

# News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Second Amtrak Cascades train between Seattle and Vancouver, B.C. to begin service August, 19, 2009**

### **Pilot Project operates through the 2010 Winter Olympics**

OLYMPIA – The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), the Province of British Columbia, and Amtrak announced today that the long awaited second daily Amtrak *Cascades* train between Seattle and Vancouver, B.C. will begin service on Wednesday, August 19, 2009. *The second train is an extension of the existing service between Bellingham and Vancouver, B.C.*

“Amtrak typically needs 90 days to start up service, so getting the second roundtrip train to BC going so quickly is a major accomplishment for everyone involved,” said Paula Hammond, Washington Transportation Secretary. “The August launch of the new service will give us a chance to encourage travelers to take advantage of this new service.”

The Canadian government approved the second train service as a pilot project until after the Vancouver 2010 Olympic and Paralympics Winter Games. WSDOT worked with Amtrak, BNSF Railway, U.S. Customs and Border Patrol, and other stakeholders to get the additional Amtrak *Cascades* service operational as soon as possible.

“More passenger train travel between Vancouver and Seattle is an important step towards helping boost cross-border tourism,” said BC Minister of State for Intergovernmental Relations Naomi Yamamoto. “We’re very hopeful the expanded service will stay on the rails long past next March.”

The second Amtrak *Cascades* train service will begin on August 19 with a northbound arrival from Portland, Oregon into Vancouver, B.C. at approximately 10:45 p.m. The next

morning, the southbound Amtrak *Cascades* train will depart Vancouver, B.C. at 6:40 a.m. arriving in Portland at 2:45 p.m.

“We are extremely pleased to begin this pilot project in time for the Winter Games,” said Kurt Laird, District Superintendent of Amtrak’s Pacific Division. “Our passengers on both sides of the Canadian and U.S. borders will now have another daily Amtrak *Cascades* train option in the Pacific Northwest.”

With the addition of this second train service, travelers from Oregon will now have direct round-trip service between Portland, Oregon and Vancouver, B.C.

Amtrak *Cascades* consists of four daily round-trips between Portland and Seattle, with service between Bellingham and Portland, via Seattle; between Eugene and Seattle, via Portland; and between Seattle and Vancouver, B.C. Amtrak *Cascades* is operated by Amtrak in partnership with the Washington and Oregon Departments of Transportation. For Amtrak *Cascades* fares and schedules, visit [www.amtrakcascades.com](http://www.amtrakcascades.com).

Additionally, the current daily Seattle to Vancouver, B.C. route will see the return of Amtrak *Cascades* Talgo train sets that have been missing from this leg of the route since summer 2008. The Talgo train sets were substituted with Amtrak Superliner trains while WSDOT and Amtrak completed a refurbishment of the train interiors.

### **About Amtrak**

Amtrak has posted six consecutive years of growth in ridership and revenue, carrying more than 28.7 million passengers in the last fiscal year. Amtrak provides intercity passenger rail service to more than 500 destinations in 46 states on a 21,000-mile route system. For schedules, fares and information, passengers may call 800-USA-RAIL or visit [Amtrak.com](http://Amtrak.com).

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