongside Route 6A through Sandwich and Barnstable. Out of service side tracks and former stations can be seen in West Barnstable. Only a platform remains in Sandwich Station, located off of Jarves Street. West Barnstable Station, located on Route 149 in Barnstable, has been preserved even though it is no longer in use. The Cape Cod Line continues to the Yarmouth wye at Willow Street in Yarmouth. Here, the Hyannis Branch turns south, while the Cape Cod Line continues to the east. An out of service and disconnected segment of track sits to the north of the main line and stretches several

hundred feet on either side of Willow Street (**Figure 11**). MassDOT owns this segment of the Cape Cod Line, from the Cape Cod Canal to Yarmouthport, and leases it to Cape Rail, Inc. The Transit Task Force study also rated this segment for 30 MPH travel. In total, the segment contains 23.31 miles of track, one bridge over Mill Creek in Sandwich, 4 grade separated roadway crossings, and 40 total roadway crossings.



FIGURE 7: RAIL TRACKS WEST OF THE SAGAMORE BRIDGE



FIGURE 8: RAIL TRACKS EAST OF MARY DUNN RD. IN BARNSTABLE



FIGURE 9: RAIL TRACKS AND SWITCH WEST OF WILLOW STREET IN YARMOUTH



FIGURE 10: RAIL CROSSING AT WILLOW STREET IN YARMOUTH, FACING EAST

East of Willow Street, the Cape Cod Line continues towards Dennis on its third segment. This is the easternmost section of railroad still in use on Cape Cod. It extends from Willow Street in Yarmouth to the Yarmouth Waste Management Facility just west of Station Avenue. The connection to the Waste Management Facility can be made from the mainline in either direction. As with the rest of the Cape Cod Line, MassDOT owns this entire segment and leases it to Cape Rail, Inc. In total, the segment contains 3.38 miles of track, the grade separated crossing of Route 6, and 23 total roadway crossings.



FIGURE 11: AN OUT OF SERVICE TRACK RUNS SEVERAL HUNDRED FEET ON EITHER SIDE OF WILLOW STREET IN YARMOUTH



FIGURE 12: RAIL TRACKS EAST OF WILLOW STREET IN YARMOUTH



FIGURE 13: RAIL TRACKS IN YARMOUTH, FACING WEST. THE SHINY METAL SURFACE OF THE RAIL TRACKS INDICATES THEIR CONTINUED USE.



FIGURE 14: RAIL TRACKS IN YARMOUTH WEST OF STATION AVENUE. ALONG WITH THE STOP SIGN, STOPPERS ON THE TRACKS PREVENT TRAINS FROM GOING TOO FAR.

The last segment of the Cape Cod line, starts at the Yarmouth Waste Management Facility east of Station Avenue and crosses the Bass River via a bridge. The Cape Cod Line used to continue all the way to Provincetown, with the Chatham Branch starting west of Route 124 in Harwich. However, the tracks were dismantled and a portion of the right-of-way was converted into the Cape Cod Rail Trail, which serves bicycle users and recreational purposes. Currently, however, the Cape Cod Line extends as far as Route 134 in Dennis. This final segment of track is out of service, abandoned, and not usable by train. Vegetation has encroached upon the rail tracks, crossing signals have been left in disrepair, and road crossings have been paved over (**Figure 16**). MassDOT owns the right-of-way and is negotiating a lease with the towns of Yarmouth and Dennis. Plans

for the westerly extension of the Rail Trail through Yarmouth to Willow Street are currently under design.



FIGURE 15: RAIL TRACKS EAST OF STATION AVENUE IN YARMOUTH



FIGURE 16: RAIL TRACKS EAST OF GREAT WESTERN ROAD, YARMOUTH. THE RAIL TRACKS HAVE BEEN PAVED OVER, WHILE VEGETATION AND A BOULDER BLOCK THE WAY.



FIGURE 17: BASS RIVER RAIL BRIDGE, FACING WEST



FIGURE 18: OUT OF SERVICE RAIL TRACKS WEST OF ROUTE 134 IN DENNIS

In sum, the Cape Cod Line is the backbone of rail service on Cape Cod. It stretches 31.09 miles, and includes 3 bridges over waterways, 8 grade separated roadway crossings, and 51 total roadway crossings. The Cape Cod Line forms the majority of regional rail infrastructure. It serves as the only access to Cape Cod by rail, and is used by both Mass Coastal freight services and Cape Cod Central Railroad.

2.4.2.2 Hyannis Branch

The Hyannis Branch begins at the Yarmouth wye at Willow Street in Yarmouth and travels south. The historic Hyannis Roundhouse, located between Route 28 and Main Street in Barnstable, has been converted into a nightclub and warehouses. The rail yard is now used for the Hyannis Transportation Center and as a rail yard for CCCRR. A restaurant and a furniture store now occupy part of the site. The terminus of the Hyannis Branch is a station for the CCCRR. Originally, the Hyannis Branch continued from the rail yard south to a port facility in the Outer Harbor of Hyannis Harbor. The port and rail connection were dismantled however, and the right of way converted into Old Colony Road. MassDOT owns the Hyannis Branch and leases it to Cape Rail, Inc. This segment has also been rated for 30 MPH travel. In total, the Hyannis Branch contains 4.39 miles of track, 2 grade separated crossings under Route 6, and 6 total roadway crossings.



FIGURE 19: RAIL TRACKS WEST OF WILLOW STREET, FACING NORTH



FIGURE 20: THE HYANNIS RAIL YARD, WITH CCCRR CARS PARKED ON THE SIDE TRACKS



FIGURE 21: THE TERMINUS OF THE HYANNIS BRANCH AT THE CCCRR STATION

2.4.2.3 Woods Hole Branch

The Woods Hole Branch begins at the Canal Junction, splitting off from the Cape Cod Line and traveling south through Bourne and Falmouth. Three depot stations along the route, in Monument Beach, Pocasset, and Cataumet, have been converted to other uses. The tracks continue south to the Otis Junction just south of Old County Road in Falmouth (Figure 22). An out of service side track, runs from Old Main Road to the Otis Junction (Figure 23). MassDOT owns this entire segment and leases it to Cape Rail, Inc. Moreover, this portion of the Woods Hole Branch has been rated for 30 MPH travel. In total, the segment contains 8.43 miles of track, 2 bridges over waterways, 5 grade separated roadway crossings, and 17 total road crossings.



FIGURE 22: RAIL TRACKS AT THE OTIS JUNCTION.

THE LEFT TRACK RUNS EAST TO THE OTIS AIR FORCE BASE. THE RIGHT TRACK RUNS SOUTH TO PALMER AVENUE AND THE END OF THE SHINING SEA BIKE PATH.



FIGURE 23: RAIL TRACKS NORTH OF OLD COUNTY ROAD IN FALMOUTH

The final segment of the Woods Hole Branch runs from the Otis Junction to the overpass at the southern crossing of Palmer Avenue. These tracks are out of service and not usable by train. Vegetation has encroached upon the rail tracks, crossing signals have been left in disrepair, and road crossings have been paved over (**Figure 24**, **Figure 25** and **Figure 26**). MassDOT has sold the right-of-way to the Town of Falmouth to be converted to an extension of the Shining Sea Bike Path. In total, the segment contains 5.82 miles of track, a bog sluiceway north of Fox Lane, 4 grade separated roadway crossings, and 14 road crossings.

Originally, the Woods Hole Line continued south with stations at Depot Street and the current Steamship Authority port at Woods Hole. Originally built in 1872, this section of the Woods Hole line has been dismantled. The station at Depot Street now serves as a bus terminal, while the right-of-way has been converted into the Shining Sea Bikepath.



FIGURE 24: A BUSH GROWS IN THE MIDDLE OF THE WOODS HOLE LINE



FIGURE 25: A CROSSING SIGNAL AT OLD DOCK ROAD OVERGROWN WITH VEGETATION



FIGURE 26: THE WOODS HOLE LINE HAS BEEN PAVED OVER AT OLD DOCK ROAD



FIGURE 27: OTIS BRANCH RAIL TRACKS, EAST OF ROUTE 28A

2.4.2.4 Otis Branch

From the Otis Junction, the Otis Branch runs east into the Otis Air Force Base (**Figure 27**). Inside the base, the track splits into several terminals, with one track running as far east as Mashpee. The entire set of track is federally owned, with use by Cape Rail, Inc. In total, the segment contains 10.51 miles of track, 3 grade separated roadway crossings, and 15 total roadway crossings.

2.4.2.5 Cape Cod Canal Railroad Bridge

In order to enter Cape Cod, trains must cross the Cape Cod Railroad Bridge (**Figure 28**). In 1910, the Buzzards Bay Railroad Bridge was completed over the first Cape Cod Canal, which was under construction at the time. When the canal was reconstructed in 1933, a new railroad bridge had to be built over the widened waterway. Since the railroad grade could not be easily raised, the Army Corps of Engineers constructed a vertical lift

railroad bridge. The new bridge was completed in December of 1935 and was the longest bridge of its kind at the time. Recently, the Cape Cod Railroad Bridge underwent a major rehabilitation effort, in large part through \$25 million in Federal funds. Normally the bridge remains in the “up” position (

Figure 30), allowing marine traffic access through the canal, and is lowered for rail service as needed. Marine traffic has statutory right-of-way over rail traffic. A panel in the bridge’s control room allows the controller to raise and lower the bridge. The mechanisms to control the interlocking rail, however, are located within the Buzzards Bay Tower in Buzzards Bay, Bourne (Figure 29). The bridge is 806 feet long, 297 feet high and has a high water clearance of 136 feet.

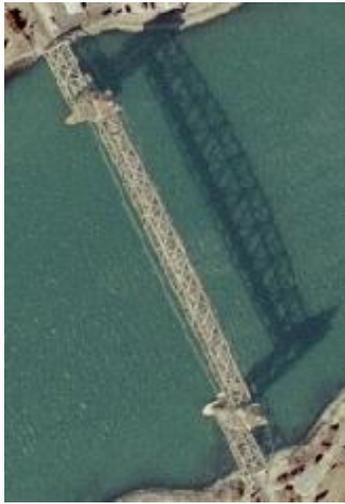


FIGURE 28: AERIAL VIEW OF THE CAPE COD RAILROAD BRIDGE



FIGURE 29: BUZZARDS BAY TOWER HOUSING RAIL CONTROL MECHANISMS



FIGURE 30: CAPE COD RAILROAD BRIDGE FROM BRIDGE PARK, IN THE "UP" POSITION

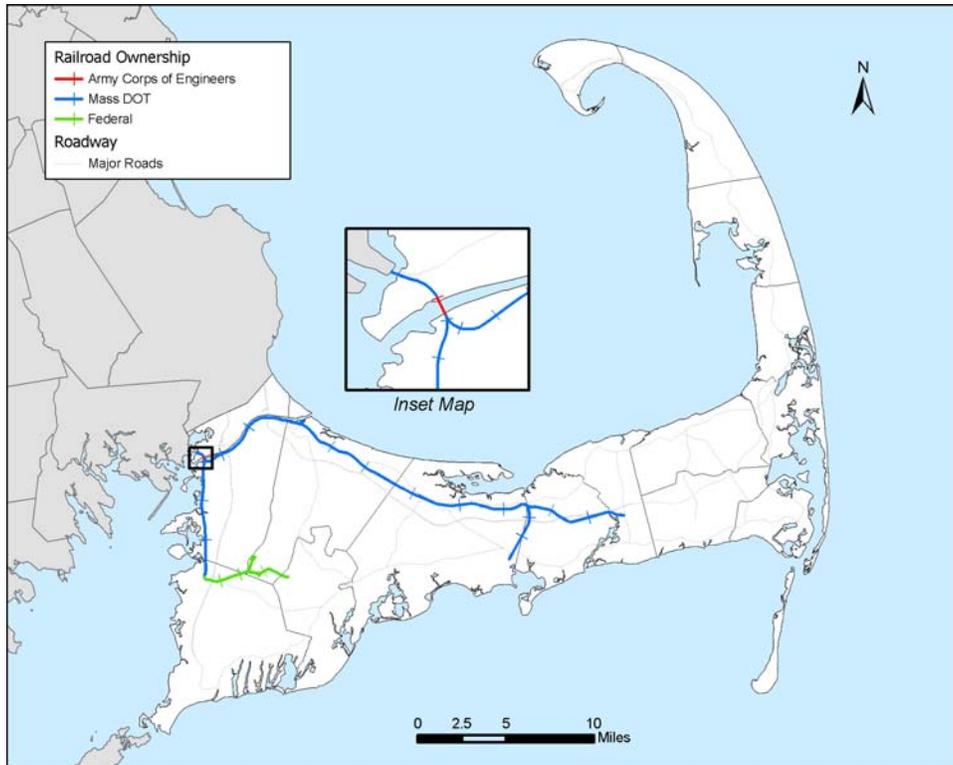


FIGURE 31: RAIL INFRASTRUCTURE AND OWNERSHIP ON CAPE COD

2.4.3 SIGNALS AND CROSSINGS

TABLE 2: RAIL INFRASTRUCTURE THROUGHOUT CAPE COD

| | Railroad Crossings at Cape Cod Roads | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|--------------------|-------|------------|--------|------------|
| | Total | Grade Separated | Gated | Signalized | Signed | Other\None |
| Cape Cod Total | 102 | 22 | 4 | 26 | 19 | 31 |
| Cape Cod Line | 62 | 10 | 3 | 20 | 11 | 18 |
| Hyannis Branch | 6 | 2 | 1 | - | 1 | 2 |
| Otis Branch | 15 | 3 | - | - | 2 | 10 |
| Woods Hole Branch | 19 | 7 | - | 6 | 5 | 1 |
| Locally Owned | 13 | 4 | - | 5 | 3 | 1 |
| Federally Owned | 15 | 3 | - | 2 | - | 10 |
| MassDOT | 73 | 15 | 4 | 27 | 13 | 14 |
| Barnstable | 18 | 1 | 3 | 8 | 4 | 2 |
| Bourne | 27 | 11 | - | 6 | 5 | 5 |
| Dennis | 3 | - | - | - | - | 3 |
| Falmouth | 6 | 4 | - | 1 | - | 1 |
| Sandwich | 33 | 2 | 1 | 11 | 3 | 16 |
| Yarmouth | 15 | 4 | - | 1 | 6 | 4 |

Exclusive rights-of-way can limit the interaction of rail and other modes, making rail transportation safer and faster. However, crossing at roadways can pose problems if the intersection is not properly signed and designed. Currently on Cape Cod, there are 66 at-grade roadway intersections along active rail lines. Some, such as the railroad crossing at Route 28 in Barnstable, can actually interfere with roadway traffic and cause congestion and delays. Of those, 21 are not gated, signalized or signed. Although most of these are minor roadways, they do represent a potential for mishap. Moreover, there are 18 grade separated roadway crossings, as well as 5 bridges over waterways along active rail lines. These bridges and overpasses must be maintained in order to ensure continued use. If rail service on Cape Cod is to be increased, further study of railroad crossings may be necessary to ensure safety and prevent interruptions to roadway traffic.

2.4.4 FREIGHT SERVICE

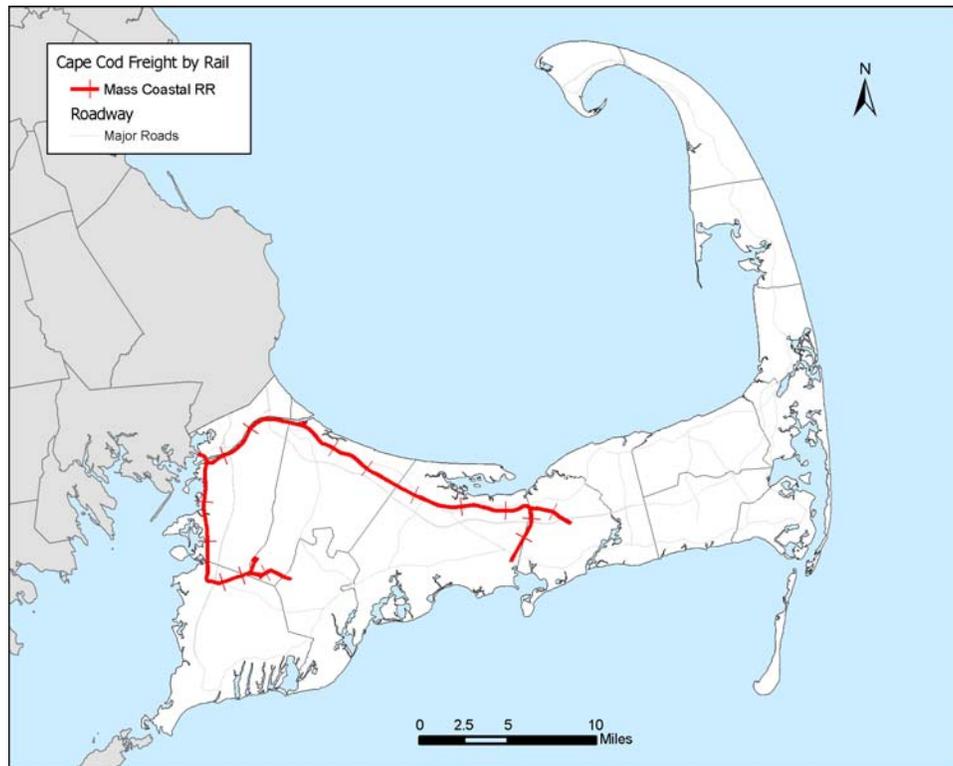


FIGURE 32: MASS COASTAL RAILROAD CAPE COD SERVICE

Freight service is the primary use of Cape Cod's rails. After many years of suspended rail service, CONRAIL formed in 1976 to provide freight service. CONRAIL owned the rail tracks on the Cape Cod Line as far as Sandwich and worked under contract with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for tracks beyond that point. After CONRAIL announced plans to suspend Cape Cod freight service in 1981, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts purchased the affected lines. It then contracted Bay Colony Railroad to take over freight service in 1982. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts, through MassDOT, still owns most railroad tracks on Cape Cod today, with Massachusetts Coastal Railroad (a company of Cape Rail, Inc.) operating under contract to provide freight service.

Currently, the primary use of Cape Cod's rails is for freight transportation by Mass Coastal. Mass Coastal is a short line freight railroad serving Cape Cod and southeastern Massachusetts between Middleboro, Otis Air Force Base, Hyannis, and South Yarmouth. The majority of Cape Cod's solid waste is transported to the SEMASS trash-to-energy plant in Rochester, MA via Mass Coastal's Energy Train. Other freight Mass Coastal carries includes food, construction materials, chemicals, heavy equipment amongst many other things.

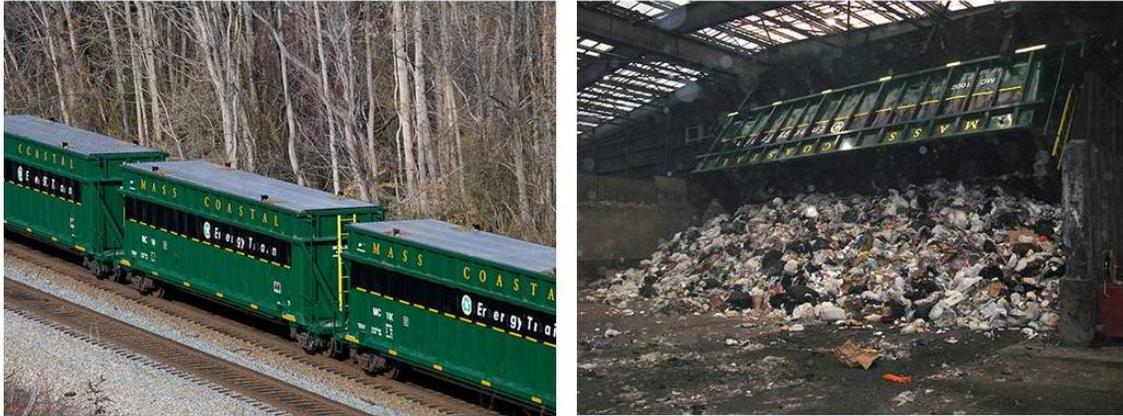


FIGURE 33: MASS COASTAL ENERGY TRAIN

Source: www.masscoastal.com/train-energy.php

2.4.5 PASSENGER SERVICE

Currently, the only passenger service on Cape Cod is a scenic/dinner train offered by Cape Cod Central Railroad – a subsidiary of Cape Rail, Inc. There is, however, plans for offering a commuter line from Buzzards Bay to Middleboro, where passengers could then cross a platform and board a train to Boston. The ride from Buzzards Bay to Boston is expected to take one hour and twenty-five minutes. The plan proposes eight connecting trains, including two morning and two evening peak period trains. The initiation of this plan will require coordination between Cape Rail, Inc. and the MBTA.

Tourist/Dinner Trains

Cape Cod Central Railroad (CCCR) formed in 1999 to provide recreational train service to Cape Cod. Today the CCCRR still provides a variety of Dinner and Scenic train services. The Hyannis Station is currently used by the CCCRR for selling tickets, dispensing information, and administrative offices. Adjacent to the single main track station is the Hyannis rail yard and maintenance facility (

Figure 21). The CCCRR owns three engines (Table 3). Engines 1501 and 1502 were built by General Motors’ Electro-Motive Division (EMD) in 1952 and serve as CCCRR’s primary motive power (Figure 35). Engine 1201, nicknamed “Lulubell,” was built in 1951 by American Locomotive Company (ALCo) and serves CCCRR as a backup engine (Figure 36). These three engines move the various excursion trains offered by CCCRR.

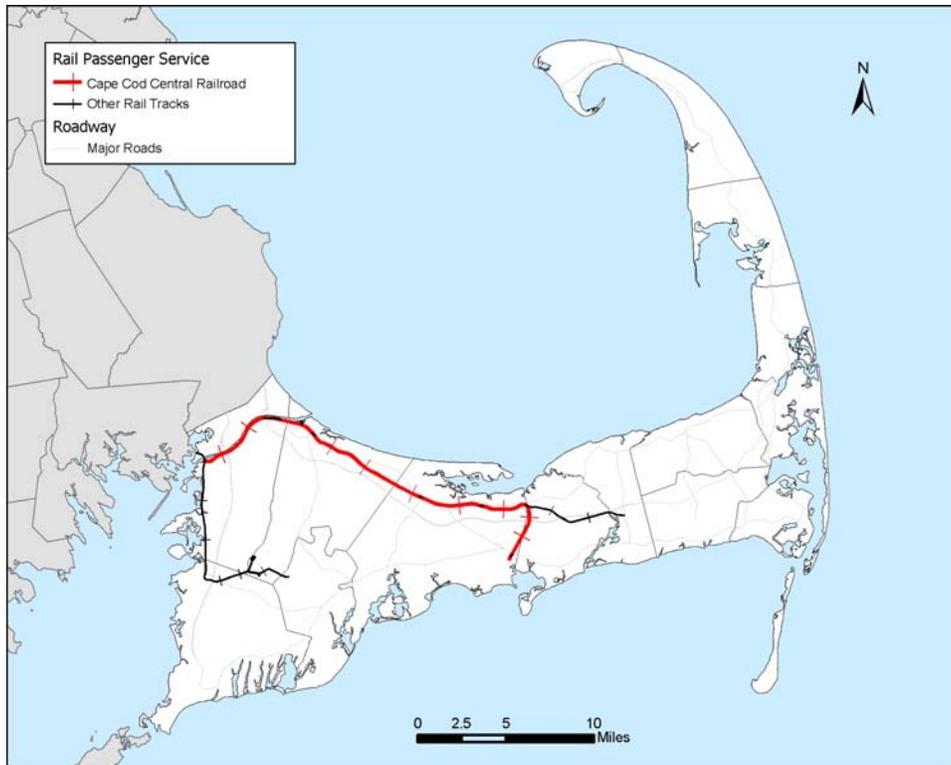


FIGURE 34: CAPE COD CENTRAL RAILROAD SERVICE

Cape Cod Central Railroad offers Scenic Excursion Train service from the Hyannis Transportation Center to Canal Junction and Sandwich stations. On occasion, the train will also stop at the West Barnstable station on the corner of Routes 149 and 6A. Hyannis and Sandwich stations are the only passenger stops. Scenic Excursion, Lunch and Dinner Train service begins in May and lasts until the end of October. During June and July, train service runs with greater frequency. Scenic excursion trains consist of one of CCCRR's engines and three coach cars. The coach cars are 82' long and 10'4" wide. Each of the former Long Island Railroad 2700 Series Commuter Cars seats approximately 60 people. They are named "Barnstable," "Sandwich," and "Bourne," the towns where the train makes stops. A variety of different cars are used for the Lunch and Dinner Trains (see Table 4). In addition to the engine and the cars, the dining excursions utilize a Kitchen / Generator Car. This car powers all of the electric lamps on board the passenger cars and provides a kitchen for the cooking staff to prepare meals. Tickets vary in cost from \$17 to \$60 depending on the type of rail service.

TABLE 3: ENGINES IN THE CAPE COD CENTRAL RAILROAD FLEET

| Engine No.: | Engine | Horsepower | Dimensions (L x W x H) | Weight (Tons) | Date Built |
|-------------|---|------------|------------------------|---------------|------------|
| 1501 | EMD 567B diesel 16 cylinder, 2 cycle | 1,500 | 55'9" x 10'3" x 14'6" | 120 | 1952 |
| 1502 | EMD 567B diesel 16 cylinder, 2 cycle | 1,500 | 55'9" x 10'3" x 14'6" | 120 | 1952 |
| 1201 | EMD 645BC diesel 12 cylinder, 2 cycle | 1,200 | 56' x 10'2" x 14'6" | 120 | 1951 |

Source: www.cape-train.com/roster

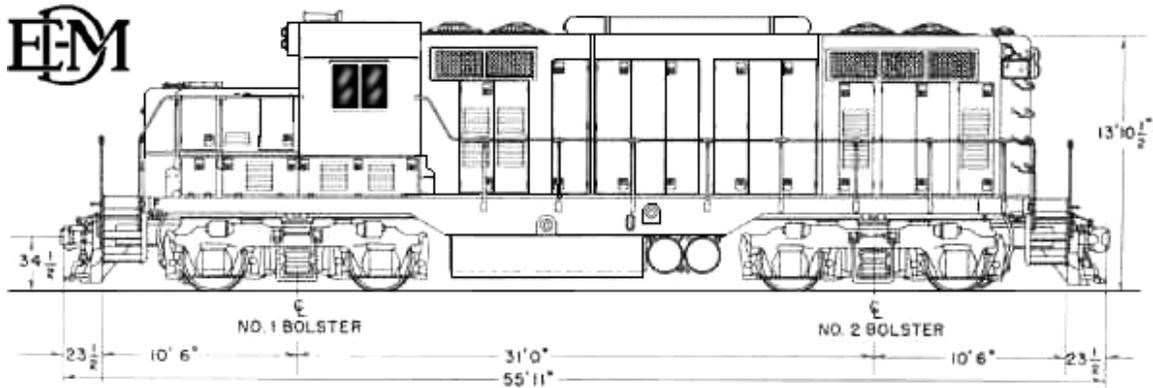


FIGURE 35: DIAGRAM FOR ENGINES 1501 AND 1502

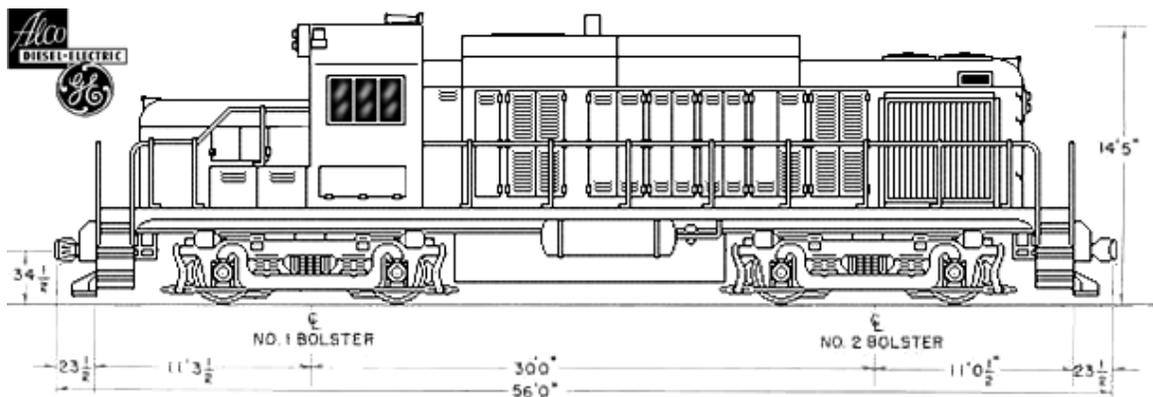


FIGURE 36: DIAGRAM FOR ENGINE 1201

TABLE 4: RAIL CARS IN THE CAPE COD CENTRAL RAILROAD FLEET

| Name | Car No. | Passenger Capacity | History | Service |
|------------------------------|---------|-------------------------------------|---|----------------------------|
| "Cape-Codder" Lounge Car | 200 | 16 at tables, 24 at lounge seats | Former IL Central Lounge Car | Dinner Train |
| "Sandy Neck" Dining Car | 201 | 64 seated at tables | Built by CC&F in 1937 | Lunch and Dinner Trains |
| "Great Island" Dining Car | 202 | 64 seated at tables | Built by CC&F in 1937 | Lunch and Dinner Trains |
| "Race Point" Dining Car | 203 | 64 seated at tables | Built by CC&F in 1942. | Lunch and Dinner Trains |
| Kitchen / Generator Car | 250 | None | Built by Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy in 1957. | Lunch and Dinner Trains |

Source: www.capetrain.com/roster

Due to the limited number of scheduled trips and stops, as well as the cost of a ticket, CCCRR service is not practical for use by commuters. Instead, the CCCRR train service is geared primarily for tourists. During the 2000 season, 50,000 passengers rode the rails, representing a 300 percent increase from the 16,000 passengers in 1999 (Cape Cod Transit Task Force).

2.4.6 RAIL ACCESSIBILITY, MOBILITY AND CONNECTIVITY

Currently, the accessibility and mobility of rail service is limited. Sandwich and West Barnstable Stations are both accessible only by road, with on-site parking facilities. Of the three active passenger stations, only the Hyannis Station is accessible by public transportation. From the Hyannis Transportation Center, rail passengers can transfer to local and interregional bus service, as well as make connections to air and ferry service. If passenger rail service on Cape Cod is expanded, improved access and connections to other transportation modes may need to be provided at rail stations.

The disabled and elderly are not wholly accommodated by rail service. All rail stations include shelters, benches, and handicapped parking. The Hyannis Transportation Center, recently constructed, was built to meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) specifications. Difficulty occurs when boarding trains. Raised platforms and ramps help, in addition to assistance offered by conductors and railroad staff. In addition, large print and Braille signage are necessary at stations and in train cars.

Based on a review of the existing rail network it is clear that much of Cape Cod is not connected by rail. Rail connections exist only in the Upper and Mid-Cape. Increasing the number of rail connections will be limited to whether rights-of-way can be acquired

for the construction of rail tracks. Given the current rails-to-trails trend, further expansion seems unlikely at the current time. In this case, connectivity and mobility issues will have to be addressed by improving rail service and connections to other modes of travel. Rail mobility is limited by the current scenic train service, which is designed for tourism, not commuting. A passenger can only use the service to travel between Sandwich and Hyannis Stations. Destinations and passenger mobility will need to be addressed in any plan to expand rail service.

2.4.7 CONCLUSION

Rail service has a long and rich history on Cape Cod. The region's early growth was in part brought about by the railroad. Many miles of usable track still exist on Cape Cod, intersecting the roads and waterways. MassDOT owns the majority of rail tracks on Cape Cod, but some tracks are owned by federal agencies. Currently though, only the Mass Coastal freight service and the CCCRR scenic train service operate on Cape Cod. Proposals currently exist to connect Buzzards Bay to Middleboro, which would give Cape passengers access to Boston. If passenger rail service were to be resumed, upgrades would be necessary to the tracks, stations, and signals. Moreover, issues of accessibility, mobility and connectivity would need to be addressed. Funding for these improvements would need to be identified and secured. As many tracks are converted in bicycle paths, the future of rail on Cape Cod is still uncertain.

