

## NCITEC Project Information

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Title: Restoration of Gulf Coast Passenger Rail Service for Sustainable and Economically Efficient Intermodal Corridor Integration

Abstract: This project focuses on intercity passenger mobility with emphasis on the needs of Gulf Coast cities, communities, and government and private employers. The Mississippi DOT's strategic planning reports indicate: (a) Most of Interstate-10 corridor has average speeds (in both directions) at or below 55 mph. (b) In the Jackson-Hattiesburg-Gulfport Corridor the majority of freight is moved by truck (91 percent) and through traffic (61 percent), which is expected to grow. The high commercial traffic volume increases general congestion on highways and safety risks to other auto commuter traffic. About nine percent of all highway fatalities in 2009 involved large trucks. Fatality rate per 100 million vehicle-mile-traveled is higher for large truck related fatality than other vehicles. Major widening of Mississippi's I-10 and improvement along with other highway corridors are being pursued by the Mississippi DOT but there is lack of initiative to integrate with passenger rail service. We need to find ways to integrate passenger/ commuter rail with the auto traffic which can ease auto travel demand on the existing road corridors, offers economically competitive and safer travel, and reduces air pollution. Currently, the Amtrak sunset service from Miami to Los Angeles through New Orleans is not operational. It served the Gulf Coast triweekly before it was suspended during 2005 Hurricane Katrina disaster. The overall goal of this project is to evaluate economic impacts of the restoration of passenger rail service and offer intercity rail solutions.

The primary objective of this project is a technical and economic competitiveness evaluation of selected passenger rail/commuter intercity rail service alternative plans. The scope of this UM study will be limited to the Mississippi Gulf Coast. However, the results can be extended to the entire Gulf Coast using the historical demographic and economic data of the region. This approach of economic impact evaluation is valid for enhancement/revival of other passenger rail services, such as Southwest Chief corridor. The project will enhance intermodal transportation education by supporting graduate and UG students.

Start Date: July 1, 2013

End Date: June 30, 2014

Project URL (if applicable): <http://www.olemiss.edu/projects/cait/ncitec/>

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