

Four Corners Freight Rail Feasibility Study



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Opening the doors
to economic opportunity.



Mission

San Juan County, the Navajo Nation, and the Federal Railroad Administration are studying the economic feasibility of freight rail service to the Four Corners region and potential railroad alignments from the I-40 corridor to the Farmington/Shiprock area. This Feasibility Study has developed potential alternatives for a proposed new rail line between the Four Corners region and the I-40 Corridor with a connection to the BNSF Railway.

Despite 140,000 route miles, the U.S. freight rail network does not currently serve San Juan County, the Navajo Nation or the greater Four Corners region. A new connection to the BNSF freight rail network will improve the efficiency of the overall freight transportation system in the Four Corners area. It will also expand economic opportunities for the region, including the Navajo Nation.

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PROJECT BENEFITS

By adding a connection to the existing BNSF freight network, the area will become an attractive resource for businesses considering locating to or expanding in the Four Corners area. It would help make the region more competitive by decreasing shipping costs.

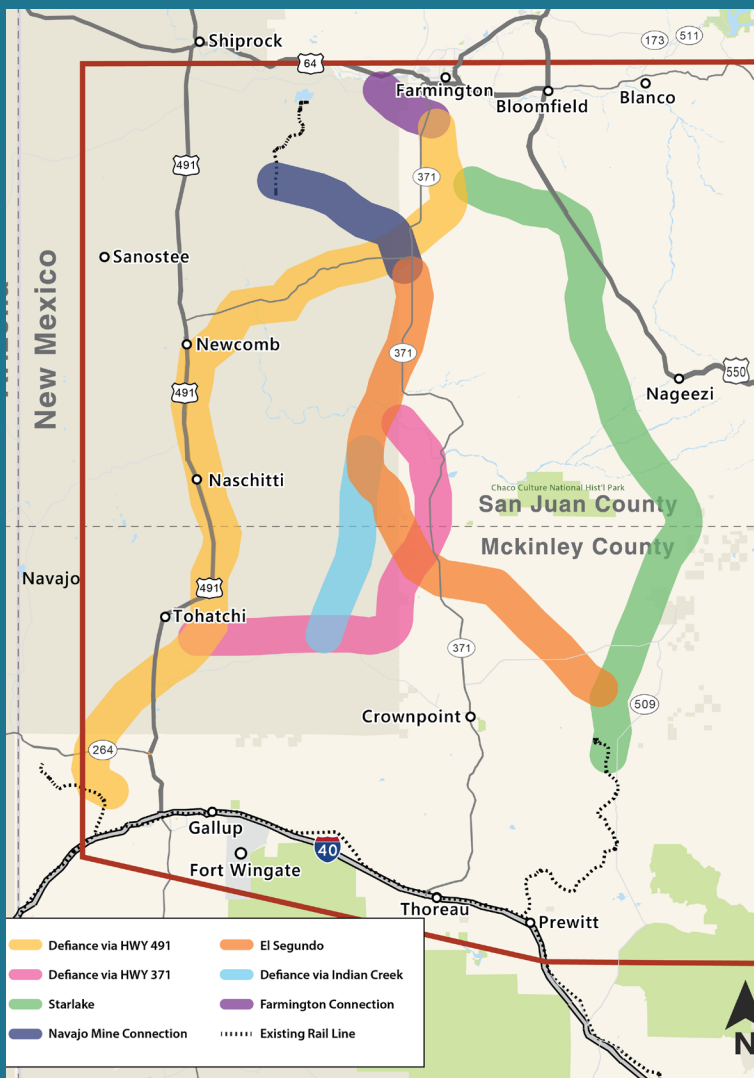
Additional economic development in the region provides learning opportunities and career pathways for local children, allowing them to stay localized and raise their families close to home. Creating more businesses will also bring in additional tax revenues directly benefiting the local school systems.

Research by the New Mexico Economic Development Department and the City of Farmington found nearly \$20 billion worth of products in projected demand for transport by the railroad industry. A Four Corners rail line could capture a high percentage of the demand when connected to the present BNSF railroad that runs east and west in the southern portion of the Navajo Nation.

Adding freight rail service will help reduce the amount of commercial truck traffic on surrounding roadways, increasing roadway safety, and decreasing potential crashes. The reduction in heavy truck traffic will also reduce the need for roadway repair.

POTENTIAL ROUTE ALIGNMENTS

The basic route for a Four Corners freight rail line could run from the I-40 corridor to the vicinity of Farmington/Shiprock in San Juan County. The feasibility study will analyze the potential benefits of specific routes.



FUNDING

San Juan County was awarded \$2 million through the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development or BUILD Transportation Discretionary Grant program, which is administered by the US Department of Transportation. The BUILD grant program provides funding for roads, bridges, transit, rail, ports and intermodal transportation.

WHAT IS A FEASIBILITY STUDY?

During the feasibility study, the project team identifies and evaluates potential route alignments, transloading facilities, commodities, and environmental impacts. In addition, public involvement and coordination with local agencies play a crucial role in the project development. The study also produces an Economic Feasibility Analysis to examine the freight traffic demand and other factors related to the feasibility of the proposed new rail line.