



AORTA

Association of Oregon
Rail and Transit Advocates

Northwest Rail News

Second Quarter 2020



AAWA
ALL ABOARD WASHINGTON

Pandemic Struggles and Opportunities

Current Circumstances

The COVID-19 pandemic has decimated passenger rail ridership. Amtrak *Cascades* service between Seattle and Portland has been reduced to a single daily round-trip; service north of Seattle has been suspended while the US/Canada border is closed; there is one daily *Cascades* through-train between Eugene, Portland and Seattle; and the *Coast Starlight* still runs daily through Seattle, Portland, Eugene, and Klamath Falls to Los Angeles. Most Thruway Buses between Portland and Eugene are operating. Amtrak is threatening to reduce daily long-distance trains to three days a week. Local, state and national elected officials are struggling to resolve the economic devastation wrought by the pandemic. Together with the cuts potentially on the horizon due to the passage of Initiative 976 in Washington, the future of passenger rail service in the Northwest has been called into question.

The Oregon Legislature will convene a special session on Aug. 10 to consider the budget shortfall. The Washington Legislature is not planning to hold a special session.

As of July 31, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a Fiscal Year 2021 budget "mini-bus" that includes \$10 billion for Amtrak and \$24 billion for transit. The seven-bill package also includes language that protects daily service, prevents further furloughs for Amtrak workers, and requires that passengers and employees wear masks on trains, planes, and large transit systems. The Senate has yet to introduce even draft appropriations language for transportation, and the most recent coronavirus relief package included no money for transit or Amtrak.

They are re-evaluating everything, including "transportation as usual." We must remind them (forcefully) that passenger rail can be an important part of the needed economic recovery, serving communities of all sizes throughout our states.

The Turning Point for Northwest Passenger Rail

From the CNN article "For American high-speed rail, 2020 could be a turning point":

High-speed rail advocates say that 2020 may be a turning point for US high-speed rail development, which has long lagged other developed nations....In the Pacific Northwest, a project to connect Portland, Seattle and Vancouver with one-hour trips, has drawn an investment from Microsoft to study the feasibility.

While we support high-speed rail (HSR), we believe it is important to think and act strategically as we plan for its implementation. In order to foster a culture of train riding, we also need investment in "emerging high-speed rail" (EHSR) that can be implemented quickly on existing infrastructure. Amtrak *Cascades* is an excellent candidate for this type of short-term investment, given its potential to serve a large urban audience. East-West tracks crossing the mountains also have great potential to deliver service to more destinations without the same sorts of costs and timelines required by HSR.

The recently-released study of the feasibility of returning passenger rail service to the Yakima Valley via Stampede Pass shows that cross-state service is financially and technically feasible. This project will be an important component of the much-needed economic recovery, which will benefit both large and small population centers. And once Seattle-Spokane service is initiated, routes to other cities can use much of the same track mileage (such as Seattle-Boise and Spokane-Boise).

The next steps will be to improve *Cascades* and cross-state service by increasing frequencies and upgrading the existing infrastructure and equipment to EHSR standards. This will create an integrated, statewide network that will feed the planned HSR rail network envisioned to serve the urban spine of Western Washington.

Rail Advocates: YOU Must Work to Save Our Trains *by Lloyd Flem*

While most Washingtonians remain careful as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to rage across the US, many are looking to a future when our state can return to some sense of normalcy.

Most sectors of our economy have been hurt, but few more than mass transportation. COVID-19's impact on ridership has forced a drastic cutback of the Amtrak *Cascades*. And the trauma of the tragedy of 12/18/17 still marks the present and future of passenger train service in Washington.

A hoped-for future position, including transportation, is from the Low Carbon Prosperity Institute with an op-ed: "Building Back Better: Investing in a Resilient Recovery for Washington State." BBB lauds new and exotic high-tech transportation modes, plus a return to the 'Mosquito Fleet' (the nickname for the fleet of commercial passenger steamboats traveling between Olympia northeast in Puget Sound to cities and settlements along the Sound in the late 19th and early 20th centuries).

Passenger rail advocates' concern is that once again, this time in the BBB article, conventional intercity passenger trains are ignored, whereas Ultra-High-Speed Rail, a costly long-term development, is praised without question. Conventional passenger trains are frequently 'forgotten' in these transportation discussions. The opposition and even ridicule of "obsolete choo-choos" we endured in the 80's and early 90's essentially faded after the success of the Amtrak *Cascades*. Yet a significant number of the public still don't know or think about traveling by train. We still have to remind even our legislative and community friends about the safe, environmentally- sound rail options between Eugene and Vancouver, BC, and two of America's best long-distance trains to/from Chicago and Los Angeles.

Related annoyances included local transit agencies not acknowledging intercity trains, or public-sector meetings explicitly dealing with transportation in such Amtrak-friendly places as downtown Portland or downtown Seattle citing only airports, rental cars, and (paid) parking as means of access. Fine city hotels originally established to serve rail travelers now promote meeting flights, but are

shocked when asked to greet train passengers close to their hostelry.

In the above cases, we wrote and phoned, or in the transit agencies' case, advocated directly to the agencies or their Olympia lobbyists for them, at a minimum, to provide information about intercity passenger trains. Amtrak and WSDOT have traditionally done some promotion and advertising. But because they are in part tax-supported, they cannot go after other entities which "forget" or ignore their trains. To a significant degree, tactful but assertive "reminding" of the existence and virtues of our passenger trains has become the role of AAWA. While a stronger commitment to public information as come about in the past year or so, a result of good professional communication services associated with AAWA, and the dedication of a few AAWA board members who have engendered strong regional support for restoring passenger trains on the Stampede Pass route, more work by all AAWA members and other Northwest passenger train advocates is required.

Accepting that AAWA will need to be the singular advocate for our trains, we cannot just rely on the professional work of CHCS, Sermonti, our Government Affairs Director, plus that of a handful of dedicated AAWA Board members. Right now the situation for our train service is not good.

Jim Hamre and Zach Willhoite would insist we redouble our efforts to, as soon as feasible, restore pre-pandemic *Cascades* service, add the additional two round trips, and work for a return of passenger trains to the now-unserved Stampede Pass route.

Readers of this newsletter are assumed to be advocates for the above. **Passive support is insufficient.** You need to work with local and state-level elected officials, local and state-level business organizations. We must also push environmental groups and transportation providers which would benefit from cooperating with passenger train service, and even such as big hotels that only advertise airports and parking.

At no time in at least two decades has passenger rail's future in our state faced such challenges. **YOU share responsibility for preserving and growing passenger rail in the Northwest!**

Lloyd H. Flem served as Executive Director of WashARP/AAWA from 1985 until 2018. He was recently appointed Director Emeritus.

Communities Can Help Restore Passenger Rail Service via Stampede Pass to Central and Eastern WA *by Gary Wirt*

Over the past several years, cities and organizations along the proposed Stampede Pass route have declared their support for passenger rail service by adopting resolutions and writing letters to legislators. The City Council of Yakima, WA, for example, adopted resolutions in 1999 and again in 2002 urging funding for a feasibility study of the service. These documents, along with 13 similar documents from cities along the route, were used to demonstrate the extent of local interest, and to encourage State government officials to conduct a feasibility study of the route. Following many years of effort by these cities and AAWA, a feasibility study was completed in July 2020 by the state legislature's Joint Transportation Committee.

The feasibility study includes estimates of ridership, infrastructure improvement costs, revenues, travel time between stations, and other relevant data. The study concluded that the service is technically feasible, although at significant cost. The study did not include a full benefit-cost analysis (BCA).

So what needs to be done next? A BCA and an economic impact analysis are the next most logical steps toward restoring the proposed service.

A BCA measures the value of a project's benefits and costs to society, while an economic impact analysis measures the impact of increased economic activity within a region. Common metrics for measuring economic impacts include retail spending, business activity, tax revenues, jobs/wages, and property values. Economic impact analyses often take a strictly positive view, (i.e., increased jobs, spending) and do not examine how the resources used for a project might have been put to alternative beneficial uses (i.e., they do not assess the net effect on society).

Understanding and addressing economic impacts can be important to project how an infrastructure improvement may affect a particular region.

However, an economic analysis should constitute an independent exercise that is separate from assessing the benefits and costs of a project through a BCA. BCA is the main tool used to determine whether a project generates sufficient value to

society, measured as positive net benefits, and to justify spending on a specific program or project [Source: U.S. DOT: "Benefit Cost Analysis Guidance for Discretionary Grant Programs", Jan. 2020].

In view of severely reduced Washington State revenue attributable to COVID-19, elected officials must be convinced that passenger rail service is more essential than ever for the economic health and recovery of Central and Eastern Washington. A new effort showing widespread support is needed to convince legislators of the importance of moving ahead with a BCA for the Stampede Pass route. A new round of letters of support and resolutions by cities and organizations is needed.

AAWA has submitted a proposed resolution in support of additional funding for the E-W project for consideration by Yakima City Council. A copy of the proposed resolution is available at <https://aawa.us/east-west>. Currently, because of COVID-19 restrictions, Yakima City Council is not accepting public input during Council meetings, therefore action on the proposed resolution is on hold. Various cities have differing rules, so some may be able to act on a resolution such as that proposed. Readers are encouraged to download the proposed resolution for use as a model and change it to suit their particular city and organizations.

"Go By Train Safely" Masks Now Available

AAWA is offering a very limited number of masks printed with our logo and the slogan "Go By Train Safely" to those who donate \$100 or more. The masks are made by a family-owned business in Seattle, and we will have them by late next week. They are 3D-style with 100% soft white cotton on the inside and 65/35 poly/cotton on the outside. They include white elastic ear loops and a nose piece. We've tested samples, and they are quite comfortable. Please make your donation soon, as we think that the masks will sell out quickly!



All Aboard Washington Responds to East-West Passenger Rail Study

All Aboard Washington is pleased that the Joint Transportation Committee's (JTC's) Feasibility of an East-West Intercity Passenger Rail System for Washington State (East-West) study shows that passenger rail service between Seattle, Auburn, Cle Elum, Ellensburg, Yakima, Toppenish, Pasco, and Spokane is technically and financially viable. It is imperative that this preliminary study be followed up with a full analysis of the economic benefits that will accrue to the areas to be served by East-West passenger rail service via Stampede Pass.

A Timely Investment

In the current fiscal environment, we believe that East-West passenger train service will provide a significant environmentally-friendly transportation alternative using existing infrastructure at a reasonable cost. The proposed infrastructure upgrades will be an important part of Washington's economic recovery plan, and will lay the groundwork for a statewide multimodal transportation network featuring a modern rail system. AAWA is concerned, however, that the study's "key findings" do not appear to reflect the data included in the report.

Ridership Estimates Make Misleading Comparisons

The key point stating that East-West service will have "low expected ridership" is not borne out by the study's own estimates. The ridership projections suggest up to 205,000 yearly riders for the twice-daily service between Seattle and Spokane, though this number varies depending on which service option is ultimately selected. The study compares these estimates to ridership for services such as the Amtrak *Cascades* and North Carolina's *Piedmont/Carolinian*, both of which have more daily round-trips than the one to two proposed by the East-West study.

What the study does not state, despite providing the data to support it, is that the East-West service

would perform remarkably well given the population density of the areas it would serve and its long run times. In fact, a key insight from the data provided is that this corridor is likely to benefit from more frequencies than are currently being studied. Amtrak route performance data shows that corridor ridership grows considerably once at least 6-8 daily round trips are offered. More frequencies would significantly increase East-West ridership and, therefore, should be studied at levels similar to the *Carolinian/Piedmont* and *Cascades* corridors.

Service Competitiveness Assumptions Are Questionable

The study's conclusions are predicated on the assumption that long travel times (8 hours 35 minutes) between Seattle and Spokane would make this train line uncompetitive with driving or flying, regardless of ticket costs. The study includes slightly higher ridership estimates for a service taking an hour less, but says that it "has not fully investigated" options such as using tilt-train technology that could reduce travel time over the tight curves in the Stampede Pass section of the route. The study also does not take into account traveler preferences for higher safety, reduced stress, improved reliability, and better environmental friendliness. AAWA questions these assumptions because of the demographics of travelers most likely to ride East-West passenger trains and the lack of public transportation options currently available to many communities along the proposed route.

Study Is Incomplete

While AAWA recognizes that budget and timeframe constrained the current study, we are disappointed that the results give an incomplete picture of how East-West service could generate ridership and, more importantly, societal benefit.

For example, the study fails to identify potential sources for local funding contributions. The original Request for Proposals from the JTC recognized the need for local communities to partner with the state in the creation and operation of East-West service. ADA-compliant platforms are necessary, but the

study seems to assume that the state would bear the full, high costs associated with new station buildings, even though most communities along the route still have their historic stations intact. Local funding opportunities, similar to the community-supported stations at Leavenworth and Olympia-Lacey, have not been identified in the study. In addition, the ridership estimates exclude induced demand, transit/intercity bus restructures, demand in the Seattle-Auburn corridor, and diversion from air travel, among other factors.

Limited Opportunities for Feedback

AAWA is disappointed that the study development process included very little opportunity for stakeholders and citizens to participate. AAWA's Luis Moscoso was named to the work group that was to have overseen the study, but the group had only one short meeting during the study process. In addition, the stakeholder meetings described in the report were very poorly publicized.

Historical Background

In spite of the limitations of the East-West study, AAWA believes that it can and must be the basis for fulfilling the 1993 mandate of the Washington State Legislature to create East-West service. Quoting from the Executive Summary of the 2001 study:

"In 1993, the Washington State Legislature established the goal of introducing high-speed* ground transportation between Seattle and Spokane by the year 2030 (RCW 47.79.020).

"...Local communities across eastern Washington support this service, but they also believe there is a need for a new, intrastate passenger train that travels during daylight hours." (*High-speed was identified to be 150 mph in this RCW.)

The 2001 report pointed out the need for further analysis of the Stampede Pass route to obtain accurate ridership, scheduling, and cost information. Twenty-seven years later, All Aboard Washington believes it is long overdue for the state to move forward with this sorely-needed project for Washingtonians on both sides of the Cascades.

Seattle: The Future is Riding on Rail

by Madison Butler, Rail Passengers Association

Taking the *Coast Starlight* north to Seattle was a lovely experience. Despite the food being less than palatable, our time onboard Amtrak showed that many people were willing to mask up to do their essential and safe traveling. As previously stated (railpassengers.org/3xservice), the concept of eliminating daily service is so insulting to the communities that rely on this service. We see towns with a guaranteed return on investment from daily service that are being neglected. To eliminate daily service is inherently insulting to the communities that have spent time, tax money, and labor to make sure that their stations are places that people want to go to. We believe there are ample examples of this in the Pacific Northwest.

Our time in Seattle, though short, made a big impression. In regards to what support the region needs from national organizations like the Rail Passengers Association, we want to prioritize funding for studies and initiatives in this region which is so obviously in need of expansion to support its growth and sustainability.

Overall, we feel as though it was great to see a city that was suffering a lot of controversial news during this pandemic come together to practice good healthy standards. The transit system was robust, every worker was doing their part. It truly seems Seattle is rising from being the first city heavily impacted by the virus and we love to see this rebirth.

Pandemic be damned - there is a lot of work that needs to be done to make sure systems such as Sound Transit survive. Not just in the current funding situation, but with an eye on the horizon: East-West passenger rail and Northwest HSR are the future. We need to rethink how we see the future of transit. Cars and planes will not be markets that we can sustain, nor will they have the demand they once did with better public rail options.

Central Washington Summit A Success

by Patrick Carnahan

The East-West passenger rail restoration project got some time in the spotlight on Saturday, July 11th thanks to All Aboard Washington's successful Central Washington Passenger Rail Summit. The Zoom-hosted event featured numerous elected leaders, the consulting firm Steer which recently completed the East-West Passenger Rail System feasibility study, stakeholders from Yakima, and prominent rail transportation advocates.

Steer's Michael Colella summarized the feasibility study that was completed earlier in July and answered questions from the audience and local officials. Mentioned the overall technical feasibility of the project and the high public support rate Steer found in their community surveys, Colella, "We've done this type of feasibility work for other states and other routes recently in the past, and 76% is one of the highest that we've seen for any sort of community engagement that we've done..." Colella finished his presentation suggesting several times that more specific travel pattern analyses, potential cost saving measures, and infill stations in places like Prosser and Cheney are, "worth investigating [in] a further study."

While the state transportation budget will face challenges over the next few years, East-West passenger rail has strong prospects. AAWA's Abe Zumwalt presented a basic analysis of the East-West service's potential impacts with some stunning numbers:

- East-West service could generate over \$7 million in extra visitor spending for communities along the line
- The service's \$15 - \$30 million operating costs could be entirely outweighed by state savings on road maintenance and accidents (\$33.5 - 36 million)

Alan Adolf of the Yakima Valley Conference of Governments spoke of the need for better transportation options in Central Washington, especially passenger rail. With the loss of multiple services over the past few decades, most residents of the Yakima Valley lack intercity transit access or are subject to infrequent schedules that connect poorly with other modes. This need was made clear in a community survey of Yakima County residents, where 91% of respondents said they support the return of train service to the Yakima Valley.

John Robert Smith, chairman of Transportation For America, then presented an idea for how to improve multi-state cooperation on regional rail transportation: a Northwest Rail Commission. Citing his experiences with the federally-chartered Southern Rail Commission, Smith suggested that this model would be an effective way to coordinate planning efforts, applications for federal grant funding, and the implementation of passenger rail services in Washington, Oregon, and Idaho.

Luis Moscoso finished up by summarizing AAWA's priorities for the 2021 legislative session:

1. Making sure the East-West passenger rail project economic impact analysis is funded and conducted
2. Creating state-level legislation approving the creation of a federally-chartered Northwest Rail Commission
3. Getting new letters of support from municipalities and counties along the East-West rail line, and
4. Setting up new CRDs and activating the one in Kittitas County to support East-West passenger rail

All Aboard Washington is thankful for the citizens, elected officials, advocates, and local and nonprofit media sources who helped make the Central Washington Summit a success. We are grateful to have had the opportunity to host a conversation on this important topic, and we look forward to continuing our push to promote East-West passenger rail for the benefit of the Pacific Northwest.

Looking Beyond COVID-19

by Bob Krebs, AORTA President

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted everyone's lives and negatively impacted our economy. Jobs have been lost, businesses closed, and government services curtailed due to the virus. The passenger transportation industry has been especially hard hit with some revenue losses reaching 90%. People working from home, holding meetings online, and avoiding recreational trips have drastically reduced travel demand. As a result many carriers are only offering limited services for essential travel.

New vaccines and medical treatments being developed to combat the coronavirus offer hope that the current crisis will be under control in a few months. As our country returns to a new normal lifestyle, substantial cuts in government services will be needed to compensate for revenue losses due to COVID-19. The recovery process offers an opportunity to develop better and more efficient ways to provide government services.

To support Oregon's intercity passenger services, AORTA is proposing an employee payroll tax of one tenth of one percent (.1%). This new tax would be dedicated for intercity rail and bus services, and commuter rail lines in metropolitan areas (i.e. Portland-Salem, Rogue Valley, Bend-Central Oregon, and Corvallis-Albany-Lebanon). Besides funding operations, this fund would pay for infrastructure improvements to add capacity, raise train speeds, extend services, and improve safety.

The tax would only be collected from people receiving a paycheck, thus not putting an extra burden on businesses and families whose incomes were impacted by the pandemic. State General Fund dollars would be made available for other uses. In addition to providing reliable mobility options to Oregon residents and visitors, the new fund offers many benefits. Many family wage jobs are sustained by the program. These employees pay taxes and contribute to our economy. Oregon businesses sell products and services needed by the system.

Looking to the future, many of Oregon's transportation policies appear to be quite costly and outdated. There are mobility options that are

underutilized due to lack of dedicated funding. The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) highway fund is facing a serious revenue shortfall. Continuing to expand the road network so everyone can travel in private cars is suddenly too expensive.

In the Willamette Valley, the Amtrak *Cascades* Rail Corridor could be modernized to upgrade both passenger and freight services, with the addition of more double tracking and safety features. It would take five to ten times the tax dollars to buy the same capacity by adding lanes to I-5 between Eugene and Portland. Additionally, rail improvements, unlike road work, do not exempt the land from property taxes. Most privately owned rail right of ways are wide enough for several tracks, reducing the need to take private lands as required for expanding roads.

Reinstating passenger train service between Portland and Boise, ID and an extension of Amtrak *Cascades* trains to the Rouge Valley are future projects these funds could support.

Responsible investment in intercity passenger services also supports Oregon's goal to reduce greenhouse gases. Trains and buses make up less than 3% of all the passenger vehicle emissions. It takes far less energy to move people on trains and buses than in private motor vehicles.

As we recover from COVID-19 over the next few months, our intercity passenger system must be restored to its former condition. Revenue shortfalls have our State and Federal governments scrambling to balance budgets. There is talk of cutting both national and regional Amtrak services. This would be disastrous since skilled employees, access to infrastructure, and transportation connections for countless small communities would be lost. Many services could not be restored without massive government investment in infrastructure and facilities. Tourist traffic would also decline negatively, impacting local economies.

You can help protect our essential intercity network. Act today since it is urgent that our political leaders understand that these requests make good business sense as we rebuild our economy after COVID-19:

- Write or e-mail your Oregon legislators asking them to support our funding proposal for the Amtrak *Cascades* and intercity buses.
- Contact your Congresspeople and urge them to maintain the Amtrak National System.

Making Strides

by Harvey Bowen, AAWA President

All Aboard Washington is making great steps and taking some warranted risks in doing so. The benefits are clear: The legislature funded our Engrossed Substitute House Bill 1160; we were asked to nominate a member of the Statewide Transportation Priorities and Needs Study Advisory Panel; and our remote meetings have been successful, with the most recent carried by TVW (currently available at www.tvw.org/watch/?eventID=2020071008).

Our income has been slightly down. We are now experimenting with new donation premiums like the masks mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter.

SARS-CoV-2 is the story of so many things now; for AAWA it has meant no in-person events and continued challenges to find new communication methods. Our volunteers and contractors are continuing their work to make progress on multiple issues that impact our state's rail services, sometimes just to keep what we already have.

As we prepare for the 2021 legislative session we face many challenges. Amtrak trains are running at far lower frequencies than before, WSDOT has removed their Talgo Series VI trainsets from service and it is unclear how their capacity will be replaced. Budgetary constraints will make it more difficult than ever to obtain funding for new service, yet we need more service to best bounce back from the economic and social effects of SARS-CoV-2.

Through the generosity of two legacy donors, AAWA has had the money to carefully spend on web, media, and other services, but this money will run out soon. We can't advance our mission of more and better rail service in Washington without your financial support. Please consider renewing your membership, and also consider making an extra gift today to support our efforts.

Website Update

All Aboard Washington's website was recently updated with a new menu structure to better accommodate our new content. You will notice 'flyout' menus as you hover your cursor over many of the items in the blue menu bar. Watch for further updates to come soon.

A Crew Perspective by Tom Riley

The coronavirus has affected people in just about every walk of life. We all think about the unsung heroes in the medical field, and grocery stores, too. I suspect those who are reading this are familiar with the plight that Amtrak is facing, but for those who aren't, I hope to shed some light on those issues.

It's an uncertain time for everybody in the US these days, and for Amtrak employees and contractors it's no different. Amtrak has announced plans to cut most of its services by a large amount, with the company potentially needing to drop 4,000 of its roughly 20,000 employees. A recent round of buyouts enticed just over 500 folks to retire, but it won't be anywhere close enough to guarantee security for the rest of us.

There have been concerns since day one of these talks: how many from each craft will be cut? From which crew bases? Will a crew base be shut down? Will "flexible dining" become permanent? Someone even started passing rumors around about replacing *Cascades* cafe service with vending machines (don't worry folks, this isn't happening).

For those that may make the cuts, will we be working on call (with limited hours), or will we be lucky enough to have a set schedule? Amtrak has many employees who commute a long distance, and technically when you are working on call you are supposed to be within 2 hours of your crew base. I've known people to commute from Vermont to Chicago, New Orleans to NYC or Chicago, Portland to Los Angeles, and Las Vegas and even Vancouver, BC to Seattle. What do any of those folks do if they can't continue to have a set schedule? Do they quit, and give up a job they love? Or do they try to stick things out, and hope for the best?

Compounding the fears is the uncertainty of what Congress will do with the appropriations bill that's in the works. If the bill is passed in its current form, it would essentially require Amtrak to resume the service frequencies that were active in FY19, or else the additional emergency funding can not be used.

I urge you folks: continue to contact your representatives and tell them to continue supporting Amtrak! You would not only help support my fellow co-workers and myself, but you would ensure that the Amtrak stays in one piece and is there for all travelers who need it.

Please Join or Renew Your Membership!

The continuing work of *AORTA* and *AAWA* continuing work is made possible only through your dues and generous donations. Remember, *AAWA* and *AORTA* are certified 501(c)(3) non-profit consumer organizations under IRS provisions. Dues and donations to *AORTA* and *AAWA* may be tax-deductible as charitable contributions for income tax purposes.

Please join or renew today and help us make our goals a reality. Thank you for your continued support!

All Aboard Washington	Association of Oregon Rail and Transit Advocates
<p><i>AAWA</i> is a nonprofit organization that promotes a safe and robust passenger rail system in Washington State.</p> <p>Join, renew or donate online at https://www.aawa.us/support/</p> <p>You may also send a check, with the form below, to:</p> <p><i>All Aboard Washington</i> <i>PO Box 70381</i> <i>Seattle, WA 98127-0381</i></p>	<p><i>AORTA</i> encourages the development of a balanced and integrated system of transportation for people and freight within and beyond the State of Oregon.</p> <p>Join, renew or donate online at https://www.aortarail.org/get-involved/</p> <p>You may also send a check, with the form below, to:</p> <p><i>Association of Oregon Rail and Transit Advocates</i> <i>P.O. Box 2772</i> <i>Portland, OR 97208-2772</i></p>
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Northwest Events Calendar

We are following the guidelines of state and local authorities, so each of these events is subject to change. Please see the AORTA website at <https://www.aortarail.org/event/> and the AAWA website at <https://www.aawa.us/events/> for the most up-to-date information.

Saturday, August 8
AAWA Board Meeting
Virtual meeting

Saturday, August 15
AAWA Picnic
CANCELLED

Saturday, August 22
AORTA Board of Directors Meeting
Meeting will be online. Details forthcoming.

Thursday, August 27
Train Trek to Spokane

Thursday, September 17
Montana Passenger Rail Summit
Details at <https://montanapassengerrailsummit.org/>

Saturday, September 19
Train Trek to Ellensburg

Saturday, September 26
AORTA Board of Directors Meeting
Meeting will be online or in person. Details forthcoming.

Saturday, October 17
Train Trek to the Tri-Cities

Saturday, October 24
AORTA 2020 Annual Membership Meeting
Meeting will be online or in person. Details forthcoming.

Saturday, November 21
Train Trek to Cle Elum

Saturday, December 5
Train Trek to Auburn

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