HEARTLAND CORRIDOR

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WHAT IS IT, AND WHY IS IT SO IMPORTANT?

The Heartland Corridor is a Norfolk Southern rail line creating a more efficient route from Mid-Atlantic Ports to the Midwest. Similar to the CSX National Gateway, this project involved upgrading bridges and tunnels to accommodate larger freight trains, specifically double-stack containers. The Heartland Corridor was constructed as part of a public-private partnership between the Norfolk Southern Railroad, the Federal Highway Administration, the states of Ohio and West Virginia, and the Commonwealth of Virginia. The Heartland Corridor opened on September 9, 2010, after three years of construction and at a cost of $261 million. The route of the Heartland Corridor runs from the Ports of Virginia to the Rickenbacker Intermodal Terminal in northern Pickaway County. There containers are transferred from train to truck and vice versa.

PROJECT DETAILS

The Heartland Corridor involved 51 obstructions that did not provide adequate overhead clearance to double-stack container trains. These obstructions included tunnels, bridges, wires, and rock fences. They were resolved by several methods, including lowering the track, enlarging tunnels, or bypassing the obstruction.

The completed Heartland Corridor allows a double-stack freight train to travel from Norfolk to Chicago in 1,031 miles, more than 250 miles shorter than the previous routes, a 1,264-mile route through Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, or a 1,342-mile route through Knoxville. This will allow trains to travel from Norfolk to Columbus overnight.

RICKENBACKER INTERMODAL FACILITY

The Rickenbacker Intermodal Facility is built on 300 acres south of Rickenbacker International Airport. The facility will be used for the interchange of shipping containers between trains and trucks. In 2010, the facility had over 140,000 lifts. However, as volumes increase with the recent opening of the Heartland Corridor the facility can be built out to 400,000 lifts. In the first 10 years the facility will have saved shippers over 660 million dollars, and reduce truck mileage in Ohio by 49 million miles, resulting in a significant emissions reduction. The long-term impact of this development will be over 20,000 direct and indirect jobs created and will have a 15.1 billion dollar impact on the region.

EXTENSION TO CINNCINATTI

Norfolk Southern is currently expanding the reach of the Heartland Corridor and Rickenbacker by making the rail line between Columbus and Cincinnati a double-stack-capable route. This will allow additional efficiencies in the service to Cincinnati.

RICKENBACKER INLAND PORT

In addition to the Rickenbacker Intermodal Facility, the inland port is home to both a cargo-oriented airport, capable of handling the world's largest aircraft, and quick connections to the Interstate Highway System. The inland port is also home to a Foreign Trade Zone. The Columbus Regional Airport Authority is developing a logistics park anchored by these three assets.

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