



Washington State
Department of Transportation

The Gray Notebook Lite

WSDOT's quarterly performance report on transportation systems, programs, and department management

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GNB 41 Excerpts

The *Gray Notebook*, WSDOT's quarterly performance report, celebrates its tenth year of publication with this edition (see page 96 for details). This edition of *Gray Notebook Lite* includes highlights from the annual reports covering safety rest areas, freight, travel information, water quality, and wetlands protection reports. This edition also includes analysis on state and local highway safety programs.

An insert provides updated figures for the 2003 Nickel, and the 2005 Transportation Partnership Account project delivery programs. A second insert provides information on the projects funded and supported by the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

An electronic copy of the *Gray Notebook Lite* as well as the complete edition of the *Gray Notebook* can be found at www.wsdot.wa.gov/Accountability/GrayNotebook/default.htm

2001-2011
A decade of transparency

Highway System Safety Programs

WSDOT has implemented various safety initiatives over the years to reduce run-off-the-road collisions. WSDOT installed 1,237 miles of shoulder rumble strips since May 2003, and 2,163 miles of centerline rumble strips since May 1996. Both forms of rumble strips notify drivers that they are leaving their lane through sound and vibration.

WSDOT installed over 229 miles of cable median barrier since March 2001, which help prevent head-on collisions along divided highways. The agency installed about 93 miles of guardrail since August 1989 and replaced about 62 miles of guardrail since 1996.

WSDOT has analyzed collision data for the five most frequent kinds of accidents to examine the effectiveness of its safety initiatives. The data was analyzed separately for eastern and western Washington, and urban and rural areas.

The graph at right shows the change in collision trends for urban areas in western Washington: these saw a reduction in collisions of between 11% and 20%; “vehicle overturned” collisions were down by 11% and “entering at angle” collisions dropped by 20%.

Eastern Washington urban areas saw collision reductions ranging from ‘no change’ to 23%. The frequency of “fixed-object” collisions was unchanged, while “rear-end” collisions dropped 23%.

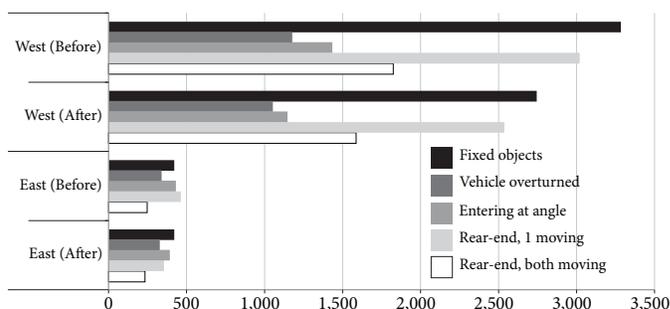
Western Washington rural areas saw reductions in the top collision

types of between 7% and 18%, while “rear-end” collisions for vehicles moving in the same direction increased by 1%. “Vehicle overturned” collisions were reduced by 18% while “entering at angle” collisions dropped by 6%. Eastern Washington rural areas showed collision reductions of between 5% and 23%. “Overturned” and “angle” collisions dropped 21% and 23% respectively.

The article also covers safety initiatives at or near tribal reservations and county grant programs. The entire report is on pages 5-8.

Collision analysis: Top five fatal, serious, and evident-injury collision types in urban Washington

Before data 2000-2004; After data 2005-2009



Source: WSDOT Collision Datamart, Capital Program Development and Management Office.

Notes: East - Eastern Washington includes WSDOT North Central, South Central, and Eastern regions. West - Western Washington includes WSDOT North Central, South Central, and Western regions.

Safety Rest Areas Annual Safety Report

Safety rest areas on the highway system improve traveler safety by providing stopping opportunities when fatigue or other distractions impact driver attention. There are 47 rest areas statewide, 28 on the interstate system and 19 on state highways.

Rest area user data for 2010 show an increase in the number of visitors statewide over 2009. The total number of visitors statewide increased by 2.5% in 2010 (22.35 million users), about 559,000 more than in 2009 (21.79 million).

The new Elbe safety rest area on SR 7 in Pierce County is under construction and will be completed in 2011. The entire report is on pages 9-10.

Safety rest area visitation data, 2006-2010

| Year | Total visitors | Change from previous year | |
|------|----------------|---------------------------|----|
| 2006 | 21,571,000 | -- | -- |
| 2007 | 20,884,596 | -3% | ▼ |
| 2008 | 20,273,428 | -3% | ▼ |
| 2009 | 21,788,595 | 7% | ▲ |
| 2010 | 22,348,011 | 2.5% | ▲ |

Data source: WSDOT Maintenance Office

1 2006 was the first year WSDOT used water usage as the primary evaluation tool to estimate user visitation, prior estimates used a different metric, and are not compared.

Safety Rest Areas Annual Preservation Report

WSDOT conducts building and site condition assessments every two years. Condition ratings focus on evaluating building and site components, structures, and systems, and not maintenance or operational components. In 2010, the majority of rest area facilities have condition ratings in the Fair-Mid to Fair-Low categories.

New buildings will replace lowest-rated facilities

The two lowest-rated facilities based on building and site condition were the eastbound Selah Creek (Fair-Low) and the Vernita (Poor) safety rest areas. New buildings are under construction at both sites and will be completed in 2011. The entire report is on pages 12-14.

Condition ratings for 43 safety rest areas

Number and percentage of safety rest areas in each category in 2010

| Condition | Number | Percentage |
|------------------------------------|--------|------------|
| Good (meets standards) | 8 | 19% |
| Fair - High (minimal deficiencies) | 7 | 16% |
| Fair - Mid (adequate condition) | 11 | 26% |
| Fair - Low (multiple deficiencies) | 16 | 37% |
| Poor (multiple major deficiencies) | 1 | 2% |

Data source: WSDOT Facilities Office.

Note: Only 43 of 47 facilities were evaluated. The remaining four were not evaluated because they are fairly new, minimal-amenity facilities. All 47 are planned to be evaluated in 2012.

Trucks, Goods & Freight Annual Report

WSDOT is partnering with Transportation Northwest at the University of Washington (TransNow), and the Washington Trucking Associations (WTA) in a project to collect and analyze Global Positioning Systems (GPS) truck data from commercial, in-vehicle, truck fleet management systems.

In 2010, the state Legislature gave the program additional funding and directed that the study area be expanded statewide from the initial Puget Sound program. Funds were used to increase the number of trucks monitored to 6,000 and widen the study area to include all state highways with freight significance.

Bottleneck identification project

The bottleneck identification process developed for the program is designed to find sections of Washington’s roadways that perform poorly for trucks, then to develop quantitative measures that allow these bottlenecks to be ranked and compared. Results will be replicable and statistically valid, producing useful data that are straight-forward to use by transportation professionals and decision makers.

Freight volumes increased from 2009 to 2010

Truck volumes in Washington have shown steady, long-term increases. Although 2009 saw an annual decrease, volumes appear to have begun to increase again in 2010. Growth in overall average

Example truck bottleneck data

I-90 Snoqualmie Pass – Tinkham Rd to Denny Creek

- Speeds below threshold 61% of the time
- Average truck speed is 37 mph
- Truck traffic averages 6,000 trucks per day
- This route is considered *Unreliable* at all measured times of day: AM, midday, PM, and night.

daily truck volumes on Washington’s major highways may be a sign that economic conditions are beginning to stabilize and grow.

Marine freight container volumes were 14.8% higher in 2010 compared to 2009, following a 12.2% decline in 2009 compared to 2008.

2009 freight volumes down for rail and up for air freight

The economic downturn finally hit rail freight traffic in Washington, as rail traffic declined more than 11% in 2009 from 2008. The most significant drop is in import rail traffic passing through Washington to the Midwest on the trans-continental route. Air cargo handled at Washington airports increased 3.77% between 2008 and 2009.

Air and rail freight data for 2010 was not available in time for publication. The entire report is on pages 42-50.

CVISN – Commercial Vehicle Information Systems

As part of the Intelligent Transportation Systems program, the Commercial Vehicle Information Systems and Networks (CVISN) program provides information to Washington State Patrol Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Offices allowing for more targeted inspections of commercial vehicles.

In 2010, CVISN truck transponders were read about 2.2 million times at open weigh stations in Washington. In this period, WSDOT estimates that 35.31% of all commercial vehicles moving through the state were using transponders. This is a 5.7% increase from 2008 and 1.3% more than 2009.

The program saved the trucking industry in Washington about 113,000 hours and an estimated \$8.5 million. Trucks received more than 1.3 million green lights in 2010, a 24% increase since 2008. The entire report is on pages 51-52.



Fort Lewis weigh station, I-5 northbound.

Preservation

Ferries Terminal and Vessel Preservation

WSDOT Ferries Division is responsible for the repair and preservation of the 19 terminals and repair facility located in Washington. WSDOT inspects and evaluates terminal assets for condition and remaining service life at least every three years.

2010 terminals condition rating results

Eighty-four percent of state ferry terminal systems are rated in “good” or “fair” condition – down 1% from 2009. Vessel condition reporting is under development and vessel status is reported in terms of life cycle assessment in the interim. The entire report is on pages 18-20.

WSF structural condition ratings for terminal systems

Inspection results for 2010

| Type of facility or system | # of systems | Good 90-100 | Fair 70-89 | Poor 50-69 | Substandard 0-49 | Not rated |
|----------------------------|--------------|-------------|------------|------------|------------------|-----------|
| Landing aids* | 179 | 55% | 22% | 12% | 11% | 0% |
| Vehicle transfer spans | 210 | 35% | 49% | 16% | 0% | 0% |
| Overhead loading systems | 66 | 62% | 30% | 8% | 0% | 0% |
| Trestle & bulkheads | 72 | 31% | 58% | 7% | 3% | 0% |
| Pavement | 77 | 25% | 42% | 19% | 14% | 1% |
| Buildings | 136 | 45% | 54% | 1% | 0% | 1% |
| Passenger facilities | 15 | 53% | 33% | 13% | 0% | 0% |
| Total average | 755 | 43% | 42% | 11% | 4% | 0% |

Data source: WSDOT Ferry System.

Environment

Stormwater quality report

Managing the stormwater that comes from its facilities helps WSDOT fulfill its environmental stewardship commitment, as well as meet regulatory conditions imposed by local, state, and federal authorities. In response, WSDOT developed a stormwater program to meet regulatory obligations which are among the most comprehensive and stringent in the country.

WSDOT increases inventory of stormwater management facilities

WSDOT tracks the number of stormwater facilities built statewide within the permit-regulated areas and the Puget Sound Basin. In 2010, WSDOT built 384 facilities statewide, 202 of which are in the permit area, and 144 of which are in the Puget Sound Basin.

WSDOT's Municipal Stormwater Permit requires development of individual Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plans (SWPPPs) for maintenance facilities, rest areas, ferry terminals, and WSDOT maintained park & ride lots located within the permit coverage area.

The agency has developed SWPPPs for 31 maintenance facilities, six rest areas, 11 park & ride lots, and 11 ferry terminals. These plans identify potential sources of pollutants at each facility, methods to prevent stormwater from coming in contact with pollutants and best management practices to prevent and control the discharge of contaminated water to surface and groundwater.

Highway maintenance crews have received training on the SWPPPs and all plans have been implemented. The entire report is on pages 32-37.

Wetland monitoring and evaluation

WSDOT designs transportation projects to avoid and minimize wetland disturbance. The department obtains permits from regulatory agencies when projects have unavoidable wetland disturbances. Wetlands are then enhanced, restored, established, or preserved to meet permit conditions and the state and department 'No Net Loss' policies.

WSDOT has constructed and monitored 183 wetland mitigation sites on 908 acres since 1988. WSDOT is responsible for these sites in perpetuity.

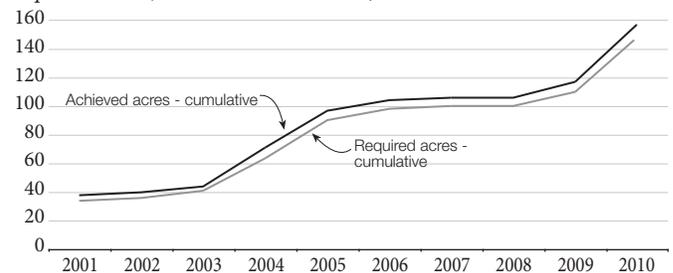
Collectively, as the graph at right shows, the 68 sites where final area has been determined have produced 9% percent more wetland than required (159 acres achieved compared to 146 acres required).

Since 1999, WSDOT has developed and operates three certified wetland mitigation banks, which have provided mitigation for 17 transportation projects; 100.9 credits remain for use by future

projects. These banks help reduce costs for design, permits, purchasing, construction, monitoring, and maintaining mitigation sites. The banks also reduce time needed to obtain permits for future projects. The entire report is on pages 38-40.

WSDOT wetland mitigation acres achieved, 2001 – 2010

Number of acres achieved (annual and cumulative) vs. required acres (annual and cumulative)



Data source: WSDOT Environmental Services.

Mobility

Traveler Information Annual Report

WSDOT provides traveler information to the public in a variety of formats. The system that started with the 5-1-1 Traveler Information phone system is now greatly expanded, with options including the travel information website, Twitter and RSS feeds, the Traffic PDA mobile application, e-mail alerts, highway radio transmissions, and variable message signs (VMS).

5-1-1 Calls low for second consecutive winter

Calls to the 5-1-1 information line for this fall/winter season (October 2010 through March 2011) totaled more than 1.1 million, up 1.1% from last winter's record-low call volume of just less than 1.1 million. This year's call volume mirrors those of last year, when few major storms took place in the heart of the winter season.

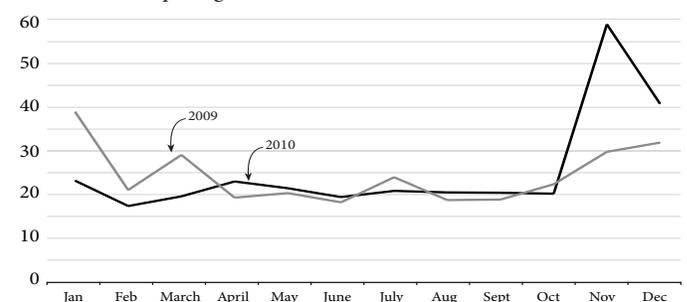
Average daily call volume remains near 2,000 in the spring/summer season (April to September), up to a range of 5,000 to 30,000 calls a day during the few severe storm event days that occur during the fall/winter season.

WSDOT website traffic increased 4% in 2010

WSDOT traffic and travel information website page views stayed relatively level in 2010 compared to the previous year, rising 4% to nearly 298.7 million from 285.5 million. Weather disruptions in late 2010 helped account for the increase as usage topped 1.9 million views a day in November 2010. The entire report is on pages 22-23.

WSDOT traffic and travel website monthly page views

In millions, comparing 2009 to 2010



Data source: WSDOT Communications Office.

Highway Construction: Nickel and TPA Project Delivery Performance Overview

Dashboard shows progress against 2010 Transportation Budget and includes individual programmatic and bucket projects

The 2010 Supplemental Transportation Budget signed into law by Governor Gregoire on March 30, 2010, directs WSDOT to develop and construct a specified list of projects in the course of the biennium. The greater part of these line-item projects were itemized in the original 2003 and 2005 Nickel and TPA programs. When the 2011 Transportation Budget is approved, the list and number of projects for the 2011-2013 biennium will likely change the total project number and value of the program.

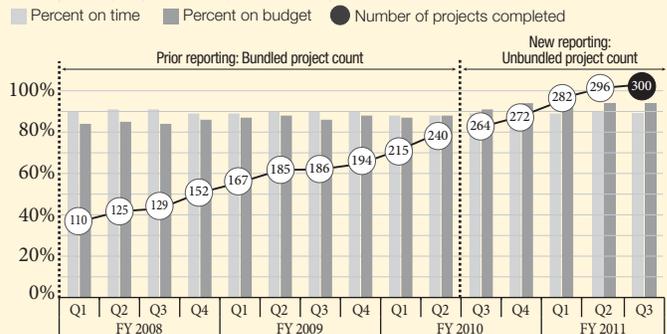
On time and on budget delivery performance on individual projects is unchanged from last quarter

WSDOT's cumulative capital program delivery performance decreased slightly: 89% of all 230 projects in the current transportation budget have been delivered early or on time, and 94% under or on budget through the third quarter of fiscal year 2011 (FY 2011). Three projects were completed in the quarter ending March 31, 2011; one was on time, and two were completed within the current approved budget.

Forty-eight Nickel and TPA projects are currently under construction, with 36 of those projects advertised for construction in the biennium to date. Six new projects were awarded in this quarter, with an estimated value of over \$68 million. Six-projects are scheduled for advertisement for construction bids between April 1, 2011, and September 30, 2011; 67% of these are advertising on or better than the anticipated schedule.

Cumulative on time and on budget performance of Nickel and TPA projects

300 of 421 projects completed as of March 31, 2011



Data source: WSDOT Capital Program Development & Management.

North Spokane Corridor Projects

The 2003 Nickel Transportation Funding Package funded eight contracts between the Wandermere/US 395 and Francis/Freya interchanges. WSDOT completed six contracts and opened 3.5 miles of the route to traffic in August 2009, operating with two-way traffic on one side of the ultimate freeway configuration. The initial segment has averaged 4,900 vehicles per day, including 12.6% trucks.

In July 2010, WSDOT awarded the contract for the NSC-Freya St. to Farwell Rd. Southbound Additional Lanes Project. Funding for this contract was secured with a \$35 million federal Transportation Investments Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant. The project will construct the full six-lane configuration by building three additional lanes, seven bridges, and completing the Parksmith Interchange. WSDOT expects to finish the last two Nickel contracts and the TIGER grant southbound lanes project by late fall 2011, opening the northerly 5.7 miles of the NSC corridor to traffic. More information is on pages 73-74.



The NSC/US 2 Interchange project will open to traffic later this year.

SR 520 Floating Bridge Replacement

The SR 520 Pontoon Construction Project, a major component of the SR 520 Floating Bridge Replacement, is currently under way in Aberdeen. This project includes construction of a new pontoon casting basin facility where the 33 concrete pontoons – each up to 360 feet long – will be built. Construction of the casting basin began in February, with pontoon construction scheduled to begin this summer. The project is expected to employ hundreds of workers.

The first cycle of pontoons will be complete in spring 2012, and will eventually be towed to Lake Washington to be used in the SR 520 Floating Bridge and Landings Project. Pontoon construction will be complete in mid-2014, when all pontoons can be towed to and assembled on Lake Washington.

WSDOT awarded a \$367 million design-build contract for this portion of the bridge replacement to Kiewit-General, a Joint Venture (K-G), in early 2010. Construction began in February, following approval from the Federal Highway Administration in January 2011, construction began in February 2011.

Design-build contract update: two change orders

In order to provide schedule certainty for the Pontoon Construction Project and the future Floating Bridge and Landings Project, WSDOT and K-G recently completed two change orders totaling \$10.3 million. One, for \$3.4 million, combined the construction of mooring and towing hardware into the main pontoon construction contract. The second, for \$6.9 million, addresses design changes. More information is on page 77.

Current 2011 Legislative Transportation Budget Performance Dashboard: Highways

Highway construction performance dashboard

As of March 31, 2011; Dollars in thousands

| Combined Nickel and TPA programs | Number of projects | Value of program |
|---|--------------------|---------------------|
| Projects completed in earlier biennia that <i>are not</i> included in the current Transportation Budget | 70 | \$239,485 |
| Projects completed that <i>are</i> included in the current Transportation Budget | 230 | \$3,823,354 |
| <i>Subtotal of completed projects</i> | 300 | \$4,062,839 |
| Projects included in the current Transportation Budget but not yet completed | 121 | \$11,474,342 |
| Total number of projects¹ in Improvement & Preservation budget² | 421 | \$15,537,181 |

| Schedule and Budget Summary: Results of completed projects in the current Transportation Budget detailed on page 60. | Combined Nickel & TPA |
|--|-----------------------|
| Number of projects in current Transportation Budget completed to date: 2003 – March 31, 2011 | 230 |
| Percent completed early or on time | 89% |
| Percent completed under or on budget | 94% |
| Percent completed on time and on budget | 85% |
| Baseline estimated cost at completion | \$3,823,354 |
| Current estimated cost at completion | \$3,766,985 |
| Percent of total program over or under budget | -1% Under |
| Total number of projects completed in 2009-11 biennium to date | 86 |
| Percent completed early or on time | 92% |
| Percent completed under or on budget | 95% |
| Percent completed on time and on budget | 88% |
| Baseline estimated cost at completion this biennium | \$1,600,183 |
| Current estimated cost at completion this biennium | \$1,551,482 |

| Advertisement Record: Results of projects entering into the construction phase or under construction detailed on pages 61-64. | Combined Nickel & TPA |
|---|-----------------------|
| Total cumulative number of projects in construction phase to date, 2003 – March 31, 2011 | 48 |
| Percent advertised early or on time | 75% |
| Total number of projects advertised for construction in 2009-11 biennium to date | 36 |
| Percent advertised early or on time | 69% |

| Projects To Be Advertised: Results of projects now being advertised for construction or planned to be advertised, detailed on page 65. | Combined Nickel & TPA |
|--|-----------------------|
| Total projects being advertised for construction bids April 1, 2011 - September 30, 2011 | 6 |
| Percent on or better than anticipated advertisement schedule | 67% |

| Budget status: 2009-2011 biennium Dollars in thousands | WSDOT biennial budget |
|--|-----------------------|
| Budget amount for 2009-2011 biennium | \$3,234,650 |
| Actual expenditures to date 2009-2011 biennium | \$2,020,708 |
| <i>Total 2003 Transportation Funding Package (Nickel) expenditure</i> | \$478,779 |
| <i>Total 2005 Transportation Partnership Account (TPA) expenditure</i> | \$1,114,595 |
| <i>Total Pre-Existing Funds (PEF) expenditure³</i> | \$427,334 |

Data source: WSDOT Capital Program Development & Management.

1. This project total has been updated to show "unbundled" projects which may have been previously reported in programmatic construction program buckets (such as Roadside Safety Improvements or Bridges Seismic Retrofit). See the June 30, 2010, *Gray Notebook 38*, page 55, for more details.

2. Per the 2005-2007 Transportation Budget, Section 603.

3. For full details of the PEF program, see pages 83-87.

The 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Recovery Act) provided Washington with more than \$1.5 billion in transportation funds to preserve and expand the transportation system while helping create and retain jobs during the national recession. Washington and its local governments received \$492 million for highway projects, \$179 million for transit projects, \$781 million for High-Speed Rail, and won \$65 million in competitive grants for TIGER (Transportation Investments Generating Economic Recovery) funds for road projects in Seattle and Spokane, and received \$45 million in early funding for a light-rail project.

In January, WSDOT completed the I-5/SR 501 Ridgefield Interchange project to build a wider bridge over I-5, while improving the intersection and the on-and-off ramps. More than 85% of the state and local highway projects funded through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) are now complete. Only nine state and 20 local FHWA projects are still under way.



This project built a new wider bridge over I-5 at SR 501 and new on-and-off ramps to better handle vehicle travel to and from Ridgefield.

More than \$160 million paid to employees on Recovery Act projects

Between January 1 and March 31, 2011, workers on state and local highway Recovery Act projects earned almost \$11.5 million working more than 271,000 hours. To date, projects receiving FHWA stimulus funds have provided more than \$160 million in payroll to workers. Many projects also receive other state, federal, or local funds, so not all payroll funding comes directly through Recovery Act funds.

The graph below shows labor hours on projects receiving stimulus funds from March 2009 through March 2011. A surge of ground-breakings in the summer of 2009 helped payroll and employment reach its peak at the end of the 2009 construction season, while the largest number of projects were under way and dozens were being completed. Employment and payroll declined in the winter months due to the weather and project completions, before rising for the 2010 peak construction season. WSDOT expects labor hours and payroll to continue to be below the previous year peaks because more than 85% of the highway Recovery Act projects have been completed.

Construction continues on TIGER projects in Spokane and Seattle, TIGER II projects advance

Construction continued on Seattle's Mercer Corridor Project, which received a \$30 million Recovery Act-funded TIGER, or Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery, grant in February 2010.

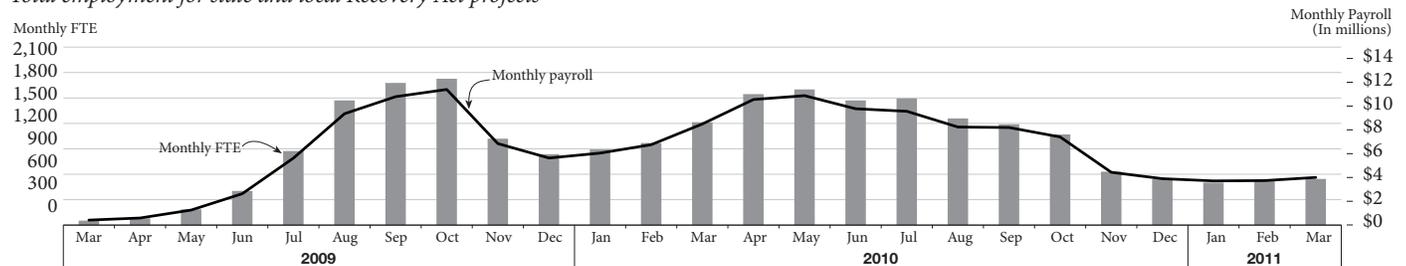
The North Spokane Corridor benefited from a \$35 million Recovery Act-funded TIGER grant. The corridor is the subject of this quarter's project spotlight on page 75. The article includes in-depth information about the \$35 million Recovery Act-funded TIGER project and the role it plays in the much-larger corridor improvements currently under way in Spokane.

Three local government projects in Washington received TIGER II grants totaling \$44 million in October 2010, including a \$34 million grant for King County's South Park Bridge Replacement. The TIGER II program was modeled after the stimulus program, but is not funded by the Recovery Act.

In March, King County announced the apparent low bidder and said construction is expected to begin this spring. The \$96 million bid from Kiewit-Massman came in below the county's construction estimate of \$98 million to \$106 million.

Recovery Act employment

Total employment for state and local Recovery Act projects*



Data source: FHWA RADS - WSDOT Capital Program Development & Management, Highways & Local Programs.

* Note: Due to the nature of construction work and firms working on multiple ARRA projects, a count of the number of employees may include double counting (employees working on multiple projects) and cannot be used as a "head count" of individual employees. Federal guidelines direct states to report full time equivalents (FTE) employed by state and local Recovery Act projects. WSDOT calculated these numbers based on a standard 2,080 hour work year which is equivalent to 173 hours each month.

Recovery Act Reporting, continued

Recovery Act-funded highway projects as of March 31, 2011

Number of projects by jurisdiction; dollars in millions

| Project information | State | Local | Total |
|---|---------|---------|---------|
| Highway projects certified by the Governor ¹ | 51 | 168 | 219 |
| Contracts awarded/Under construction | 51 | 168 | 219 |
| Projects completed | 42 | 148 | 190 |
| Financial information | State | Local | Total |
| Recovery Act dollars provided | \$340 | \$152 | \$492 |
| Total cost of obligated projects ² | \$736 | \$792 | \$1,528 |
| Total Recovery Act dollars spent | \$279.4 | \$142.4 | \$421.8 |

Data source: WSDOT Capital Program Development & Management Office, Highways and Local Programs Office.

Note: Project totals are cumulative, for example “projects awarded/under construction” include projects already completed.

¹ 17 state and 23 local projects were added to the list and received federal approval, 6 local projects are no longer receiving funds. Also includes two safety program buckets for rumble strip and cable median barrier projects. The programs are described in greater detail in GNB 40.

² Includes non-Recovery Act leveraged fund sources.

Nine state Recovery Act-funded highway projects under construction as of March 31, 2011

Completion planned in 2011

SR 14/I-5 to SE 164th Avenue Interchange – Paving

SR 26/Grant County Line to SR 17 – Resurfacing

I-82/Valley Mall Blvd Interchange – Rebuild Interchange

I-5/Port of Tacoma Rd to King Co Line – Add HOV Lanes

US 395/Lee Rd to Jct I-90 – Paving

Completion planned in 2012

I-90/Lake Easton Vicinity to Big Creek Bridge Vicinity EB – Replace/Rehab Concrete

I-405/NE 8th St to SR 520 Braided Ramps – Interchange Improvements

Completion planned in 2013

SR 433/Lewis and Clark Bridge – Superstructure Painting

I-5/SR 16/EB Nalley Valley – HOV

WSDOT signed agreements advancing \$735 million in high-speed rail projects

On February 26, 2011, WSDOT and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) signed an agreement that secured \$590 million in federal stimulus money to improve the Amtrak *Cascades* rail corridor from Portland to Seattle. The agreement commits the FRA to allocate the Recovery Act funds that were first awarded in January 2010.

Separately, Amtrak, BNSF Railway, and WSDOT signed an agreement that outlines how investments will be made: they will be based on service outcomes and passenger rail performance benchmarks on rail lines shared by freight and passenger rail, such as on-time performance, faster travel times, and frequency of service.

Another agreement followed in early April, officially securing \$145 million originally intended for Ohio and Wisconsin.

Projects will improve speeds and reliability

As a result of the initial \$590 million Recovery Act high-speed rail funding:

- Two additional daily Amtrak *Cascades* round trips will be added between Seattle and Portland, for a total of six trips, by 2017.
- On-time reliability is expected to improve from 62% to 88% and more consistent speeds will result in faster travel times.
- Construction projects will build bypass tracks and multiple upgrades to existing track.
- Several safety-related projects will be completed, including grade separations and the latest technology in advanced



WSDOT signed agreements to use \$735 million in Recovery Act funds on projects to improve Amtrak Cascades service in Washington.

warning signal systems. This will reduce passenger/freight congestion, making passenger travel times shorter with more reliable on-time service.

The additional \$145 million will be used for improvements that boost the rail-line capacity and relieve mainline congestion, allowing Amtrak *Cascades* to offer more frequent and reliable passenger service between Portland and Vancouver, B.C.

In May 2011, Washington was awarded \$15 million of the \$2.4 billion in federal high-speed rail funding returned by Florida. The \$15 million award will be applied towards eliminating a congestion chokepoint near the Port of Vancouver; it brings Washington state’s total to approximately \$781 million in Recovery Act high speed rail funding.