

June 17, 2025

Media Contact

Summers Miya, PIO, summers@portofbenton.com, 509-375-3060

Port Completes Sixth Railroad Crossing Replacement Project with Grant Funding Support

RICHLAND, Wash. – Port of Benton has completed its sixth railroad crossing replacement project. Construction crews finished work and reopened the State Route 240 rail crossing near Horn Rapids Road on the evening of June 1, nearly 12 hours ahead of schedule.

For the State Route 240 crossing project, Sen. Matt Boehnke helped secure a \$865,000 grant from the National Highway Freight Program through the Washington State Department of Transportation. The port added nearly \$800,000 in matching funds.

“Port of Benton’s rail line is vital for our region’s industries, and the funding support secured by Sen. Boehnke was pivotal for this construction project,” said Diahann Howard, port executive director. “We’re grateful to have the strong support of our state and federal representatives, as our rail line moves 1.3 million tons of freight each year for our farmers, ag producers and other small and big businesses.”

The State Route 240 crossing work began at noon on Thursday, May 29. Crews worked continuously to replace the entire rail crossing, installing new concrete panels, pavement, a signal cabinet, cantilevers and new track and ties.

As part of ongoing efforts to improve the railroad track, the port previously replaced its rail crossings at Airport Way, Saint Street, Kingsgate Way, State Route 224/Van Giesen and Swift Blvd./Cemetery Drive. Additionally, crews installed approximately 3,400 new ties and added additional ballast along the rail line.

This work allowed track speeds to increase from 5 to 10 mph. Future tie replacement projects will enable the rail line to return to Class 2 track with speeds up to 25 mph, further reducing wait times for drivers.

One final crossing to replace remains along the port’s 16-mile White Bluffs Southern Connection Rail Line, located at the intersection with Steptoe Street. The port will partner with City of Richland later this year to complete that project.

Important Clarification: The Washington State Department of Transportation is performing a separate road widening construction project along State Route 240 near the port’s rail crossing. For more information on the state’s project and its planned road closures and work schedule, visit wsdot.wa.gov/about/news/2025/improvements-state-route-240-richland-underway.

###