

BEFORE THE WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION

THE BURLINGTON NORTHERN SANTA FE RAILWAY COMPANY	DOCKET NO. TR-020951
Petitioner,	ORDER GRANTING PETITION TO UPGRADE WARNING DEVICES AT THE RAILROAD AVENUE HIGHWAY-RAIL GRADE CROSSING
v.	
EVERETT, WASHINGTON	D.O.T. 084992M
Respondent	W.U.T.C. 2ASAG 1783.00

BACKGROUND

- 1 On July 23, 2002, 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 Railroad Avenue and the petitioner's tracks, in the SW ¼ of the SW ¼ of Section 21, Township 29 N., Range 5 E., W.M., in Everett, 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 Railroad Avenue, in the vicinity of the crossing, is classified as an urban local roadway. The roadway consists of one lane for each direction of traffic and a vehicle speed limit of 25 mph. Average daily traffic through the crossing is estimated at 644 vehicles, including 207 trucks and 12 school bus trips. The tracks cross the roadway at an acute angle and the east-bound roadway approach is curved. These characteristics combined with heavy vegetation along the north side of Railroad Avenue diminish sight distance of approaching trains, especially for east-bound drivers. A roadway intersection of Railroad Avenue and an unidentified public street is located immediately east of the crossing in the northeast quadrant. The roadway intersection is close enough to the grade crossing that the south-bound approach towards the crossing on the unidentified roadway should be considered an approach to the grade crossing and treated as such (i.e. equipped with railroad advance warning signs).

4 Petitioner maintains one main track through the crossing. Daily train traffic includes
nine freight trains and two passenger trains operating at a maximum timetable speeds
of 15 MPH and 35 MPH respectively.

5 Warning devices at the crossing include standard crossbuck signs and railroad
advance warning signs. Petitioner proposes to upgrade warning devices by installing
shoulder-mounted flashing light signals and gates. In addition to the standard signal
installation, an extra set of flashing light signals is also proposed to face northeast
towards the roadway that intersects with Railroad Avenue in the crossing's northeast
quadrant. The installations are being proposed in the interest of improving safety for
highway users.

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

7 This matter was brought before the Commission at its regularly scheduled open
meeting on August 14, 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 2ASAG 1783.00 and located at the intersection of Railroad
Avenue and the petitioner's tracks, in Everett, 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) The City of Everett must install and maintain railroad pavement markings on Railroad Avenue as specified in section 8B-4 of the U.S. Department of Transportation *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)*. A W10-4 railroad advance warning sign must be installed per MUTCD standards on the south-bound approach of the roadway that intersects Railroad Avenue in the northeast quadrant of the crossing.

- (5) Upon completion of the upgrades authorized herein, Petitioner must notify the Commission. Acceptance of the changes is subject to a compliance inspection by Commission Staff, verifying that the crossing is in full compliance with law, regulation, and the conditions specified herein.

DATED at Olympia, Washington and effective this 14th of August, 2002.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

CAROLE J. WASHBURN, Secretary