

**AAWA**  
ALL ABOARD WASHINGTON

# Welcome!



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## Train Trek to Cle Elum and the Tri-Cities

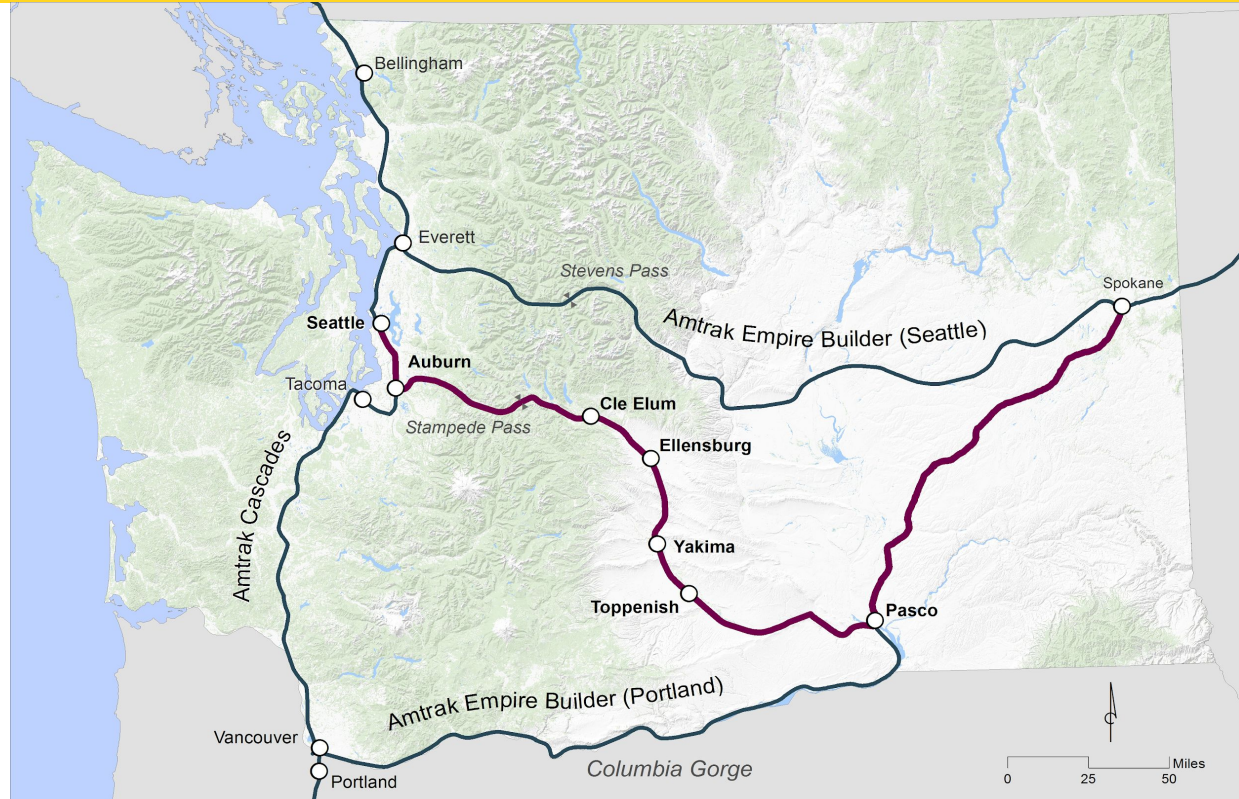
Saturday, November 21st, 2020



# Welcome

- *Gary Wirt*
- *Luis Moscoso*

**Post your questions  
to the chat**



# Regional Cooperation on Passenger Rail

How a Northwest Rail Commission Can  
Help Jumpstart the East-West Corridor

**Patrick Carnahan**

**Board Member, AAWA**



# Moving Beyond the I-5 Corridor

- WA and OR need strong incentives to increase service outside of I-5
- RCW 47.79.020 (1993)
- MT and ID are interested in trains
- Federal grant programs support interstate passenger rail services





# Working Together on Rail

## Southern Rail Commission

- LA, MS, and AL
- Interstate compact
- More competitive for federal grant applications
- Each state chips in, appoints commissioners



# A Northwest Rail Commission?

- Formal cooperation on regional rail planning
- Supports lines with interstate significance
- Can be corridor specific
- More leverage for lines in Central and Eastern WA



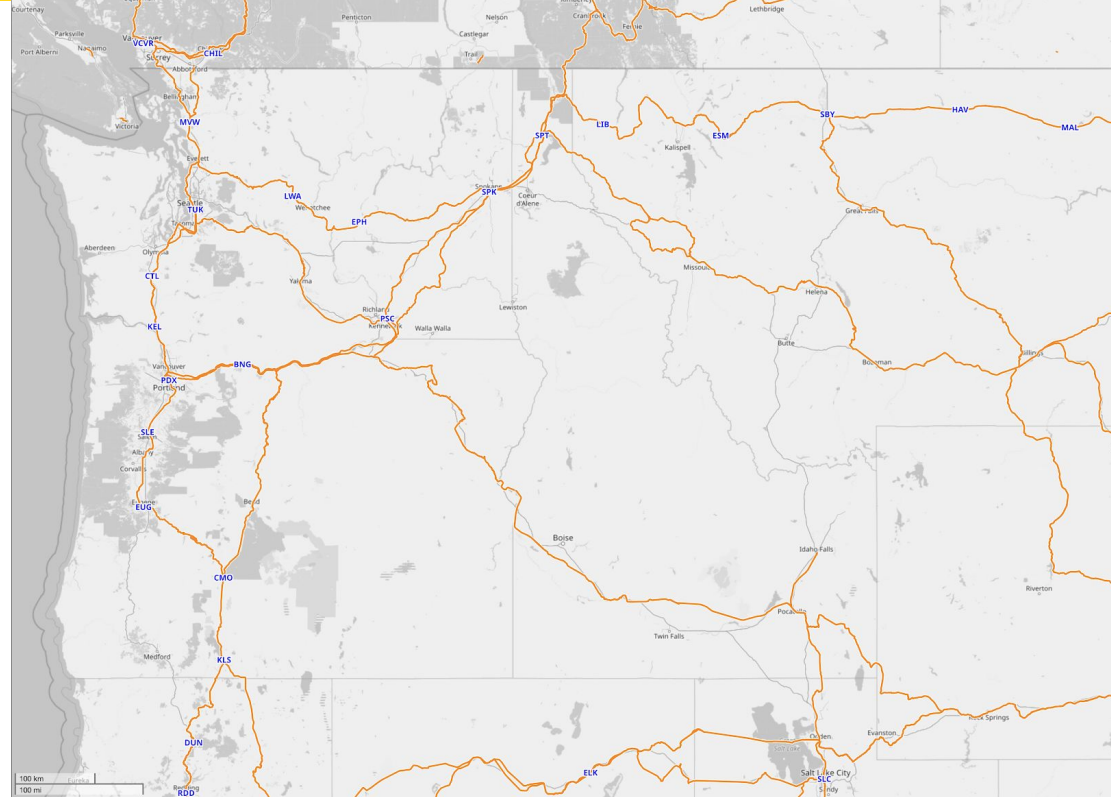
# One Northwest Rail Commission or Several?

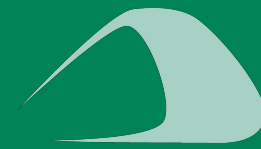
There are two options for this:

1. A single NRC with WA, OR, ID, MT, and possibly other states
2. Several commissions, each focused on a specific corridor

Interstate corridors featuring WA:

- Seattle - Pasco - Boise - Salt Lake
- Seattle - Pasco - Spokane - Fargo
- Spokane - Pasco - Boise
- Spokane - Pasco - Portland (daytime)





## Making It Happen

1. State-level enabling legislation between first two states
2. Federal enabling legislation
3. States appoint commissioners
4. Other states can join with approval of current member state legislatures





# Financing with County Rail Districts

- County Rail Districts are already authorized in law
- A funding bill would allow State assistance similar to Public Facilities Districts
- A percentage of the State's share of Sales and Use Tax raised in the jurisdiction could be matched
- Funding could be used for freight or passenger improvements, such as stations, or the NRC



**Louis Musso**  
**AAWA**

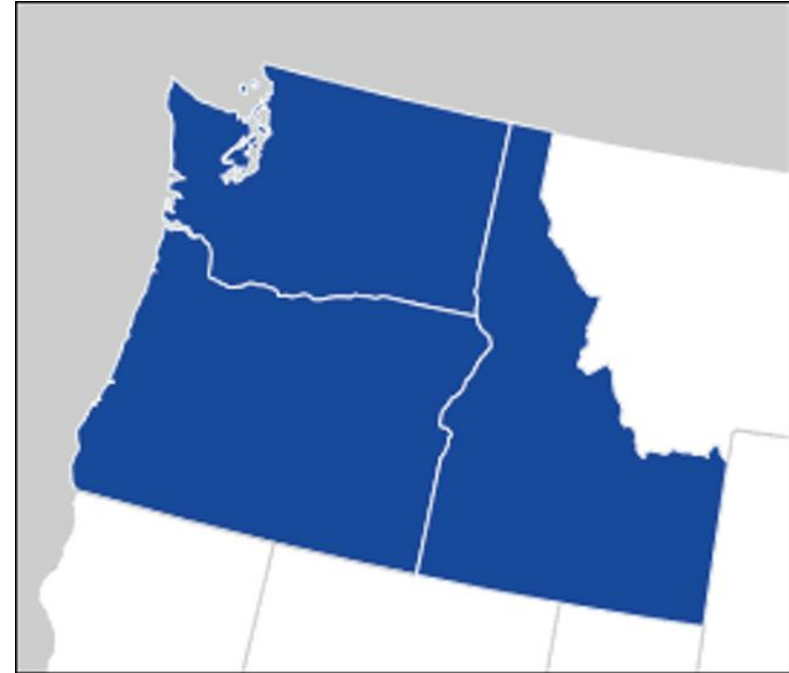
# County Rail District

- Recognized by WA state law
- Allows state match of existing sales taxes
- In-county rail improvement funding



# Northwest Rail Commission

- Created by interstate compact
- Congressionally recognized
- Focused on regional planning needed for federal grant funding



# The Passenger Rail Dividend

Passenger Rail's Return on Investment  
& Community Economic Recovery

**Abe Zumwalt**

**Board Member, AAWA**

**Transportation Analyst**

**R.L. Banks & Associates, Inc.**



# The Passenger Rail Dividend

- *Draft Benefits of East-West (Spokane) Service working from STEER's Feasibility study*
  - *Benefits Methodology*
- *Benefits of the Cascades Service*
- *How to grow our Passenger Rail Dividends*

# COVID-19 and Train Travel

- Recent studies show that transit is not a significant vector of viral spread
- Air recirculates on Amtrak equipment every 5 minutes



# Basic E-W Economic Analysis

For \$15m - \$30m in annual operations costs (STEER), we get:

**\$33.5m - \$36m** in state savings from Car Trips Diverted

+

**\$7m+** in Visitor Spending

+ **\$300k** Pollution saved + **\$8m** Airfare saved



# Avoiding Car Trips Saves Money

- Initial STEER estimates of East-West ridership only consider diverted automotive trips
- Cost savings of avoided **Vehicle Miles Travelled** (VMT) by cars is vastly underappreciated



## **Savings per VMT Avoided**

**\$2.00 on road wear & tear**

**12¢ on accidents & deaths**

**-47% CO2 emissions reduction**

Victoria Transport Policy Institute general averages for the US  
from AASHTO Reporting

## VMT Reduction: It's The Law

2008 Washington State enacted VMT Reduction Goals per capita from 2006:

- 18% Drop by 2020 (!)
- 30% by 2035
- 50% by 2050

***Cascades* and East-West Can Help**

# Regional Ridership from STEER Report

Table 6.2: Origin and Destination Pairs for All Survey Participants

Origin	Destination								
	Auburn	Cle Elum	Ellensburg	Seattle	Spokane	Toppenish	Tri-Cities	Yakima	Total
Auburn		0.6%	1.0%	8.6%	1.2%	0.3%	0.3%	0.4%	12.3%
Cle Elum	0.4%		0.7%	2.4%	0.3%	0.3%	0.1%	0.4%	4.6%
Ellensburg	0.4%	0.3%		3.6%	0.6%	0.1%	0.3%	1.0%	6.2%
Seattle	9.0%	2.2%	3.7%		10.2%	0.8%	3.7%	6.1%	35.9%
Spokane	1.1%	0.1%	1.1%	6.9%		0.1%	2.5%	1.9%	13.9%
Toppenish	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	0.8%	0.1%		0.7%	0.8%	3.0%
Tri-Cities	0.4%	0.1%	0.7%	3.6%	2.2%	0.4%		1.9%	9.4%
Yakima	1.0%	0.3%	2.2%	5.3%	2.2%	1.0%	2.8%		14.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>12.3%</b>	<b>3.6%</b>	<b>10.0%</b>	<b>31.2%</b>	<b>16.9%</b>	<b>3.0%</b>	<b>10.4%</b>	<b>12.6%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Steer (2020) analysis.



# Car Trips Avoided

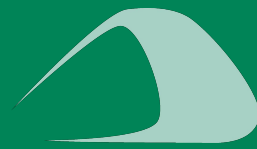
Using STEER's Seattle - Spokane ridership numbers + Survey Results in the study, a sketch was made of potential Origin-Destination Pair Ridership

1 Daily Trip									
	Auburn	Cle Elum	Ellensburg	Seattle	Spokane	Toppenish	Tri-Cities	Yakima	Total
Auburn	0	1,152	1,920	16,512	2,304	576	576	768	23,808
Cle Elum	768	0	1,344	4,608	576	576	192	768	8,832
Ellensburg	768	576	0	6,912	1,152	192	576	1,920	12,096
Seattle	17,280	4,224	7,104	0	19,584	1,536	7,104	11,712	68,544
Spokane	2,112	192	2,112	13,248	0	192	4,800	3,648	26,304
Toppenish	0	0	1,152	1,536	192	0	1,344	1,536	5,760
Tri-Cities	768	192	1,344	6,912	4,224	768	0	3,648	17,856
Yakima	1,920	576	4,224	10,176	4,224	1,920	5,376	0	28,416
Total	23,616	6,912	19,200	59,904	32,256	5,760	19,968	24,000	191,616

# Car Trips Avoided

(Ridership Pair / Average National Vehicle Occupancy (1.67)) × Trip Miles  
 (Fastest Google Maps Mileage)  
 × Saved VMT Maintenance and Safety Costs (\$2.12) =

Savings from Avoided VMT									
	Auburn	Cle Elum	Ellensburg	Seattle	Spokane	Toppenish	Tri-Cities	Yakima	
Auburn	\$0	\$123,601	\$265,569	\$597,654	\$830,957	\$120,623	\$154,874	\$140,975	<b>\$2,234,252</b>
Cle Elum	\$82,401	\$0	\$41,697	\$494,405	\$146,683	\$59,567	\$31,273	\$59,567	<b>\$915,592</b>
Ellensburg	\$106,228	\$17,870	\$0	\$956,048	\$257,627	\$13,899	\$75,948	\$89,350	<b>\$1,516,969</b>
Seattle	\$625,452	\$453,204	\$982,604	\$0	\$7,063,137	\$321,661	\$1,910,110	\$2,149,866	<b>\$13,506,034</b>
Spokane	\$761,711	\$48,894	\$472,315	\$4,778,004	\$0	\$49,887	\$881,093	\$905,416	<b>\$7,897,321</b>
Toppenish	\$0	\$0	\$83,394	\$321,661	\$49,887	\$0	\$105,979	\$41,697	<b>\$602,618</b>
Tri-Cities	\$206,498	\$31,273	\$177,211	\$1,858,485	\$775,362	\$60,560	\$0	\$99,030	<b>\$3,208,418</b>
Yakima	\$352,437	\$44,675	\$196,571	\$1,867,916	\$1,048,376	\$52,121	\$145,939	\$0	<b>\$3,708,035</b>
								<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$33,589,239</b>

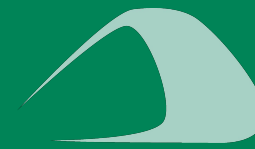


## Car Trips Avoided

Trips to:

Cle Elum = ~\$900,000 saved annually

Tri Cities = ~\$3,208,415 saved annually



# Car Trips Avoided

Minimum Pollution Savings:

- Cars = 371 grams CO<sub>2</sub>/PaxMile\*
- Trains = 177 grams CO<sub>2</sub>/PaxMile\*

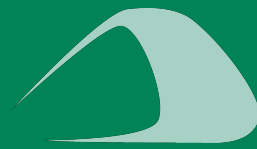
**Conservative Price Per Gram:**

- \$.0000371\*\*

\*2016 Comparative Energy Use & CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions by Mode

\*\* VTPI Transportation Cost and Benefit Analysis II - Air Pollution Costs Page 5.10-21





## Car Trips Avoided

By these conservative calculations:

East-West Service could save  
Washington **\$368,320/year** in pollution  
abatement expense

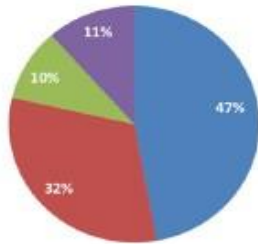


# Just Car Trips Avoided?

## WASHINGTON STATE

### Profile of Amtrak Customers

Travel Mode Preference if Amtrak Unavailable

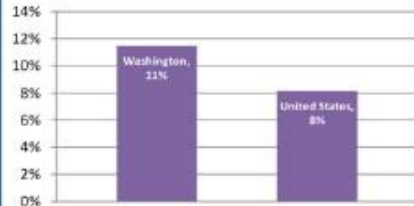


- Would drive if Amtrak unavailable
- Would fly if Amtrak unavailable
- Would use the bus if Amtrak unavailable
- Would not travel if Amtrak Unavailable

Percent of population within 30 miles of a rail station served by Amtrak

**88%**

Percent of Riders who Would Not Travel if Amtrak was Unavailable



Income Distribution of Amtrak Travelers in Washington



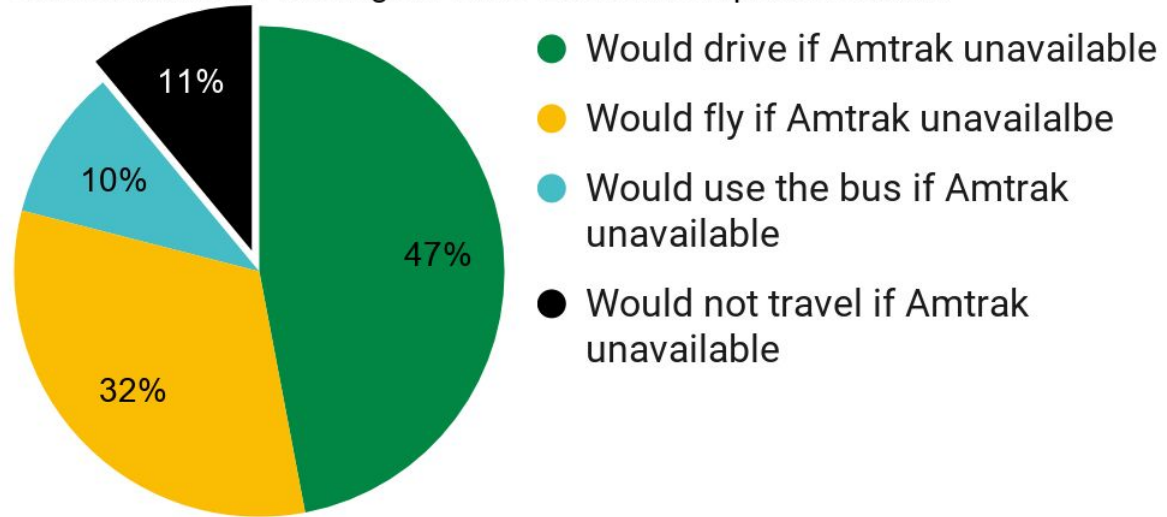
- STEER's ridership estimates were derived solely from car trips avoided.
- This does not reflect Amtrak's own data regarding ridership in Washington state.

# Not Every Passenger Drives

- Amtrak data says **less than half** of potential riders in Washington drive
- This data implies that the STEER report therefore underestimated ridership **by half**

## *Passengers Without Trains Don't Just Take the Bus*

Source: Amtrak Washington State Economic Impact Brochure



# Some Passengers Wouldn't Travel

Percent of Riders who Would Not Travel if  
Amtrak was Unavailable



- The report contemplates 'little induced ridership,' which is to say, riders who wouldn't otherwise travel.
- **Amtrak's own data shows above-average induced ridership for passenger rail in Washington.**



# Induced Travel is Valuable

**\$84 per day-trip visitor**

**\$366 per overnight visitor**

Average spending generated, according to Experience Washington



# Hypothetical New Spending

Annual Induced Visitor Spending in:

Cle Elum: ~\$350,000

Tri-Cities: ~\$720,000

# Saving Washingtonians Money

The 32% of pax who would otherwise fly **save big:**

**47¢\*** per mile for airfare

**26¢\*\*** per mile for Amtrak *Cascades*

Average travel costs per mile

\*Bureau of Transportation Statistics 2018 Air Carrier Profile

\*\*WSDOT 2019 Amtrak *Cascades* Performance Data Report (average *Cascades* fare [\$40.10]/Average trip length [155.37 miles])



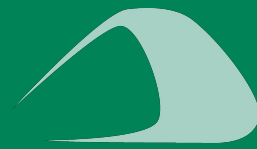
# Saving Washingtonians Money

If enacted, East-West Service could save Washingtonians **\$8,121,235/year** over would-be air fare

# Today's Reality for Central & Eastern WA



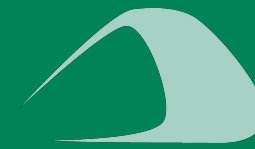
If you can't afford plane tickets, then you'd better get on your knees and put some tire chains on.



## Support in Eastern WA

STEER cited the 76% support rating for East-West trains as:

“one of the highest [rates of public support] that we’ve seen for any sort of community engagement we’ve done”



## ***The Cascades Dividend***

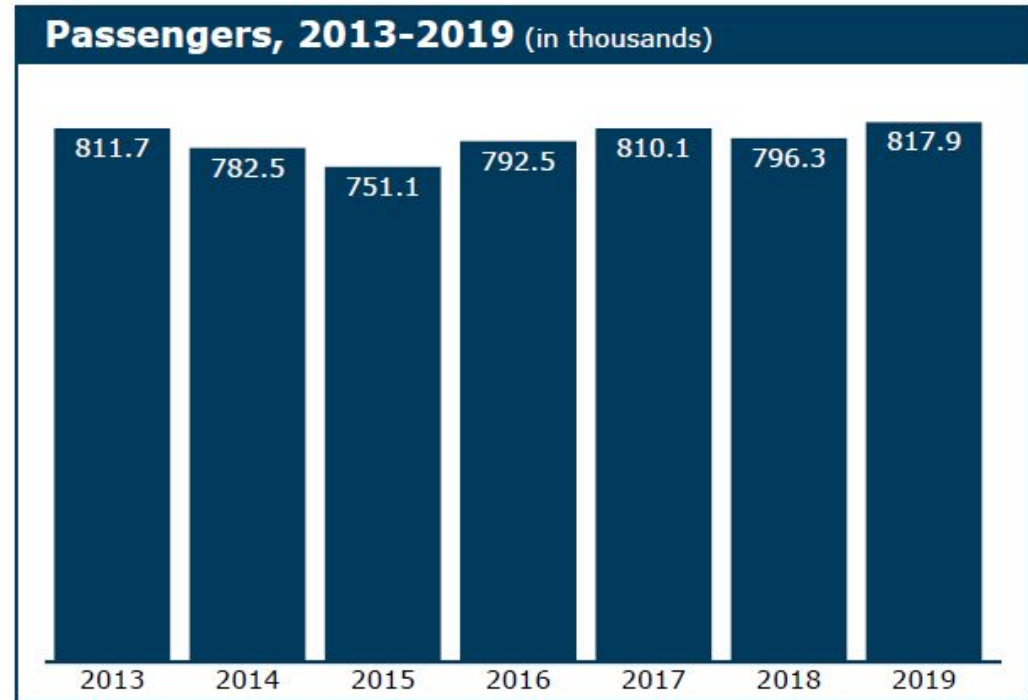
The same analysis shows, in 2019, the *Cascades* in WA **was worth \$88.2M:**

- \$54.3M in Road Maintenance
- \$1.6M in reduced vehicle fatalities
- \$900k in pollution saved
- \$17.8M in airfare saved
- \$13.6M in visitor spending



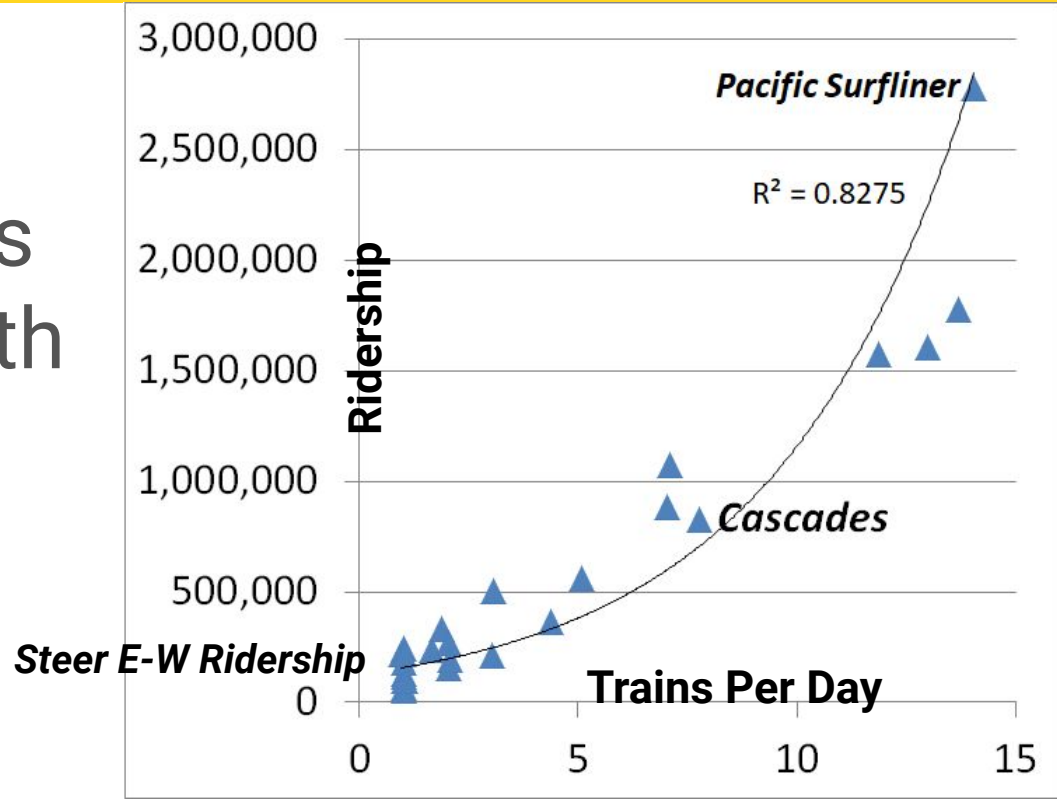
# The *Cascades* Dividend

Since 2013,  
**nearly \$500M** in  
benefits have  
accrued



# Growing the *Cascades* Dividend

Ridership grows exponentially with Frequency



## 2023 *Cascades* Service Goals

- **2,995,300** annual riders
- **13 daily** Seattle-Portland round trips
- **4 daily** Seattle-Vancouver, B.C. round trips

# Growing the *Cascades* Dividend

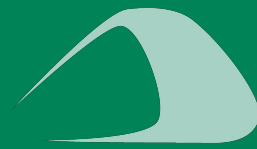
## \$324.9 Million in Benefits Every Year

At a projected annual ridership of **2,995,300**



# Investments in the *Cascades* Dividend

- Blaine Swift Customs Facility (rail milepost 114.6 to 118.3) (**\$13.8m**)
- Mount Vernon Siding Extension (rail milepost 65.5 to 67.5) (**\$8.4m**)
- King Street Station Track Improvements (rail milepost 0.2 to 0.5) (**\$92m**)
- Auburn South Third Main Track (rail milepost 20.9 to 24.2) (**\$23.9m**)
- Reservation to Stewart Third Main Track (rail milepost 38.2 to 33.9) (**\$48.3m**)
- Point Defiance Bypass (rail milepost 25.38 to 12.71) (**\$412m**)
- Kelso to Martin's Bluff Rail Project (rail milepost 96.3 to 113.9) (**\$469.3m**)
- Vancouver Rail Project (rail milepost 10 to 132.5) (**\$86.6m**)
- Advanced Wayside Signaling System (**\$536m**)
- **E-W PROJECTED IMPROVEMENTS (\$380m)**



# Well-Needed Perspective

**\$280m - \$380m (397 Miles)**

Contemplated Capital Costs for East-West Passenger Rail Service

**\$220m (~2 Miles)**

One Southbound HOV lane, Portland Avenue - Port of Tacoma Road

**\$283.5m (~6 Miles)**

Snoqualmie Pass Lanes



# Break

**5 minutes**

*Join us or donate*

**[aawa.us](http://aawa.us)**

**(509) 213-0070**

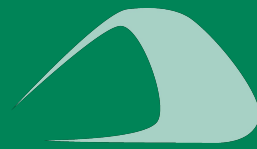
# Next Steps and How You Can Help

**Luis Moscoso, AAWA**



# Who Can Make This Happen? Your Friends

- Young people
- Diverse demographics
- Recreation travelers
- People with disabilities
- Environmentally conscious
- Business travelers
- University students
- People who don't drive
- People who can't afford to fly
- Those who need to carry luggage and packages
- People who can't fly for medical reasons
- Elderly
- Those who travel during the winter
- Anyone who needs an alternative



# Organizing for Success

What AAWA and Rail Advocates are working for:

*A safe, accessible, and sustainable transportation network that connects and benefits all Washingtonians*

# Who Can Make This Happen?

The State Legislature and the Governor



# How can we influence them?

*Organized advocacy at the following levels:*

- Grassroots
  - Rail Advocacy Groups
  - Community & Social Groups
  - Marginalized communities
  - Student Organizations



# How can we influence them?

*Organized advocacy at the following levels:*

- Grasstops
  - Professional & Business Groups
  - Labor & Environmental Organizations
  - Industry & Consultant Groups
  - NGOs

# How can we influence them?

*Organized advocacy at the following levels:*

- Municipal & Regional Planning Groups
- City and County Governments

# How can we influence them?

*Organized advocacy at the following levels:*

- State Government
  - Transportation Commission
  - WSDOT
  - Legislature
  - Governor

# How can we influence them?

*Organized advocacy at the following levels:*

- Federal Government
  - Amtrak & FRA
  - Congressional Delegation

# Give Every Washingtonian Their Fair Share

- Passenger rail should be an important component of an integrated transportation system that:
  - Furthers economic recovery and development
  - Serves rural and urban communities alike
  - Helps create a fiscally and environmentally-sustainable future

# The Time for East-West Service is Now

- Our state's 30-year mandate to develop “high-quality intercity passenger rail service through incremental upgrading of the existing [Amtrak] service” is long-overdue.
- A new train culture has emerged in Washington that is interested in creating a modern, expansive intercity passenger rail network serving communities of all sizes.
- It is time for us to press the Legislature to follow through on its promise for cross-state rail service connecting the Yakima Valley.

## **Advocate for Amtrak *Cascades* Funding to Restore Pre-Pandemic Service Levels**

### **Governor, Senate & House Transportation budgets**

#### **Next Steps to Evaluate East-West Intercity Passenger Rail Corridor**

- Further investigation of the capital and operating costs is recommended
- Assess the economic impacts of East-West passenger rail service
- Complete a cost-benefit analysis of East-West passenger rail service

#### **County Rail Districts - resubmit HB 2622 (2018/19)**

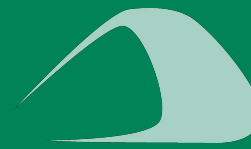
- Allow the governing body of a County Rail District to share and match a small portion (.033%) of existing sales and use taxes for rail development

#### **Northwest Rail Commission (NRC)**

- Create at least one NRC featuring Washington State to improve planning coordination

#### **Managing *Cascades* Corridor - resubmit HB 2781 (2013)**

- Authorize WSDOT to enter into agreements with the Oregon ODOT and the British Columbia ministry of transportation



# Let's Make It Happen

1. Contact your legislators and ask them to support an East-West economic impact analysis
2. Ask for resolutions of support for East-West service from your local governments
3. Talk with your county officials about using county rail districts to fund improvements
4. Donate to AAWA or join us as a member, volunteer, or director
5. Create or work with a local chapter of AAWA
6. Participate in our upcoming events



# Auburn - Saturday, December 5



Visit [aawa.us/east-west](https://aawa.us/east-west) to Get Involved

Contact us, become a member, or donate:

**All Aboard Washington**

[aawa.us](https://aawa.us)

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