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Press Release

Port of Columbia Short Line Railroad Grand Re-Opening Celebration

Dayton, WA – After several years of embargo on a portion of the track in need of repairs, the Port of Columbia's short line railroad is ready to resume full service.

A Grand Re-opening Celebration will be held Saturday, October 7th at 10 am at the Dayton Historic Depot located at 222 E Commercial in Dayton, WA. There will be a short ribbon cutting celebration after which attendees can visit with the rail operator and climb up on the engine. Coffee and treats will be served.

The Port of Columbia owns 37 miles of short line railroad spanning two counties and providing service from Dayton to Walla Walla. The section of line between Prescott and Dayton has been closed for almost 3 years due to needed repairs on 8 bridges and a section of track near the Touchet River suffering from bank erosion. A combination of Washington State Department of Transportation Rail Bank grant funds, Port of Columbia matching funds, private shipper matching funds, and contributions from the Port's rail operator made repairs possible for the reopening of the line.

The Port of Columbia leases the rail line to Frontier Rail, which operates the line as the Columbia Walla Walla Rail Line (CWW). Frontier has worked hand in hand with the Port to get the line reopened so customers can be served once again.

"We are beyond excited to see the rail line resume service," stated Jennie Dickinson, manager of the Port of Columbia. "Given the history of rail in the settling of this area, we thought celebrating this important event at the oldest train depot in State of Washington made sense."

The Port's Columbia Walla Walla Rail Line Grand Re-opening Celebration is taking place on the same day the community is holding Dayton on Tour, an event featuring an Art Walk, a Fall Festival, and tours of some of Dayton's Historic Homes. Visit www.historicdayton.com for more information on the community event.

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The Port of Columbia's mission is to maximize public resources and private investment to create jobs, provide infrastructure, and maintain and improve the economic vitality of Columbia County and its communities.