

Summary

The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) co-funds the Amtrak Cascades intercity passenger rail service with the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT). Ridership for the first quarter of 2025 was strong until a major service interruption caused a loss in ridership at the end of March.

ODOT continues efforts toward improving the service performance of the Cascades route. ODOT continues corridor modeling with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and Union Pacific Railroad (UP) to identify infrastructure projects that will improve on-time performance (OTP) of the Amtrak Cascades service.

Key Q1 Ridership and OTP Drivers

- The ridership increase for the first quarter of 2025 is representative of the Oregon portion of the Cascades route for the past 13 months.
- A major service interruption caused by the grounding of the majority of Amtrak equipment in the Amtrak Cascades service in March 2025 impeded the continued growth of ridership. Ridership was expected to set records based on the average daily ridership at the time of the interruption.
- On-time performance challenges included delays caused by freight and passenger train meets and reduced speed orders on the host railroad. Trespassers on the tracks and police activity continue to be a problem resulting in delays. Disabled freight trains create lengthy delays due to their size and the time needed to clear them from the tracks.

Status

Ridership for January-March 2025

- Year-over-year analysis shows the first quarter of 2025 saw slightly higher ridership than the first quarter of 2024 by 5 percent. Ridership for the first quarter of 2025 was slightly lower than the previous fourth quarter of 2024 by 6 percent. Given that it was only a slight decrease, the data suggests that Cascades ridership remained strong until the route experienced service disruption on March 26.

Amtrak Horizon Trainset Grounding

On March 26, Amtrak indefinitely suspended all Horizon coach cars nationally in coordination with the FRA for safety reasons. The cars were grounded upon their final stops as of March 26. The suspension caused serious service disruptions for the Amtrak Cascades as the majority of the fleet were Horizon cars.

One round trip remained in service utilizing the ODOT-owned Mt. Jefferson Talgo trainset. The second ODOT-owned train set, the Mt. Bachelor, is out-of-service due to an accident in November when the train struck a fallen tree. It is expected to be back in service in mid to late April.

Amtrak was able to secure other Amtrak equipment quickly, with full service resuming on April 7.

The grounding of the Horizon equipment took place during peak ridership through spring break, a historically high ridership period, resulting in a drop in March ridership.

The replacement equipment has fewer seats per car compared to Horizon equipment, resulting in less passenger-carrying capacity for most Amtrak Cascades trains. Decreased seating capacity is expected to continue until Amtrak can furnish additional equipment, or until the Airo equipment enters service in 2026.

On-Time Performance for January-March 2025

- OTP for northbound passengers traveling from Eugene to Portland averaged 76 percent and southbound passengers from Portland to Eugene averaged 65 percent.
- Compared to the first quarter of 2024, OTP increased favorably from 59 percent of on-time arrivals to 69 percent of on-time arrivals. A decrease in host railroad delays and a mild winter caused less weather-related delays to increase passenger on-time performance by 10 percent year over year.
- The longest delays this quarter were caused by freight and passenger train interference and slow order delays (speed reduction) due to weather.
- Delays this quarter were caused by:
 - 75 percent - Host railroad
 - 14 percent – Amtrak
 - 11 percent - Unassignable (i.e., trespasser strikes, weather-related delays, and drawbridge operation)

Current Progress and Next Quarter Look Ahead

Union Pacific Outsourcing Yard and Local Freight Service in Eugene/Springfield

In early April the federal Surface Transportation Board approved Central Oregon & Pacific Railroad's (CORP) lease and operation of UP's Eugene Yard and provision of freight rail service to industries served along 27.5 miles of UP trackage from Junction City to east Springfield. The changeover from UP to CORP service was scheduled to begin the week of April 13th. UP will continue to provide long-haul transportation while CORP will provide local pickup and delivery for area rail users and perform switching and train makeup at Eugene Yard. Other railroads dependent upon Eugene Yard include Coos Bay Rail Line, Portland & Western, and Amtrak.

Oregon Cascades Service Development Plan (SDP) Implementation

Oregon Cascades corridor modeling with UP and the FRA is projected for completion in summer 2025, laying out the scope and structure to improve and expand intercity passenger rail service between Eugene and Portland over the next 20 years. The modeling will produce a list of capital infrastructure projects to improve the line for both passenger and freight transportation, including capacity additions necessary to host more passenger train frequencies. Oregon is responsible for leveraging federal grants for infrastructure additions and upgrades to implement the SDP. This list will be incorporated into the Oregon State Rail Plan (OSRP) update and become the plan for improving passenger rail in Oregon. The Cascades Corridor's 2023 entry into the FRA's Corridor Identification and Development (CID) Program, through joint participation by ODOT and WSDOT, will facilitate securing grants.

2025 Oregon State Rail Plan

ODOT continues its focused analysis and plan refinement of the OSRP. ODOT is hosting the first of three online, public questionnaires. The first questionnaire was posted March 27, 2025. A total of 1,055

responses have been received as of April 1, 2025. The questionnaire is open until May 31, 2025, and hosted on ODOT's site: <https://metroquestsurvey.com/ig8j8x>.

Staff will summarize responses and post the results later in April. Two more rounds of interested party outreach will occur for this survey.

Subcontractor RailState and contractor David Evans & Associates deployed 16 electronic sensors along Class I railway corridors at key locations within Oregon, as well as one location in Northern California. The sensors collect and report data in real time, enabling ODOT to better understand freight rail volumes, equipment usage and operating characteristics such as train length.

Draft OSRP findings and reports will be shared in a public open house and online meetings later in September 2025. The draft plan is expected to be released for public review in fall 2025, followed by approval of the final plan by the Oregon Transportation Commission in winter of 2025-26.

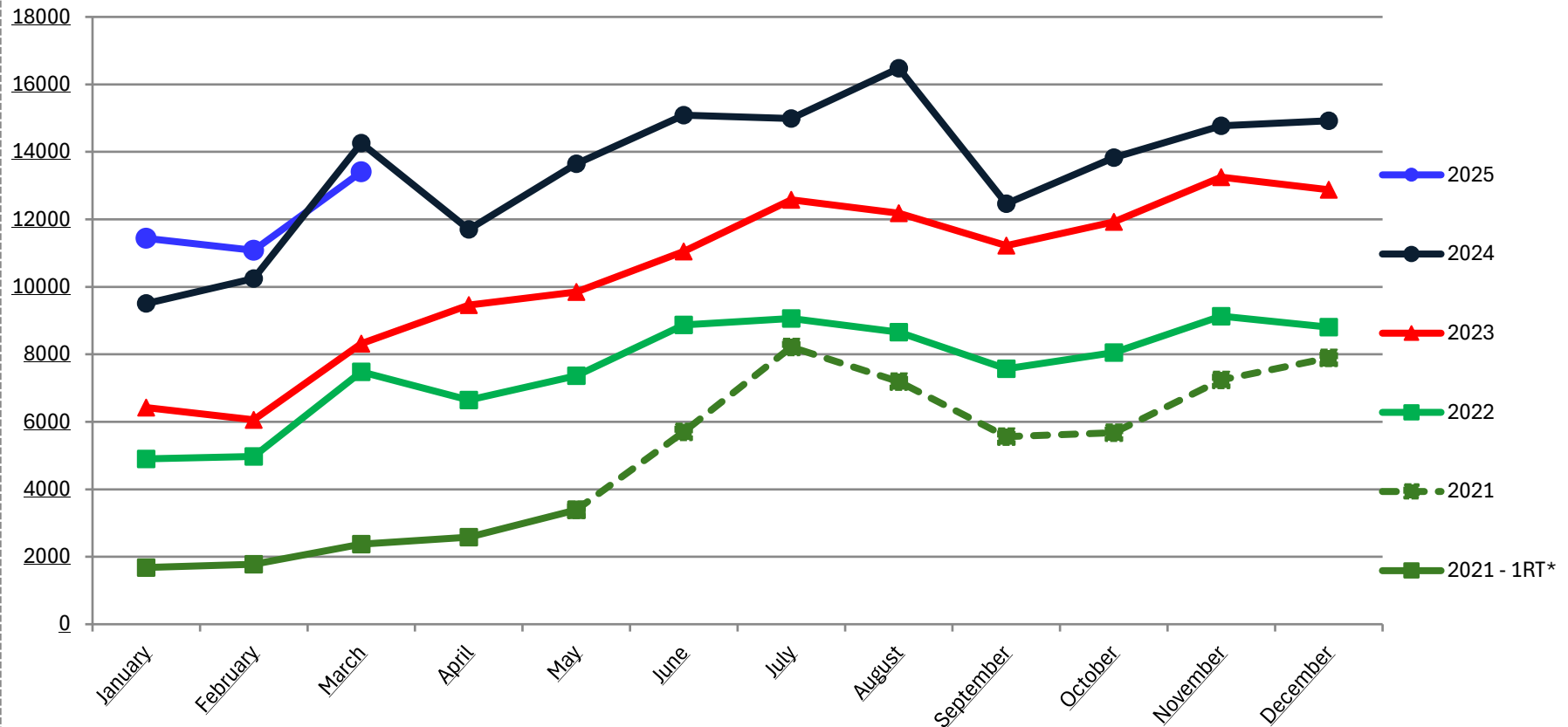
Cascadia High-speed Rail Project

The FRA awarded WSDOT \$49.7 million to proceed with development of an SDP for the Cascadia High-speed Rail Project, which is Step 2 of the CID Program, in late December 2024. As part of that process WSDOT submitted a scope of work for the project activities to be completed during this next phase. ODOT and the British Columbia Transportation Ministry continue to meet with WSDOT as members of the Project Leadership Team regularly to advance SDP work.

Some of the activities that WSDOT identified for the project in 2025 include:

- An Executive Team meeting on April 29 to discuss refreshing of the vision for the corridor. This work will include coordination with the Amtrak Cascades service and the WSDOT I-5 Master Plan project.
- Planning for outreach and engagement are initial tasks in development of the SDP. Specific outreach and engagement plans will be developed for agencies, communities and railroad providers. ODOT is coordinating with Metro in the SDP work.

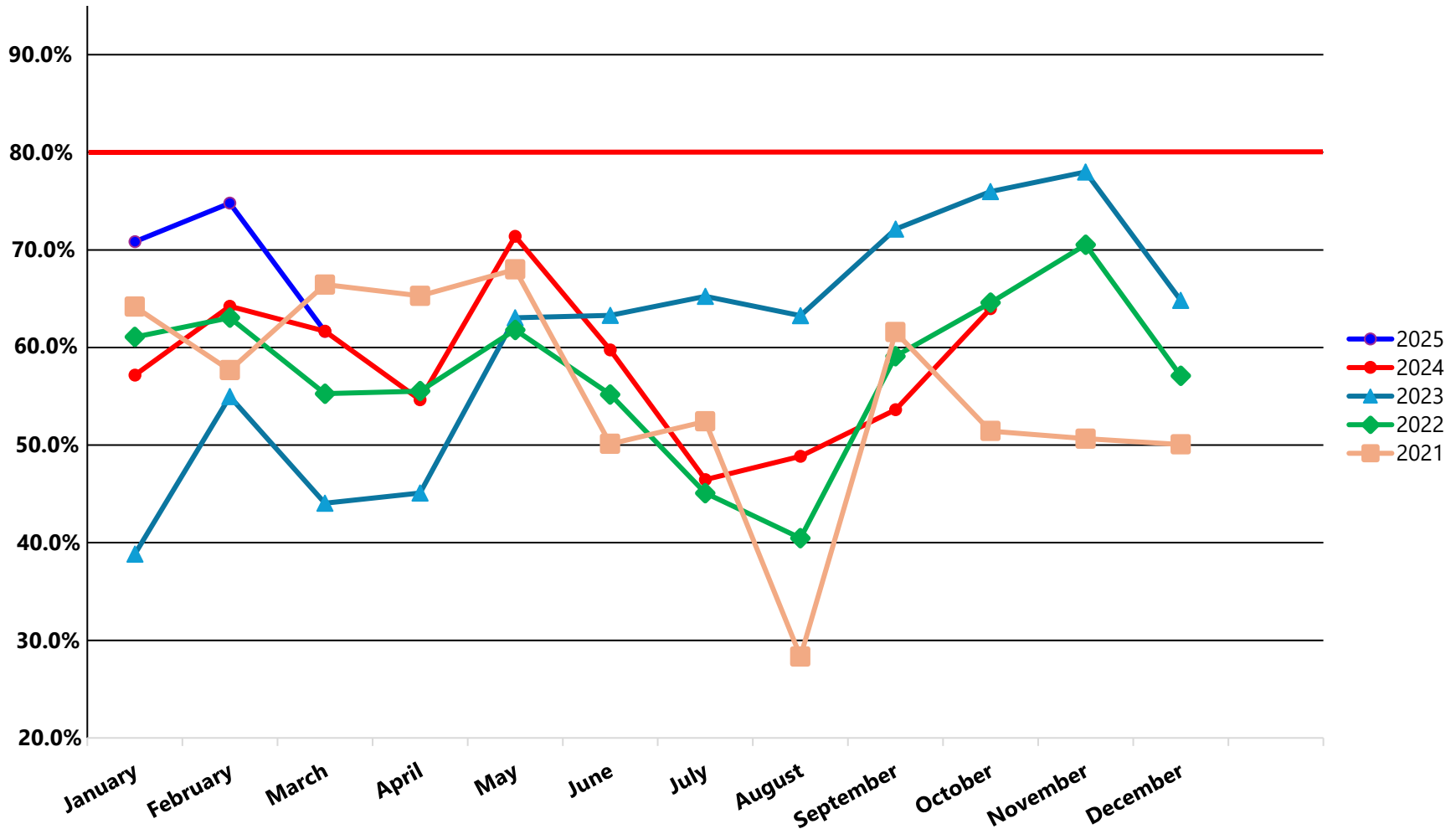
Amtrak Cascades Ridership in the Eugene – Portland Corridor Trains Operated Under Contract for the Oregon Department of Transportation



The COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting decreases in demand led to the decision to reduce service to one round trip per day between Seattle and Eugene. Service was resumed to two daily round trips on May 24, 2021. The dotted lines above depict the timeframe when the service was reduced to one roundtrip daily.

*RT = Roundtrip PDX-EUG

Amtrak Cascades Customer On-Time Performance Eugene-Portland Corridor Trains Operated Under Contract for the Oregon Department of Transportation



The data presented is based on the new federal standards for OTP. This new standard measures the timeliness of each individual passenger rather than the train and represents the percentage of customers who reached their stations in Oregon no later than 15 minutes after their published scheduled arrival time.