

Washington State's Global Gateway Freight System

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Washington State's freight systems.

I. **Global Gateways for import and export**

Connecting Asian trade flows to western and mid-western states, Alaska to the Lower 48, and Canada to the U.S. West Coast. NW ports also provide a strategic platform for national defense, and export of agriculture and natural resource products.

II. **Made in Washington**

Manufacturers and farmers rely on the freight system to ship Washington State-produced products to international, national, and regional customers.

III. **Delivering Goods To You**

Consumers depend on the freight system for nearly everything they buy and use.

To learn more please see the Washington Transportation Plan freight report at:
www.wsdot.wa.gov/freight/images/WTP_FreightUpdate.pdf

Washington State's water and land global gateways are essential to the nation's economy.

About 6% of all U.S. exports and about 4.5% of all U.S. imports move through Washington's water and land gateways.

About 70 percent of containers entering Washington gateways are delivered to other U.S. markets, mostly via rail.



Freight by volume.

Washington State's global gateways are essential to the nation's security.

1. Fort Lewis is a key location for gathering, staging and mobilizing forces and material.

During a major regional conflict, cargo from all over the U. S. will move by road and rail to Fort Lewis.

Port of Tacoma is the strategic port supporting Fort Lewis.

2. Port Hadlock Naval Ordnance Center (one of 9 national centers).

Port of Seattle is a sustainment port to ship supplies to troops.

3. Other military installations relying on Washington's gateways and transportation infrastructure:

Naval Bases Bremerton and Everett

McChord Air Force Base

Naval Air Station Whidbey

Naval Submarine Base Bangor

Current and forecasted increases in domestic and international freight volumes challenge Washington's global gateway infrastructure...

Freight Rail

BNSF Railway Company and UP Railroad are reaching capacity limits in Washington State and across the U.S. Smaller shippers are having difficulty in adapting to the new business model of railroads.

Highways

Deficiencies on major interstate and state truck corridors are impacting regional and national deliveries.

Waterways

Delayed maintenance of the Columbia and Snake Rivers waterway (dredging, lock repair/retrofit, jetty repairs and channel deepening) threatens US agriculture exports from many states.



The Washington State Produce Rail Car Program helps smaller agribusiness shippers and is funded in part by U.S. Senator Patty Murray.

...and also challenge Washington's global gateway communities.

Longer freight trains, and more of them, are blocking traffic and affecting passenger and commuter rail schedules.

More trains and trucks impact air quality.

More trucks on highways increase congestion especially in urban centers.

State and local public agencies don't have adequate funds to mitigate impacts of national freight system.



At-grade rail crossing blocks traffic in Spokane

Changes in the national freight rail system have a ripple effect.

Roads will need upgrades to handle new traffic patterns.

Many low-volume shippers are going to have to truck their products to central intermodal centers. Timber, grain and industrial products are heavy and will affect road maintenance and congestion.

Growing interest in shortline railroads can be problematic.

Shortline railroads are viewed by some shippers and communities as critical to economic survival. While shorelines are often viable, in many instances they need extensive and costly capital improvements, and will require ongoing capital and operational subsidies for the survival.

Implications for Commission's consideration.

Importance of freight transportation to the nation's economy must be reflected in federal transportation policy and funding.

Policies and funding should ensure and expand the competitiveness of global gateways and key freight corridors, and address the impacts on communities.

Incentives, research and funding are needed to advance technological and operational changes to improve the intermodal network.



Double-stacked container unit train
headed to Stevens Pass