



- 3 In the vicinity of the crossing, Ontario Street is classified as a local access road, with one lane for each direction of traffic and a vehicle speed limit of 25 mph. Average daily traffic through the crossing is estimated at 200 vehicles consisting primarily of heavy truck traffic entering and exiting industrial facilities located immediately south of the crossing.
- 4 Petitioner currently maintains one mainline track through the crossing. Average daily train traffic includes four freight trains, traveling at a maximum speed of 10 mph. PSAP RR plans to construct two additional siding tracks across Ontario Street within 20 feet of the existing grade crossing. Because the new tracks would be owned by PSAP RR and the existing track is owned by UPRR, the tracks associated with each railroad company would be listed in Washington state and federal databases as two separate grade crossings. Accordingly, PSAP RR's petition to construct the new tracks across Ontario Street is filed in Docket No. TR-050524.
- 5 Warning devices at the crossing consist of "wig-wag" warning signals. Wig-wag signals (*i.e.* an overhead pendulum device with a light in the center that swings back and forth and illuminates upon the approach of a train) were widely used in the United States prior to the 1940s. Since that time, they have been largely phased out and replaced by more advanced equipment. In addition to the obsolete signal hardware, train detection circuitry at the crossing consists of equally outdated DC track circuits. Petitioner seeks to replace the existing equipment at the crossing with standard shoulder-mounted flashing light signals and constant warning-type train detection circuitry. The upgrades are proposed in the interest of improving visibility and reliability of the crossing warning system. If approved, the same warning signals would be used for all three tracks when the two additional tracks described in paragraph 4 are constructed.
- 6 The cost of the crossing warning system upgrade is estimated at \$35,000. PSAP RR has requested that the cost of the upgrade be paid from the Grade Crossing

Protective Fund. Commission Staff recommend partially funding PSAP RR's project with a disbursement of \$15,000. The recommendation to limit funding to this amount resulted from a combination of limited available funds, and prioritization of the merits of the project against similar projects for which GCPF disbursement is sought. There are currently funds available to disburse \$15,000 towards this project. Any remaining costs for this project will be paid by PSAP RR.

### FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

- 7 (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. *Chapter 81.53 RCW.*
- 8 (2) The Ontario Street grade crossing, identified as USDOT 808716P, is a public railroad-highway grade crossing within the state of Washington.
- 9 (3) RCW 81.53.261 requires that the Commission grant approval prior to making changes in the method and manner of traffic control at public railroad-highway grade crossings within the state of Washington.
- 10 (4) The Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission is an agency of the State of Washington having authority to approve and administer disbursements from the Grade Crossing Protective Fund. Chapter 81.53.271 RCW and 81.53.281 RCW.
- 11 (5) The project for which disbursement from the Grade Crossing Protective Fund is sought is eligible for funding consideration under the Grade Crossing Protective Fund Policy and Interpretive Statement in Docket No. TR-031384, and complies with the requirements of RCW 81.53.271 and RCW 81.53.281.

- 12 (6) Commission Staff investigated the petition and recommended that it be granted, subject to specified conditions.
- 13 (7) This matter was brought before the Commission at its regularly scheduled meeting on April 13, 2005.
- 14 (8) After examination of the petition filed by the Puget Sound and Pacific Railroad Company on April 5, 2005, giving consideration to all relevant matters, and for the reasons stated in paragraphs 5 and 6, the Commission grants the petition.

## ORDER

### THE COMMISSION ORDERS:

- 15 The petition of the Puget Sound and Pacific Railroad Company to upgrade railroad warning signals at a railroad-highway grade crossing, located at the intersection of Ontario Street and the petitioner's tracks, in Hoquiam, Washington, is granted, subject to the following conditions:
- (1) All upgrades must conform to the plans and documents filed in this proceeding.
  - (2) Traffic control devices must comply with all applicable standards specified in the U.S. Department of Transportation *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices*.
  - (3) Expenditure from the Grade Crossing Protective Fund must not exceed \$15,000.
  - (4) The work for which the Grade Crossing Protective Fund disbursement was approved must conform to the project description specified in the petition.

- (5) 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.
- (6) The project must be completed, and the associated request for reimbursement from the Grade Crossing Protective Fund must be on file with the Commission no later than May 31, 2005.

The Commissioners, having determined that this filing complies with the requirements of RCW 81.53.261, directed the Secretary to enter this Order.

DATED at Olympia, Washington, and effective this 13<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2005.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

CAROLE J. WASHBURN, Secretary