

BEFORE THE WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION

BURLINGTON NORTHERN)	
SANTA FE RAILWAY COMPANY)	DOCKET NO. TR-011645
)	
Petitioner,)	ORDER GRANTING PETITION
)	TO UPGRADE WARNING
v.)	DEVICES AT THOMSEN ROAD
)	
THURSTON COUNTY)	D.O.T. 085766S
)	
Respondent)	W.U.T.C. 1K 27.65
.....)	

BACKGROUND

1 On December 12, 2001, the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway Company (BNSF) filed a petition with the Commission, seeking authority to upgrade warning devices at a highway-rail grade crossing. The crossing is located at the intersection of the petitioner's tracks and Thomsen Road, in the NW ¼ of the SW ¼ of Section 20, Township 18 N, Range 1 E., W.M., in Thurston County, Washington. Funding for the upgrades is pursuant to the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act in cooperation with the Washington State Department of Transportation.

2 Respondent has consented to an entry of an order by the Commission without further notice or hearing.

DISCUSSION

3 Thomsen Road, in the vicinity of the crossing, is classified as a local access road. The roadway consists of a gravel surface with one lane for each direction of traffic and a vehicle speed limit of 25 mph. A roadway curve, west of the crossing, limits sight distance ahead to the crossing until a point approximately 200 feet from the tracks. Average daily traffic through the crossing is estimated at 50 vehicles, including 2 trucks. Average daily traffic is expected to increase to 75 vehicles by 2020.

4 BNSF maintains two main-line tracks through the crossing. Daily train traffic averages up to 54 freight trains and eight passenger trains, operating at maximum timetable speeds of 50 MPH and 70 MPH respectively.

5 Warning devices at the crossing include standard Crossbuck signs and Stop signs. Petitioner seeks to upgrade the warning devices through the installation of shoulder-mounted flashing light signals with gates. The upgrades are being proposed in the interest of improving safety for highway users.

6 Commission Staff investigated the petition and recommended that it be granted,
subject to specified conditions.

7 This matter was brought before the Commission at its regularly scheduled open
meeting on February 27, 2002. The Commissioners have reviewed the petition and
have been advised in the matter. They believe that granting the petition, subject to
the conditions set forth below, is in the public interest, and direct the Secretary to
issue the Order.

ORDER

8 THE COMMISSION GRANTS the petition of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe
Railway Company to upgrade warning devices at a highway-rail grade crossing,
designated as WUTC 1K 27.65 and located at the intersection of Thomsen Road and
the petitioner's tracks in Thurston County, Washington, subject to the following
conditions:

- (1) The upgrades must conform to the plans filed in this proceeding.
- (2) Traffic control devices must comply with applicable standards specified in the U.S. Department of Transportation *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices*.
- (3) Traffic control devices and instrument housing must be installed in such a manner as to provide required clearances for both rail and vehicular traffic.
- (4) Thurston County must remove the Stop signs at the crossing at such time that active warning devices become operational.
- (5) Upon completion of the installations authorized herein, petitioner must notify the Commission. Acceptance of the installations is subject to a compliance inspection by Commission Staff, verifying that the changes are in full compliance with law, regulation, and the conditions specified herein.

DATED at Olympia, Washington and effective this 27th of February, 2002.

THE WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

CAROLE J. WASHBURN, Secretary