

# **Pacific Northwest High Speed Rail Corridor**

## **Amtrak Cascades Passenger Service**

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**Joint Transportation Committee**  
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# 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



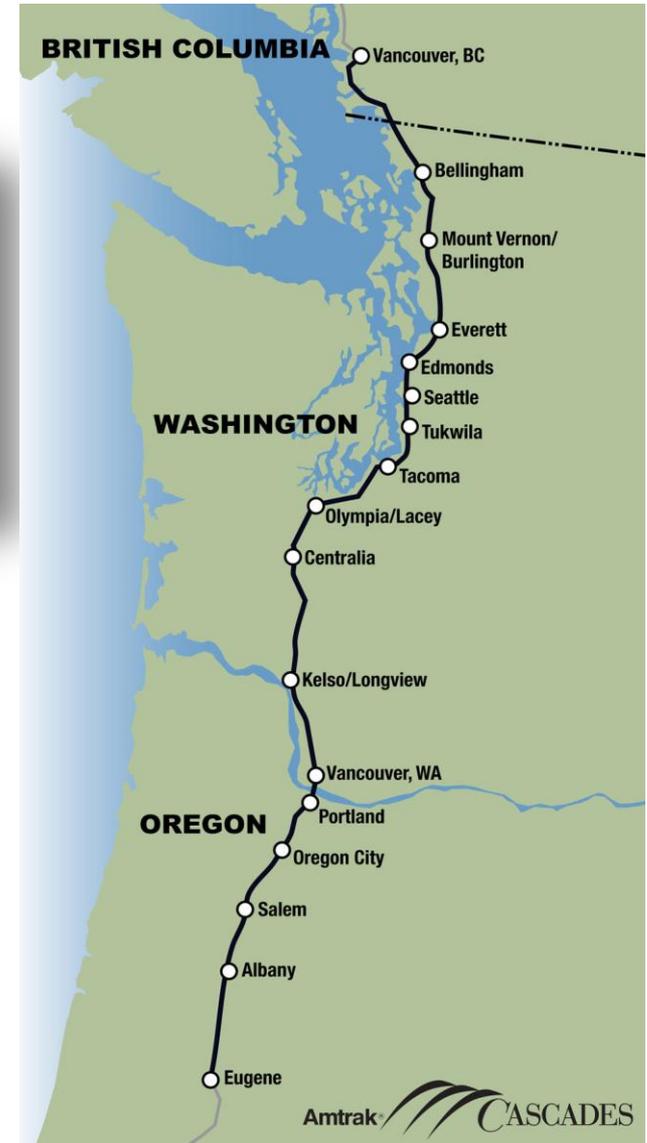
## BNSF and UP own the tracks

### Amtrak operates service

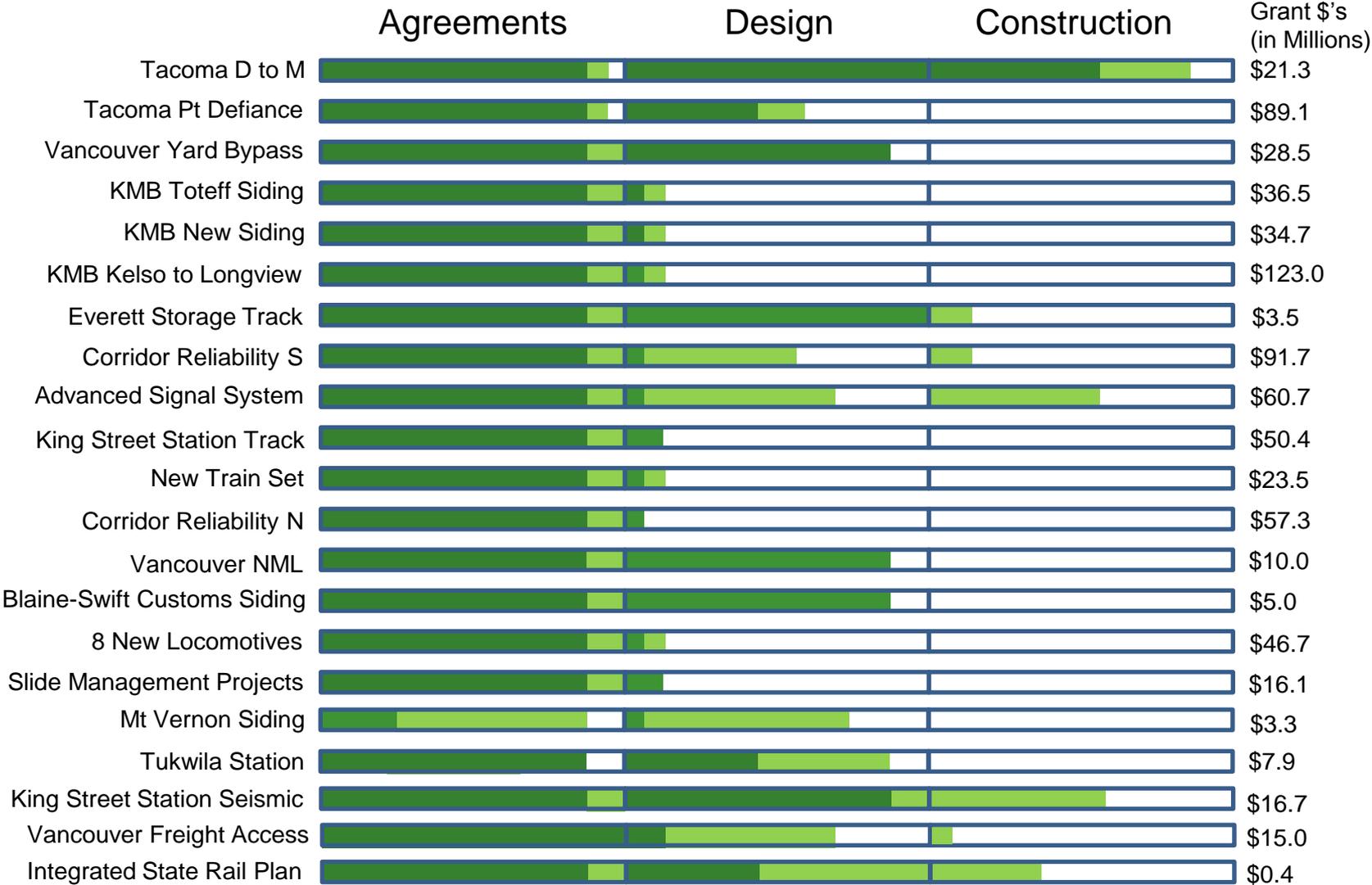
- We pay Amtrak via a contract
- Amtrak pays the railroads

### Talgo and Amtrak maintain equipment

- Washington pays Talgo via contract



# Update - Rail Capital Projects with Federal Funding



Progress - May 2010 through Dec. 2011:   
 Progress - Jan. 2012 through Sept. 2012: 

# Improving Train Service, Supporting Future Growth

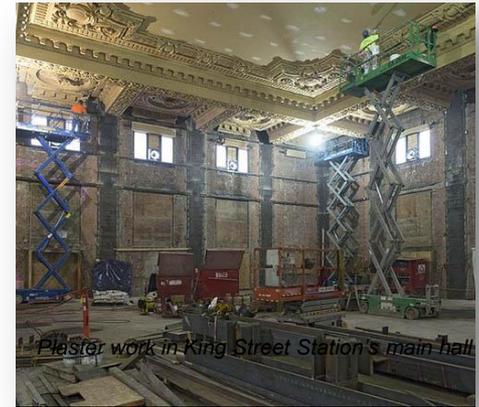
- Federal high-speed rail funds - \$794.9 million
- Supports overall program goal of more frequent and reliable Amtrak Cascades service
  - Two additional round trips between Seattle and Portland, for a total of six
  - Improved on-time performance to 88%
  - 10-minute savings
- 20 projects in Washington building additional rail-line capacity and upgrading tracks, utilities, signals, passenger stations and advanced warning systems
  - Also includes purchase of eight locomotives and one new trainset
- Supports skilled construction and operating jobs for railroad crews and regional contractors.



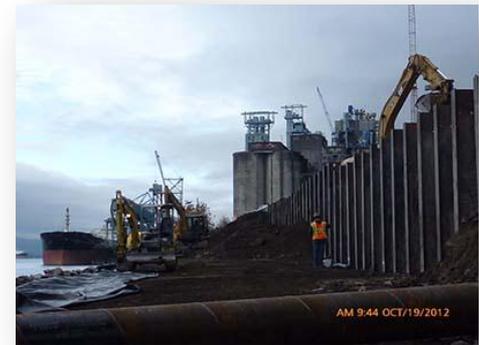
# Capital Project Highlights

- King Street Station Seismic Retrofit
  - Structural steel installation continues, on track for 2013 completion
- New tracks under construction in Everett
  - Cascades trains avoid congestion through busy rail yard
- Track upgrades underway from Seattle to Vancouver, WA
  - Improves track durability and reduces speed restrictions
- Bridge pilings going in at Port of Vancouver
  - Separates freight and passenger trains
- Point Defiance Bypass Environmental Assessment
  - Completion and FRA decision by end of 2012

\$55.3 million anticipated construction spending in 2012 and 2013



Plaster work in King Street Station's main hall



New soldier pile wall for retaining the hillside next to the new track area



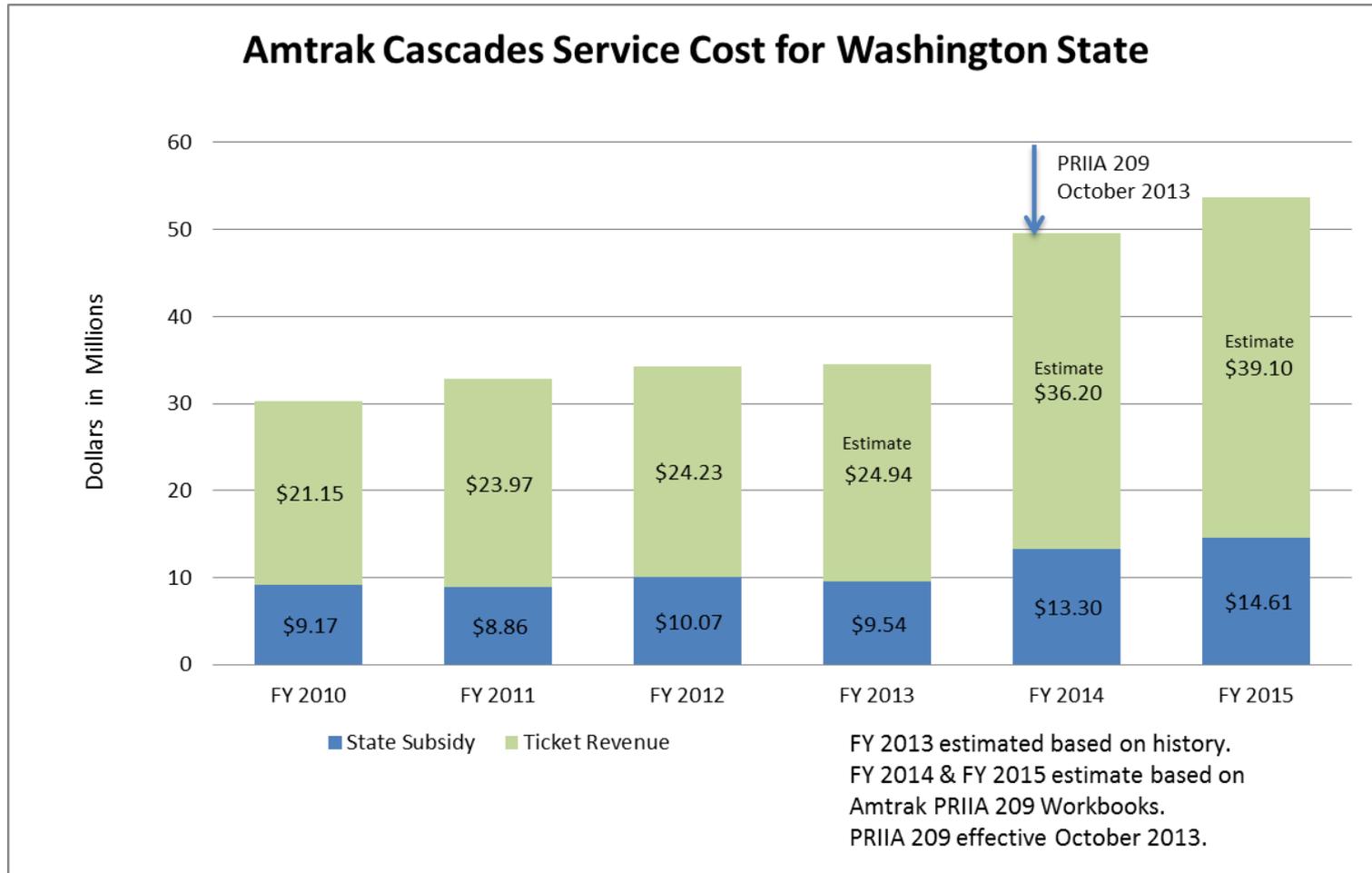
BNSF crews replace worn track near Vancouver, WA

# Funding Challenges

- Operating fees - Amtrak
  - Washington pays \$9 million per year
- Equipment maintenance fees - Talgo
  - Washington pays \$4 million per year
- Track infrastructure maintenance - 20 years (2017 start)
  - Washington pays ~\$3 million per year
- Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 (PRIIA) requirements take effect in October 2013
  - Washington will pay \$3 - \$5 million more a year

# Federal Act Requires States to Pay Full Subsidy

PRIIA 209 becomes effective October 2013

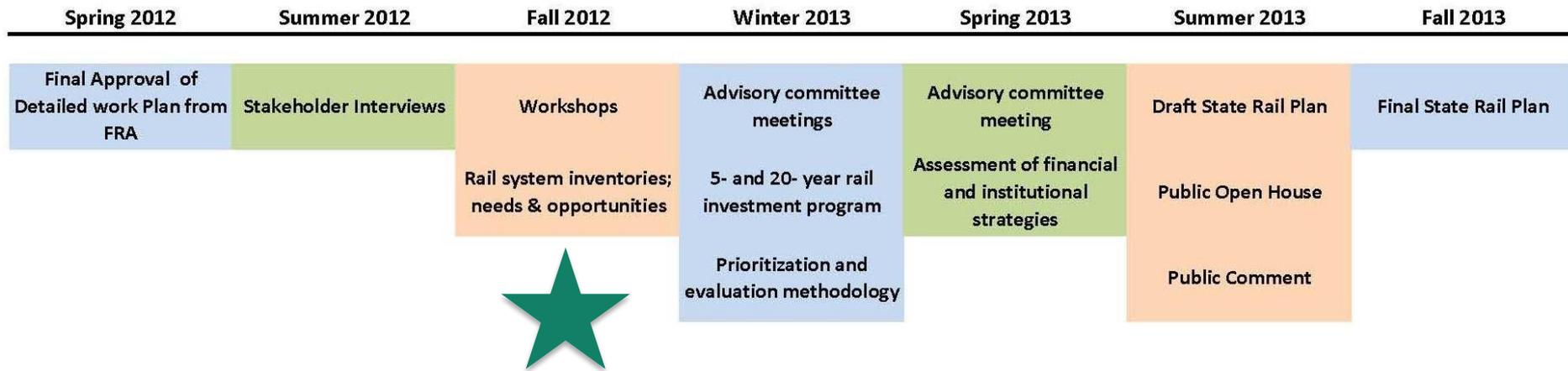


Currently, federal subsidies through Amtrak pay for 23.7% of Amtrak Cascades service. In October 2013, the federal-subsidy percentage becomes zero.

# Washington State Rail Plan

The plan will serve as a strategic blueprint for future investment in the state's rail transportation system.

Project milestones and opportunities to participate:



## Recent public workshops:

October 30 in Spokane

October 31 in Seattle

# Corridor Approach Benefits

## Washington, Oregon & British Columbia

- Deliver consistently on customer expectations for HSR
- Build revenue to lower the cost of operations
- Grow ridership in the largest business centers
- Provide a competitive transportation alternative
- Pool resources for increased efficiencies
- Better grant funding opportunities
- Partners share in revenue and costs

# Corridor Management Workplan

Key elements:

- Initial corridor vision, goals and objectives
- Roles and responsibilities of Corridor Director
- Work program for daily operation and oversight
- Issues to be addressed in agreement negotiations
- Policy questions
- Opportunities to include British Columbia in joint funding, revenue-sharing and decision-making

WSDOT and ODOT will formalize this framework in an interagency agreement, anticipated in Summer 2013.

# Mudslides

Mudslides caused by heavy periods of rain have caused some disruptions of the Cascades service as well as Sounder. In 2011, 96% of Cascades trains were unaffected. WSDOT has been working with BNSF to make improvements where possible. Passenger safety is the top priority.

- WSDOT worked with BNSF to perform additional preventative maintenance.
- WSDOT will review drainage outfalls that may be part of the root cause.
- WSDOT worked to obligate \$16 million in federal funding to address mudslide areas.
- WSDOT and BNSF have identified five project areas.

# Considerations For New Corridor Station Stops

We do not anticipate any service changes until the capital program is completed in 2017 and we continue to plan for the future. Considerations include:

<b>Operational feasibility</b>	Does the stop meet the goals for High Speed Intercity Passenger Rail Service? Does the stop increase travel time? If so what stop should be eliminated to comply with travel time requirements?
<b>Customer demand</b>	Based on a ridership and revenue forecast model, what is the potential market demand for the stop? To what extent are there new riders or riders transferred from existing Cascades stops?
<b>Station suitability</b>	What are the strengths and challenges associated with using the building as a Cascades stop? What are the likely capital improvement needs?
<b>Interconnectivity benefits</b>	How would the station stop improve multi-modal connectivity and reduce vehicle miles traveled?
<b>Financial viability</b>	What is the benefit-cost ratio associated with the new stop? What level of ridership and revenue would be needed to cover costs? Is the city willing to guarantee ridership and revenue?

# Questions?

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