

Mike Sommerville 04/27/99 11:26:33 AM

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"Rolando" <rolando@gorge.net> on 04/25/99 08:05:59 PM

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To: records
cc: "Roger Holen" <innkeeper@gorge.net>, "Larry D. Barker" <larryb@gorge.net>, "Debby & Tony Bergstrom" <bergstrom@gorge.net>, "Dottie DeVaney" <wascodir@gorge.net>, ROLANDO@GORGE.NET
Subject: Docket No. TR-981102

I am writing to express my interest, as a Citizen and White Salmon City Council Member, in the "Railroad Company Operations Rulemaking". I believe that there is a need to consider/add rules concerning the following eight areas:

1. Reporting requirements regarding notification of:
 - Any railroad company activity MAY affect a surrounding or adjacent community;
 - Remote control train operations;
 - Identity and contact information of railroad police;
2. Identifying Commission processes;
3. Blocking crossings;
4. Identifying specific maintenance requirements and standards regarding crossing surfaces, signals and circuitry;
5. Identifying specific safety and operating rules regarding:
 - Industrial and logging railroads;
 - Commuter rail;
 - Track motor cars and related on-track equipment;
 - Pre & Post-accident drug and alcohol testing;
6. Identifying specific procedures when considering individual citizen, community, and or City petitions to implement whistle bans;
7. Improving the process and results of filing petitions for grade crossing improvements;
8. Establishment, and scheduled use of, Community specific communications and coordination.

Item #6 in particular is of interest because of the 24-hour disturbance created by train whistles as the train approaches and passes through the Cities of Bingen and White Salmon, WA.. The whistle blowing is quite loud in itself but its intensity seems magnified by the canyon nature of the Columbia River Gorge. Private residences, recreation, and businesses are negatively impacted by the extremely loud whistle blowing. The need for safety is clearly understood and respected however this should not be used as an excuse for being louder and louder. The target zone for the safety risk should be area where the safety alarm is applied, not areas a mile away. I am certain that cooperative problem solving will lead to solutions that are effective at providing for safety, economics, and environmental quality.

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this process, results of which have significant potential to affect the environmental quality of our communities. Please keep me informed on this railroad operations rulemaking effort.

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