



NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD  
**Investigative Hearing**

Managing Safety on Passenger Railroads: Amtrak Overspeed Derailment – DuPont, Washington; and CSX and Amtrak Train Collision – Cayce, South Carolina.

GROUP	G
EXHIBIT	
22	

Agency / Organization

**Washington State DOT- Rail, Freight, and Ports Division**

Title

**Point Defiance Bypass Project-Presentation**

# **Point Defiance Bypass Project**

## **National Transportation Safety Board**

Washington State Department of Transportation  
Rail, Freight and Ports Division  
Ron Pate, Director

July 10-11, 2018  
Washington, D.C.

# History of Amtrak Cascades development

- WA State legislature funded and established a passenger rail program within WSDOT - 1993
- WSDOT and Amtrak began to operate service between Seattle and Portland – 1994
- WSDOT expanded to Vancouver, B.C. and ODOT started service to Eugene – 1995
- WSDOT 2006 *Long Range Plan for Amtrak Cascades*
  - Vision (with unconstrained budget) for 13 roundtrips between Portland and Seattle with speeds up to 110 mph by 2023
  - “Building block” approach for incremental improvements based on performance and available funding
- WSDOT applied for American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) grants from FRA for an incremental step toward long range goals
- FRA awarded federal grants of nearly \$800 million in 2009 and 2010 for incremental corridor improvements (capital improvements completed in 2017)

# Amtrak Cascades corridor

## 467-mile corridor

- 300 miles in Washington
- 134 miles in Oregon
- 33 miles in British Columbia

**18 stations from Vancouver, BC to Eugene, Oregon**

## Current daily roundtrips

- Four between Seattle and Portland
- Two between Seattle and Vancouver, BC
- Two between Portland and Eugene, Oregon



# States supported routes

## Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008, Sec. 209 (PRIIA)

### Highlights of the Act:

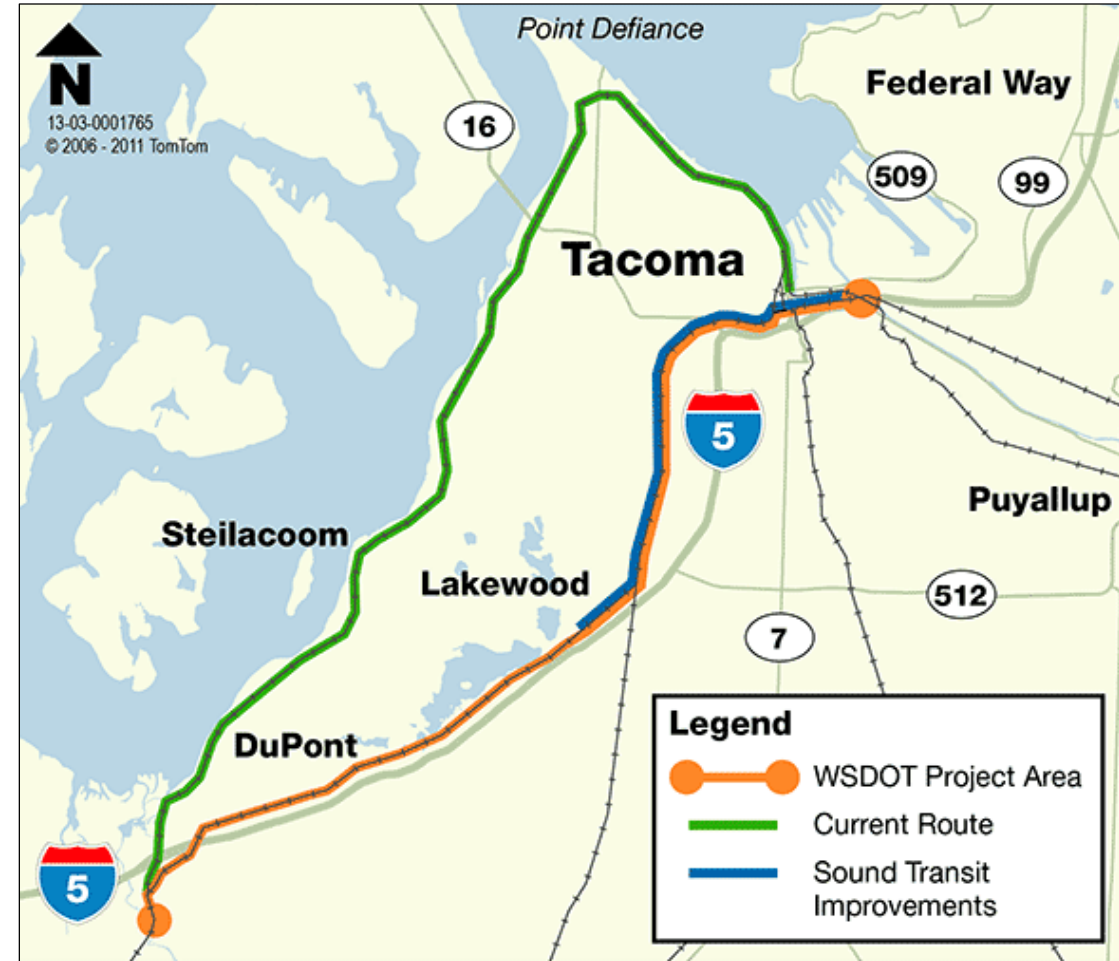
- State corridors were defined as 750 miles or less
  - 18 States representing 21 agencies that sponsor the operations of 29 intercity passenger rail routes were affected by this change
- Amtrak's share of costs were eliminated in the state corridors
- States pay all operating costs beyond ticket revenues starting October 1, 2013
  - *WSDOT, Oregon DOT and Amtrak had split Amtrak Cascades costs before this change*

# Roles and responsibilities for Amtrak Cascades Service

- WSDOT and ODOT sponsor the Amtrak Cascades service
- WSDOT and ODOT contract with Amtrak to operate the service
- BNSF owns most of the tracks in Washington
- Sound Transit owns the tracks on the Point Defiance Bypass (Lakewood Subdivision)
- BNSF dispatches all trains in Amtrak Cascades corridor in Washington
- WSDOT owns some of the train equipment
  - Seven Charger locomotives (an eighth lost in the derailment; will be replaced)
  - Two train sets (a third lost in the derailment; will be replaced)
- ODOT owns two train sets
- Remainder of equipment owned by Amtrak and paid for by WSDOT and ODOT under operating agreements
- WSDOT, ODOT, and Amtrak contract with Talgo to maintain trainsets
- WSDOT contracts with Amtrak to operate and maintain Charger locomotives

# Tacoma Point Defiance Bypass

- Largely funded with federal ARRA grants
- New inland bypass route: reduces congestion, adds daily trips, reduces travel times, improves on-time performance
- New and upgraded tracks and ties
- Five reconstructed crossings with advanced warning and signal systems, wayside horns, median barriers, fencing
- Three railroad bridges rehabilitated; a fourth reconstructed
- New downtown Tacoma station, including a trestle platform extension and second platform



# Roles and responsibilities on the Bypass

## Sound Transit

- Owns and maintains the Bypass
- Construction administration of capital improvements on the Bypass

## BNSF

- Dispatches all trains

## Amtrak and Talgo

- Operate and maintain passenger trains and employs staff on trains

## WSDOT

- Grant administration of capital improvements
- Administration and oversight of operating funds
- Contributes funding for track and signal maintenance

## FRA

- Grant manager for ARRA program (includes Bypass work)
- Approved (working with WSDOT)
  - Project management plans
  - Finance plans
  - Environmental assessments
  - Preliminary engineering plans
- Accepted final design plans
- Provided grant oversight for construction



# Questions?

For more information,  
please contact:

## **Ron Pate**

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