



Washington State
Department of Transportation

Lynn Peterson, Secretary of Transportation

Rail Monthly Update

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Progress continues on Amtrak Cascades high-speed rail projects

The ARRA-funded Cascades high-speed rail program continues to make strides, and now has 10 projects in construction, 5 completed and 5 in the design stage. Recent updates include:

- **Tukwila Station:** The station project was completed in early January – another major milestone in the high speed rail improvements program. The \$46-million station replaces a temporary structure and serves as a major, multimodal transportation hub. Construction was partially funded and overseen by Sound Transit with assistance and financial support from WSDOT, FRA and FTA. Station dedication and rider appreciation events are scheduled for Feb. 18.

New Tukwila Station



Sound Transit photo

- **Program agreements finalized:** After four years of work, all the construction agreements needed for the high-speed rail program have been signed. This closes a significant portion of WSDOT's responsibilities with FRA, and paves the way for construction of the remaining

projects.

- **Blaine Swift Customs Facility:** Construction is expected to begin in March. The work includes a new 10,000-foot-long main track and conversion of the existing main track into a second siding. The siding allows slower freight trains to pull over so passenger trains can pass, reducing congestion and eliminating a substantial bottleneck. This helps shorten Amtrak Cascades travel times and improve reliability throughout the corridor. Work is scheduled for July completion.
- **Mount Vernon Siding Extension:** Final design for the roadway portion of this project is complete, and construction is scheduled to start in July. Construction of phase two of the siding extension continues. The project lengthens an existing siding which gives passenger trains more room to get around slow moving freight trains.

Landslide mitigation along the north rail line is featured in WSDOT blog and on website

During the 2014-2015 rainy season, WSDOT continues to work on landslide mitigation along the north passenger rail line between Seattle and Everett, such as:

- Slope stabilization projects described on the updated [Rail website project page](#) and [map](#).
- Landslide Mitigation Working Group, comprised of 17 agencies and private companies.
- Landowner information at workshops, presentations, open houses, new [blog](#) and [brochure](#) on ways to help prevent landslides.
- Media interviews, such as for a [TV story](#) last month.

Point Defiance Bypass moves forward with environmental amendments and permits

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers issued their permit to WSDOT for the Clover Creek Bridge replacement in Lakewood as part of Point Defiance Bypass. Additional permitting and approvals are being coordinated with FRA and Sound Transit. WSDOT is also coordinating with the Federal Communications Commission on the antenna pole installation for positive train control (PTC) in the southern portion of the corridor.

WSDOT partners with Clipper Vacations for a legislative proviso

The 2013 Washington State Legislature directed WSDOT to participate in a pilot partnering program with the travel industry to increase [Amtrak Cascades](#) ridership in 2014. WSDOT partnered with [Clipper Vacations](#) to include Amtrak Cascades train transportation in their promotions between Seattle and Vancouver, British Columbia. The partnership increased revenue, maximized farebox recovery, and stimulated private investment in the north corridor. The program has been extended into 2015.

New OnTrak magazine is on board Amtrak Cascades trains and in stations

The inaugural issue of the onboard magazine OnTrak for the Amtrak Cascades passenger rail service is available on Amtrak Cascades trains and in stations. The quarterly magazine focuses on cities, events and activities, food and art along the Oregon and Washington rail corridor.