



Freight Systems Division

Washington's Freight Systems



Supporting Washington's freight systems by providing strategic planning for all state freight investments and directly managing the state's rail programs.

Global Gateways
International and National Trade Flows Through Washington



Made in Washington
Regional Economies Rely on the Freight System



Delivering Goods to You
Distribution of Retail and Wholesale Products

January 2008

The Freight Systems Division Is Responsible for:

- Developing the state's strategic investment plan for freight, which is based on the Washington Transportation Plan (WTP) Freight Report.
- Building regional participation and support for the freight investment plan by working together with freight system partners.
- Managing the state's freight and passenger rail capital programs and operations.

Freight Continues to Grow in Washington

Washington businesses and households depend on the reliable movement of goods using trucks, ships, rail, and air transportation. Across all modes and systems, the amount of freight tonnage is growing, which reflects positive economic growth and development for Washington. Based on the most recent data released by the Federal Highway Administration in 2002, over 477 million tons of freight worth more than \$371 billion was moved to, from, and within Washington State using all modes. Trucks carried most of the freight, both by tonnage (59%) and value (64%), in 2002. By 2035 freight movement in Washington is expected to increase to 975 million tons of freight worth over \$1.2 trillion.

As the state's economy and population continue to grow, WSDOT's Freight Systems Division will continue to stress the importance of freight system efficiency and its critical role in sustaining our competitive position, improving quality of life, and maximizing the benefits of public investment in freight transportation.



Washington's Freight Systems Are Moving the Economy

Efficient, safe, and secure freight transportation helps support and drive Washington's diverse economy. Washington's freight systems are an interconnected network of highways and local roads, main-line and short-line railroads, waterways and deepwater ports, and air cargo facilities.

Global Gateways

Washington is a gateway state, connecting Asian trade to the U.S. economy, Alaska to the continental 48 states, and Canada to the U.S. West Coast. About 70 percent of international goods entering Washington gateways continue on to the larger national market. Thirty percent become part of Washington's manufactured output or are distributed in the local retail system.

Made in Washington

Our state's manufacturers and farmers rely on freight systems to ship Washington-made products to local customers, to the large national markets in California and on the east coast, and worldwide.



Delivering Goods to You

Washington's retail distribution system is fundamentally crucial in delivering food, fuel, and consumer products to our citizens, with up to 80% percent of the truck trips operating in the local economies.

Capital Rail Projects Are Moving Forward

"The economy of the state will be best served by a policy of maintaining and encouraging a healthy rail freight system by creating mechanisms that keep rail freight lines operating if the benefits of the service outweigh the cost." RCW 47.76.200

The economic vitality of Washington State requires a strong rail system capable of providing its businesses, ports, and farms with competitive access to North American and international markets.

WSDOT's State Rail and Marine Office has more than 40 capital rail projects proposed, funded, or underway to support freight and passenger rail mobility in Washington State. When completed, these capital rail projects will result in enhanced freight mobility, improved safety, reduced rail congestion, track upgrades, and improved frequency of Amtrak Cascades service. For more information on WSDOT's capital rail projects, go to: www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/rail.

Some of the key freight rail projects currently managed through the State Rail and Marine Office are:

Palouse River and Coulee City Rail Line

In 2007 WSDOT completed the purchase of this debilitated rail line to save it from abandonment. The PCC is the state's longest short-line freight rail line, spanning four counties in eastern Washington. It handles nearly one-fifth of the state's grain harvest each year.

The Washington Grain Train

WSDOT owns and manages a fleet of supplemental grain cars to help Washington farmers move grain to market.



Produce Railcar Pool

Developed in 2006, this program helps carry Washington State produce to eastern states in refrigerated railcars.



Amtrak Cascades Shows Steady Growth

Since 1994 WSDOT has worked with Amtrak, the state of Oregon, the Province of British Columbia, and the railroads to provide fast, reliable, and more frequent intercity passenger rail service along the I-5 corridor. Travelers ride Amtrak Cascades trains between Vancouver, B.C. and Eugene, Oregon and 15 cities in between.

Ridership on Amtrak Cascades has seen steady increases every year since its beginning in 1994, and is projected to grow substantially over the next several years. Service has been increased to include additional trains resulting in four daily round-trip trains between Seattle and Portland. A second train between Seattle and Vancouver, B.C. is planned for summer 2008.

Washington State plans to improve Amtrak Cascades service over the next 20 years based on market demand, partnership investment, and legislative authorization. Improvements to track, safety systems, train equipment, and stations will reduce travel times, increase train frequency, and improve safety and reliability.

