

**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON  
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

In the Matter of the Petition of	DOCKET TR-250354
INLAND EMPIRE RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY,	ORDER 01
Petitioner,	GRANTING PETITION TO CONSTRUCT A RAILROAD- HIGHWAY GRADE CROSSING AT OLD SUNSET HIGHWAY, REARDAN
LINCOLN COUNTY,	
Respondent.	USDOT: 981267X

**BACKGROUND**

- 1 On May 14, 2025, the Inland Empire Railway Historical Society, doing business as the Inland Northwest Rail Museum (Museum or Petitioner), filed with the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission) a petition (Petition) seeking approval to construct a railroad-highway grade crossing, identified as USDOT 981267X, at the intersection of Old Sunset Highway and the Petitioner's spur track near Reardan. Commission staff (Staff) discovered the existence of this crossing during a visit to the Museum. Upon review, Staff determined that the spur track and crossing were constructed in or before 2015 without prior approval from the Commission.
- 2 Respondent Lincoln County consented to entry of an order by the Commission without further notice or hearing.
- 3 The Museum's spur track provides a connection between the Washington Eastern Railroad and the Museum's rail complex at 27300 Sprinkle Road, Reardan. Old Sunset Highway is a two-lane secondary roadway with a speed limit of 40 miles per hour. Average annual daily traffic on the roadway is three vehicles. Old Sunset Highway is neither a designated commercial vehicle route nor a school bus route. The Museum operates up to one freight train and one passenger train daily over this crossing at up to 10 miles per hour.
- 4 Warning devices at the crossing consist of roadway pavement markings, advance warning signs, crossbuck assemblies, yield signs, reflective striping, and Emergency Notification System signs.

- 5 According to the Petition, the parties have reached an agreement related to the apportionment of costs.
- 6 Staff has investigated the Petition and although the public service laws require the Commission's approval prior to a petitioner constructing a crossing,<sup>1</sup> Staff recommends retroactive authorization of the Museum's Petition to recognize the Museum's efforts to comply with state law and keep the public highways safe for traveling.
- 7 Staff recommends that that the Petition be granted subject to the following conditions: (1) the project must conform to the description in the Petition, (2) traffic control devices must comply with all applicable standards specified in the U.S. Department of Transportation Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, and (3) Staff will conduct a follow-up inspection to verify that the crossing is in full compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and the conditions specified herein.

### DISCUSSION

- 8 RCW 81.53.030 requires that the Commission grant approval prior to construction of a public railroad-highway crossing within the state of Washington. Although the Museum did not seek approval before constructing this crossing, we find that the crossing provides for the public safety, mobility, and convenience of roadway users. Accordingly, the Commission grants the Petition subject to the conditions that Staff recommends.

### FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

- 9 (1) The Commission is an agency of the State of Washington having jurisdiction over public highway-rail crossings within the state of Washington.
- 10 (2) The Old Sunset Highway crossing, identified as USDOT 981267X, is a public crossing within the state of Washington.
- 11 (3) RCW 81.53.030 requires that the Commission grant approval prior to establishing a public crossing within the state of Washington.
- 12 (4) Staff investigated the Petition and recommends that it be granted with the conditions set out in paragraph 7 above.

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<sup>1</sup> RCW 81.53.030.

- 13 (5) This matter came before the Commission at its regularly scheduled meeting on June 12, 2025.
- 14 (6) After review of the Petition filed by the Museum on May 14, 2025, and giving due consideration to all relevant matters and for good cause shown, the Commission grants the Petition.

## ORDER

### THE COMMISSION ORDERS:

- 15 (1) The Inland Empire Railway Historical Society's Petition to construct a public railroad-highway crossing located at Old Sunset Highway is granted. Approval of the Petition is subject to the following conditions:
- (a) The project must conform to the description in the Petition.
  - (b) Traffic control devices must comply with all applicable standards specified in the U.S. Department of Transportation Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices
  - (c) Staff will conduct a follow-up inspection to verify that the crossing is in full compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and the conditions specified herein.
- 16 (2) The Commissioners, having determined this Order to be consistent with the public interest, directed the Secretary to enter this Order.

DATED at Lacey, Washington, and effective June 12, 2025.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

JEFF KILLIP  
Executive Director and Secretary