

Economics Benefits Associated with Downeaster Passenger Rail Investments



Client

Facts

Period 2005

Project Country

By Economic Development Research Group and KKO Associates, for the Maine Department of Transportation, 2005



What is the current and potential economic development impact of new passenger rail service? To investigate this issue, Maine DOT engaged the team of Economic Development Research Group (EDRG) with KKO Associates, to measure the economic impacts of the first three years of Downeaster Amtrak train service between Portland, Maine, and Boston, Massachusetts.

The analysis included evaluation of: 1) rider volumes and business sales generated for railroad operations and ancillary services, including seasonal variations and an analysis of origins and destinations of passengers; 2) additional visitor spending generated by rail passengers visiting sites in Maine, New Hampshire and Massachusetts; and 3) real estate development as well as new/expanded business operations at and near Downeaster stations. The study also included analysis of an extensive survey of more than 900 Downeaster passengers, as well as comparison of communities with Downeaster service to those without service.

The evaluation documented currently observable impacts to date from the first three of rail service, and identified potential future benefits of continued real estate development and business expansion planned and proposed near Downeaster train stations.

Contact Persons