Farwest Steel Corporation

Farwest Steel's Next-Generation Press Brakes for Marine, Energy, and Infrastructure

Executive Summary

Farwest Steel is proud to announce its new, state-of-the-art press brake system, purpose-built to support heavy fabrication projects and large-format structural forming. This new equipment marks a pivotal milestone for Farwest Steel in its ongoing mission to deliver quality metal solutions that drive customer success. According to Director of Sales & Operations Dave Hendricks, "This investment really opens the door to new market segments and supporting customers in ways that will help drive cost avoidance."

With this new press brake system, Farwest Steel is substantially elevating its forming capabilities. Key specifications include: 2,000 tons over 60 linear feet, a 48-inch throat, an adjustable bottom die with a minimum gap of 2 inches and a maximum gap of 12 inches, and a top-ram opening of 24 inches. These capabilities place the machine at the top tier for heavy fabrication on the West Coast.

For manufacturers, heavy fabricators, and OEMs across marine, energy, transportation, power-transmission, mining, and construction, this system delivers tangible benefits: fewer weld seams, longer bent sections, reduced labor and onsite assembly time, and faster lead times from stock to finished component.

This white paper explores the strategic context, key capabilities, technology advantages, market benefits, workflow transformation, and how customers can leverage this new press brake system for superior outcomes.

Federal and private spending is creating sustained demand for large-format steel components on the West Coast. The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) authorized hundreds of billions for transportation and other infrastructure, with the U.S. DOT having already obligated 59% of its IIJA transportation funding by April 2025, 1, capital now flowing into real projects that need long, heavy-formed sections. In parallel, "Build America, Buy America" rules tie this funding to U.S.-made iron and steel, favoring domestic, vertically integrated providers 2.

Farwest Steel's Growth and Market Leadership

Farwest Steel has a long history of metal solutions innovation and growth. Founded in 1956 in Eugene, Oregon, Farwest Steel has grown into one of the largest steel service centers on the West Coast, with multiple locations across Oregon, Washington, Arizona, Wyoming, Idaho, Utah, California, and Alaska.

The company's processing capabilities are broad: forming, welding, cut-to-length, laser and plasma cutting, shearing, and more. Prior to the new press brakes investment, Farwest already offered press brake capability ranging from 90 tons up to 750 tons over lengths of up to 50 feet, able to form materials from light stainless steel or aluminum sheet up to 1 ½-inch heavy wear plate.

Thus, introducing this new press brake system is aligned with Farwest's strategy of reinvestment in technology and capacity so customers can access advanced forming under one roof.

Key Capabilities of the New Press Brake System

Farwest's new press brake system offers a robust suite of features that extend forming capabilities significantly:

- **Massive Tonnage and Linear Footage:** 2,000-ton capacity across 60 feet.
- **Large Throat Width:** 48 inches.
- **Depth and Opening Range:** Bottom die featuring an adjustable gap from 2 inches minimum to 12 inches maximum and top ram opening of 24 inches.
- **Large Leg Formation Capability:** Can form a 48-inch leg over 60 linear feet.
- **Material Flow Integration:** Strategically placed close to first-stage cut processes so raw material can be cut, formed, and processed in one contiguous flow.

These specifications allow Farwest to handle parts that previously would have required segmenting, multiple weld seams, outsourced forming, or complex onsite assembly. By enabling longer, thicker, and wider formed sections, Farwest positions itself to serve higher-end heavy fabrication markets.

Forming longer pieces reduces the number of field splices and weld seams. Fewer pieces to erect typically shorten erection schedules and lower labor and logistics costs 3.

Technological and Operational Advantage

A powerful forming system is only useful if integrated with upstream and downstream workflows. Farwest's strategy of vertical integration is evident in this investment. As Stewart McCondochie, Director of Sales and Operations, explains:

> *The improvement in processes for Farwest comes in the form of workflow consolidation. So we've taken what typically would be done in two or three bays and consolidated it into one bay. It really creates a lot of efficiencies in terms of material handling and making sure things are going to the next stage of processing as quickly as possible rather than transfer, sit, wait, transfer. It's a very efficient workflow.*

The new press brakes, then, are part of a broader digital- and process-enabled ecosystem: material enters, is levelled or cut as required, transitions to the forming bay (minimizing handling), then proceeds to welding or further assembly, all under one roof in most instances. This all reduces lead-time, scrap, logistics cost, and risk associated with multi-vendor coordination. Further, forming longer sections with fewer welds reduces labor cost, lowers potential quality issues associated with seams, and speeds installation or assembly at downstream operations.

Market Impact and Customer Benefits

The introduction of this press brake system has implications far beyond raw tonnage or size. For customers in sectors such as marine, power transmission, structural fabrication, equipment manufacturing, mining, transportation, and infrastructure, several key benefits emerge:

- **Lower Weld Seam Count:** Reducing field splices/welds can compress schedules and lower erection/inspection effort; AISC notes fewer pieces to install can minimize crane rental time and labor costs 4.
- **Faster Lead Times and Reduced Handling:** Material processing, forming, and finishing under one roof and within one material flow reduces time-to-market and lead-time risk.
- **Cost Avoidance and Improved Productivity:** Larger one-piece forming limits cost of welding, fit-up, rework, transport, and onsite assembly.
- **Closer Proximity and Logistics Advantage:** Access to shorter logistics chains for West Coast customers.
- **Consistent Quality and Fewer Handoffs:** Fewer logistics handoffs, fewer interfaces between suppliers, and more direct accountability for quality, schedule, and handling.

Strategic Differentiation

What distinguishes Farwest's offering is how this additional capacity is embedded into a larger ecosystem of value. Key strategic differentiators include:

Integrated Processing

Farwest offers material distribution, first-stage processing (cut, level, shear), forming, welding/assembly, and delivery logistics under one umbrella. McCondochie emphasized: "The big differentiator is the broad range of inventory and services all under one roof. We have the material, the first-stage processing that can cut anything, the second-stage processing in terms of forming, and then we have welding capabilities."

Geographic Proximity

For western U.S. customers, the availability of a forming system of this scale is quite rare. According to McCondochie, "The capacities are something that are not currently available in the full range on the West Coast." The introduction of this new system unlocks a wide range of

opportunities for customers in the region. This regional capacity arrives as public agencies and utilities accelerate spending on grid, bridges, and resilience; DOE reports $36.9B in public/private/non-federal grid investments mobilized since 2023 across 1,120+ projects, underscoring a broad upgrade cycle [5].

Technology-Led Investment Culture

Farwest's history of reinvesting in new equipment, cutting technologies, forming, and logistic infrastructure means customers benefit from up-to-date capabilities, not legacy constraints. As McCondochie explains, "We've always been very big on reinvestment in new equipment and facilities. And that's really driven by our customers and what they need."

Customer-Centric Approach

Farwest positions itself as a partner in heavy fabrication, emphasising competitive pricing, lead-time reduction, yield optimisation, scrap mitigation, and logistic advantage. According to Dave Hendricks, "Our whole goal is to deliver value and see customers grow."

Unique Value Proposition for Heavy and Large Format Forming

While many fabricators or service centers can bend smaller sheets or light plates, few can deliver a 2,000-ton capacity across 60 feet with 48-inch leg formation within the western region.

Practical Implications and Use Cases

Below are some of the key use cases for Farwest Steel's forming capabilities with the new press brake system.

Marine Platform Fabrication

Marine structures often require long-formed steel legs up to 48 inches wide and over 60 feet long. Previously, multiple segments would need to be formed, welded, transported, and fitted onsite. With Farwest's new press brakes, the leg is formed in a single piece, reducing onsite welding, fit-up time, and transport logistics. This speeds up the installation schedule, lowers labor cost, and mitigates seam-weakness potential.

Large single-piece bends reduce field welding on long pieces. AISC's bridge guidance ties fewer pieces and splices to shorter erection schedules and less labor, principles that translate directly to large marine fabrications [6].

Power Transmission and Light Pole Systems

As wood pole infrastructure transitions to steel fabricated cells or light poles, longer sections and wider legs become necessary to meet structural demands. Farwest's ability to form 60-foot

lengths with 48-inch legs means customers in utility and infrastructure markets can get ready-to-install components rather than assembly-intensive builds.

Utilities are investing at record levels: EEI projects $208B industry capex in 2025; EIA confirms utility spending has trended up over the last two decades, driven by grid infrastructure 7.

Resilience upgrades include shifting from wood to steel/composite poles in high-fire-risk areas. DOE cites 80-year service life estimates for steel poles versus 30–50 years for wood, aligning with fewer lifecycle replacements 8.

Heavy Equipment or Mining Troughs

Mining and aggregate equipment often require large steel troughs with deep legs or flanges. The ability to form thicker plate (up to heavy wear plate) and long lengths with larger leg geometry means fewer seams, fewer production steps, and faster delivery of large assemblies.

Structural Fabrication for Earthquake-Protected Buildings

In structural fabrication where large column casings or ledger angles are required, forming long lengths with wide legs reduces weld-seams, improves structural integrity, and eases on-site installation. Farwest's system enables formed sections that previously might have required multi-tier fabrication or shipping from other geographies.

For long column casings and ledger angles, minimizing field splices and welds reduces site time and improves quality assurance. AISC notes that fewer pieces and splices can shorten erection schedules and limit equipment time 9, critical for urban seismic retrofits with tight closures.

Next Steps for Customers

If you're a manufacturer, fabricator, or structural OEM looking for heavy-forming capability, here are the recommended next steps:

1. **Define Your Forming Specifications:** Consider length, leg depth, thickness of plate/steel, required angles, material grade, and tolerance. The wider the leg, the longer the part, the greater the benefit of Farwest's system.
2. **Engage Us Early in the Process:** Because Farwest's forming bay is integrated into cutting, shearing, welding, and logistics, early involvement means you can optimize material flow, avoid multiple vendor handoffs, and reduce lead time.
3. **Review Potential Cost-Avoidance:** Quantify cost savings from fewer weld seams, reduced labor, reduced transport and handling, shorter onsite installation time, and fewer fit-ups.
4. **Evaluate Logistics Advantages:** If you're based in the Western United States, using a local forming partner like Farwest can shorten lead times, reduce freight costs, and simplify logistics.

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5. **Ask About Additional Services:** Farwest offers distribution of materials, first-stage processing, forming, and second or third stage processing, including welding.
6. **Plan for Delivery and Installation:** Understand how formed components will transport, handle, and integrate into your assembly sequence.

Conclusion

With the launch of this new heavy-capacity press brake system, Farwest Steel is delivering a differentiated capability that aligns with its mission: to deliver quality metal solutions that drive customer success. Customers in demanding markets such as marine, energy, transportation, infrastructure, heavy equipment, and structural fabrication now have access to forming capacity previously unavailable in the Western U.S.

By combining large-format forming with vertically integrated processing, efficient workflows, and regional logistics, Farwest empowers customers to build larger, stronger, more efficient structures with fewer welds, lower labor costs, faster installation, and shorter lead times.

Farwest's new press brake system is enabling heavy formation at scale, backed by experience, technology, and logistics.

Notes

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