

Appendix 5

Oregon Rail Freight Plan, Freight Policies and Actions

Policy 1: Increase economic opportunities for the State by having a viable and competitive rail system.

Actions

1. Stabilize and improve Oregon's access to the national rail system by maintaining a competitive environment for rail customers, assuring a level playing field for each mode, and assisting in removing capacity constraints.
2. Promote intermodal centers where freight may be interchanged between rail and other modes by identifying suitable locations with adequate potential volume and, if necessary, funding rail improvements and providing adequate highway access.
3. Identify opportunities for improved rail service to Oregon's deep water ports which will promote foreign trade by funding support facilities to reduce congestion and increase efficiency.

Policy 2: Strengthen the retention of local rail service where feasible.

Actions

1. Where necessary, seek alternative ownership and/or operation of rail facilities in order to preserve service.
2. Encourage increased use of rail service by promoting rail service opportunities, providing a wide range of intermodal facilities, and assisting localities and rail users to understand railroad economics, revenue needs of individual lines, and land use requirements.
3. Utilize federal or state funds for rail service continuation assistance as appropriate. Preference should be given to those lines which upon analysis have a positive benefit over cost ratio and will not require public assistance for on-going operations.

Policy 3: Protect abandoned rail rights-of-way for alternative or future use.

Actions

1. Ensure that political jurisdictions and private groups are familiar with how to preserve and convert abandoned rail rights-of-way for Public Use and Interim Trail Use, as allowed under federal law.
2. Use federal, state and local funds to preserve rail rights-of-way for future transportation purposes.

Policy 4: Integrate rail freight considerations into the State's land use planning process.

Actions

1. Recognize the social, economic and environmental importance of rail freight service.
2. Encourage land use zoning and ordinances that enhance and protect existing rail freight service.
3. Work with communities to minimize conflicts between railroad operations and other urban activities.
4. Assist in removing constraints to improved railroad operating efficiency within urbanized areas. Work with communities to consolidate or close existing grade crossings and prevent the establishment of unjustified new grade crossings.
5. Encourage local jurisdictions to identify alternative uses for low density branch line rights-of-way.

Source: ODOT, *Oregon Rail Freight Plan*, 1994.