



Washington State
Department of Transportation

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Rail Monthly Update

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WSDOT hosts public meeting for Freighthouse Square Station in Tacoma

The preferred design for Freighthouse Square Station will be shared at a [public meeting pdf 61kb](#) on Oct. 30, 2014. As part of the current preliminary engineering phase, WSDOT refined the design concepts, based on information from the City of Tacoma’s citizen advisory committee (CAC) meetings, WSDOT’s online survey, letters and emails, and CAC’s questionnaire to their members. Prior to the public meeting, the WSDOT design team collaborated with the CAC and presented the preferred design in briefings with the City of Tacoma, Tacoma city council and mayor, legislators, Amtrak, Sound Transit, building owner and manager, and others.

Public and agency comments are under review for Kelso Martin’s Bluff environmental study

WSDOT and FRA are reviewing public comments on the Kelso Martin’s Bluff environmental assessment (EA) for the third mainline and infrastructure improvements in the vicinity of the Port of Kalama and Port of Longview (Task 5 and 6). The next step is to address questions from the public comment period and draft the decision document. The purpose of the project is to alleviate train congestion in the area, improve schedule reliability for passenger rail service and travel times, and increase the number of passenger rail trips between Seattle and Portland.

Landslide Mitigation Working Group continues progress in north rail corridor

WSDOT continues to lead the Landslide Mitigation Working Group, comprised of 17 public agencies and private companies. They recently held the third open house on landslide prevention for residents along the north passenger rail line. The Working Group convened their first meeting almost two years ago with four participants: WSDOT, Amtrak, BNSF and Sound Transit. Goals of the Working Group include (1) addressing effects of landslides during the rainy season on Amtrak passengers and Sound Transit commuters between Seattle and Everett, and (2) improving transportation reliability in the north corridor through landslide mitigation strategies. Objectives include (1) research contributing factors for landslides between Seattle and Everett, (2) develop short- and long-term strategies for reducing landslides, and (3) educate and motivate property owners about slope management practices. In addition to the three open houses in Mukilteo, Everett and Edmonds, the group prepared the [How Landslides Affect Your Property brochure \(pdf 340kb\)](#), the [Landslide Mitigation Action Plan \(pdf 18mb\)](#), talking points and

frequently asked questions. In addition, BNSF is waiving the permit waiver (up to \$3,500) through April 2015 for property owners to connect to BNSF-owned drainage systems. The WSDOT design and construction team has completed two of the four slope stabilization projects between Seattle and Everett.

King Street Station restoration wins national acclaim

The restoration of Seattle's historic King Street Station is being nationally honored. The restoration will receive a Richard H. Dreihaus National Preservation Award from the National Trust for Historic Preservation in November 2014. The restoration made the century-old station more structurally sound, as well as modernized utilities and infrastructure. It also returned the lobby to its former grandeur, restoring plaster ceilings, marble columns and tile work at the busiest train station in the Pacific Northwest. WSDOT is listed as a co-recipient along with the City of Seattle and other funding partners for the King Street Station restoration project, which is part of the federally funded high-speed rail improvement program.

Amtrak Cascades improvements feature three high-speed rail projects

Recent activities for the ARRA-funded Cascades High-Speed Rail projects include:

- **Tukwila Station:** With just final punch list items remaining, the new Tukwila Station is nearing completion -- a major milestone in the HSR improvements program. The \$46 million permanent station replaces a temporary one and includes dedicated parking for Amtrak Cascades passengers. The station offers commuter, intercity and regional train service as well bus and other connections, making it a major, multimodal transportation hub. It's also expected to be a boon for Sea-Tac International Airport passengers looking for new ways to and from the airport, which is just a short taxi or public transit ride from the station. Construction was overseen by Sound Transit with assistance, and financial support, from WSDOT.
- **Point Defiance Bypass:** WSDOT received FRA final design approval on "Tract A," the Nisqually cross over, which allows that portion of the project to move on to construction. The overall project reroutes Amtrak trains from a congested line and improves passenger train schedule reliability.
- **Vancouver Rail Yard Bypass and New Middle Lead:** Construction continues on a new freight bypass track at the Vancouver Rail Yard and a new "lead" track near Vancouver, Wash. Both projects help improve the reliability of intercity passenger rail service by reducing congestion. Work should be complete in 2016.