Media Room

Amtrak Pacific Surfliner Rail Service Reduces Fleet's Environmental Impact With Sustainable Fuel Alternative

Amtrak® Pacific Surfliner® service transitions to a more sustainable fuel made from renewable raw materials

ORANGE, Calif., Oct. 3, 2023 -- The Los Angeles – San Diego – San Luis Obispo (LOSSAN) Rail Corridor Agency, which manages the Amtrak® Pacific Surfliner® service, is proud to announce that the passenger rail fleet is now powered by a more sustainable fuel alternative.

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The Pacific Surfliner trains will now operate on renewable diesel (RD) which is chemically similar to fossil diesel but made from renewable raw materials such as used cooking oil, instead of crude oil. Compared to fossil diesel, RD significantly reduces greenhouse gas emissions by an estimated 63%[1] throughout its lifecycle, providing a steep increase to the sustainability of rail travel in Southern California. Furthermore, the switch to RD offers the potential to reduce other harmful emissions, including fine particulates and nitrogen oxides leading to improved local air quality.

"The adoption of renewable diesel for our Pacific Surfliner service is an important milestone in our ongoing commitment to environmental preservation and the fight against climate change," said Jewel Edson, Chair of the LOSSAN Agency Board of Directors. "We take immense pride in joining forces with Amtrak, state and federal agencies, rail equipment manufacturers, and fuel distributors who share our commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and promoting sustainability."

The adoption of renewable diesel for the Pacific Surfliner fleet is the result of a collaborative effort that engaged key stakeholders, including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), Amtrak, the Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority, San Joaquin Joint Powers Authority, and various other partners.

It is worth noting that the Amtrak Pacific Surfliner is already an efficient mode of travel as train travel is 46%[2] more energy efficient than traveling by car. Additionally, the Pacific Surfliner currently operates with diesel-electric Charger locomotives, the first passenger locomotive to receive the stringent Tier IV emissions certification from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), making it one of the cleanest diesel-electric passenger locomotives in operation. The transition to renewable diesel serves as yet another significant stride in reducing the Pacific Surfliner and our passengers' carbon footprint.

[1] Calculated using the Department of Energy GREET model
[2] Department of Energy Transportation Energy Data Book

About the Amtrak® Pacific Surfliner®
The Pacific Surfliner travels along a 351-mile coastal route through San Diego, Orange, Los Angeles, Ventura, Santa Barbara, and San Luis Obispo counties, serving 29 stations. It is the busiest state-supported intercity passenger rail route in the United States. To learn more and plan a trip, visit pacificsurfliner.com.

About the LOSSAN Rail Corridor Agency
The Los Angeles – San Diego – San Luis Obispo (LOSSAN) Rail Corridor Agency is a joint powers authority overseeing the management of the Amtrak Pacific Surfliner service. Comprised of rail owners, operators, and planning agencies along the 351-mile LOSSAN rail corridor, the Agency strives to improve passenger rail ridership, revenue, on- time performance, operational flexibility, and safety along its service area. The Orange County Transportation Authority provides all necessary administrative support for the LOSSAN Agency and its Board. For more information, visit Lossan.org.

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On behalf of LOSSAN Agency

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