NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RAILROAD PASSENGERS

TRAINS: A TRAVEL CHOICE AMERICANS WANT

**Environmental Impact:**
**Rail travel is the most environmentally benign mass transportation alternative**

- By operating electric locomotives on the Northeast Corridor, fuel-efficient diesel locomotives in the rest of the system, removing tens of millions of passengers from the highways, and by encouraging cluster development around many of its stations, Amtrak helps mitigate both direct and indirect sources of air pollution.

- In the United States, highway vehicles accounted for almost all carbon monoxide emissions, 78% of nitrogen oxides, and 77% of volatile organic compounds emitted into the air in 2002. (Source: U..S. Department of Transportation, Bureau of Transportation Statistics, “Transportation Statistics Annual Report”, November 2005.)

- Many investments on behalf of passenger rail have served to benefit freight rail as well, and freight trains are responsible for between six and twelve times less pollution per mile than trucks. A typical truck emits three times more nitrogen oxides and particulates per ton-mile than a locomotive, and much more greenhouse gases. (Sources: Surface Transportation Policy Project, “State of the Nation’s Intercity Rail,” February 11, 2004. Association of American Railroads, “Overview of U.S. Freight Railroads,” January 2007.)

- Railroads reduce the amount of paved roads, parking lots, and interchanges required for transportation. Paved surfaces damage aquatic life by washing toxic chemicals into waterways, hastening erosion, and altering water temperatures – with serious degradation occurring when more than 10% of a watershed’s acreage is paved. (Source: Pew Oceans Commission, “Coastal Sprawl: The effects of Urban Design on Aquatic Ecosystems in the United States,” 2002.)