**Press Release**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Oregon Rail Heritage Foundation Takes the Next Step to Make Historic Rail Excursions a Permanent Part of Portland’s Future**

ORHF Acquires Oregon Pacific Railroad, Expanding Excursions and Preservation of Pacific Northwest Railroad History

**Portland, OR —** The Oregon Rail Heritage Foundation (ORHF) is thrilled to announce that it has entered a sales agreement to acquire the Oregon Pacific Railroad (OPR), marking a monumental step in securing the future of historic rail excursions in Portland. This acquisition not only strengthens ORHF’s mission to preserve and celebrate Oregon’s railroading heritage but also paves the way for expanded opportunities for the community, now and for future generations, to engage with Oregon’s dynamic rail history.

With this historic purchase, ORHF ensures that rail excursions—an integral piece of Portland’s cultural and industrial legacy—will remain a vibrant part of the region for generations to come. Guests can look forward to increased excursion options, immersive volunteer experiences, and new ways to connect with the stories that shaped the Pacific Northwest.

**Continuing a Legacy of Railroad History**

The Oregon Pacific Railroad has played a vital role in Portland's history since 1904, when it was built by the Oregon Water Power and Railway Company to connect the region's towns and attractions. Under the stewardship of Richard “Dick” Samuels in the late 20th century, OPR was revitalized as a hub of activity, preserving the last five miles of Portland’s historic rail network and launching beloved excursions, such as the “Samtrak” route between OMSI and Sellwood.

Rick Franklin, President of ORHF, highlighted the significance of this milestone:
*"Acquiring the Oregon Pacific Railroad honors Dick Samuels’ remarkable legacy while securing a permanent future for rail excursions, preservation, and education in Oregon. This transformative step enables us to connect with our community in deeper, more impactful ways, bringing history to life through expanded excursions and enriched volunteer opportunities. Most importantly, it ensures that future generations will have the chance to experience and appreciate the rich rail heritage that shaped our region."*

**A Vision for Expanded Excursions and Volunteer Engagement**

With the acquisition of OPR, ORHF plans to significantly enhance its excursion offerings. Visitors will enjoy more frequent and diverse train rides, gaining access to unique opportunities to experience the magic of rail travel on historic Oregon lines.

The acquisition also brings new opportunities for volunteers. Rail enthusiasts can now participate in hands-on roles such as track maintenance, excursion operations, and rail yard support, helping to preserve and maintain the newly acquired rail line. Volunteers will play a crucial role in keeping these historic rails active and accessible, contributing directly to the preservation of a vital piece of Oregon’s history.

**Support Oregon’s Rail Future**

ORHF is calling on the community to help finalize this transformative purchase and fund critical upgrades to the Oregon Pacific Railroad. Donations will support track improvements, expanded excursion services, and ongoing preservation efforts.

*"This acquisition is a community effort,"* said Franklin. *"Every contribution, no matter the size, brings us closer to realizing a shared vision of a thriving, accessible rail heritage in Portland."*

**Make a difference today by visiting** [**orhf.org**](http://orhf.org) **to donate or learn more about how you can help. Together, we can preserve this vital piece of Oregon’s rail history and secure its future for generations to come.**

**About the Oregon Rail Heritage Foundation**

The Oregon Rail Heritage Foundation (ORHF) is a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving Oregon’s rail history and inspiring future generations through education, hands-on experiences, and public engagement. ORHF operates the Oregon Rail Heritage Center in Portland, showcasing historic locomotives and hosting community events that connect people to the region’s rich railroad heritage.

Contact:

Oregon Rail Heritage Foundation Oregon Pacific Railroad

Renee Devereux Tim, Brian, Craig Samuels

Executive Director Owners

rdevereux@orhf.org rasopr@gmail.com

503.233.1156

Media Assets:

Media assets, including photos of the Oregon Pacific Railroad and ORHF events, are available upon request.

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