



# The Nickel City Dispatch

*News From The Nickel City Line Railroad*

DECEMBER 2014

## REFURBISHED BOXCARS ADDED BACK TO THE FLEET



October proved to be a busy month for the Maintenance of Equipment Division as they finished refurbishing and repainting thirteen boxcars and returning them to revenue service. The boxcars, a combination of 40 foot and 60 foot cars, were completely stripped down and overhauled from the trucks up to the roof. As soon as the major mechanical work was completed, the cars were sent over to the

paint shop where they received the new Nickel City Line paint scheme for railcars. The new paint scheme is midnight blue on the car ends and roof; white sides; and a large red stripe with silver trim running lengthwise on both sides. The railroad's logo appears in the upper left corner on each side of the car.

The refurbished cars were reassigned from the shop to revenue service at the end of October. Some of the cars can be seen daily on Trains 201, 202, 203, 204, 211R and 212R or along the mainline at some of our customer's sidings.

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### New Sign Greet Visitors to Nickel City Yard



At the beginning of November work crews prepared and erected the new Nickel City Yard sign. The sign includes the cab from locomotive 261 which incurred irreparable damage earlier this year and has been scrapped. While the sign catches the eye of visitors, it's a reminder to employees that **Safety is Number 1**.

### New Signage Warns Operators

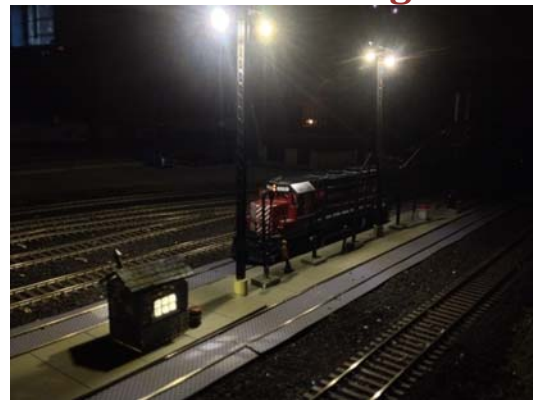


Signage has been added to the layout fascia of the railroad to inform operators with sound equipped locomotives of grade crossings. The W and associated arrow point towards the grade crossing. The town where the crossing is located is noted in the lower box.

Upon seeing a grade crossing sign, operators with sound equipped locomotives shall sound the grade crossing warning from their locomotive prior to passing the grade crossing.

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### Let There Be Light



Energy efficient lighting at the locomotive service racks.

The end of the year brought some new lighting to several areas of Nickel City Yard. New high intensity,

low voltage lighting has been installed at the locomotive service racks, the Little Locomotive Maintenance Facility, the Nickel City passenger station, and two yard light towers in Nickel City Yard.



Light Towers at both ends of NC Yard.



Brighter lighting in the Little Locomotive Facility.



The new light tower at the east side of NC Yard.

Besides using less electricity, the new lighting is brighter and safer for our employees who work the night shift.

### **Yardmaster and Hostler Offices Get Makeover**

A major project was undertaken in the second half of 2014 with renovations to the Hostler's and Yardmaster's Offices. Workers also went to the Dispatch Center preparing to remove the old and abandoned dispatcher's panel.



While renovation work was on going in those offices, the Radio Shop installed several additional simplex radio transmitters along the mainline. These transmitters (UR-91s) eliminated some gaps in radio coverage. The equipment was quickly ordered upon hearing that the manufacturer (Digitrax) is no longer supporting simplex radio transmitters.



A new look for the Hostler Office.

By the end of November, renovation of the Hostler and Yardmaster



Offices was complete. The renovations include the addition of a UR91 simplex radio transmitter which will help train crews in Ridgway Yard. The Hostler and Yardmaster have freshly painted new work areas and work surfaces.



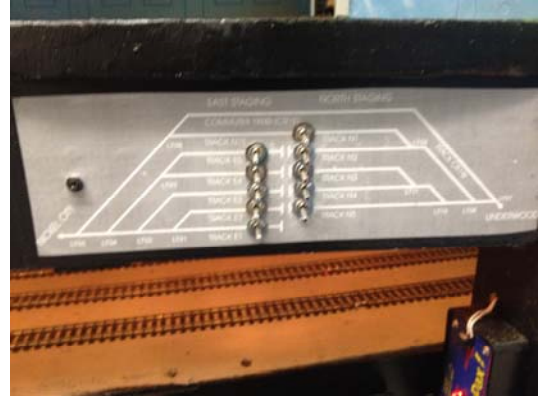
New control panel for NC Locomotive Yard.



An additional UR91 plug in at the Hostler Office.



New control for Hughes Industries (Program Track).



New power cutoffs for East and North Staging Tracks.



Detailed job instructions are posted for each work station.



A new monitor location and clip for paperwork in the Yardmaster's Office.

Each area has throttle holders and plug ins. Yellow instruction placards provide each person with detailed instructions for the position. Scenery has been completed up to the newly painted fascia. The upper deck fascia has also been painted and

town labels added for quick reference.



Freshly painted work surfaces complement the overall renovation.



Scenery has been completed up to the edge of the finished fascia.

These improvements should make for a comfortable working environment for NCL employees.

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### 2014 Recap

2014 hosted the most sessions ever on the NCL, 11 total! The railroad was certainly put to task this year but that afforded the opportunity to find a number of items needing attention and addressing them.

The layout operation has improved significantly as a result. In 2014 we

added some new locomotives and cars and retired some other railcars. We added a couple more trains and have been operating under signals for half the year.

In 2014 we moved 860 cars over the rail line to our customers. We awarded 8 certifications to our employees which include:

- Bryan K. – Certified Yardmaster
- Mat T. – Certified Dispatcher and Advanced Engineer
- Pete L. – Advanced Hostler and Advanced Railroad Operator
- George M. – Certified Yardmaster
- Ernie L. – Master Dispatcher
- Marie M. – Certified Engineer

Congratulations to all the above NCL staff for their hard work and contributions to the railroad.

And while the railroad has improved, there is much more to do. In 2015 we have a good size to-do list. Highlights of what is planned include:

- Installation of additional power management blocks on the mainline and locomotive yard.
- Installing power turnouts for all mainline sidings and incorporating them into the signaling logix.
- Pushing Underwood back (underneath Sheppardsfield and daylighting it so operators have a clear view of the station, all signals and track.
- Completing all scenery between Canova and Monserrat on the upper deck.
- Finishing the upgrade of all railcars to metal wheel sets, Kaydee couplers and detection wheel sets.

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- Replacement of outdated (era) railcars with modern railcars appropriate to industries served.
- Deploying the newly acquired MTH GP35 after repainting to Trains 502T and 504T (Engine has DCC activated couplers).

More work and more progress in 2015 will mean more fun for our participants. The NCL Management is looking forward to a great ops season in 2015.

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**2015 Operations Calendar**

**January**

Saturday, January 10, 2015  
9:00a to 1:00p (Session 38A)  
Md / Va Ops Group Session

**February**

Sunday, February 8, 2015  
1:00p to 5:00p (Session 38B)

**March**

Saturday, March 14, 2015  
9:00a to 1:00p (Session 38C)  
Md / Va Ops Group Session

**April**

**No Session**

**May**

Sunday, May 24, 2015  
1:00p to 5:00p (Session 39A)

**June**

Wednesday, June 10, 2015  
9:00a to 1:00p (Session 39B)

**July**

**No Session**

**August**

**No Session**

**September**

Sunday, September 20, 2015  
1:00p to 5:00p (Session 39C)

Wednesday, September 30, 2015  
9:00a to 1:00p (Session 40A)

**October**

Wednesday, October 21, 2015  
9:00a to 1:00p (Session 40B)

**November**

Sunday, November 15, 2015  
1:00p to 5:00p (Session 40C)

**December**

**No Session**

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Stay Informed. Check Out the  
Nickel City Line on the Web at:  
[http://home.comcast.net/~nclrr/  
index.htm](http://home.comcast.net/~nclrr/index.htm)  
or on Facebook at:  
[www.facebook.com/NickelCityL  
ineModelRailroad](http://www.facebook.com/NickelCityLineModelRailroad)