Union Pacific Trackage Rights: Dual-Carrier Competition on Shared Valley Rails

Pillar: The Corridors | **Basis:** Agency / Carrier Record | **Primary Source:** WSDOT / BNSF / Union Pacific | **As Of:** 2026-11-16

Although BNSF owns the physical rail right-of-way through most of the Green River Valley, Union Pacific operates extensively over the same tracks via trackage rights—meaning dual-carrier contracts still share one physical corridor.

Operational Continuity & Corridor Facts

• Union Pacific operates freight trains through the Green River Valley to Seattle/Tacoma intermodal terminals and industrial parks via trackage rights on BNSF-owned mainlines.

• For procurement teams, having both BNSF and Union Pacific quotes creates commercial rate competition—but not physical route redundancy inside the valley.

• If the valley rail bed floods or suffers a signal/bridge outage, both BNSF and Union Pacific trains stop on the same corridor.

Commercial vs. Physical Redundancy on Valley Rail

Dimension	BNSF	Union Pacific	Procurement Reality
Valley Track Ownership	Owner	Trackage-rights tenant	One physical rail corridor
Rate / Service Contracting	Direct BNSF	Direct UP	Commercial competition exists
Valley Flood / Washout	Halted	Halted	Zero physical bypass inside valley

Corridor Exposure, Triggers & Facility Actions

- Do not treat 'dual-rail-carrier' status (BNSF + UP) as physical flood resilience for a Kent or Auburn siding.
- Pair rail contracts with transload backup plans at Tacoma or Spokane/Moses Lake if continuous raw-material flow is critical.
- Check 49 CFR FRA track-safety and hazmat routing rules when moving regulated industrial inputs.

Cross-Cluster Links & Primary Sources

- **WA Space Cluster Hub (#1382):** https://bcesg.org/washington-space-cluster-census/
- **Auburn WA Space Cluster Profile:** https://bcesg.org/auburn-wa-space-cluster-profile/
- **Kent WA Space Cluster Profile:** https://bcesg.org/kent-wa-space-cluster-profile/
- **Supply-Chain & Procurement Desk Brief:** https://bcesg.org/wa-space-role-procurement-lead-desk-brief/
- **Components & Materials Continuity Exposure:** https://bcesg.org/wa-space-components-materials-continuity-exposure/
- **BNSF Railway Network:** https://bnsf.com/
- **49 CFR DOT / FRA / PHMSA Regulations:** https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-49

Provenance Note: Trackage-rights structure per WSDOT freight rail documentation.