



August 31, 2010

ANTONITO, COLO. –The westbound “San Juan Express #216” passenger train outbound from Antonito struck an Antonito track “tie crew” motor car occupied by two Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad employees shortly after noon Tuesday. The collision occurred at mile post 311, just East of Mud Tunnel in New Mexico Territory. The two C&TSRR Antonito track personnel sustained shoulder and leg injuries. They were treated and released at Conejos County Hospital in La Jara, Colorado.

The men sustained severe bumps, bruises and lacerations in the mishap. Marvin Casias, C&TSRMC General Manager, was on hand as the men were treated, assisted them in transportation home following their hospital treatment. He said the circumstances of the accident were under investigation.

“Although, the accident wasn’t life threatening, it’s still a very serious accident with injuries,” Casias said. “I am greatly relieved that both men are expected to recover fully from this accident.”

The collision today resulted in a two-hour delay in the Antonito-originating train, necessitated by a return trip back to Sublette Station with the injured employees to meet C&TSRR officials who transported them to a rendezvous with medical personnel

“We are very relieved that our men’s injuries are not disabling or life-threatening,” said Elmer Salazar, C&TSMC president and CEO. “We wish them a safe and speedy recovery.”

Noting that the railroad has about six weeks left in its 2010 operating schedule, Salazar reassured that all trains and all events would continue as scheduled between now and fall’s winter hiatus.

The C&TSRR has recently concluded its 40th anniversary weekend celebration with State and local dignitaries, rail buffs, tourists, and many of those who helped through the birth and early life of the line following its purchase by the states of New Mexico and Colorado.

The railroad is dealing with altered operations out of Chama due to the fire that damaged the Lobato Trestle in late June, several miles from the depot. Chama passengers are transported by motor coach to Cumbres Station, at the high point of the 64-mile line, for the trip to Osier, Colo., or to Antonito, Colo.

The C&TSRR management company continues its multi-year program to replace ties and ballast on the track to restore it to optimum operating capability. A total of 40,378 new ties have been installed over the duration of this project, with 64 miles of track resurfaced and lined. Bringing the track, locomotives and rolling stock up to top-notch condition has been a joint priority project of the Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad Commission and the operating company, and has moved forward with generous funding from the states of New Mexico and Colorado, owners of the line.

The rail line is a living history experience in steam-powered mountain narrow-gauge railroading, owned and preserved by the two states. The Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad prepares to gear up for its busiest time of the season full of fall colors, breathtaking gorges, trestles and tunnels. For reservations call 888-CUMBRES or visit www.cumbrestoltec.com.