

WASHINGTON



UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION



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

RECEIVED
STANDARD MANAGEMENT
JAN 19 AM 11:11
STATE OF WASH
UTIL. AND TRANS
COMMISSION

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: City of Sultan

Organization: Municipal Government

Address: PO Box 1199

Sultan, WA 98294

Office Phone: 360.793.2231

E-mail: donna.murphy@ci.sultan.wa.us

Cell Phone: N/A

Fax Number: 360.793.3344

Type of Application: Miscellaneous Safety Project

- 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.

**Dan Ramirez, citizen and property owner – Public/Private Partnership
Harmsen & Associates, Inc. – Design Engineer - PO Box 516 Monroe, WA 98272
BNSF Railroad – Dan MacDonald 2454 Occidental Avenue South, Suite 1-A
Seattle, WA 98104-1105 – 206.625.6146**

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:*

Trucks and cars hang up at this unsafe crossing due to the severe grade change. The grade is too steep and needs to be rounded to lessen the opportunity for “High Centering”. The City has a number of reports of vehicle damage caused by the crossing at this location.

***See Attached Letters of Support**

This crossing also has a very unsafe site distance because it’s too narrow and vehicles can’t see one another from either side. The sight crossing is in very poor shape and is extremely rough.

“My neighbor had his trailer become high centered and get stuck on the tracks. I have another neighbor whose car high centered and was unable to move without a push. I have also seen trailers that had to have the wheels blocked in order to cross the tracks without getting high centered and stuck”..... *Dan Ramirez, resident and property owner*

*** Sultan School District sends 3 school busses per day over this dangerous crossing (6 trips per day) *See attached Letter of Support***

- 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):*

The City of Sultan proposes to bring the street elevation up to railroad height and level out the steep grade, making the crossing safer and reduce the chance of trucks “high centering” and person vehicles scraping as they are crossing the tracks.

Detailed Description: Attached is an engineer’s sketch of the proposed project and a profile of the project.

Hazard Mitigation: Attached are testimonials of the hazard of this crossing and proof that approval of this grant will mitigate those dangerous situations

3) *Provide cost estimates, including those related to long-term maintenance:*

PRELIMINARY CONSTRUCTION COST OPINION

PROJECT:	RR APPROACH-CROSSING-GRANT	CLIENT:	RAMIREZ		
ADDRESS:	BOUNDARY ROAD	PREPARED:	DWM	DATE:	01/10/06
POND	SULTAN, WA	CHECKED :	SRM	JOB NO:	04-258
ITEM	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	UNITS	UNIT COST	TOTAL COST
#REF!	CLEAR AND GRUB	1	JOB	750.00	\$750
#REF!	STRIPPINGS	47	CY	3.25	\$154
#REF!	EXCAVATION	95	CY	3.25	\$308
#REF!	EMBANKMENT CONSTRUCTION	521	CY	4.00	\$2,086
#REF!	STRUCTURAL FILL	521	CY	19.00	\$9,908
#REF!	RECONSTRUCT RR CROSSING	1	JOB	24000.00	\$24,000
	SUBTOTAL CONSTRUCTION COSTS				\$13,206
	CONTINGENCY 20%	0			\$2,641
	GRAND TOTAL CONSTRUCTION COSTS				\$39,847

Long-term maintenance: The City of Sultan will maintain the public street, standard pavement markings, and protective barriers or guardrails. The railroad will operate and maintain the signals and the tracks.

*** The City of Sultan is requesting \$20,000 for this project. The remaining \$19,847 will be paid with a Private/Public Partnership Agreement.**

4) *Estimated timeline of project, if approved:*

This project can be complete within 120 days of construction approval.

5) *If known, provide a description of how the project's success would be measured:*

As you can see from the attached Letters of Support, this crossing is dangerous, and approval of this application could clearly avoid future fatalities. The attached testimonials prove that cars and trucks regularly get “stuck” at this crossing, and so far they’ve been able to free themselves before a catastrophe occurs.

Success of this project will be measured merely by the successful passage of vehicles over the tracks at this location. Complaints would cease, and people and their property will be safe.

- 6) *Other comments:*
Please take the time to read the attached frustrating and heartfelt Letters of Support sent from people who use this crossing daily. Thank you.

For questions or assistance, please contact Mark Halliday at 360-664-1232 (e-mail mhallida@wutc.wa.gov) or Vicki Elliott at 360-664-1100 (e-mail velliott@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 Mark Halliday at (360) 664-1232 or Vicki Elliott at (360) 664-1100.

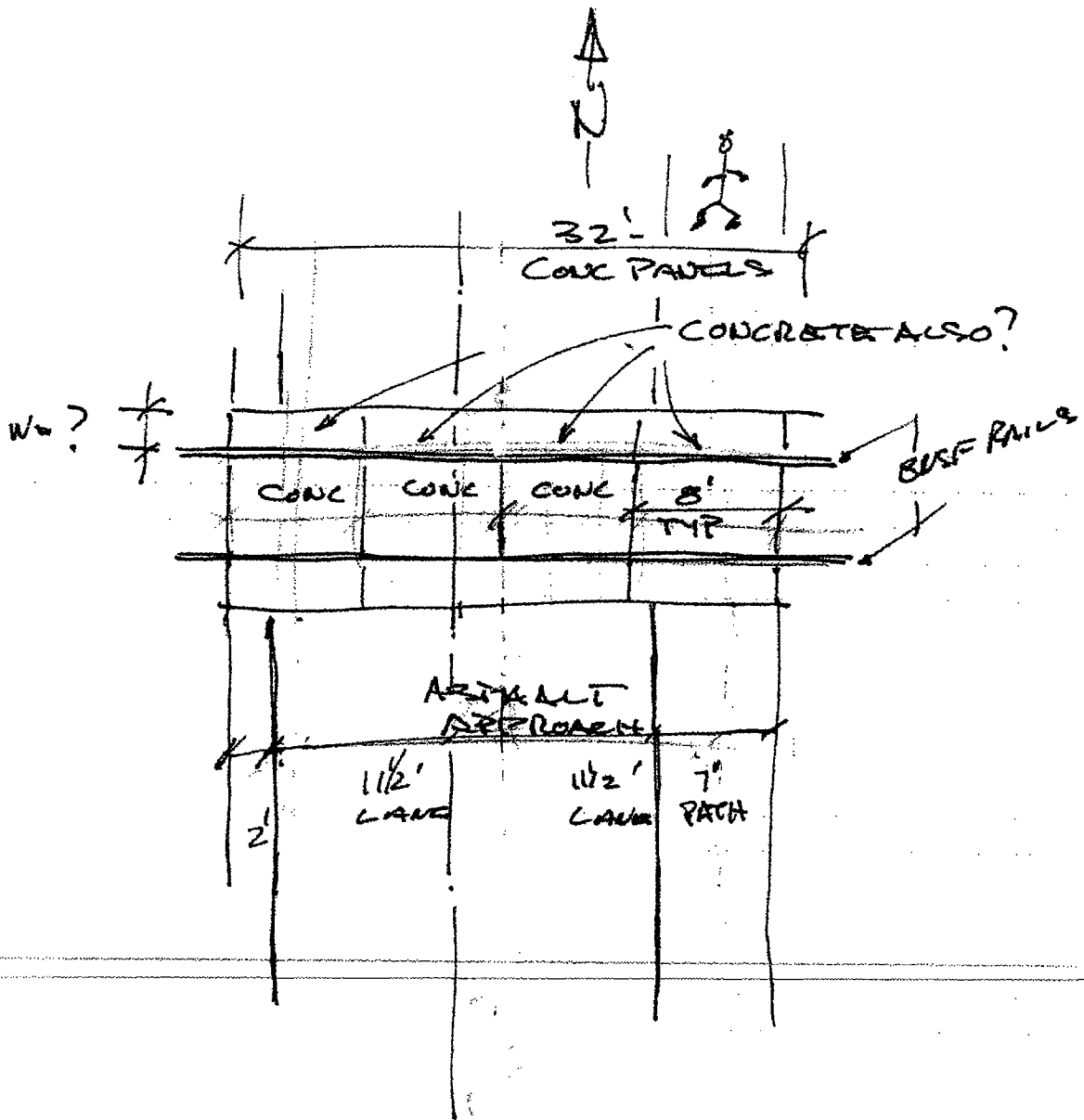
The Commission will review and select projects for funding based on the relative severity of the hazard being addressed, the safety benefits resulting from a project, the costs of implementing a project, and geographic diversity. For projects that require physical installations and are selected after 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.

Detailed Description

Engineer's Profile of
the Project



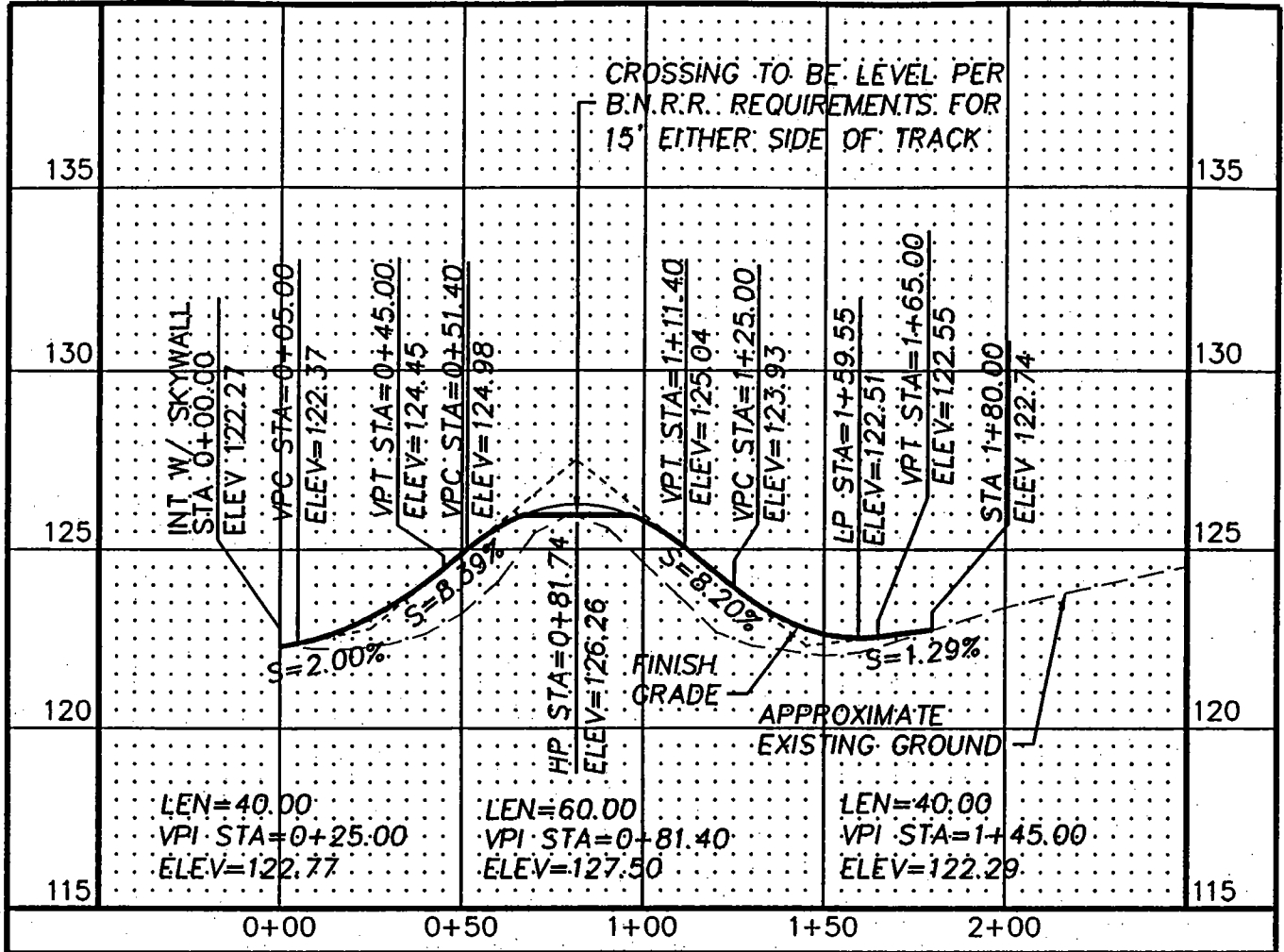
RAMIREZ. 04.230

April 23, 2005

David Mc

December 13, 2005

RANGE 8 EAST, W.M.



5
P4

FOUNDRY ROAD PROFILE

SCALE: H: 1" = 50'
V: 1" = 5'

Letters of Support



GOLD BAR • INDEX • STARTUP • SULTAN

SULTAN SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 311

514 4th Street • Sultan, Washington 98294
(360) 793-9800 • Fax (360) 793-9890

January 13, 2006

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Doug Moore; I am the Transportation Supervisor for Sultan School District. I am writing to give my support for the repair of the railroad crossing on the Foundry Rd in Sultan.

The crossing needs to have a lot work. When our bus is approaching the tracks from the north a power control box on the west side of the road that blocks the line of sight for oncoming trains. The bus driver has a hard time getting enough room past the power control box to see down the track, and if a train is coming the crossing arm could possibly hit the bus or be real close to hitting the bus as it is coming down. The approach to the track is very steep and any low clearance cars would bottom out as it crossed over the tracks. The tracks are very rough and need to be rebuilt.

I strongly urge you to approve this grant to improve this track crossing to make it safer to cross for buses and vehicles.

Sincerely,

Doug Moore
Transportation Supervisor
Sultan School District
(360) 793-9820
doug.moore@sultan.k12.wa.us



Snohomish County Fire District #5

P.O. Box 149 • 304 Alder Street • Sultan • Washington • 98294
Phone: (360) 793-1179 Fax: (360) 793-1932

January 17, 2006

To Whom It May Concern:

We are not strangers to Railroad Crossing accidents in Fire District Five. One tragic accident resulted in the death of a firefighter's wife who after crossing the tracks to take her child to a friend's home was hit as she left. Invariably, improvements to crossings are made **after** such heartbreaking incidents.

Most of these tragedies are foreseeable and preventable. The crossing at Foundry Drive is unquestionably a poor risk. Increasing traffic and a deteriorating crossing, combined with a farmer crossing design make it so. Although I am unaware of a vehicle or person being hit at the Foundry Drive Crossing, there have been near misses.

We are particularly concerned for young drivers, older people, and young mothers with vehicles full of children. This crossing is unforgiving and makes no allowance for inexperience, diminished reaction or distractions.

Fire District Five supports the City's effort to make improvements to this crossing **before** a tragedy occurs. Thank you for the opportunity to comment. We are available if further assistance can be rendered.

Sincerely,

Merlin Halverson
Fire Chief



SULTAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

515 Main Street
Post Office Box 1650
Sultan, Washington 98294
(360) 793-1051 Fax (360) 793-7774

Fred Walser, Chief of Police

January 17, 2006

Washington State Utilities and Transportation Commission
Olympia, Washington

Re/ Grade Crossing Grant Request

Gentlemen/Ladies,

The Sultan Police Department has assisted at the scene of two truck-trailer high center incidents the past two years at the Burlington-Northern Santa-Fe railroad crossing on Foundry Drive in our city. Both incidents involved trucks becoming stuck crossways on the tracks at the sharply graded track crossing. *In our opinion the size and grade of this crossing is too pronounced to afford safe crossing of all types of vehicles.*

We support the request for a Grade Crossing Protection Grant.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Fred B. Walser".

Fred B. Walser
Chief of Police

Donna Murphy

From: "Bob Gilmore" <bob.gilmore@romacindustries.com>
To: <donna.murphy@ci.sultan.wa.us>
Sent: Friday, January 13, 2006 2:46 PM
Subject: Railroad crossing at Foundry Drive

Donna,

Thank you for your interest in the railroad crossing near our facility on Foundry Drive. The crossing has been a source of concern for us for many years due to the poor approaches to the crossing and ultimately safety challenges it presents. In the past year I approached the Public Works Department for the City of Sultan and requested a special sign be made and posted that shows commercial truck drivers the profile of the crossing. This was due to several incidents where trucks, either attempted to make the crossing, or approached it then had to back away from it, which ultimately caused another safety hazard. This sign has been installed.

The worst incident of record was approximately 4 years ago when a truck delivering raw materials to our facility attempted to cross the track at this location, apparently to turn around. The truck cleared the tracks but the trailer did not and actually became high-centered and virtually wedged on the tracks. The truck couldn't move and had completely blocked the railroad tracks and Foundry Drive. Romac employees rushed to the truck driver's aid and used forklifts to lift the trailer and allow the truck to back off the tracks. This incident was a very close call since a train likely would not have been able to stop in time, before hitting the semi truck and trailer. A derailment could have sent the truck and/or parts of the train into a residential area or into parts of our manufacturing facility. As you know, that part of our facility has molten iron and large amounts of natural gas and high voltage electricity.

Furthermore, although we take extra effort to keep our delivery trucks away from the tracks, there can always be that one truck that doesn't get the message or a truck delivering materials to any of the homes in the Skywall development that could also have trouble with the tracks. I have recently been informed that the Ramirez property may be developed which will bring considerable construction and ultimately families to crossing the intersection.

I have been told that a train passes through our town on the average of every 36 minutes, including the two daily passenger trains. This crossing definitely needs our attention for improved public safety and in support of the potential residential growth in the Skywall development.

Please let me know if we can help in any way to make these changes happen.

Thanks again,

Bob Gilmore

Romac Industries, Inc.
Sultan Division
125 Foundry Dr.
Sultan, WA 98294
360 793-6079
bob.gilmore@romacindustries.com

Jan. 18, 2006

To Whom It May Concern:

This is the fourth letter I have written to the City of Sultan about the unsafe railroad crossing on Foundry Drive before reaching Skywall Drive. The road leading up to and down off the railroad tracks is too steep. Trailers gouge the road, further destroying the road. The crossing itself is unsafe - my 2004 Hyundai Sonata cannot cross straight - I must angle across the tracks to not "bottom out" - leaving me vulnerable to on-coming traffic.

I feel this is treacherous and is our only entrance/exit to our homes + thus cannot be avoided.

Please help before we incur a fatality in our neighborhood.

Sincerely,
Catherine Ann Steppe
207 Skywall Drive
Sultan, WA 98294
(360) 793-3605

January 6, 2006

Donna Murphy
City of Sultan
319 Main Street
PO Box 1199
Sultan, WA 98294

Re: Railroad Crossing at Foundry Drive/Skywall Drive
Condition of Skywall Drive

Dear Donna:

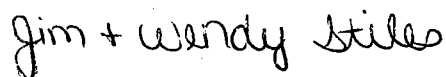
Please find enclosed a copy of a letter we submitted to the City of Sultan almost two years ago requesting repairs to the railroad crossing at Skywall Drive. To date, we have not received any acknowledgement to this correspondence from the City nor have any improvements been done. However, we understand from our neighbor, Dan Ramirez, that you are currently working on a possible grant to correct this problem and would like to include our complaint as documentation of this problem.

The situation has continued to deteriorate since we originally wrote to the City in March of 2004. If you cross over the tracks to Skywall Drive, you can clearly see the ruts in the road where many vehicles have not been able to make the crossing without tearing up the pavement. As stated in our original correspondence, the only way we can exit our street Drive is to cross the tracks on the west side (putting us in the oncoming traffic lane). We used to be able to clear that side but are now bottoming out there as well. It is impossible for us to even attempt the east side of the crossing. This is extremely dangerous and still results in damage to our vehicle. The only other option for us would be to drive along the tracks to Dyer and cross there but since it is nothing more than a dirt path and not suitable for passenger vehicles, that is not truly an option.

We hope the City will finally do something with this inadequate and dangerous crossing. Our street tends to be very neglected by the City yet we pay the same in taxes as other citizens. We know several neighbors have voiced these concerns yet the City rarely responds.

Thank-you for your work on this situation.

Sincerely,



Jim and Wendy Stiles
205 Skywall Drive
Sultan, WA 98294
(360) 793-0911

March 24, 2004

FILE

Rick Cisar, City Planner
Connie Dunn, Public Works
Craig Bruner, City Inspector
319 Main Street
PO Box 1199
Sultan, WA 98294

Re: Railroad Crossing at Foundry Drive/Skywall Drive
Condition of Skywall Drive

Dear Mr. Cisar, Ms. Dunn and Mr. Bruner:

Please find enclosed a copy of a letter recently submitted to you from our neighbor, Catherine Steppe. We also echo Ms. Steppe's concerns regarding the railroad crossing for Skywall Drive and request your assistance in improving this crossing.

We recently purchased a new vehicle that cannot go over the tracks without bottoming out. Our only option so as not to destroy the underside of our car is to cross the tracks diagonally or totally on the west side of the crossing. This is extremely dangerous and sets us up for potential liability should an accident occur with another vehicle but we have no other choice to get off our street. This is our one and only access.

In addition to the crossing problems, please be aware that the condition of Skywall Drive itself is very poor. Numerous floods have destroyed the road to the point that large pot holes and cracked pavement have appeared in front of our house. These holes have been patched in the past but unfortunately, this has not solved the problem. Chunks of the road frequently end up in our yard from passing vehicles. The uneven surface also creates drainage problems. We respectfully request that the City please repave this section of the roadway as soon as possible and not continually patch it.

Skywall Drive tends to be very neglected by the City and it is very frustrating as taxpayers of the City of Sultan to continue to be put off and/or ignored. We are aware that several of our other neighbors have voiced similar concerns and complaints to the City with no results.

We appreciate your attention to these matters.

Sincerely,

Jim and Wendy Stiles
205 Skywall Drive
Sultan, WA 98294
(360) 793-0911

December 13, 2005

RECEIVED
DEC 13 2005
BY:.....

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing this letter about a concern I have regarding the railroad crossing that serves Skywall Drive and Foundry Drive. There are approximately 40 homes that utilize this crossing. My residence is located at 210 Foundry Drive and I have been a Sultan resident for over 30 years.

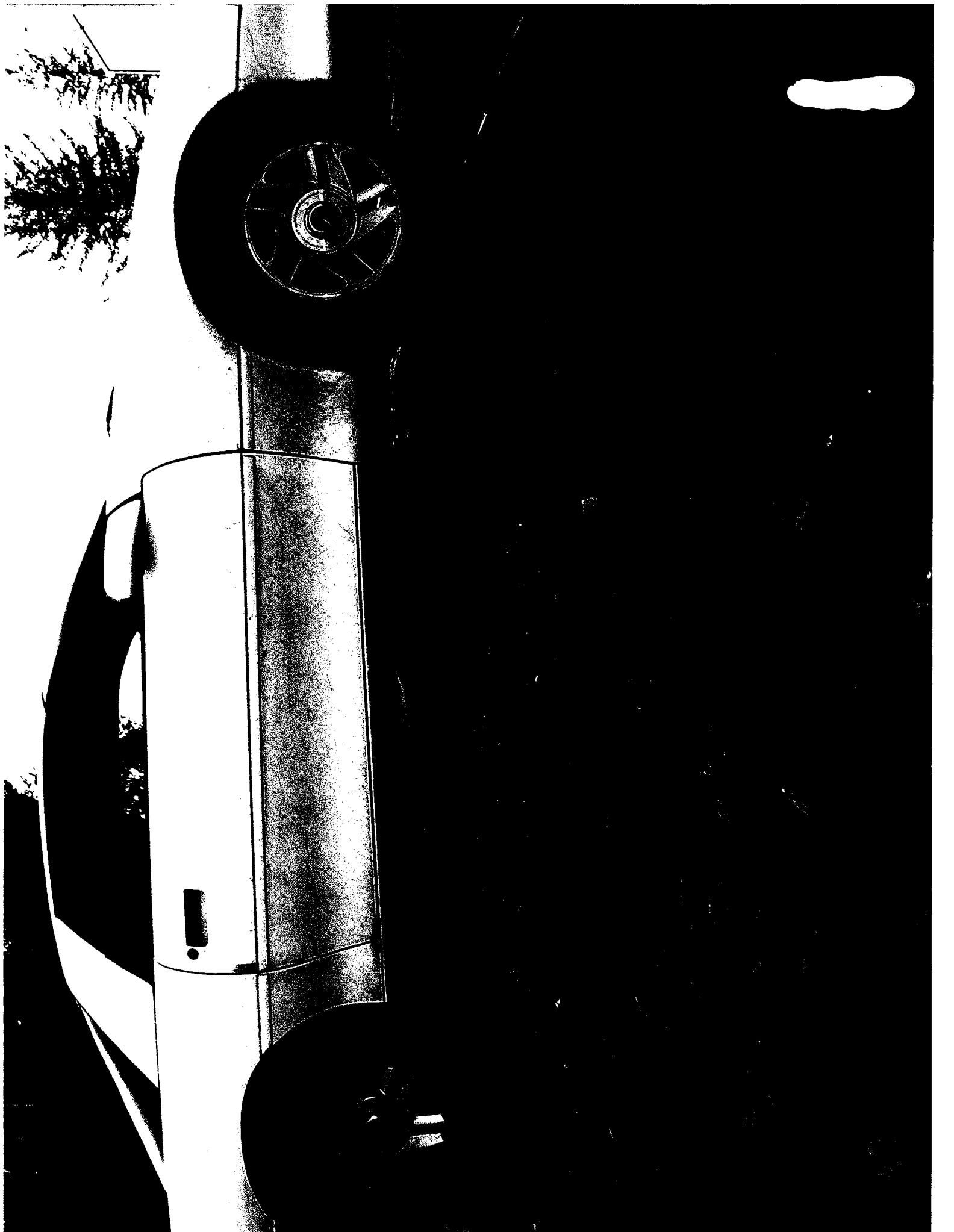
I have heard my neighbors complain for many years about the safety issues regarding this crossing and I feel that it is time to make a formal complaint. Many cars scrape while crossing the tracks. See picture #1. In pictures 2, 3, and 4 you can observe deep ruts created by trailers scraping because of the steep approaches. In pictures 5, 6, 7 and 8 you can see the poor condition of the wooden crossing ties and the scraping of the concrete surface by the undercarriages of cars.

Although the catalytic converter on my car has been crushed because of the condition of the tracks, my main concern is safety. My neighbor had his trailer become high centered and get stuck on the tracks. I have another neighbor whose car high centered and was unable to move without a push. I have also seen trailers that had to have the wheels blocked in order to cross the tracks without getting high centered and stuck. I fear that it is only a matter of time before someone gets hurt because of the condition of the tracks at the crossing at Skywall Drive. I appreciate your thoughtful consideration and rapid response to this safety hazard in Sultan.

Sincerely,



Daniel A. Ramirez

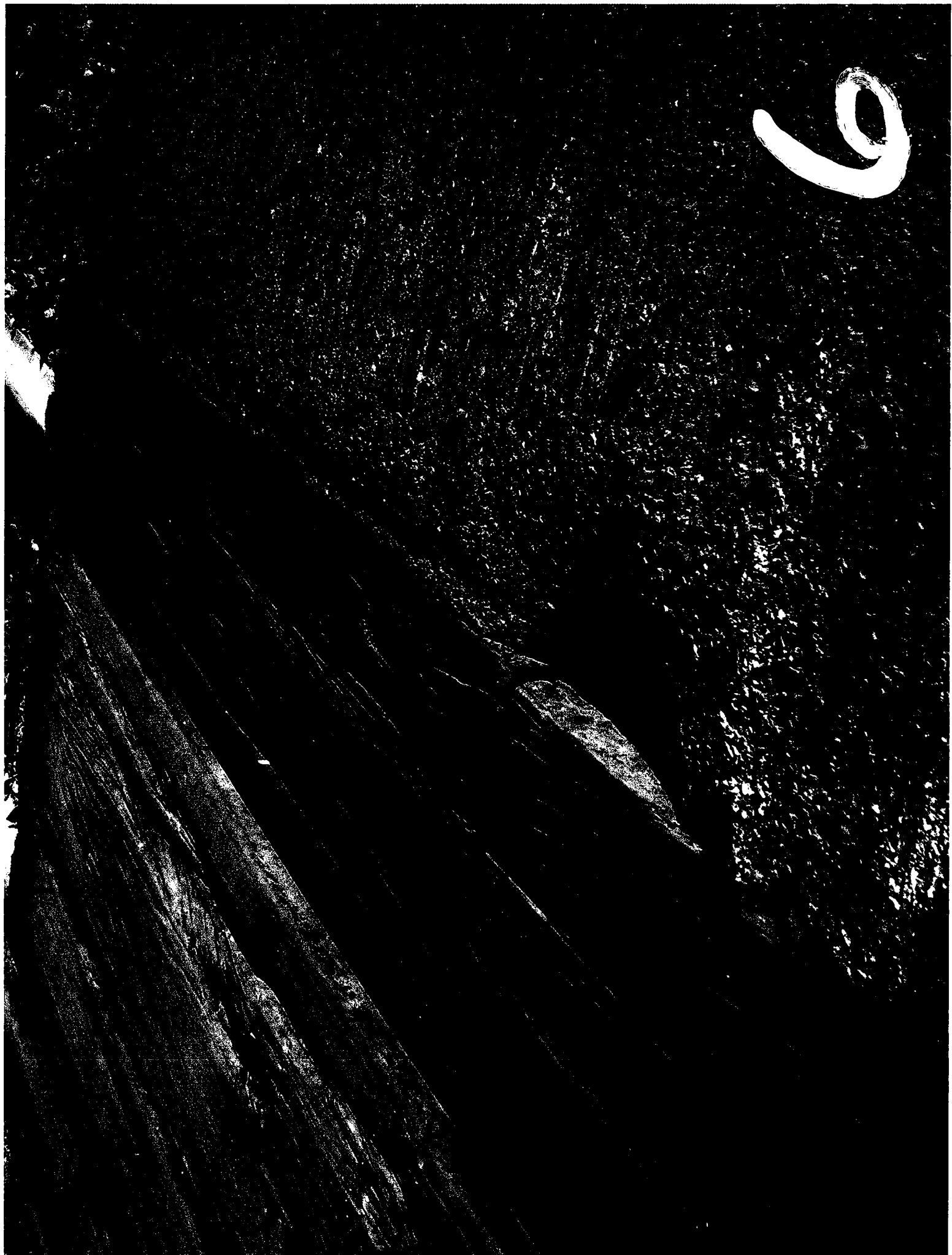


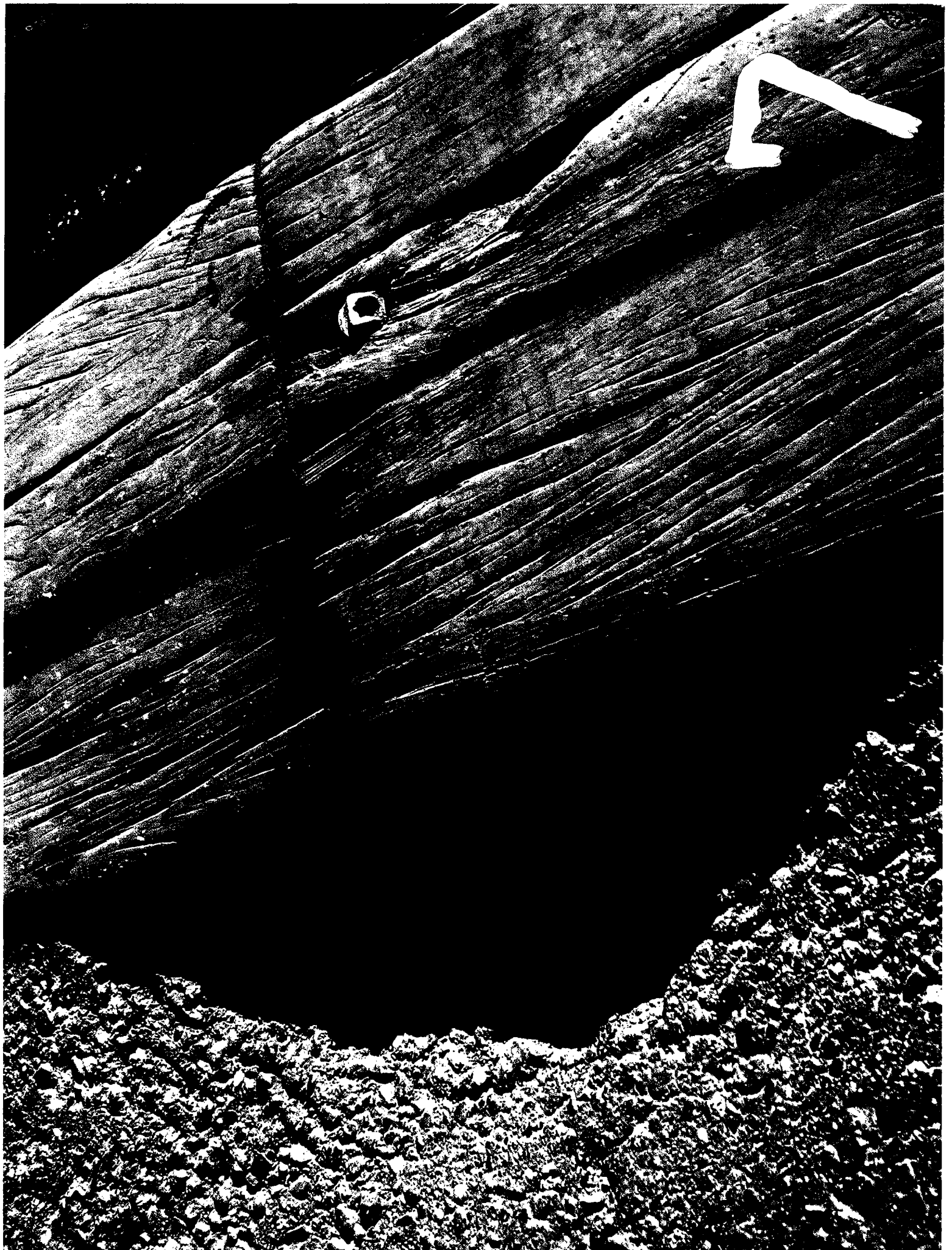
2

M

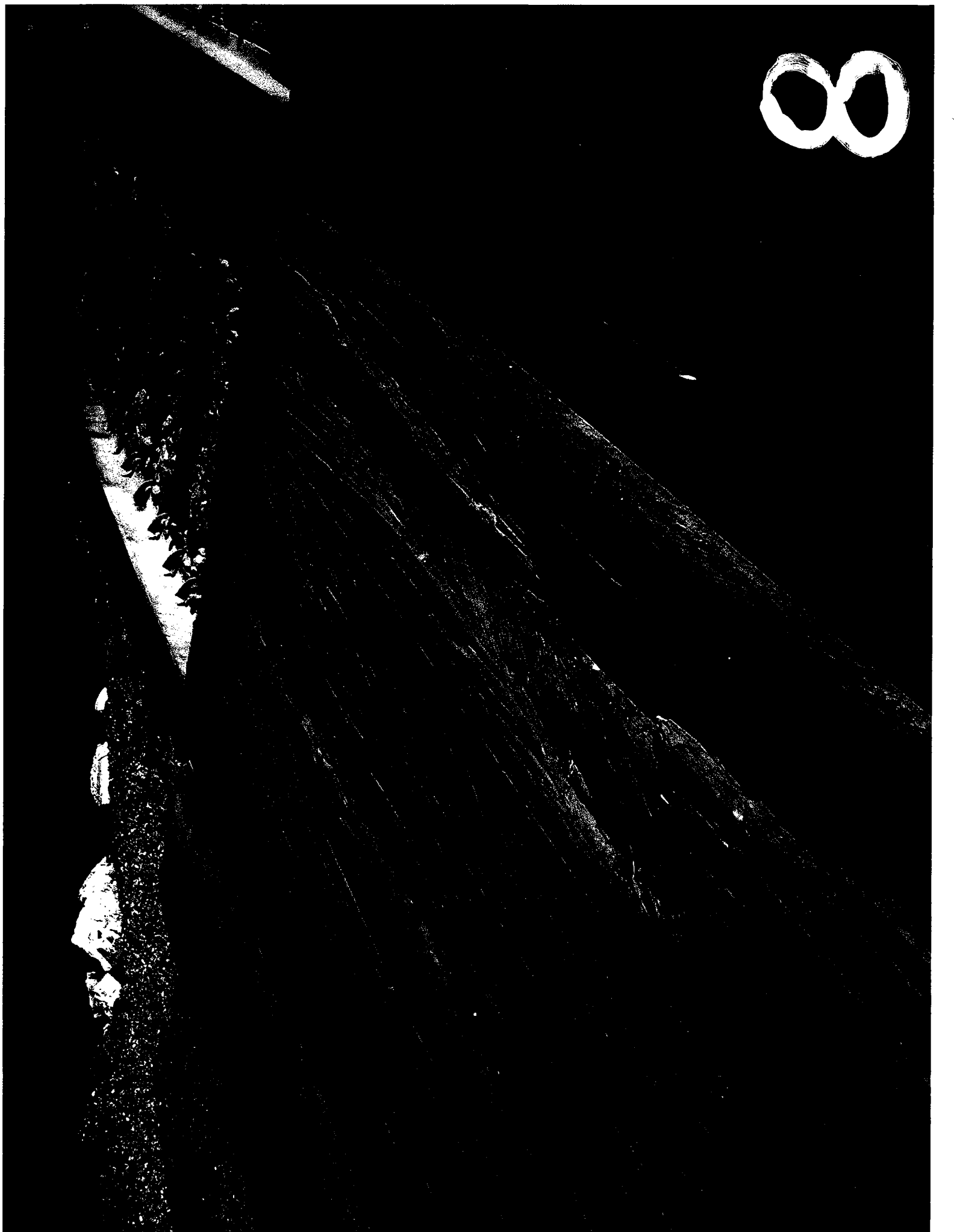
4

5





00



1-6-06

To: Nonna Murphy, or to whom
it may concern:

We, Al & Beve Holdt live
on Skywall Rd., down from
Romac Foundry. We have
to go over the railroad tracks
to and fro many times a day.

The tracks are very, very
dangerous, we have to
straddle them, and we have
hit the bottom of our car.

I've been told, its up to the
City to fix them, and I've been
told its up to the railroad.

The Crossing is so bad
that I cannot ride my
bicycle over them or our
Granddaughter either.

Believe me, there is an
accident (bad) waiting to

(2)

happen.

We have a whole lot of people, young, old & many children whom live here and cross these tracks many times.

Its pretty bad when you have to pick up a kiddies wagon & carry it over these railroad tracks.

Please, lets do something to prevent a fatality.

Sure do hope somebody will care, and do something about this dangerous situation.

Thank you very much.
from:

Al & Beue Heldt

215 Skyway Dr.

Sultan, WA, 98294.

ph # (360) 793-0127

P.S.

Please Care!

Donna Murphy

From: "Darke-Mallow, Christi" <Darke-MallowC@monroe.wednet.edu>
To: <donna.murphy@ci.sultan.wa.us>
Sent: Friday, January 13, 2006 2:11 PM
Subject: RR Grade Crossing Grant from the UTC

To Thom It May Concern:

It is my understanding that the City of Sultan has an opportunity to apply for a Railroad Grade Crossing Grant from the UTC. I support this application, with hopes that the railroad crossing leading to my home, which has caused numerous property damage to our vehicles, to be improved. There have been numerous times that I have not felt safe going over the tracks due to the condition of the road on either side of the crossing. We do not have any other roads leading into our homes, so we have no choice but to use the railroad crossing daily .

My hope is that the railroad crossing be improved before someone is injured, or severe property damage occurs.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Christi Darke-Mallow
1322 Skywall Drive
Sultan, WA 98294

1/16/06

Hello Donna:

My name is Gordon Riemland and I live at 1309 Skywall Drive and use the railroad crossing leading into Skywall Drive daily! Both my 1996 Honda Accord and my 2002 Saturn bottom out when crossing the railroad tracks causing damage too both the muffler & the catalytic converter! Also I have a 2005 32' enclosed car hauler that when I brought it home from buying it the skids on the very back drug real hard into the black top! When I tried too see if I could make it back out the skids on the back drug so hard that it stopped the truck & trailer on the crossing and I had too be pulled backwards to unblock the railroad tracks and that was with no load in the trailer meaning the trailer is traveling at it's highest level! So needless to say I have a very expensive trailer to I can only use for storage! If Sultan does get this \$20,000 and uses it too improve the slope on both sides of the railroad tracks it would be a huge improvement so that I can cross the railroad track without causing damage to my vehicles!!!!

Thank You
Gordon Riemland

P.O. Box 1309
1309 Skywall Drive
Sultan Washington 98294

Donna Murphy

From: <tkrby@comcast.net>
To: <donna.murphy@ci.sultan.wa.us>
Sent: Thursday, January 12, 2006 11:46 AM
Subject: Skywall Drive Resident

January 12, 2006

Tim and Kim Kennedy
1315 Skywall Drive
Sultan, WA 98294
(360) 793-3375

Dear Donna Murphy:

I am writing to you regarding railroad crossing at Skywall Drive and Foundry. Upgrade to this crossing is over due.

My husband and I have had to drag utility trailers and car trailers over this crossing for the past eleven years.

My Son's stock Toyota Corolla car has to go over to the left into the on coming lane to cross over because his car can not

make the right side crossing and drags and hit's the bottom of his car when he has to cross on the right. His car is not the only car I see do this at this railroad crossing, I can count eight other cars that live on Skywall Drive that I have seen

cross over onto the left side to avoid damaging the bottom of their vehicles.

We believe this crossing is extremely dangerous for all vehicles, trailers and motorhomes due to the slopes on both sides and worry that someone will get their vehicle stuck on the railroad tracks at the same time a unstoppable train is on its way to the Skywall Drive railroad crossing.

Have you seen the scrape marks in the slope from a Sport Utility Trailer that crossed their very often last summer? I was very glad no trains were coming at those times for the amount of time it took him to get over the railroad tracks.

Besides damage to vehicles and trailers, someone getting stuck on the railroad tracks and hit by a train is one of my biggest worries for the

Skywall Drive railroad crossing, along with those people that have no idea and have never driven into Skywall Drive the danger of driving their vehicles over the railroad crossing for not knowing someone is in their lane when they are coming over the railroad crossing causing head on collision - or that their car is too low to make the crossing and get their car stuck there with the possibility of a train coming to kill them.

Please relay our concerns to the Railroad Grade Crossing Grant from the Utilities and Transportation Commission.

Thank you in advance for your help in improving Skywall Drive railroad crossing.

Sincerely,
Tim and Kim Kennedy

1/12/2006

Ray E. & Kay George
1304 Skywall Drive
Sultan, WA 98294
Phone: 360-793-2305
Fax: 360-793-2235

January 12, 2006

Ms. Donna Murphy, Grants Coordinator
City of Sultan
P.O. Box 1199
Sultan WA 98294

Re: Railroad grade crossing on Foundry Drive, leading to Skywall Drive.

Dear Ms. Murphy:

This is in response to your letter of January 10, 2006 seeking support for grant application to improve the BNSF Railroad Crossing leading to Skywall Drive. I fully support any efforts geared towards improving this particular crossing. As an affected property owner, I have regularly either witnessed or experienced serious safety problems with this crossing. There are two problem areas in this regard.

First, it is common for the signal to fail, requiring BNSF maintenance personnel to come and reset the signal. Most often, the gate will fail in the down position; i.e. not returning to the upright position after a train has passed. To get through the gate, drivers maneuver their cars around the gate bars. Aside from the inherently obvious hazard in doing this, the hazard is magnified by the potential for a car's wheels to drop between the tracks where it could be come trapped. I have also personally witnessed the gate failing in the up position on one occasion. Under this type of failure, there is no warning to a driver that a train may be coming.

Secondly, the leading and trailing grades to the crossing are too steep for many vehicles to clear the tracks while crossing. I know of a delivery truck that got stuck in a high center position on this crossing. The driver knew the people at the foundry and got them to quickly come over with a fork lift and assist in getting the truck/trailer out of this predicament. Fortunately, no train was coming during this period of time. Passenger cars with low ground clearances also tend to hang up on this crossing.

As this is a very busy track, with traffic of some 28 trains per day, it is a very real possibility that the unthinkable could happen if this crossing is not improved to handle the traffic that regularly crosses it.

Best Regards,

Ray E. George

Donna Murphy

From: "Jaemi Bermudez" <jaemicherib@gmail.com>
To: <donna.murphy@ci.sultan.wa.us>
Sent: Thursday, January 12, 2006 10:49 AM
Subject: Safety and Damage Concern-Linda Ross

To: Donna Murphy
City of Sultan
PO Box 1199
Sultan, WA 98294

Linda Ross
1300 Skywall Dr.
Sultan, WA 98294

To the City of Sultan:

The railroad crossing leading to Skywall Drive has always been and still is a very dangerous crossing. Many people throughout the years have tried relentlessly to get this corrected.

Just last November a delivery truck trying to deliver appliances to our home got stuck going over the very steep incline on the railroad crossing track. Many trains (cargo and passenger) go over that crossing daily. Needless to say the delivery men were visually shaken. It could have been a tragic situation if a train had been there at the same time.

Also, on a daily basis certain vehicles cannot make it across the tracks and have to drive across horizontally to avoid damage to their vehicles. This is not a safe situation for an oncoming car from the opposite side. I can attest to this since my own Infiniti vehicle's engine blew up due to damage to the oil pan. It scraped going over the train track grade and the oil pick up tube located in the oil pan was crushed, therefore not delivering oil to the engine.

Not only is this crossing unsafe, it also creates expensive repair bills to personal property. This ongoing road hazard remains a dangerous situation that needs to be corrected now. Thank you for your time and consideration.

A Concerned Citizen,

Linda Ross

City of Sultan, Grants Coordinator
PO Box 1199 Sultan, WA 98294

January 11, 2006
1306 Skywall Dr.
Sultan, WA 98294

Dear Donna Murphy:

Thank you for the letter of January 10th regarding our local rail grade crossing. It has been a safety concern for some time. The view of vehicles and pedestrians immediately opposite the crossing is obscured due to the hood angle until the car begins descending from the tracks. Drivers of low clearance vehicles have found that approaching the east side of the crossing at an angle allows the most ground clearance. The possibility of a vehicle-disabling front end collision right on the tracks exists. Coupled with the unreliability of the warning gate this could result in a multiple fatality train/vehicle collision.

Your efforts to obtain the grade crossing improvement grant to correct the situation are appreciated. The lack of clearance damaged our vehicle's hydraulic steering hoses once when fully loaded, resulting in loss of fluid and costly repairs. This loss is nothing compared with what could happen.

Sincerely,

Ron Jackson

Pacific Northwest ConstruXion Inc
12822 307TH AV SE
Sultan WA 98294-9671

Office: 360-793-8641
Fax: 360-793-8642
E-mail: pncx1@aol.com

Donna Murphy
City of Sultan
PO Box 1199
Sultan WA 98294-1199

January 17 2006

Dear Donna

Last week you asked me to look at the railroad crossing at Skywall Drive with regards to 18 wheelers crossing safely. A dump truck & pony trailer could not cross safely. The tongue (device that connects the truck to the trailer) would drag on the tracks and hi-center preventing the truck from completing the crossing. . My opinion is, only a 2 or 3 axle dump truck could cross safely. This would raise the cost of development or road repairs because it would take twice as many trips to deliver crushed rock or asphalt.

This crossing also limits the size of heavy equipment that could be moved over it safely and legally. My lowboy trailer (heavy machinery moving trailer) would also hi-center on the tracks. The other trailer I have and other contractors have to use would be a tilt trailer. It is coupled close to the truck and hauls less weight because of the close axle spacing to the truck. Going over a steep ramped crossing with this combination can be done but it does put a greater strain on the towing vehicles hitch.

Steeply ramped crossings scare me, they are un-safe. When bidding construction projects with similar crossing conditions it can be a deciding factor when I ask myself "do I want this project that bad".

If you would like a demonstration with an empty dump truck and trailer please let me know.

Sincerely

Received Via E-Mail
Gordon MacDonald, President
Pacific Northwest ConstruXion Inc

Donna Murphy

From: "Richard Muller" <r.muller3@verizon.net>
To: "Donna Murphy" <donna.murphy@ci.sultan.wa.us>
Sent: Monday, January 09, 2006 9:35 PM
Attach: Rail Road crossing Foundry Rd. 001.jpg; Rail Road crossing Foundry Rd. 006.jpg; Rail Road crossing Foundry Rd. 002.jpg; Rail Road crossing Foundry Rd. 003.jpg; Rail Road crossing Foundry Rd. 004.jpg; Rail Road crossing Foundry Rd. 005.jpg
Subject: Railroad Crossing

Donna,

Just to get back with you on the Railroad crossing on Foundry/Skywall Drive road in town. I have filed a complaint with the Burlington rail road and the city of Sultan. This goes back a couple of years may three. Burlington Rail had repaired the crossing in our community. Since then my Volvo and others have to cross the railroad at an angle so that we do not hit as we go cross. That in itself is dangerous because we in the community are driving on the wrong side of the street, which can cause an accident. In the mean time we are scrapping going cross the rail. At present my Volvo and I'm sure other vehicles are sustaining some damage. My Volvo will need a new exhaust system shortly... I will attach pictures of the crossing .

Please fell free to contact me anytime.

Richard Muller
Collocation Construction Manager
Lyle Representing Cingular Wireless
206.940-3218
r.muller3@verizon.net

