

2015 Rail Plan Implementation Update January 2016

- The South Carolina Statewide Rail Plan (SRP) was approved by the SCDOT Commission as part of the South Carolina Multimodal Transportation Plan on December 4, 2014. SCDOT is South Carolina's "State Rail Transportation Authority" as defined by the federal Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 (PRIIA). SCDOT ensures that the SRP documents the state's policy on freight and passenger rail transportation – including commuter rail – within the State's boundaries, establishes priorities and implementation strategies to enhance rail service in the public interest, and serves as the basis for Federal and State rail investment.
- The SRP was approved by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) on April 13, 2015.
- The Carolina Southern Rail Line in the Conway area was purchased by R.J. Corman Railroad Group after having been out of service for many months. Repairs and upgrades are being made to the corridor and should be completed by Spring 2016.
- SCDOT, through our Office of Railroads, applied for FRA Safety Grants for two Class III Short Line Railroads for infrastructure improvement projects in November 2015. Staff currently awaits a final decision on funding by FRA.
- The Atlanta to Charlotte Passenger Rail Corridor Investment Plan (PRCIP), developed through a tri-state coordinated effort of Georgia DOT, NCDOT and SCDOT, with Georgia DOT leading the effort and SCDOT a non-funding partner, is 75% complete. The PRCIP, including a Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), is an extension of the Southeast High-Speed Rail Corridor (SEHSR), which is under development from Charlotte to Washington, D.C. The extension from Charlotte would travel southeast through portions of South Carolina and into Atlanta. The Atlanta to Charlotte PRCIP Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) provides an analysis of the proposed project at a broad scale. The Tier 1 EIS describes the need for and purpose of the Atlanta to Charlotte PRCIP project, and it identifies potential route alternatives, station locations and levels of additional, new train service.
- FRA selected the Southeast region for a fully-funded, USDOT-led, Southeast Multi-State Rail Planning Study in July 2015. This effort will facilitate coordination with neighboring states and will assist with funding for freight and passenger rail projects in the state. FRA's effort will begin in the 1st quarter of 2016 with SCDOT serving as a member of the project Steering Committee.