

Q1 2023 Report to Legislature

Summary

The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) co-funds the Amtrak Cascades intercity passenger rail service with the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT). Figures for the first quarter of 2023 show decreased ridership when compared to the fourth quarter of 2022, which is consistent with pre-pandemic trends. Another key driver of reduced ridership during the first quarter of 2023, included 94 annulled trains. In the first quarter of 2023 ridership was up 16 percent compared to the first quarter in 2022.

Key drivers of ridership numbers and on-time performance (OTP) during the first quarter included:

- Union Pacific track work resulted in decreased ridership and OTP due to the substitution of 92 buses for trains (about 25 percent of trains each month) and an increase in slow orders.
- Colder than normal weather in February caused the cancellation of two trains.
- The second round-trip of the Amtrak Cascades service to Vancouver, B.C. started on March 6, 2023.

The Ridership Reports from Amtrak are missing ridership data for the substitute buses in January, February, and March. ODOT has been working with Amtrak to identify the missing ridership. At this time ODOT has received the ridership for February and will have the January and March ridership updated by the second quarter report. ODOT is also working with Amtrak to identify why this happened and how to ensure accurate reporting going forward.

Under the new federal rules, OTP is based on the total number of passengers that arrive at their detraining point no later than 15 minutes after the scheduled arrival time, divided by the total number of passengers on that train.

OTP dropped this quarter to 56 percent northbound and 41 percent southbound, compared to the fourth quarter of 2022, which was 75 percent northbound and 59 percent southbound. Host railroad actions and late arrival of the southbound trains from Washington continue to be the primary cause of late arrivals south of Portland.

Status

Ridership for January to March 2023

- January, February, and March ridership in 2023 was down 20 percent compared to the fourth quarter of 2022.
- The pre-pandemic baseline for comparison purposes is 2019. Ridership for the first quarter of 2023 is 3 percent below the 2019 ridership first quarter ridership.
- Ridership in the first quarter of 2023 continues the trend of ridership recovery since 2019.
- Ridership decreased 32 percent between a heavily traveled December 2022 to January, increased from January 2023 to February 2023 by 12 percent, and then jumped from February 2023 to March 2023 by 13 percent, despite several annulled trains and substitute buses.

On-Time Performance for January to March 2023

- OTP for northbound trains averaged 56 percent and southbound trains averaged 41 percent.
- OTP for the southbound trains remains low as a result of late arrivals to Portland from Washington
- Delays this quarter were caused by:
 - 82 percent - Host railroad
 - 17 percent - Amtrak
 - 1 percent- Unassignable (i.e., trespasser strikes, weather-related delays, and drawbridge operation)

- The longest delays this quarter were caused by:
 - freight and passenger train interference; and
 - slow order delays (speed reduction).

Current Progress and Next Quarter Look Ahead

Oregon State Rail Plan - Implementation Plan

The 2020 Oregon State Rail Plan – Implementation Plan (OSRP-IP) was unanimously endorsed by the Rail Advisory Committee at their March 2023 meeting. The OSRP-IP includes strategies and actions that help Oregon to achieve the goals and policies laid out in the Oregon State Rail Plan. It includes an online Rail Needs Inventory (RNI), which is a comprehensive list of rail projects needed in the state as well as a list of potential funding options. The OSRP-IP will eventually have its own webpage and a notification will be sent when that work is complete. The documents are currently available on the [RAC website](#) under the meeting materials for the March meeting.

The [OSRP-IP](#) consists of the Implementation Plan and five appendices an interactive RNI Map:

- [Appendix A - Rail Needs Inventory](#)
- [Appendix B - Funding](#)
- [Appendix C - Factors and Evaluation Criteria](#)
- [Appendix D - Outreach](#)
- [Appendix E - Rail Needs Inventory Scoring Exercise](#)
- [Interactive Rail Needs Inventory Map](#)

2024 Oregon State Rail Plan

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) requires an update to all state rail plans every four years. The Oregon State Rail Plan was last revised in 2020; therefore, ODOT is beginning the process for an update in 2024.

New Reduced Fares for Travel between Portland and Eugene

Reduced fares began on January 4, 2023, to increase awareness of the service and ridership. Tickets from Portland to Eugene are as low as \$17. The annulments related to the Union Pacific track work made it difficult to analyze how the new pricing has impacted ridership. ODOT will monitor how the new pricing will affect ridership.

Update on Resumption of Service in Washington and B.C.

The second round-trip of the Amtrak Cascades service to Vancouver, B.C. started on March 6, 2023. The states and Amtrak plan to begin the fifth and sixth frequencies of the Amtrak Cascades service between Seattle and Portland in the fall of 2023. This additional service is expected to increase ridership as Oregonians traveling to Seattle and on to points further north will have additional travel options.

Federal Railroad Administration Long-Distance Study

The FRA launched its Amtrak Daily Long-Distance Service Study to evaluate the restoration of daily intercity passenger rail service and the potential for new Amtrak long-distance routes. The study is expected to result in FRA issuing a report to Congress of prioritized long-distance routes and associated costs and funding opportunities. Amtrak expects to complete this work in early 2024. ODOT, along with other western states, is participating in a series of meetings with the FRA on this topic, including examining the restoration of the Pioneer route. More information is available on the [FRA Amtrak Daily Long-Distance Service Study](#) website.

FRA Corridor Identification (CID) Program

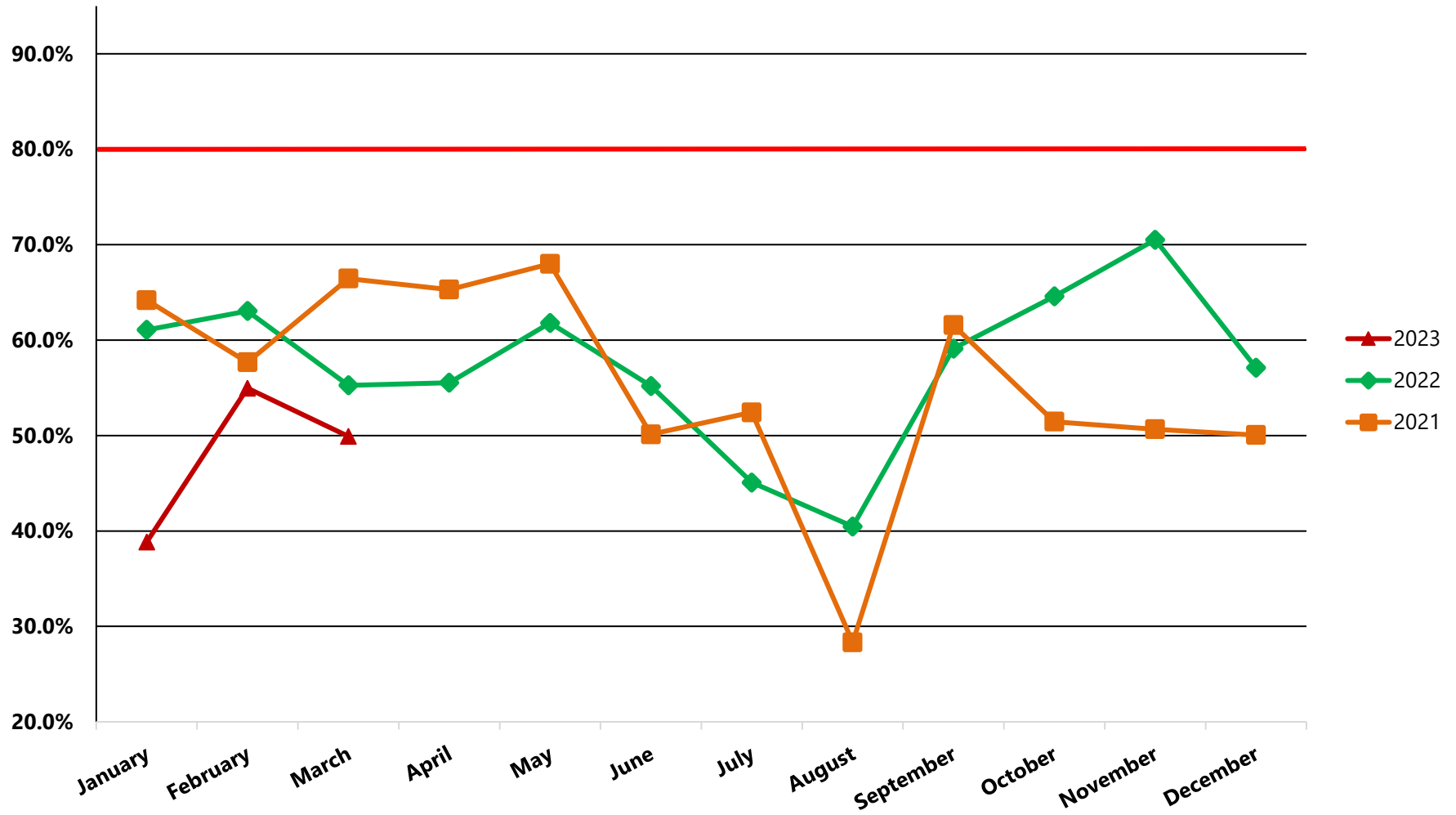
The [Corridor Identification and Development \(Corridor ID\) Program](#) is a comprehensive intercity passenger rail planning and development program that will help guide intercity passenger rail development throughout the country and create a pipeline of intercity passenger rail projects ready for implementation.

ODOT and WSDOT jointly submitted an Expression of Interest in the CID in August 2022 and submitted an application to the CID for the Amtrak Cascades service in March with WSDOT as the lead applicant and ODOT the co-applicant.

Ultra High-Speed Ground Transportation

WSDOT is the lead for the UHSGT project, with ODOT participating on the Policy Advisory Committee and the Technical Advisory Committee. ODOT is providing in-kind contribution for the Federal-State Partnership and Corridor ID Program grant applications.

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.

Amtrak Cascades

Customer On-Time Performance in the Eugene-Portland Corridor

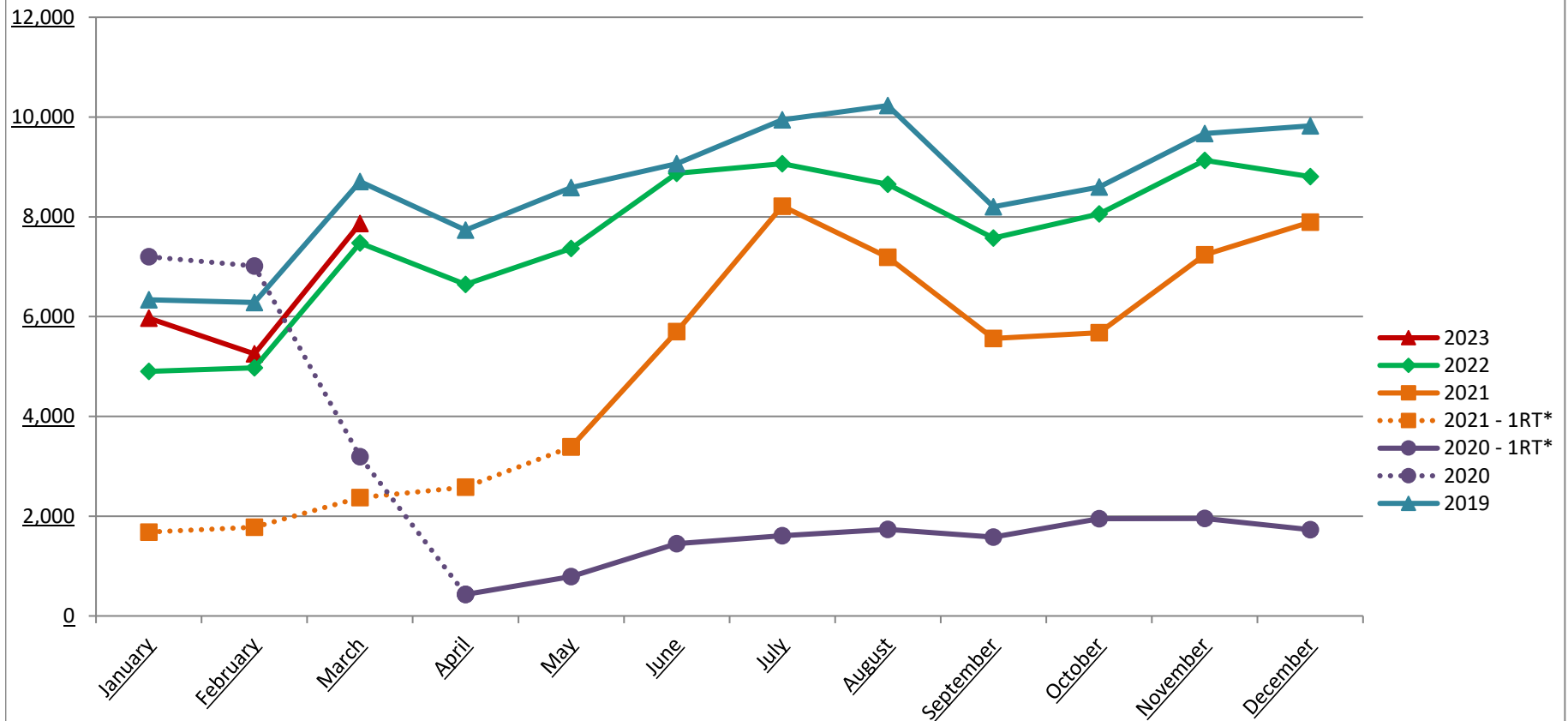
TRAINS OPERATED UNDER CONTRACT FOR THE OREGON DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

TRAIN		JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	YEAR
500	2	51.3%	52.4%	44.1%										
508		75.6%	74.7%	56.4%										
Northbound Trains	0	61.2%	62.0%	49.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	56.1%
503	2	59.8%	47.6%	47.0%										
505		-58.8%	61.3%	30.0%										
Southbound Trains	3	29.9%	52.0%	41.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	41.4%
All		38.8%	55.0%	44.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	45.9%

TRAIN		JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	YEAR
500	2	73.6%	85.3%	88.7%	95.5%	78.6%	74.8%	65.5%	80.4%	86.4%	63.5%	75.2%	72.9%	77.6%
508		68.0%	38.1%	55.4%	38.8%	56.4%	61.8%	48.0%	42.5%	49.6%	81.4%	79.5%	69.3%	58.3%
Northbound Trains	0	69.7%	53.5%	65.4%	54.9%	63.8%	66.1%	53.6%	54.7%	62.5%	75.8%	77.9%	70.6%	64.6%
503	2	50.6%	69.2%	44.5%	59.8%	56.1%	53.2%	49.2%	32.5%	68.2%	58.9%	79.7%	56.5%	55.9%
505		64.3%	66.6%	57.0%	51.5%	66.3%	46.9%	31.7%	37.1%	45.8%	59.7%	55.7%	45.5%	51.4%
Southbound Trains	2	57.3%	67.9%	50.5%	55.8%	60.9%	50.7%	41.6%	34.6%	57.7%	59.3%	67.1%	50.7%	53.8%
All		61.1%	63.0%	55.3%	55.5%	61.8%	55.2%	45.1%	40.5%	59.1%	64.6%	70.5%	57.1%	57.1%

TRAIN		JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	YEAR
500	2	77.1%	77.9%	71.5%	93.9%	91.2%	87.2%	90.2%	84.7%	91.9%	90.9%	72.4%	70.8%	83.6%
508						60.0%	41.0%	72.1%	28.4%	67.0%	62.7%	37.5%	54.0%	52.0%
Northbound Trains	0	77.1%	77.9%	71.5%	93.9%	83.3%	59.7%	77.9%	49.4%	76.3%	72.6%	48.1%	59.0%	65.6%
503	2					59.4%	39.4%	59.7%	12.1%	56.3%	41.4%	53.5%	45.0%	44.5%
505		60.8%	50.6%	64.7%	56.5%	63.3%	53.6%	24.3%	28.3%	53.0%	40.9%	50.2%	47.7%	47.3%
Southbound Trains	1	64.2%	57.7%	66.4%	65.3%	68.0%	50.1%	52.4%	28.3%	61.6%	51.4%	50.7%	50.1%	51.8%
All		64.2%	57.7%	66.4%	65.3%	68.0%	50.1%	52.4%	28.3%	61.6%	51.4%	50.7%	50.1%	51.8%

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**

The Ridership Reports from Amtrak are missing ridership data for the substitute buses in January, February, and March. ODOT has been working with Amtrak to identify the missing ridership. At this time ODOT has received the ridership for February and will have the January and March ridership updated by the second quarter report.

Amtrak Cascades Ridership in the Eugene-Portland Corridor

TRAINS OPERATED UNDER CONTRACT FOR THE OREGON DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

TRAIN		JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	YEAR	
500	2 0 2 3	1,469	1,526	2,253										5,248	
508		2,394	1,348	1,897										5,639	
Northbound Trains		3,863	2,874	4,150											10,887
503		1,177	1,720	2,253											5,150
505		927	2,210	1,462											4,599
Southbound Trains		2,104	3,930	3,715											9,749
All		5,967	6,804	7,865											20,636
TRAIN		JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	YEAR	
500	2 0 2 2	999	1,032	1,587	1,430	1,637	1,863	1,804	1,956	1,693	1,762	1,903	2,168	19,834	
508		1,246	1,392	2,023	1,712	1,835	2,283	2,399	2,281	1,885	2,098	2,361	2,243	23,758	
Northbound Trains		2,245	2,424	3,610	3,142	3,472	4,146	4,203	4,237	3,578	3,860	4,264	4,411	43,592	
503		1,354	1,304	1,980	1,803	2,063	2,790	2,744	2,455	2,114	2,036	2,297	2,205	25,145	
505		1,303	1,245	1,887	1,699	1,830	1,936	2,115	1,963	1,880	2,160	2,571	2,192	22,781	
Southbound Trains		2,657	2,549	3,867	3,502	3,893	4,726	4,859	4,418	3,994	4,196	4,868	4,397	47,926	
All		4,902	4,973	7,477	6,644	7,365	8,872	9,062	8,655	7,572	8,056	9,132	8,808	91,518	
TRAIN		JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	YEAR	
500	2 0 2 1	714	839	1,106	1,159	1,267	1,305	1,857	1,727	1,423	1,289	1,501	1,605	15,792	
508						287	1,250	1,948	1,602	1,337	1,399	1,967	2,179	11,969	
Northbound Trains		714	839	1,106	1,159	1,554	2,555	3,805	3,329	2,760	2,688	3,468	3,784	27,761	
503						304	1,682	2,261	1,929	1,423	1,485	1,911	2,349	13,344	
505		968	938	1,268	1,420	1,530	1,462	2,149	1,931	1,377	1,500	1,862	1,761	18,166	
Southbound Trains		968	938	1,268	1,420	1,834	3,144	4,410	3,860	2,800	2,985	3,773	4,110	31,510	
All		1,682	1,777	2,374	2,579	3,388	5,699	8,215	7,189	5,560	5,673	7,241	7,894	59,271	
TRAIN		JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	YEAR	
500	2 0 2 0	1,357	1,359	606	194	328	615	737	812	730	853	854	765	9,210	
506		832	871	297											2,000
508		1,557	1,597	760											3,914
Northbound Trains		3,746	3,827	1,663	194	328	615	737	812	730	853	854	765	15,124	
511 (M-F)		474	464	228											1,166
513 (S-S-H)		445	438	131											1,014
505		2,535	2,286	1,172	237	460	833	871	920	851	1,095	1,099	966	13,325	
Southbound Trains	3,454	3,188	1,531	237	460	833	871	920	851	1,095	1,099	966	15,505		
All	7,200	7,015	3,194	431	788	1,448	1,608	1,732	1,581	1,948	1,953	1,731	30,629		

Amtrak Cascades Ridership in the Eugene-Portland Corridor

TRAINS OPERATED UNDER CONTRACT FOR THE OREGON DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

TRAIN		JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	YEAR
500	2 0 1 9	1,528	1,307	1,749	1,682	1,779	1,812	1,986	2,156	1,656	1,817	1,418	1,780	20,670
506		441	645	978	731	840	1,070	974	1,089	929	823	1,571	1,231	11,322
508		1,329	1,435	1,981	1,814	2,015	1,930	2,153	2,182	1,718	2,099	2,261	2,233	23,150
Northbound Trains		3,298	3,387	4,708	4,227	4,634	4,812	5,113	5,427	4,303	4,739	5,250	5,244	55,142
511 (M-F)		395	392	561	558	568	675	789	760	572	744	586	730	7,330
513 (S-S-H)		260	334	545	352	397	536	486	513	435	367	802	696	5,723
505		2,383	2,170	2,892	2,598	2,987	3,043	3,559	3,530	2,893	2,750	3,033	3,152	34,990
Southbound Trains		3,038	2,896	3,998	3,508	3,952	4,254	4,834	4,803	3,900	3,861	4,421	4,578	48,043
All		6,336	6,283	8,706	7,735	8,586	9,066	9,947	10,230	8,203	8,600	9,671	9,822	103,185