

Illinois high-speed rail corridor work resumes

Thursday, March 29, 2012

The Illinois Department of Transportation and Union Pacific will be upgrading Illinois' high-speed route, Chicago-St. Louis, for future high-speed Amtrak trains, from April 16 through May 25. The improvements for 110-mph service include the installation of new premium rail with concrete crossties and ballast; upgrades to bridges, culverts and drainage; signal and wayside equipment installations and upgrades and roadway-rail grade crossing improvements.

Union Pacific's Track Renewal Train crews will improve infrastructure to enable Amtrak service to travel at speeds up to 110 mph, an increase from the current maximum of 79 mph. IDOT and Amtrak are planning to preview higher speed trains in September 2012 from Dwight, Ill, to Pontiac, Mich.

This is the last scheduled year of large-scale construction leading to alternate transportation on the corridor. When this project began with a groundbreaking north of Alton, Ill., in 2010, it was among the first high-speed rail projects in the country to start construction.