



FY2018

FARE PLAN & ANALYSIS

Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority 75 West Commercial Street, Suite 104 Portland, Maine 04101

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www.AmtrakDowneaster.com

Executive Summary

Purpose

The purpose of this fare plan is to establish the pricing for Downeaster passenger rail transportation services. This document supports the fiduciary responsibility that the Board of Directors has to maximize the public investment and minimize public subsidy in passenger rail service. This plan is developed by staff and forwarded to the Board of Directors for approval.

Plan Objectives

NNEPRA's fare policy provides both fixed measurements and general guidance. There are numerous and divergent variables that influence fare policy; they can be summarized as:

- a) Fiscal: Collect the maximum revenue that the market will bear
- b) Mobility: Carry the greatest number of people as possible
- c) Social: Provide an equitable and socially responsible public transportation service

This fare plan seeks to balance these three objectives with a pricing program that reflects regulatory constraints, market expectations and fairness to customers, while also supporting the operations of the Downeaster service.

The increasing costs associated with Amtrak operations are outpacing revenue growth in spite of record ridership. One area of opportunity to aid cost recovery are commuter fares, where Downeaster prices are competitive with rider alternatives. These market conditions are the major catalyst for proposed increases in fares. Adjusting fares allows NNEPRA to stay within budget and reduce the impact on taxpayer contributions.

Summary

NNEPRA has considered various ways to increase revenue by increasing fare options for passengers, within the parameters of the Amtrak system. This fare plan presents the proposed modifications to the fare structure for one-way fares, monthly commuter passes and 10-Ride passes. The expected result of these fare changes will net approximately \$287,000 in incremental revenue compared to the existing fare structure.

About Downeaster Fares and Fare Structures

The Amtrak Downeaster is part of the Amtrak national network and uses reservations and ticketing services provided by Amtrak. NNEPRA receives revenue receipts for the operation of the Downeaster service and decides business strategy for pricing and ticketing. This includes the responsibility to set the fares, discounts and ticketing classifications.

There are three major fare categories for the Downeaster:

- One Way Fares,
- Multi-Ride Fares, and
- Group Fares.

One Way Fares

Approximate 75% of Downeaster riders travel using one way fares, representing about 82% of total revenue.

One-Way fares on the Downeaster are classified into different fare categories: **Saver, Value, Flexible** and **Premium** Service. Common refund rules, restrictions and terms apply to fares within each category. When a customer reviews the Fare Finder on Amtrak.com, they will be provided with all the available fare options for each train and are then able to select the fare which best suits their travel needs.

Value Fares

Value Fares are considered the Downeaster's base fares, and are available on all Downeaster trains.

- Value Fare tickets are fully refundable if a reservation is canceled more than 48 hours prior to the scheduled departure of the train.
- If a Value Fare ticket reservation is cancelled within 48 hours of a scheduled departure, the customer may request a refund for the value of the ticket less a 20% cancellation fee. To avoid the cancellation fee, a customer may request the value of the ticket be provided in the form of an eVoucher. An eVoucher can be used for future travel on any Amtrak train.
- If a Value Fare reservation is not canceled before the scheduled departure from the origin ("no show"), the entire amount is forfeited by the passenger and cannot be applied toward future travel.

Flexible Fares

Flexible Fares are priced higher than Value Fares, offer more flexible cancellation options, and are available on all Downeaster trains.

- Flexible Fares are 100% refundable without any cancellation fee.
- Flexible Fare tickets can be canceled at any time for a full refund of the ticket value or with the ticket value stored as a credit in an eVoucher that can be used for future Amtrak travel.

Saver Fares

Saver Fares are the lowest available fares. They are not available on peak Downeaster trains and are not available for travel between all city pairs.

- Downeaster saver fares are only available for purchase online and must currently be purchased at least 24 hours in advance of travel.
- Some discounts/promotions may not apply to Saver Fares.
- Saver Fares are non-refundable, meaning there is no cash refund.
- If a Saver Fare ticket reservation is cancelled prior to travel, the ticket value stored as credit in an eVoucher to be used for future Amtrak travel.
- If a Saver Fare reservation is not canceled before the scheduled departure from the origin ("no show"), the entire amount is forfeited by the passenger and cannot be applied toward future travel.

Premium Service/Business Class

Premium Service Fares on the Downeaster apply to the Business Class, and have the highest price point. There are a limited number of Business Class seats on Downeaster trains and they are located adjacent to the Downeaster Café.

- Downeaster Business Class seats are larger, leather and fully reclining.
- Business Class passengers enjoy at-seat service of a complimentary non-alcoholic beverage, and a complimentary newspaper.
- Business class tickets are fully refundable if cancelled prior to scheduled departure.
- If a business class ticket reservation is not cancelled before the scheduled departure time ("no show"), the ticket is refundable less a 20% cancellation fee.

Multi-Ride Passes

Approximately 22% of Downeaster riders travel using a multi-ride pass, representing about 16% of total ticket revenue. Multi-Ride Passes provide a discount for frequent passengers, and also provide maximum flexibility by allowing the rider to travel without advance reservations. Three types of multi-ride passes are available on the Downeaster:

Monthly Ride Passes

Monthly Ride Passes provide unlimited rides between designated stations for a calendar month for one fixed price.

Ten-Ride Passes

Ten-Ride Passes are valid for 10 one-way trips between a given city pair within 45 days of purchase.

6 Tix Passes

6 Tix Passes are valid for 6 one-way trips between any city pair within a calendar year. Riders must present a valid college student ID. This is a Downeaster-specific pass.

Group Fares

Approximately 3% of Downeaster riders travel with a group, representing about 2% of total ticket revenue. Group fares are generally available for groups of 20 or more. Discounts vary depending on the time and date of travel and are handled on an individual basis based on availability. The Downeaster Discovery Program is targeted specifically at youth and school groups, and is extremely popular.

Other Fares and Discounts

The Downeaster participates in a number of Amtrak and/or federally required fare promotions, and also offers a variety of sales and promotions throughout the year based on Value Fares. Standard discounts include:

Senior & Disabled Discount:

Amtrak provides a 15% discount for seniors age 62 and older. The Downeaster has expanded this discount to 50% off one-way fares on most trains, and extends it to disabled passengers as well.

Child Discount:

Children under 2 ride free. Children ages 2-12 receive a 50% discount off applicable full fare when accompanied by an adult. The Downeaster offers an off peak promotion which allows Children ages 2-12 to ride for free on Sundays.

Student Discount:

Amtrak has recently introduced a student discount of 15% off the one-way fare for students ages 13-25 with a school I.D.

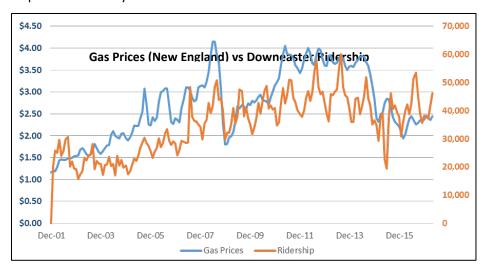
AAA:

AAA members receive a 10% discount off full fares with 3-day advance purchase.

Trends in Ridership and Revenue

Downeaster ridership and revenue increased consistently from FY2005 to FY2014 when performance peaked at 520,000 riders and \$8.6M in revenue. Improvements to customer experience, additional station destinations and an optimized schedule grew ridership, but 2014 also coincided with the price of gas reaching \$3.50 per gallon which also made rail travel more attractive. FY2015 brought many challenges: construction projects impacted reliability and forced the cancellation of hundreds of trains.

Customers responded to poor on-time-performance, along with relenting gas prices with decreased travel. However, ridership and revenue began to rebound throughout FY2016, and now in FY2017, the service has broken ridership records in five of the months with only a brief break during track construction and outages this fall.



FY2018 Fare Plan Recommendations:

The 2018 Fare Plan recommends the following changes to the various fare types offered on the Downeaster.

One Way Value Fares:

The fare plan generally proposes nominal increases in one way fares for all trains, but proposes that a separate fare structure for Train 685, which often operates at or near capacity.

A \$1.00 per ride increase in one-way VALUE FARES for travel between most city pairs is proposed on all trains except Train 685. No increase is proposed for travel between city pairs within the state of Maine.

A greater increase is proposed on one-way fares for travel between city pairs Boston to Exeter on Train 685. A high percentage of riders on Train 685 are monthly pass holders who travel at a deeply discounted rate and the number of seats available to full fare passengers is limited. The proposed change seeks to increase overall revenue by yielding a higher fare from riders travelling on shorter distances who may be displacing higher fare passengers traveling longer distances.

PROP	PROPOSED VALUE FARES July 1, 2017										
Applie	Applies to all trains EXCEPT Train 685										
	BRK	FRE	POR	ORB	SAO	WEM	DOV	DHM	EXR	Н	IAV
FRE	\$ 6										
POR	\$ 9	\$ 6									
ORB	\$ 12	\$ 9	\$ 6								
SAO	\$ 15	\$ 12	\$ 9	\$ 6							
WEM	\$ 18	\$ 15	\$12	\$ 9	\$ 6						
DOV	\$ 23	\$ 20	\$ 15	\$ 13	\$ 11	\$ 8	1				
DHM	\$ 24	\$ 21	\$ 17	\$ 15	\$ 13	\$ 11	\$ 9				
EXR	\$ 27	\$ 24	\$ 19	\$ 17	\$ 15	\$ 13	\$12	\$ 9			
HAV	\$ 30	\$ 30	\$ 29	\$ 19	\$ 17	\$ 15	\$14	\$12	\$ 9		
WOB	\$ 30	\$ 30	\$ 29	\$ 24	\$ 23	\$ 20	\$20	\$19	\$16	\$	13
BON	\$ 30	\$ 30	\$ 29	\$ 25	\$ 24	\$ 21	\$21	\$20	\$17	\$	14

PROP	OSED V	'ALUE I	ARES J	ulv 1. 2	2017					
	es ONL									
	BRK	FRE	POR	ORB	SAO	WEM	DOV	DHM	EXR	HHL
FRE	\$ 6									
POR	\$ 9	\$ 6		_						
ORB	\$ 12	\$ 9	\$ 6							
SAO	\$ 15	\$ 12	\$ 9	\$ 6		_				
WEM	\$ 18	\$ 15	\$12	\$ 9	\$ 6					
DOV	\$ 23	\$ 20	\$ 15	\$ 13	\$ 11	\$ 8				
DHM	\$ 24	\$ 21	\$ 17	\$ 15	\$ 13	\$ 11	\$11			
EXR	\$ 27	\$ 24	\$ 19	\$ 17	\$ 15	\$ 13	\$13	\$13		
HAV	\$ 30	\$ 30	\$ 29	\$ 19	\$ 17	\$ 15	\$15	\$15	\$15	
WOB	\$ 30	\$ 30	\$ 29	\$ 24	\$ 23	\$ 20	\$20	\$20	\$21	\$21
BON	\$ 30	\$ 30	\$ 29	\$ 25	\$ 24	\$ 21	\$21	\$21	\$21	\$21

Structure for other One-Way Fare categories:

The plan recommends the following:

- Flexible Fares will be priced \$5.00 higher than Value Fares for all trains.
- Saver Fares will be priced \$5.00 less than Value Fares. Saver fares will not be offered for travel between Boston and Exeter on Train 685.
- Premium Business Class will be priced \$10.00 higher than Value Fares for all trains.
- The charge for bicycles carried on the Downeaster will be \$10.00 each.

Multi-Ride Fares

Monthly Pass Fare Structure

The Plan recommends a \$20.00 increase in the Monthly Pass Fares to/from Boston and increases in other select city pairs.

CURRENT	CURRENT MONTHLY PASS FARE											
	BRK	FRE	POR	ORB	SAO	WEM	DOV	DHM	EXR	HHL		
FRE	\$ 79											
POR	\$ 99	\$ 99		_								
ORB	\$ 99	\$ 99	\$ 79		_							
SAO	\$ 139	\$ 139	\$119	\$ 79		_						
WEM	\$ 179	\$ 179	\$159	\$119	\$ 79		_					
DOV	\$ 239	\$ 239	\$ 205	\$ 166	\$ 119	\$ 79		_				
DHM	\$ 269	\$ 269	\$ 237	\$ 197	\$ 152	\$ 116	\$ 91		_			
EXR	\$ 299	\$ 299	\$ 277	\$ 242	\$ 197	\$ 159	\$ 145	\$ 96				
HAV	\$ 299	\$ 299	\$ 299	\$ 277	\$ 237	\$ 234	\$ 213	\$ 151	\$ 87			
WOB	\$ 299	\$ 299	\$ 299	\$ 299	\$ 299	\$ 297	\$ 294	\$ 252	\$ 180	\$ 87		
BON	\$ 299	\$ 299	\$ 299	\$ 299	\$ 299	\$ 299	\$ 299	\$ 299	\$ 299	\$ 299		

PROP	OSED M	ONTHLY	PASS FA	ARE						
	BRK	FRE	POR	POR ORB		WEM	DOV	DHM	EXR	HHL
FRE	\$ 79		-							
POR	\$ 99	\$ 99								
ORB	\$ 99	\$ 99	\$ 79		_					
SAO	\$ 139	\$ 139	\$ 119	\$ 79		_				
WEM	\$ 179	\$ 179	\$ 159	\$ 119	\$ 79		_			
DOV	\$ 239	\$ 239	\$ 205	\$ 166	\$ 119	\$ 79				
DHM	\$ 269	\$ 269	\$ 237	\$ 197	\$ 152	\$ 116	\$ 110		_	
EXR	\$ 299	\$ 299	\$ 277	\$ 242	\$ 197	\$ 159	\$ 150	\$ 135		_
HAV	\$ 299	\$ 299	\$ 299	\$ 277	\$ 237	\$ 234	\$ 220	\$ 160	\$ 135	
WOB	\$ 319	\$ 319	\$ 319	\$ 319	\$ 319	\$ 299	\$ 299	\$ 299	\$ 249	\$ 135
BON	\$ 319	\$ 319	\$ 319	\$ 319	\$ 319	\$ 319	\$ 319	\$ 319	\$ 319	\$ 319

10-Ride Fare Structure

The Plan recommends increases of \$7.00 to \$10.00 in Ten-Ride pass fares for travel between most city pairs.

CURRENT	CURRENT 10-RIDE PASS FARE										
	BRK	FRE	POR	ORB	SAO	WEM	DOV	DHM	EXR	HHL	
FRE	\$ 45		_								
POR	\$ 83	\$ 42		_							
ORB	\$ 90	\$ 75	\$ 42		_						
SAO	\$ 113	\$ 90	\$ 64	\$ 42		_					
WEM	\$ 135	\$ 113	\$ 74	\$ 64	\$ 42		_				
DOV	\$ 165	\$ 143	\$ 105	\$ 84	\$ 74	\$ 42					
DHM	\$ 173	\$ 150	\$ 126	\$ 101	\$ 84	\$ 64	\$ 48		_		
EXR	\$ 195	\$ 173	\$ 147	\$ 126	\$ 105	\$ 79	\$ 78	\$ 50			
HAV	\$ 218	\$ 188	\$ 169	\$ 147	\$ 126	\$ 105	\$ 87	\$ 78	\$ 50		
WOB	\$ 218	\$ 203	\$ 180	\$ 180	\$ 169	\$ 147	\$ 146	\$ 127	\$ 81	\$ 50	
BON	\$ 218	\$ 203	\$ 180	\$ 180	\$ 180	\$ 171	\$ 169	\$ 164	\$ 127	\$ 109	

PROPO	PROPOSED 10-RIDE PASS FARE											
	BRK	FRE	POR	ORB	SAO	WEM	DOV	DHM	EXR	HHL		
FRE	\$ 45											
POR	\$ 83	\$ 42										
ORB	\$ 90	\$ 75	\$ 42									
SAO	\$ 113	\$ 90	\$ 64	\$ 42		_						
WEM	\$ 135	\$ 113	\$ 74	\$ 64	\$ 42		_					
DOV	\$ 173	\$ 150	\$ 113	\$ 92	\$ 81	\$ 50		_				
DHM	\$ 180	\$ 158	\$ 134	\$ 108	\$ 92	\$ 72	\$ 58		_			
EXR	\$ 203	\$ 180	\$ 155	\$ 134	\$ 113	\$ 86	\$ 88	\$ 60		_		
HAV	\$ 225	\$ 195	\$ 177	\$ 155	\$ 134	\$ 113	\$ 97	\$ 88	\$ 60			
WOB	\$ 225	\$ 210	\$ 187	\$ 187	\$ 177	\$ 155	\$ 156	\$ 137	\$ 91	\$ 60		
BON	\$ 225	\$ 210	\$ 187	\$ 187	\$ 187	\$ 179	\$ 179	\$ 174	\$ 137	\$ 119		

6-TIX Fare Structure:

Plan Recommendations. No changes proposed. All 6-TIX Passes remain \$86.

Competitive Analysis

To gain a better understanding of the marketability of Downeaster fares, the staff has conducted a survey of fares from other modes in various marketplaces and factored in the proposed changes to the Downeaster Fare Structure.

Other Amtrak and State Supported Routes

A variety of factors can influence pricing of *intercity passenger rail* services (IPR); these include frequency, geographic location, population and demand. NNEPRA selected a set of IPR services that have similarities across these characteristics in order to assess the new pricing policy. In general, the proposed fare per mile of Downeaster one-way fares is comparable with other routes. It is notable the Downeaster passes are discounted more deeply than other IPR routes which offer that product.

DOWNEASTI	OWNEASTER VALUE FARE SUMMARY - FY2018															
				Value					10	Ride Pass		Monthly Pass				
	City Pairs	Miles		Fare		\$/mile		Pass	Cos	t/10 rides	% full Fare		Pass	Cos	t/Ride 36	% full Fare
Downeaster	BRK-BON	146	\$	30	\$	0.21	\$	225	\$	22.50	75%	\$	319	\$	8.86	30%
	FRE-BON	136	\$	30	\$	0.22	\$	210	\$	21.00	70%	\$	319	\$	8.86	30%
	POR-BON	116	\$	29	\$	0.25	\$	187	\$	18.71	65%	\$	319	\$	8.86	31%
	ORB-BON	104	\$	25	\$	0.24	\$	187	\$	18.71	75%	\$	319	\$	8.86	35%
	SAO-BON	100	\$	24	\$	0.24	\$	187	\$	18.71	78%	\$	319	\$	8.86	37%
	WEM-BON	84	\$	21	\$	0.25	\$	179	\$	17.85	85%	\$	319	\$	8.86	42%
	DOV-BON	68	\$	21	\$	0.31	\$	179	\$	17.90	85%	\$	319	\$	8.86	42%
	DHM-BON	62	\$	20	\$	0.32	\$	174	\$	17.40	87%	\$	319	\$	8.86	44%
	EXR-BON	51	\$	17	\$	0.33	\$	137	\$	13.71	81%	\$	319	\$	8.86	52%
	HAV-BON	34	\$	14	\$	0.41	\$	119	\$	11.90	85%	\$	319	\$	8.86	63%

OTHER AMTRA	AK ROUTES FA	ARE SUMN	/IAR	IES										
								10 Ride	e Pass			Мо	nthly Pass	
	City Pairs	Miles		Fare	,	\$/mile		Pass	% full Fare		Pass	Cos	t/Ride 36	% full Fare
Carolinian	NYP-WIL	116	\$	65	\$	0.56	\$	685	105%	\$	1,544	\$	42.89	66%
NEC	NHV-NYP	75	\$	42	\$	0.56	\$	454	108%	\$	1,023	\$	28.42	68%
Downeaster	HAV-BON	34	\$	14	\$	0.41	\$	119	85%	\$	319	\$	8.86	63%
NEC	BOS-NYP	231	\$	78	\$	0.34	\$	825	106%	\$	1,860	\$	51.67	66%
Empire	HUD-NYP	113	\$	38	\$	0.34	\$	424	112%	\$	954	\$	26.50	70%
Downeaster	EXR-BON	51	\$	17	\$	0.33	\$	137	81%	\$	319	\$	8.86	52%
Downeaster	DHM-BON	62	\$	20	\$	0.32	\$	174	87%	\$	319	\$	8.86	44%
Capital Corridor	OAC-SAC	90	\$	29	\$	0.32	\$	179	62%	\$	468	\$	13.00	45%
Downeaster	DOV-BON	68	\$	21	\$	0.31	\$	179	85%	\$	319	\$	8.86	42%
Empire	ALB-NYP	141	\$	43	\$	0.30	\$	496	115%	\$	1,116	\$	31.00	72%
Hiawatha	MKE-CHI	86	\$	25	\$	0.29	\$	192	77%	\$	416	\$	11.56	46%
Downeaster	WEM-BON	84	\$	21	\$	0.25	\$	179	85%	\$	319	\$	8.86	42%
Downeaster	POR-BON	116	\$	29	\$	0.25	\$	187	64%	\$	319	\$	8.86	31%
Downeaster	ORB-BON	104	\$	25	\$	0.24	\$	187	75%	\$	319	\$	8.86	35%
Downeaster	SAO-BON	100	\$	24	\$	0.24	\$	187	78%	\$	319	\$	8.86	37%
Cascades	PDX-SEA	146	\$	35	\$	0.24								
Cascades	EUG-PDX	124	\$	28	\$	0.23	\$	154	55%	\$	406	\$	11.28	40%
Wolverine	CHI-DOA	102	\$	23	\$	0.23	\$	219	95%					
Downeaster	FRE-BON	136	\$	30	\$	0.22	\$	210	70%	\$	319	\$	8.86	30%
Downeaster	BRK-BON	146	\$	30	\$	0.21	\$	225	75%	\$	319	\$	8.86	30%
Vermonter	SAB-WRJ	118	\$	23	\$	0.19								
NEC	RGH-CLT	173	\$	32	\$	0.18	\$	268	85%					
Piedmont	CLT-RGH	173	\$	32	\$	0.18	\$	268	85%					
Heartland Flyer	FTW-OKC	206	\$	31	\$	0.15	\$	255	82%					
Illini	CHI-RTL	115	\$	15	\$	0.13	\$	143	95%		•		·	·
Lincoln	ALN-LCN	127	\$	14	\$	0.11	\$	133	95%					

Other Modes and Transit Options

Markets served by the Downeaster are also served by other competing modes and transit providers. Proposed Downeaster one-way and pass fares appear to be comparable yet not competitive to other transit modes. However, further pricing increases could prove to be disadvantageous to Downeaster ridership growth in other segments of the service.

Market Analysis							
PORTLAND - BOSTON	One Way		San	ne Day RT	:	10-Ride	Monthly
Downeaster Value Fare	\$	29.00	\$	58.00	\$	187.00	\$ 319.00
Concord Coach POR-S. Stn	\$	23.00	\$	39.00	\$	125.00	n/a
Greyhound- Flexible Fare POR-S. Stn	\$	32.00	\$	64.00		n/a	n/a
EXETER - BOSTON	0	ne Way	San	ne Day RT	:	10-Ride	Monthly
Downeaster Value Fare	\$	17.00	\$	34.00	\$	137.05	\$ 319.00
C&J Portsmouth-South Stn.	\$	17.00	\$	25.00	\$	117.00	\$ 351.00
HAVERHILL - BOSTON	0	ne Way	San	ne Day RT	:	10-Ride	Monthly
Downeaster Value Fare	\$	14.00	\$	28.00	\$	119.00	\$ 319.00
МВТА	\$	10.50	\$	21.00	\$	105.00	\$ 336.50

Pass/Fare Descriptions

Downeaster

10 Ride Pass: Valid for ten one-way trips within a 45 day period

Commuter Pass: Valid for unlimited one-way trips within a calendar month.

Concord Coachlines

10 Ride Pass: Valid for ten one-way trips within a 30 day period Portland to

Boston South Station

C&J Trailways

10 Ride Pass: Valid for ten one-way trips within a 21 day period from

Portsmouth, NH to Boston South Station

Commuter Pass: Valid for unlimited one-way trips within a calendar month.

MBTA

<u>Commuter Pass:</u> Valid for unlimited one-way trips within a calendar month. Also includes unlimited travel on Local Bus, Subway, Express Bus, and Inner Harbor Ferries.

Conclusion

The fare strategies proposed are anticipated to have the following financial impacts:

- The monthly pass sales from impacted markets are anticipated to decline approximately 3%, as the new fare will remain below other transportation options therefore the net revenue gain associated with increases in multi-ride pass sales is estimated to be \$37,000.
- Based on the percentage of riders who travel without using a discounted ticket, and who will be impacted by the \$1.00 increase in value fare, it is anticipated that the net revenue gain associated with the increase in value fares will be more than \$250,000.
- Therefore the FY2018 Fare Policy is anticipated to increase revenues approximately \$287,000.

Process summary

Staff presents preliminary fare policy review and projected revenue needs									
Board approves staff to conduct public outreach									
Public input and feedback solicited and received									
Revised draft presented to Board for review and vote									
Fare Plan implemented									

Public Comments for the 2018 Fare Plan will be accepted until June 25, 2017. Public comment can be made in writing and sent to NNEPRA via mail or e-mail at info@nnepra.com.

Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority

Attn: Fare Plan

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