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1300 S. Evergreen Park Drive SW
Post Office Box 47250
Olympia, Washington 98504-7250
Toll-Free 1-888-606-9566 or 360-664-1222
Fax 360-586-1181 or 360-586-1118
TTY 360-586-8203 or 1-877-210-5963
Web: www.wutc.wa.gov

Grade Crossing Protection Fund APPLICATION FOR FUNDING

The Commission's objectives in distributing monies from its Grade Crossing Protective Fund (GCPF) are as follows: To reduce accident/incident frequency and severity at both public and private railroad crossings; and to reduce pedestrian trespassing and the frequency of trespass-related deaths and injuries along railroad rights-of-way. Any public, private, or nonprofit entity may submit an application to the Commission for GCPF monies.

The focus of the GCPF program is to fund projects that demonstrate a need for improved public safety related to one of the following four categories:

- **Grade crossing safety projects** (the Commission's original GCPF program).
- **Trespass prevention projects.** Examples of projects in this category include fencing or other physical barriers that prevent trespassing on railroad rights-of-way; pedestrian warning devices; establishing new public grade crossings; installing channeling devices; media/public relations campaigns; and enforcement-related activities.
- **Private crossing safety improvements.** Examples of projects in this category include private crossing closures; installation of private crossing-specific warning devices; installation of nighttime/off-hours locked gates; and improvements to reflectorization/conspicuousness of existing warning devices.
- **Miscellaneous safety projects.** Examples of projects in this category include improvements to motorists' ability to see approaching trains, including the removal of physical obstructions; participation in roadway improvements at or approaching grade crossings; and mitigation of crossing closures.

All projects that fall within any of these four general categories are eligible for funding consideration.

Applicant Name: Bob Boston

Organization: Washington Operation Lifesaver

Address: 1300 S. Evergreen Park Dr. SW

Olympia, WA 98504

Office Phone: 360-664-1264

E-mail: bboston@wutc.wa.gov

Cell Phone: 360-701-1615

Fax Number: 360-586-1150

Type of Application: Trespass prevention – ACCESS CLOSURE ON SR 14

Private crossing safety improvement

Trespass prevention

Miscellaneous

Please list all of the other companies (e.g., railroad companies) organizations, or state or local agencies that may be involved in implementing this proposal and the name, address and phone number of each. Toy Washington – Senior Special Agent (BNSF Railway) 1515 W. 39th St. – Vancouver, WA 98660 360-418-6367

Note: Requests for public grade crossing safety projects will be continue to be processed through the Commission's regular petition process.

Project Information – Please attach additional information if needed.

- 1) *Provide a detailed summary of the hazard being addressed, including any accident/incident information or other supporting data. If filing this application electronically, photographs, drawings, or other optional materials that are not in electronic format may be sent to the mailing address specified in the “instructions” section and should be clearly identified as an attachment to your application: The BNSF Railway Northwest Division, Fallbridge Subdivision runs alongside State Highway 14 in the Columbia River Gorge in Washington State. Several miles east of Stevenson, directly across from the Bergen Road intersection is a 50-foot wide access between the guard rails for BNSF Railway to get their maintenance vehicles down to the tracks. Trespassers using primarily four-wheel drive vehicles are using this access and driving their vehicles over the rails to access a secluded area near the river. It is a blind curve in both directions where they cross the tracks and near-hits have been reported. BNSF has installed a gate along the dirt access road approximately 20 yards from SR 14, but people keep destroying it because it is secluded from the highway.*

- 2) *Provide a detailed description of your proposed project and explain how its implementation will eliminate or mitigate the hazard. If available, please attach any drawings or construction plans for your proposed project (see section 1 if filing electronically): Ideally, the best solution is to extend the WSDOT guardrail from both ends of the opening to seal it off permanently. It is possible, however, that the BNSF will still need access for some equipment at this location. If that is the case, then 40 feet of guardrail would be extended and a 10-foot heavy gate installed. Preventing vehicles from accessing the tracks at this location will eliminate the possibility of a collision with a train.*

- 3) *Provide cost estimates, including those related to long-term maintenance:*
50 feet of WSDOT approved guardrail = \$4,000

Above pricing includes installation labor costs.

- 4) *Estimated timeline of project, if approved:*
August, 2004

- 5) *If known, provide a description of how the project’s success would be measured:*
The success of this project is dependent on the effectiveness of the engineering improvement to keep vehicles from accessing the tracks in this area. If the barrier is properly constructed it should be able to keep 100% of unauthorized vehicles away from the track
- 6) *Other comments:*

For questions or assistance, please contact Ahmer Nizam at 360-664-1345 (e-mail anizam@wutc.wa.gov) or Sally Turnbull at 360-664-1230 (e-mail Sturnbul@wutc.wa.gov)

Instructions

After completing the Grade Crossing Protective Fund application, please send the original and two copies to:

Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission
Attention: Grade Crossing Protective Fund
1300 S. Evergreen Park Drive SW
Olympia, WA 98504-7250

Applications are available at www.wutc.wa.gov/GCPFgrants, and may be filed electronically at railinfo@wutc.wa.gov. When filing electronically, please specify "Grade Crossing Protective Fund" in the subject line.

Please ensure that the names and addresses of representatives from the relevant railroad company and local jurisdiction are correct and listed in the application.

Funding

RCW 81.53.271 allows the Commission to grant up to twenty thousand dollars for selected projects without requiring a monetary match. The Commission, however, may limit the amount of funding per project to a lesser amount so that an optimal number of projects may be funded with regard to relative safety benefits and project costs. The Commission may also consider funding for larger safety projects for which the GCPF grant would constitute some portion of the total cost.

Selection of Projects

The Commission will initiate a "call for projects," soliciting applications within a specific timeframe. After the specified submittal deadline, all applications will be reviewed simultaneously. Further information about the Grade Crossing Protective Fund may be obtained on the Commission's website at www.wutc.wa.gov/GCPFgrants, or by contacting Ahmer Nizam at (360) 664-1345 or Sally Turnbull at (360) 664-1230.

The Commission will review and select projects for funding based on the relative severity of the hazard being addressed, the safety benefits resulting from a project, the costs of implementing a project, and geographic diversity. For projects that require physical installations and are selected after an initial prioritization of applications,* Commission Staff will organize an on-site meeting with representatives of the railroad, local agency, the applicant (if different from the railroad or local agency), and other entities if appropriate. The purpose of the meeting is to verify information included in the application, gain first-hand knowledge of the hazard and proposal, and give all relevant parties an opportunity to recommend alternatives or additional safety needs. The Commission will approve at an open meeting all projects that receive GCPF funds, as well as the amount of any GCPF funding, if any, to be awarded to each project. Final award of GCPF grants will be contingent upon the recipient signing an agreement specifying the terms of the grant.

* Since funding is limited, an initial prioritization will reduce the number of eligible applicants to a number consistent with the amount of funding available.