



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Stay Back from the Tracks: Train testing coming to Tacoma to DuPont route this month

Seahawks Wide Receiver Doug Baldwin to help spread rail safety message

TACOMA – Residents living along the Point Defiance Bypass train tracks between Tacoma and DuPont will soon see more – and faster – trains passing as testing of new tracks and signals begins next week.

Trains traveling at various speeds will test the new section that runs parallel to Interstate 5 to ensure Amtrak Cascades passenger trains can begin using the line this fall. Sound Transit, which owns the tracks and manages the Point Defiance Bypass construction project for the Washington State Department of Transportation, will conduct the testing. Test trains will travel at speeds up to 40 mph this month, and up to 79 mph in February and March.

Railroad crossing safety

During [the testing](#), the fast-moving trains will come from either direction, both day and night, with the exception of peak commute times. Because these tracks previously were used by slower freight trains, residents should be prepared for the more frequent and faster test trains. Drivers and pedestrians are urged to always follow good rail safety guidelines including:

- Do not walk on or near the tracks
- Do not stop your vehicle on the railroad tracks while waiting for traffic
- Obey all signals at all times – both as pedestrians and when in vehicles
- Wait for crossing arms to go up and/or lights to stop flashing before entering a crossing.

As a way to reach residents throughout the area, WSDOT has partnered with Seattle Seahawk wide receiver Doug Baldwin on a series of rail safety messages as part of the [Stay Back from the Tracks](#) campaign for the new passenger rail route. A community event featuring Baldwin is scheduled for the spring and the campaign also is featured on the Amtrak Cascades Seahawks locomotive currently traveling between Vancouver, British Columbia and Eugene, Oregon.

Amtrak Cascades service improvements

Starting this fall, Amtrak Cascades and Amtrak long-distance trains will use the Point Defiance Bypass, including a stop at the new Tacoma station at Freighthouse Square. The bypass is one of [20 passenger rail improvement projects](#) administered by WSDOT and paid for with nearly \$800 million in federal funds. Once complete, the 20 projects will add two additional daily Amtrak Cascades roundtrips between Seattle and Portland, cut travel time between the cities by 10 minutes and improve on-time reliability.

Hyperlinks within the release:

- Point Defiance Bypass Track and Signal Testing: www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/Rail/PNWRC_PtDefiance/TrackTesting
- Stay Back From the Tracks: www.staybackfromthetracks.com
- 20 High-Speed Rail Projects: wsdot.wa.gov/Rail/Projects