Navigating Washington’s Transportation Future

Washington State Transportation Commission

MIKE GRIBNER, REGIONAL ADMINISTRATOR, EASTERN REGION
September 16, 2020
We’re still working hard for you to move freight and people safely and efficiently.
Labor Day Storm 2020

- 570 = 15% of Eastern Region Lane miles closed due to dust, fires, and smoke
  - Fire closures: US 2, SR 23, SR 21
  - Dust/smoke closures: SR 26, 21, 28, 261, US 395
  - 12 different closures between Spokane, Whitman, Adams, and Lincoln counties
  - Zero visibility, several collisions

- Powerful teamwork between TMC, maintenance, communications and emergency operations
  - Local farmers used chemical trucks as makeshift water tanks
  - Crews stretched so thin that some roads could not be closed until more help arrived.
  - North Central crews came to help at US 395 and SR 26 so Eastern Region could manage closures on SR 261 and SR 21.
SR 26 – Dusty to Colfax - Add Climbing Lanes

- Recognized as farm to market corridor.
- Used by WSU students, family, faculty.
- Addition of truck climbing lanes will address vehicle platooning behind trucks, reduce congestion, improve safety.
- Construction scheduled Spring 2021 but COVID-19 impacts have delayed ROW acquisition and plan approval.
- US 195 – 6 passing lanes added in 2018 through CW funding package.
SR 26 and US 195

**Challenge:** History of fatalities and serious injury collisions in Whitman County.

**Action:** Palouse Driver Safety Campaign established in 2016; evolved into partnership with many state and local agencies.

**Outcome:** Public awareness campaign and safety improvements may have contributed to the downward trend in collisions.
2013-2018 - **40.14% (766)** of crashes were ages 14-25 years old
- Of those, **6 fatality crashes (.78%)** and **10 (.13%) suspected serious injury crashes**

2019-2020 - **32.8% (160*)** of crashes were ages 14-25 years old
- Of those, **1 fatality crash (.062%)** and **7 (4%) suspected serious injury crashes**

Falling asleep, exceeding safe speed, inattention, alcohol and drugs contributed to **42.65% (804)** of crashes from 2013 – 2018, and
**41.51% (203)** of crashes from 2019 – 2020*

WSDOT Data through 9/4/2020
Help highway safety messages reach WSU Students, Staff, Families.

From practical to provocative messages: increased creativity to draw interest without distracting.

Safety improvements.

Outcome

- Greater awareness among students and parents.
- May have contributed to the downward trend in collisions.

We started with practical ...

...then got more creative
SR 276 North Bypass

- WSDOT secured SR 276 ROW for a north bypass to relieve congestion and improve safety.
- Made property available to Pullman Moscow Regional Airport.
- City of Pullman is currently reviewing proposed roadway alignment.
Snake River EIS

Participated in Government-led EIS to update operations, maintenance, configuration of 14 CRS multiple purpose dams and related facilities

- 3 years+ successful collaboration among WSDOT and other co-lead agencies, 30+ Tribes, state, federal, and county agencies.
- RTPO freight movement is evolving: 90% goes through river navigation; opportunity to update freight studies in Palouse.
- Preferred alternative
  - includes innovative dam operations
  - balances fish benefits
  - honors tribal rights
  - meets clean energy and climate goals
  - ensures affordable transportation for wheat farmers in the Palouse and Tri-Cities areas, and reliable irrigation supplies for Eastern Washington farmers.
• With limited budget, 2015 repairs ensured traveler safety on the bridge.
• Significant effort of public outreach during alternatives phase.
• Many options considered.
• Preferred option: replace SR 26 bridge; remove US 195 infrastructure.
• Project estimated at $12.4 million unprogrammed in 2020 Plan update, not included in 10 year plan.
CRISIS: A time of intense difficulty when important, challenging decisions must be made.
Revenue Shortfall

Insufficient funding continues to impact our ability to operate and maintain our transportation network

• The total revenue loss to address over the next three years is at least $1.3 billion, of which we will need to address a $482 million deficit this biennium.
• Longer term, when you combine the impact of the pandemic and I-976, forecasted revenue is down between $4 billion and $8 billion over the next 10 years.

While WSDOT is taking steps to cut spending, it will not be enough to make up for the anticipated revenue shortfall.
Preservation is needed now to achieve State of Good Repair

• 4,000 lane miles of pavement due for preservation, another 3,600 past due, 1600 poor rating; repaving 750 lane miles/year.

• 15 bridges need replacement, 19 need major rehabilitation; 2 being replaced.

• 60 steel bridges due for painting, 39 past due; 4 being painted.

• 56 concrete bridge decks past due for repair, 30 more are due; 8 being repaired.

• 17 of the 22 ferry Vessels have a preservation backlog – average vessel is 28 years old.

• > 20% of Palouse River and Coulee City (PCC) railway is in poor condition; only capable of 10 MPH operations; of 75 miles in poor condition, 20.8 being replaced.

• 110, or 39%, of WSDOT facilities > 50 years old.
Unfunded bridge needs

Legend

- **Unfunded Bridge Needs**

**Freight and Goods Transportation System - Truck corridors**

- T-3 and Below
- T-1 corridors
- T-2 corridors
Unfunded pavers

Legend

- Unfunded Pavers

Freight and Goods Transportation System - Truck corridors

- T-3 and Below
- T-1 corridors
- T-2 corridors
In the midst of every crisis, lies great opportunity.

— Albert Einstein —
Getting the word out

The public needs to understand:

• Revenue shortfall impacts the transportation system which impacts our economic health and quality of life.

• It’s not new: preservation and maintenance underfunded for over 20 years.

• Without additional revenue, there will be cuts to maintenance, preservation, and capital projects across the state.
Spokane gets a wake-up call on U.S. 195

"We're looking at a crisis": Crumbling becoming more of a concern in Eastern Washington

Getting There: As WSDOT warns of ‘crisis,’ hard decisions lie ahead about new construction, preservation

Infrastructure: Unsafe roads, bridges, railways across the US, conditions by state
• Our history of partnership and problem-solving enables hard decision-making at difficult times.

• We need to collaborate on what projects to build and challenges to tackle.

• We will move forward on building alignment around the budget, investing in projects with high positive outcomes to the system.
WE’RE UP TO THE Challenge
Thank you!

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Palouse River and Coulee City Railway System

Washington State Transportation Commission

Bob Westby, PCC Railway Manager
September 16, 2020
# PCC System

## The Six Segments of the PCC Line

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Segment</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Length (Miles)</th>
<th>Operators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Cheney to Coulee City (CW)</td>
<td>107.8</td>
<td>EWGRR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Marshall to Idaho State Line (P&amp;L)</td>
<td>83.1</td>
<td>WIR</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Palouse to Idaho State Line (WIM)</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>WIR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Hooper Jct to Colfax (Hooper)</td>
<td>51.6</td>
<td>PCC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Winona to Thornton (PV)</td>
<td>31.7</td>
<td>PCC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Colfax to Pullman (Hooper Sub)</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>WIR</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total**: 296.9
PCC system administration

Rail Authority
- Oversees business and economic development portions of the operating leases
- Four members operate as an intergovernmental entity formed by Grant, Lincoln, Spokane County and the Port of Whitman through an inter-local agreement

Operators
- Maintain infrastructure through an Operating Lease Agreement
- Do not pay for the rights to operate on the system

WSDOT
- Manages infrastructure, property and regulatory portions of operating leases
- Determines projects and develops PS&Es
- Manages leases with operators
- Sale of nonessential property
- Constituent response
- Regulatory compliance
- Works with operators and shippers as they develop new facilities or business opportunities
PCC strategic plan

- Advance priority projects to increase 286,000-pound railcar capability
- Rehabilitate track in the curves
- Identify and replace defective rail through rail testing
- Inventory, load rate, and prioritize bridges
- Address ongoing maintenance and preservation needs
  - Initiate an annual tie replacement program
  - Improve at-grade crossings
- Repurpose rail materials from other sources
- Replace substandard rail
PCC Funding

Connecting Washington

- Includes $47 million for PCC improvements
- Funding designated through the 2029-31 biennium
  - 2015-17 - $345,000
  - 2017-19 - $6.7 million
  - 2019-21 - $6.7 million
  - 2021-23 - $6.7 million
  - 2023-25 - $6.7 million
  - 2025-27 - $6.7 million
  - 2027-29 - $6.7 million
  - 2029-31 - $6.5 million
- Currently leveraging Connecting Washington funds as state match for federal funding
Federal BUILD Grant

$11.3 million total
- $5.6 million federal funds
- $5.3 million state funds
- $.35 million private funds

Track rehabilitation
- LaCrosse to Endicott – 8 miles
- Marshall to McCoy – 5 miles
- Geiger Spur to Davenport – 16 miles

Bridges
- Replace 8 and rehabilitate 2 between Marshall and McCoy

Work now underway, projected completion in late 2020
Private sector investments

- Private sector investment along the PCC totals nearly $70 million since state acquisition
- Most recently, Northwest Grain Growers invested $7 million to expand the Endicott grain terminal
- Allows grain to be moved to market using Union Pacific unit trains
- Now all three branches of PCC have unit train service, providing the most economical rail shipping rates to eastern Washington farmers
Questions?

For more information, please contact:

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