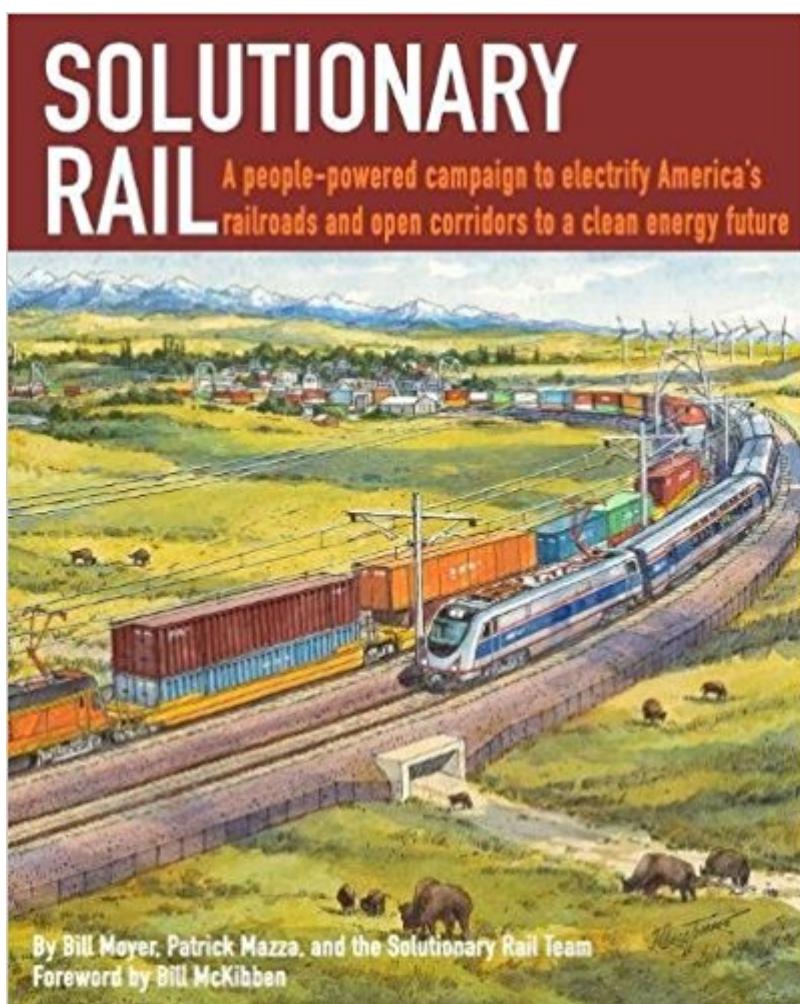


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# **Solutionary Rail: A People-powered Campaign To Electrify America's Railroads And Open Corridors To A Clean Energy Future**



## Synopsis

Could railroads, the oldest form of mechanized mass transportation, be the key to unlocking solutions to some of the greatest challenges of the 21st century? Unique among modes of long-haul transport, rail can be electrified. So, why not power trains with renewable energy? Might a clean, modernized, higher-speed rail network draw freight and passengers off the highways and back onto the tracks? Could electrifying the railroads actually open new transmission corridors and increase the supply and reliability of electricity from wind and solar? If the rest of the world is already electrifying their railroads, why isn't the US? After three years of inquiry with experts and stakeholders, the Solutionary Rail team addresses these questions and more. The Solutionary Rail vision draws unlikely allies together. It provides common cause to workers, farmers, tribes, urban and rural communities via the tracks and corridors that connect them. Solutionary Rail invites railroads into a win-win partnership with We the People. Solutionary Rail charts a path forward to tackle interlocking economic, environmental, and social problems. Part action plan and part manifesto, this book launches a new people-powered campaign to transform the way we use trains and the corridors they travel through. So, echoing the conductor's call, "All aboard!"

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Rail electrification, as proposed in this remarkable book, is that rarest of things: a genuinely new idea." ~ Bill McKibben, climate activist, author and co-founder of 350.org "Don't miss this provocative book! The time is now for big picture..." ~ Wenonah Hauter, Executive Director, Food &

Water Watch, author of Frackopoly and Foodopoly "Solutionary Rail provides something tangible for all stakeholders to consider and to build on." ~ Mike Elliott, Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen "Electrification is not only our best option for passenger rail travel but also for freight rail." ~ Denis Hayes, President, Bullitt Foundation; principal national organizer of the first Earth Day in 1970 "Solutionary Rail taps into that spiritual challenge to change course and returns with a transformative vision for redeeming railroads and a society addicted to their dangerous cargo. Indigenous and non-indigenous rural communities can be part of this solution by powering these trains and their communities with renewable energy, and transmitting the surplus to the cities." ~ Tom Goldtooth, Executive Director, Indigenous Environmental Network, [www.ienearth.org](http://www.ienearth.org), [www.indigenousrising.org](http://www.indigenousrising.org) "A brilliant solution to our simultaneous need to cut carbon emissions and improve our transportation infrastructure. Brilliant!" ~ Thom Hartmann, author, radio and television journalist "This book is a must read for anyone who works for a railroad, wants to work for a railroad, or wants to come to a better understanding on how transportation can be restructured to fill the needs of a planet killing itself on fossil fuels." ~ Jeff Kurtz, Retired 41-year locomotive engineer with BNSF. and Iowa State Legislative Board Chairman ( 2004-2014 )with the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen "Well reasoned and comprehensively documented - this book will jumpstart an energy transformation in the United States that has already been demonstrated as a success in other countries." ~ Ralph Nader, author, consumer protection, environmental and democracy champion and former independent and Green Party presidential candidate "Solutionary Rail has contributed a valuable next step in this fine work drawing together in one place a comprehensive statement of the benefits of electrification and the Steel Interstate." ~ David Foster, Executive Director, RAIL Solution "We need to move beyond gloom and doom to holistic solutions. America desperately needs a new transportation system, as well as a regenerative food, farming, energy, and political system. Part of the transformation is outlined in this visionary new book, Solutionary Rail. All aboard!" ~ Ronnie Cummins, Director, Organic Consumers Association "Solutionary Rail will catalyze an economic renaissance in rural communities along the line. What an elegant solution. Read this book and get inspired to create a more sustainable future!" ~ Luther Propst, Founder, Sonoran Institute, board member, George B. Storer Foundation. "This new proposal might very well kindle a new fire in the public debate about our country's transportation and energy future." ~ Roger Hickey, Co-Director, Campaign for America's Future

Inclusionary activist Bill Moyer has assembled an outstanding and diverse team to formulate a very practical and attractive plan to electrify and upgrade US rail, both freight and passenger, starting

with the Seattle to Chicago northern transcontinental route. The engineers on the team have crunched the numbers, and they look very promising. Key input has come from railroad engineering and business consultants, in addition to government reports and discussions with environmentalists, tribes, rail workers, and others. Agriculture and rural communities along the route would reap great benefits, and not just from the sales of wind and solar energy to the railroads. The direct electrical power, track, and signal improvements would mean substantially greater speed, reliability, and capacity at substantially lower cost. Speeds up to 125 mph are feasible within most of the current corridor, and there is also room for new power lines. This means much improved market access, especially for perishables. In addition the prospects are good for taking back some of the freight that was lost to trucking with the advent of the interstate highway system and trucking subsidies. This will be a big saver of road wear and tear, not just green house gas emissions. Ironically, electric rail has a long history in the United States, including the Seattle to Chicago route until the 1970s. As fossil fuel costs have risen globally, so has rail electrification, usually with government assistance in other countries. Here the long term benefits of electrification require at least 500 miles of corridor upgrades, hence billions up front. BNSF has been investing heavily in spot improvements along this corridor, but is not ready to make the big leap to electrification by itself. This proposal would kick in public subsidies by lowering the cost of debt, also the cost of property taxes on the new infrastructure. A non-profit corporation would end up owning the improvements thus financed, which would then be leased to the railroad companies, with the lease fees covered all the costs to the non-profit. The concept is that the states with the most at stake, Montana and Washington, would take the lead, with negotiations including labor standards and tribal treaty rights, not just infrastructure and finances. Other rail corridors and partners would follow. As they say, "All Aboard!" Do a search on "solutionaryrail" to learn more.

If you are exhausted from fighting off coal terminals, oil terminals, methanol plants and other unspeakably bad ideas, and you want something good to fight for, here it is. Everybody loves renewable energy (unless you are a big oil company). Updating our rail system to run on electricity moves us away from using diesel. The frosting on the cake is that the same infrastructure right-of-way that brings power to the train can be used to distribute wind from the Midwest and solar from the Southwest. Diversity of renewable sources ("the wind is always blowing somewhere") makes wind and solar energy a more consistent source of energy. In fact, a widely-enough distributed upgraded electrical grid makes renewable energy reliable enough to get rid of fossil fuels in our electricity (e.g., look up the work of Dr. Mark Jacobson at Stanford University). The

demonstration project proposed by Solutionary Rail is a big step in the right direction, toward 100% renewable electricity, an electrified transportation system, and freedom from fossil fuels. This is something you can say "Yes!" to!

A fascinating concept for improving our rail system. The concepts are well explained and good documentary research supports these ideas. The United States has so under appreciated the value of a good rail system. Just look at China and the huge investments they have made!. And rail is an important part of their transportation system. We are so far behind and the ideas presented in this valuable book should be taken seriously by everyone interested in improving our transportation system.

This is something we can all get behind and feel good about. Thank you for bringing this wonderful idea out! I've often wondered why we have not continued to use our rails in this country. John Henry and his like did not do all of this work to just have them fall into disrepair. Our climate, our country, our indigenous people, and the others who share this country all need this Solutionary Rail. Thank you for reminding us that our YES needs to be as prominent as our NO, Bill Moyer, Backbone, et al.

Excellent book, the new administration needs to implement these ideas!

A needed Railvolution in transportation. More efficient trains powered by electricity from renewable energy sources. Do this NOW!

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