



Four Corners Freight Rail Project

Project Summary

Even though there are 140,000 miles of rail, the US freight rail network does not currently serve San Juan County, the Navajo Nation or the larger Four Corners Region. The goal of the Four Corners Freight Rail Project is to implement a freight rail link that enhances the region's freight transportation system and boosts economic opportunities. In 2025, San Juan County, the Navajo Nation, and the Federal Railroad Administration identified five potential routes and determined that freight rail service is feasible from the I-40 corridor to the Farmington/Shiprock area.

HOW DID WE GET HERE

After 50 years with little progress, new key partnerships and funding are now in place to advance the project.

- In February 2020, a historic memorandum of understanding was made between San Juan County and the Navajo Nation to partner on bringing rail to the Four Corners region.
- San Juan County, in partnership with the Navajo Nation, was awarded a \$2 million FY 2019 BUILD grant to complete a feasibility study.
- The 2025 feasibility study identified five alignments for a proposed new rail line between the Four Corners Region and the I-40 corridor, connecting to the BNSF Railway.
- San Juan County, in partnership with the Navajo Nation and State of New Mexico, was awarded a \$4 million FY 2023-2024 CRISI grant along with \$1 million in match funding from the State of New Mexico to advance into Project Development. This Project is underway.

Lack of Transportation in the Four Corners Area



PROJECT BENEFITS



Reduces truck traffic on U.S. 491, U.S. 550, and other roads, thus decreasing the potential for crashes, lowering congestion, and reducing highway maintenance needs.



Connecting to the BNSF Railway, creates a competitive shipping option that will reduce shipping costs for primary commodities including coal and agricultural products.



Could revitalize the regional coal industry, thus bringing back critical jobs and boosting the local economy.



Generates job opportunities for those entering the work force, enabling them to live, work and raise families locally, due to economic development from improved freight rail connections.



Addresses a projected demand of nearly \$20 billion in products transported by the rail industry.



Captures new business that will bring in additional tax revenues directly benefiting the local school systems.



San Juan County, in partnership with the Navajo Nation and State of New Mexico, is working to expeditiously complete the Project Development lifecycle phase to take advantage of the remaining opportunities in the final years of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act while aligning with the upcoming Surface Transportation Reauthorization.

ESTIMATED PROJECT COSTS

Conceptual cost estimates (before contingencies) range from \$1.3 to \$2.0 billion.

WHAT'S NEXT

Technical assessment of five railroad alignments

Selecting two railroad alignments for stakeholder input

Preliminary engineering and environmental review of one railroad alignment

PROJECT FEATURES

- Approximately 95 to 115 miles of new railroad (depending upon considered route option).
- Connection to BNSF Railway main line near Gallup or Prewitt (depending upon considered route option).
- Northern terminal located at Navajo Agricultural Products Industry (NAPI) Headquarters.
- Connection to existing rail spur for Navajo Mine.

