

**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

In the Matter of the Petition of	)	DOCKET TR-143705
)	
COLUMBIA BASIN RAILROAD,	)	ORDER 01
)	
Petitioner,	)	ORDER GRANTING PETITION TO
	)	MODIFY HIGHWAY-RAIL GRADE
	)	CROSSING ACTIVE WARNING
Seeking Approval to Upgrade Signals	)	DEVICES AND AUTHORIZING
at a Railroad-Highway Grade	)	EXPENDITURE FROM THE GRADE
Crossing	)	CROSSING PROTECTIVE FUND AT
	)	N SE ROAD
)	
.....	)	USDOT: 396956E

BACKGROUND

- 1 On October 16, 2014, the Columbia Basin Railroad (CBRR or Petitioner) filed with the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission), a petition seeking approval to modify active warning devices at a railroad-highway grade crossing. The application was held over for consideration in the 2015-2017 Grade Crossing Protective Fund (GCPF) biennium due to depleted funds for the 2013-2015 biennium. On August 10, 2015, CBRR filed revised pages. The crossing is identified as USDOT 396956E and is located at the intersection of N SE Road and the Petitioner's tracks in Grant County. The Petitioner further requested the Commission authorize an expenditure of \$20,000 from the Grade Crossing Protective Fund (GCPF) to pay for the upgrades.
- 2 Railroad warning devices at the N SE Road crossing consist of cantilever-mounted flashing lights, crossbucks, multiple-track signs and motion sensor train detection. The Petitioner proposes to replace batteries and upgrade the older model motion sensor train detection to new motion sensor equipment.
- 3 Commission Staff reviewed the proposed upgrades and recommends approval of the project. These upgrades will improve the overall safety at the crossing by providing motorists and pedestrians with upgraded active warning devices to notify them of an approaching train. The new batteries will improve reliability if there is a power failure at the crossing.
- 4 N SE Road is a two-lane roadway with a posted speed limit of 55 miles per hour. Average annual daily vehicle traffic through the crossing is estimated at 900 vehicles. N

SE Road is part of an established school bus route with six buses traveling over the crossing daily. The crossing is part of an established truck route, with trucks making up 22 percent of the total daily traffic on this roadway. Freight trains are authorized to operate at 10 miles per hour over this single main track crossing. Two freight trains per day currently operate over this crossing. No passenger trains operate over the crossing.

- 5 The total approximate cost of the project is \$20,000. The Petitioner is contributing labor toward the cost of the upgrades and is responsible for any additional project costs. An expenditure of \$20,000 from the Grade Crossing Protective Fund is available to help fund the improvements.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6 (1) The Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission is an agency of the State of Washington having jurisdiction over public railroad-highway grade crossings within the state of Washington, and authority to approve and administer disbursements from the Grade Crossing Protective Fund. RCW 81.53; RCW 81.53.271; RCW 81.53.281.
- 7 (2) The grade crossing at N SE Road, identified as USDOT 396956E, is a public railroad-highway grade crossing within the state of Washington.
- 8 (3) RCW 81.53.261 requires the Commission grant approval prior to any changes to public railroad-highway grade crossings within the state of Washington. *See also* WAC 480-62-150.
- 9 (4) RCW 81.53.271 allows the Commission to disburse up to \$20,000 from the Grade Crossing Protective Fund to pay for the installation of a grade crossing protective device, without requiring the Petitioner to share the cost.
- 10 (5) Commission Staff investigated the petition and recommended that it be granted, subject to specified conditions.
- 11 (6) After reviewing CBRR's petition filed on October 16, 2014, and revised on August 10, 2015, and giving due consideration to all relevant matters and for good cause shown, the Commission grants the petition and request for disbursement of funds.

ORDER

THE COMMISSION ORDERS:

- 12 CBRR's petition to upgrade warning devices at a railroad-highway grade crossing, located at N SE Road, is granted. The cost of this upgrade shall be paid from the Grade Crossing Protective Fund. Approval of the petition is subject to the following conditions:
- (1) Expenditure from the Grade Crossing Protective Fund must not exceed \$20,000.
 - (2) Payment will be made upon presentation of claim for reimbursement for materials and labor, and verification by Commission Staff that the work has been satisfactorily completed.
 - (3) CBRR must sign and return the attached project agreement.
 - (4) The project must be completed no later than March 1, 2016.
 - (5) Traffic control devices must comply with all applicable standards specified in the U.S. Department of Transportation *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices*.
 - (6) CBRR must notify the Commission on completion of the upgrades authorized in this Order. Acceptance of the upgrades is subject to inspection by Commission Staff, and verification that the crossing is in full compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and the conditions specified in this Order.

The Secretary of the Commission has delegated authority over this matter pursuant to Order 04 in Docket A-090485. The Secretary finds this Order to be consistent with the public interest.

DATED at Olympia, Washington, and effective September 22, 2015.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION



STEVEN V. KING, Executive Director and Secretary

NOTICE: This is an order delegated to the Secretary for decision. In addition to serving you a copy of the decision, the Commission will post on its Internet website for at least fourteen (14) days a listing of all matters delegated to the Secretary for decision. You may seek Commission review of this decision. You must file a request for Commission review of this order no later than fourteen (14) days after the date the decision is posted on the Commission's Web site. The Commission will schedule your request for review for consideration at a regularly scheduled open meeting. The Commission will notify you of the time and place of the open meeting at which the Commission will review the order.

The Commission will grant a late-filed request for review only on a showing of good cause, including a satisfactory explanation of why the person did not timely file the request. A form for late-filed requests is available on the Commission's website.

This notice and review process is pursuant to the provisions of RCW 80.01.030 and WAC 480-07-904(2) and (3).