

WSDOT's Corridor Sketch Initiative is a collaborative planning process with agency partners to identify performance gaps and select high-level strategies to address them on the 304 corridors statewide. This Corridor Sketch Summary acts as an executive summary for one corridor. Please review the User Guide for Corridor Sketch Summaries prior to using information on this corridor:

SR 504: I-5 Jct to Johnston Ridge

This 52-mile long east-west corridor is located in the southwestern corner of Washington. This corridor runs between the Interstate 5 junction and Johnston Ridge. Additionally, the corridor includes a 0.9-mile spur that branches to a viewpoint of a sediment retention structure near the Mt St Helens Science and Learning Center near the eastern end point. The corridor runs through the city of Castle Rock, the community of Toutle, and both Silver and Coldwater Lakes. The corridor's character is mostly rural as most of this route passes through timberland owned by Weyerhaeuser and the federal government. The corridor near Silver Lake is rural residential, with a small area of commercial. Within the community of Toutle, character is low density urban residential, with some commercial and a high school. This route passes through rolling countryside, which becomes mountainous near the east end at Mt St Helens. In addition to Mt St Helens, State Route 504 also passes Seaquest State Park. Other bodies of water the route encounters include the North Fork Toutle River and various creeks throughout the route. It is a gateway to natural and scenic resources.



Current Function

SR 504, also known as Spirit Lake Highway, is one of the main roads into Mt St Helens. It provides spectacular views of the landscape, including the crater, blast zone, and the Toutle River Valley. This route provides access to the Mt St Helens National Monument and the various recreational opportunities throughout the corridor including Seaquest State Park. It also provides access to the communities of Silver Lake, and the only access for the Toutle and Kid Valley communities. It serves as a freight route for logging trucks operating to and from the timberlands along the route. Due to tourism and recreational usage, the corridor experiences seasonal traffic, with the peak traffic occurring in the summer months. The east end of this highway is closed in the winter due to snow. In addition to I-5, SR 504 connects with SR 505. The Cowlitz Tribe provides dial-a-ride service to all within 20 miles of I-5. Shoulders are available in most areas for bicyclist and pedestrian use and sidewalks are being constructed in Castle Rock.

Future Function

Based on the projected population, land use, and economic trends, the future function of this corridor is expected to remain the same.

Highlights and Performance

This corridor transitions between a three-lane and a two-lane undivided highway with climbing and passing lanes. Left turn only and center turn lanes are present throughout the corridor. Several logging roads channel off the route. The annual average daily traffic on this corridor is highest at the I-5 junction in Castle Rock and lowest near the Mt St Helens Science and Learning Center.

What's working well?

- The entire corridor performs above WSDOT's congestion threshold.
- Roughly 98% of surveyed pavement on the corridor is in fair or better condition.
- There are no chronic environmental deficiencies on the corridor.
- There are no habitat connectivity issues identified on the corridor.

What needs to change?

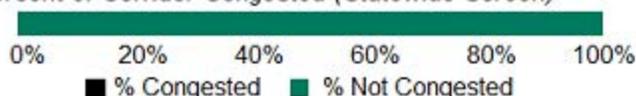
- There are four bridge preservation needs identified on the corridor.
- Fish passage barriers are present on the corridor.
- Poor sight distance at the intersection on Si Town Road.
- Frequent rockfall locations have been identified along the corridor.

WSDOT monitors the state system in ongoing efforts to track asset performance. For this corridor, WSDOT finds:

| High | Low | |
|-------------|------|---|
| 9,522 | 61 | Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) |
| 9.8% | 4.0% | Bus/Truck Percent |
| 120.36 | | Number of Lane Miles |
| 3 | | # of Signalized/Stop Controlled Intersections |
| \$2,507,000 | | Corridor Investments (2005-2016) |

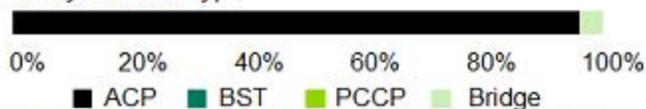
Mobility

Percent of Corridor Congested (Statewide Screen)

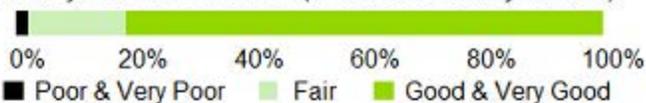


Preservation

Roadway Surface Type



Roadway Surface Condition (Percent of Surveyed Area)



Corridor Bridge Preservation Needs



Environment

| | Protect | Restore/ Enhance/ Assess |
|------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| Fish Barriers | 54.2% Passable | 45.8% to Do |
| Noise Walls | 0% Built | 0% Proposed |
| Chronic Environmental Deficiencies | 100% Resolved | 0% Unresolved |
| Wildlife Connectivity | 0 Structures in Place | 9 High Priority Miles |
| Stormwater Treatment | 0 BMPs | Retrofit Prioritization in progress |
| 39.8 | % of Corridor with high potential for increased Climate Impacts | |
| 2 | Wetland Mitigation Locations | |
| None | Historical Bridges | |

1) 2015 data unless otherwise noted. 2) For more information see the User Guide for Corridor Sketch Summaries at <http://bit.ly/WSDOTcorridorsketch>

What we heard from our partners

WSDOT collected feedback from agency partners. Key themes included:

- Concern over proposed BPA powerlines affecting the scenic beauty of SR 504.
- The county owned viewpoint at the Sediment Dam Road (SR 504 Spur), one of the last remaining unaltered stretches of the original Spirit Lake Highway, is in disrepair.
- Concerns over safety in several locations along the corridor including, Slightly Road and South Toutle Road intersection, adjacent to Silver Lake, and the area around Toutle High School.
- Several cliffs along the roadway create the potential for falling rocks.
- Interest in a multimodal route with marked bicycle lanes and road-adjacent trails.
- Concerns over the lack of access and signage to nearby recreation sites, including winter recreation activities.
- Fish, wildlife, and riparian habitat need improvement in several areas.
- Water quality in Silver Lake is highly degraded, the result of runoff from the highway.

Strategies

WSDOT identified the following strategies and associated actions to keep the corridor working well and address performance gaps. Regional partners collaborated on high-level mobility strategies. The identified strategies are not meant to be all-inclusive, nor an established list of priorities. Further evaluation is needed before any strategy can be recommended as a solution to address performance. Project funding decisions will take place at the programming phase, and are subject to statewide prioritization. For more strategy information, visit the Corridor Sketch Summary User Guide.

Policy Goals / Strategies Description and Near-Term Actions

Economic Vitality

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|-------------------|---|
| Under Development | <i>WSDOT will continue to work with partners in developing strategies to address economic vitality.</i> |
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Environment

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| Protect and Maintain | <i>Protect and maintain existing assets that provide environmental function (these include WSDOT's mitigation sites, storm water systems, fish passable culverts).</i> |
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| Enhance or Restore | <i>Enhance or restore natural areas and environmental functions associated with the multimodal transportation system.</i> |
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|-----------------------|--|
| Fish Barrier Retrofit | <i>WSDOT has prioritized the removal of state-owned culverts that block habitat for salmon and steelhead. See interactive map of uncorrected fish barriers at http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/FishPassage/default.htm.</i> |
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Mobility

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| Assessment | <i>A mobility performance strategy has not been identified by WSDOT.</i> |
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Preservation

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| Maintenance | <i>Based on expenditure history, it is expected that the top three activities will continue to be maintenance on snow and ice control, pavement repair, and rest areas.</i> |
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| Pavement | <i>WSDOT has identified two Pavement actions in the next six years encompassing 33% of the corridor.</i> |
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Stewardship

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| Planning | <i>Under Practical Solutions, the Corridor Sketch Initiative identifies corridor performance, and assesses alternative strategies to improve the quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of the transportation system.</i> |
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For more information

To find out more information about this corridor or how to get involved, please contact:

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Washington State Department of Transportation's Corridor Sketch Initiative is a set of planning activities that engage our partners to define the context and performance information for all of the state's 304 highway corridors. The Corridor Sketch complements and supports regional planning processes in Washington. It is not intended to duplicate, substitute or compete with other planning efforts; nor is it intended to generate lists of projects.

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