

Pt. Defiance Bypass



WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

For More Information:

Kevin Jeffers, P.E.
Capital Projects Manager
WSDOT State Rail Office
PO Box 47407
Olympia, WA 98504-7407

www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/Rail/PNWRC_PtDefiance
www.AmtrakCascades.com
Phone: 360.705.7900
or toll-free 1.800.822.2015
E-mail: rail@wsdot.wa.gov

Elizabeth Phinney
Rail Environmental Manager
WSDOT State Rail Office
PO Box 47407
Olympia, WA 98504-7407



**Washington State
Department of Transportation**
WSDOT State Rail Office
PO Box 47407
Olympia, WA 98504-7407



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Department of Transportation**

Pt. Defiance Bypass Project



Passenger trains will avoid the slower, congested route. This will improve travel times and free up space on the congested route, resulting in an improved rail system.

November 2007

Pt. Defiance Bypass

What is the Pt. Defiance Bypass Project?

The project is located along an 18-mile corridor owned by Sound Transit. It includes:

- A new second track between South Tacoma and Lakewood.
- New rails, ties, and ballast between Lakewood and Nisqually.
- Improved connection to the main line near Nisqually.
- Safety improvements at several road/rail (at-grade) crossings, where the rail line and the road cross one another at the same level.

Part of the proposed route of this WSDOT project is the same route that Sound Transit will use to extend Sounder commuter rail to Lakewood. In fact, Sound Transit will administer the construction of the improvements.

What is the purpose of the project?

- Improve Amtrak *Cascades* reliability. Passenger trains will not have to share the tracks with freight trains in this area.
- Provide faster and more frequent Amtrak *Cascades* service. Speeds will be increased up to 79 mph, reducing travel times between Seattle and Portland by six minutes. This will then allow for additional Amtrak *Cascades* trains in the future.
- Allow increased freight rail service around Pt. Defiance and along southern Puget Sound by eliminating passenger trains from the BNSF Railway main line.

Are significant impacts expected as a result of the project?

WSDOT has done extensive research and modeling in many areas including traffic, noise, and wetlands and have found no significant impact will result from the project.

Why is WSDOT re-routing Amtrak trains away from Pt. Defiance?

Passenger trains must slow down due to curves and single-track tunnels on the BNSF Railway main line tracks around Pt. Defiance and along southern Puget Sound. This project re-routes passenger trains to a bypass on an existing rail line. The bypass runs along the west side of Interstate 5 (I-5), from south Tacoma through Lakewood and DuPont, and reconnects with the BNSF Railway main line east of I-5, near Nisqually.

- This project provides more reliable Amtrak *Cascades* service.
- WSDOT and Sound Transit are working together to save time and money, by ensuring that construction only has to be done once in any one location.

Why is WSDOT building the bypass?

Currently passenger and freight trains share the same route. This results in unreliable, limited, and slower service because:

- The curved tracks along southern Puget Sound require passenger trains to move more slowly.
- The Nelson Bennett and Ruston tunnels near Pt. Defiance are both single-track, limiting the number of trains that can operate on this route.
- The longer route, around Pt. Defiance and along southern Puget Sound, increases travel times for passenger trains.

How is the project funded?

This project is funded through the following sources:

2005 Partnership Funding (Vehicle Weight Fees)	\$49.312 million
2003 Legislative Transportation Package (New & Used Vehicle Sales Tax)	\$7.072 million
Federal Funds	\$3.200 million
Total funding from all sources*	\$59.584 million

* This does not include work by Sound Transit on this route.

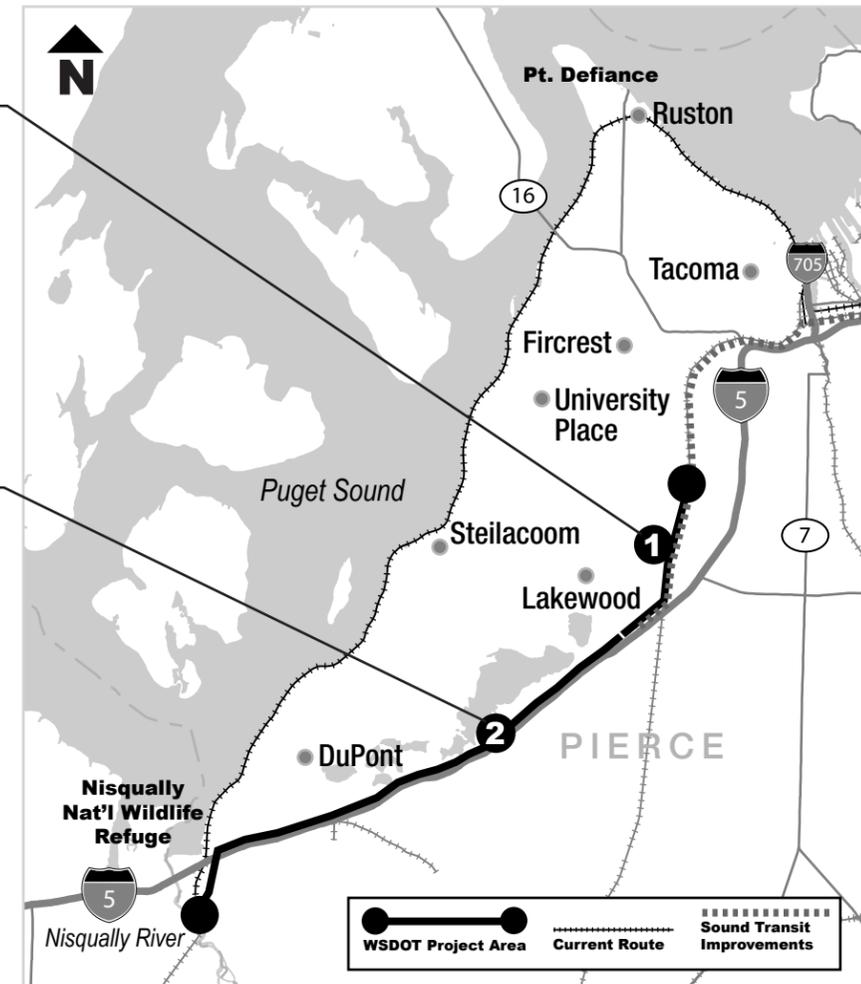
WSDOT Improvements

Segment 1:

- Constructs second track from South 66th Street, past Lakewood Station and Bridgeport Way.
- Safety upgrades and improvements to five road/rail grade crossings to accommodate the second track, so trains can travel up to 79 mph.

Segment 2:

- Upgrades tracks and improves existing connection to BNSF Railway main line so trains can travel up to 40 mph from Nisqually to Mounts Road and 79 mph from Mounts Road to Bridgeport Way.
- Safety upgrades to five road/rail grade crossings.



Sound Transit Improvements

- Constructs new single-track connection between D Street and Chandler Street.
- Upgrades tracks between Chandler Street and the new Lakewood Station, so trains can travel up to 65 mph.
- Upgrade ten road/rail grade crossings outside the WSDOT project area.
- Constructs new layover facility in Lakewood for Sounder trains to stay overnight.

WSDOT will make safety improvements at these road/rail grade crossings for safety upgrades

Location	Jurisdiction
South 74th Street	Tacoma
Steilacoom Boulevard SW	Lakewood
100th Street SW	Lakewood
108th Street SW	Lakewood
Bridgeport Way SW	Lakewood
Clover Creek Drive SW	Lakewood
North Thorne Lane SW	Lakewood
Berkeley Street SW	Lakewood
41st Division Drive (entrance to North Ft. Lewis)	Fort Lewis
Barksdale Avenue (aka Dupont-Steilacoom Road)	Pierce County

What is the current schedule?

Environmental and Engineering	Began Summer 2006
Public and Agency Open House	November 2006
Complete Environmental Process	November 2007
Final (Complete) Design and Permitting	Winter 2007-2008
Begin Construction	Spring 2008
Complete Construction	2010