Implementing Railroad-DOT Mitigation Strategies, A DOT Perspective

Washington State Department of Transportation

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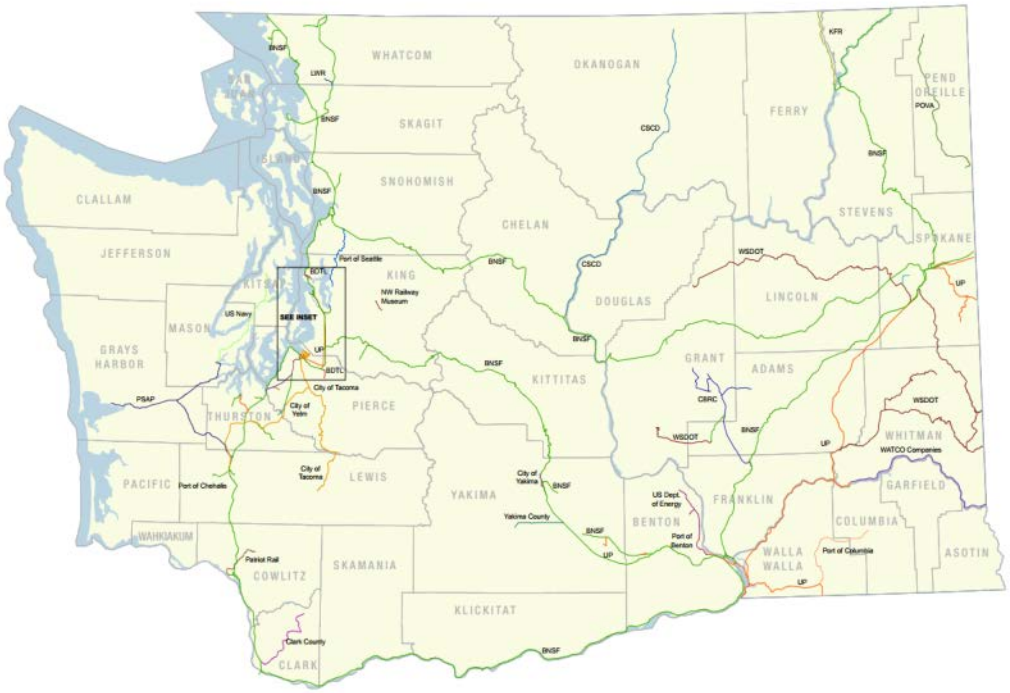
Washington has 3,000+ miles of freight, passenger, and short-line rail lines

- BNSF and Union Pacific own 60% of the rail network, by mileage.
- 1,450 miles of short track Class III rail lines.
- A 300-mile high-speed rail passenger rail corridor undergoing $800 million in federally-funded upgrades.



Pacific Northwest High-Speed Rail Corridor

Passenger Rail – Amtrak Cascades.

- 467-mile corridor.
  - 300 miles in WA.
  - 134 miles in OR.
  - 33 miles in BC.

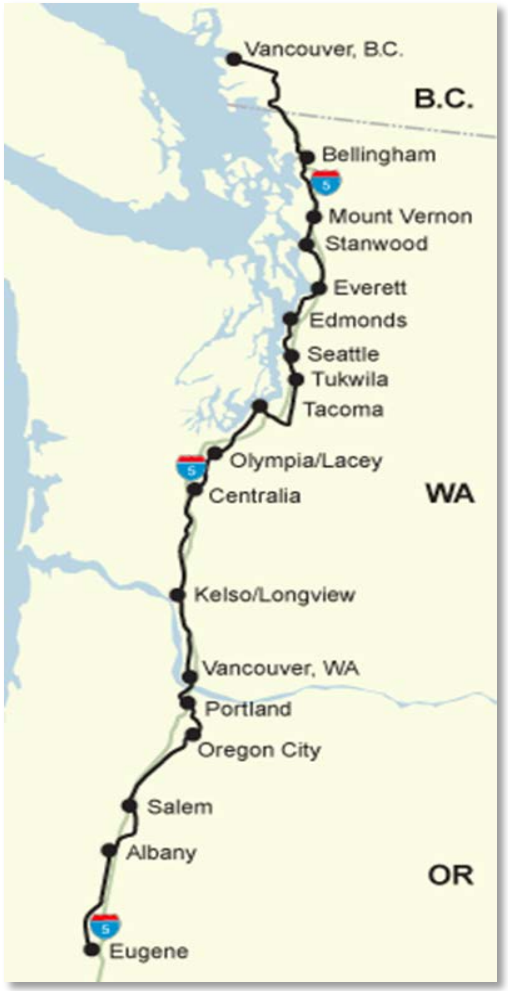
BNSF and UP own the tracks.

Amtrak operates the service.

- WSDOT pays Amtrak via contract.
- Amtrak pays the railroads.

Talgo and Amtrak maintain equipment.

- Washington pays Talgo via contract
- Seven trainsets:
  - Washington owns three.
  - Amtrak owns two.
  - Oregon added two in July 2013.



www.wsdot.wa.gov/rail
www.AmtrakCascades.com

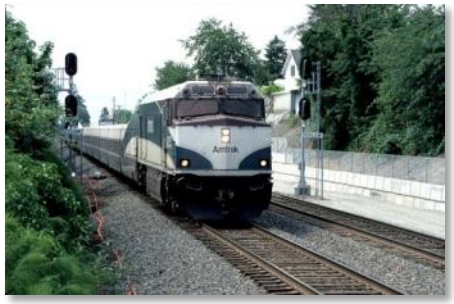
High-Speed Rail Capital Investments

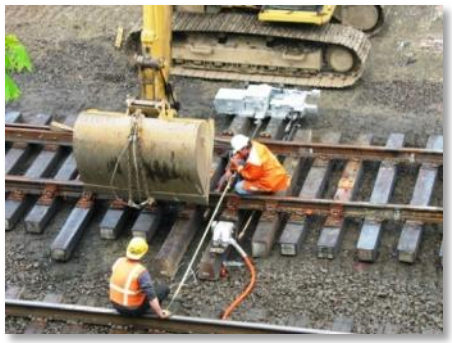
- Federal high-speed rail funds – approximately $800 million from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

- Supports overall program goal of more frequent and reliable Amtrak Cascades service:

  - **Two additional round trips between Seattle and Portland, for a total of six.**
  - **Improved on-time performance to 88%.**
  - **10-minute schedule reduction between Seattle and Portland.**

- 20 projects in Washington adding capacity, passenger stations, safety features, and upgrading and extending tracks.





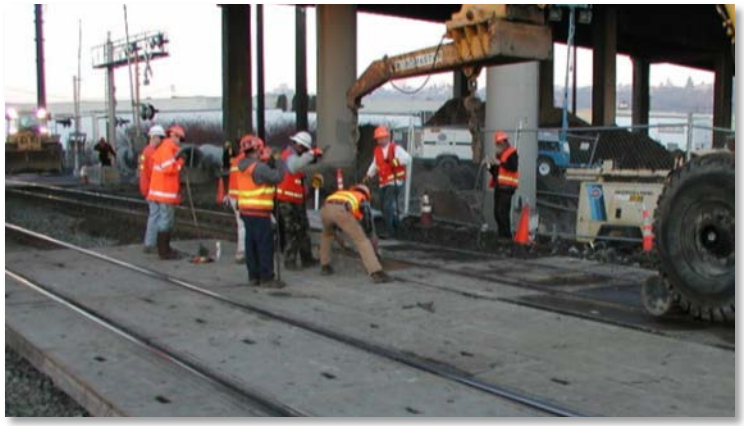
Collaboration

Collaborating with railroads is important to WSDOT.

- Washington DOT was involved in all phases of the project:
  - SHRP2 R16 research (2008).
  - R16A outreach and the Community of Interest.
  - R16B tools and training.
- Frequent highway project coordination.
- High-speed rail program.

Historical Challenges

- Planning for railroad coordination, property rights, plan approvals, etc.
- Negotiating agreements.
- Railroads typically own underlying property.
- Regulated by the Surface Transportation Board, FRA, state public utilities commissions.
- No two railroads are alike.
- Federal preemption over state and local regulation.
- Many railroads operate in multiple States and must coordinate with many different public agencies.
- Pre-construction and coordination construction.



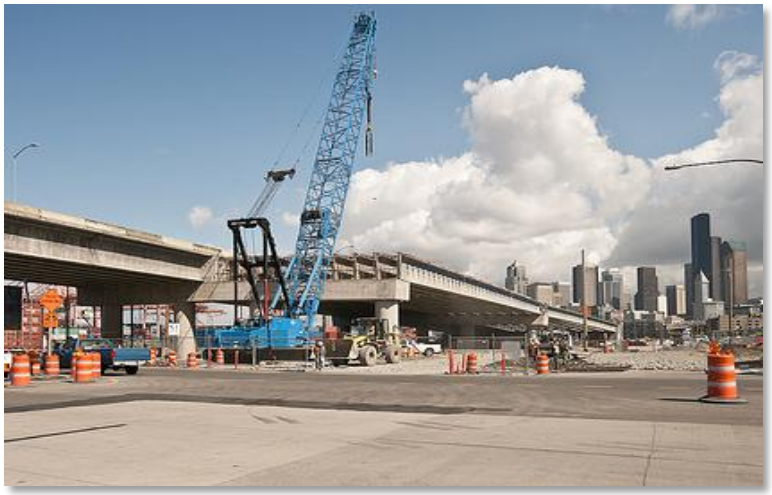
WSDOT Model and Approach *(cont.)*

ARRA Program

- Standardization of schedules as a collaborative effort.
- Risk modeling with all partners.
- Quarterly executive and “over the shoulder” reviews.
- Invoice processing changes – both internal and railroad.
- C&M Agreement – task order process to authorize work and manage cost risk.
- The Big Table – internal coordination of all things rail.

Scenario in 2005

- WSDOT was preparing to deliver the largest transportation program in its history, including dozens of projects impacting several railroads.
- Our railroad coordination model was adequate up until this time, but two factors suggested that something more was needed:
  - The number of railroad construction agreements, easements, and other documents required within a short period of time (30 agreements with BNSF alone).
  - Design-build delivery.



BNSF Railway Manager for WSDOT Projects

- April 2007 – Entered into an agreement with BNSF to assign a public projects manager dedicated to WSDOT projects.
- Term was extended twice.
- Expired at the end of June 2012.
- This arrangement helped to expedite engineering and legal reviews, coordinate dispute resolution, and address issues between the RR and contractors during construction.

Successes

- Jointly developed a process flow chart with railroads for processes having more complex structures.
  - Provides reliability (know when to expect deliverables and what action is to take place and when).
- Joint presentations with railroads at WSDOT design and project engineer annual conferences.
- Joint reviews on the rails.
- Assisting local agencies with railroad coordination when requested.

Successes *(cont.)*

- Developed escalation protocols that establish rules on when and between whom issues would be addressed.
  - Better resource use; freeing resources to address other activities and needs.
- Direct coordination and discussion between subject matter experts (attorneys, structural engineers, signal specialists, etc.) as needed.
  - Reduces the back and forth communication needed to clarify issues.
  - Creates a more collaborative environment – less contention when experts communicate.
  - Expedites work.

Successes *(cont.)*

- Have dedicated project managers with BNSF.
  - Help deliver the large program of projects successfully.
  - Kept projects on scope, schedule and costs.
- New processes through delivery of ARRA grants.
  - Project delivery joint schedule development.
  - Risk sharing on cost at task order level.
  - Recognition of railroad requirements and timing vs. State agency.
  - BNSF committed to delivery program requirements.
  - Communications greatly improved.
  - Risk Mitigation—proactive escalation (BNSF and WSDOT).
  - Landslide Mitigation Group—full partnership with local agencies and BNSF.