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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: Gary N. Ekstedt, P.E., County Road Engineer

Organization: Yakima County Public Services Department

Address: 128 North 2nd Street, 4th Floor, Courthouse
Yakima, WA, 98901

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Type of Application: Trespass Prevention 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.

Yakima County is the sole agency involved in this project.

Contact: Yakima County Public Works
Kent McHenry, Traffic Engineering Manager
128 N. 2nd Street, Room 408, Courthouse
Yakima, WA 98901
(509) 574-2300

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*

The potential for a catastrophic accident between local pedestrians (primarily students) and the train traffic on the Toppenish, Simcoe, and Western Rail Line, hereby known as the White Swan Branch Line (WSBL) has led Yakima County to propose the installation of trespass-prevention designed security fencing along 650 linear feet of track in the community of White Swan, WA (approximately 20 west of Toppenish).

In 1999, freight rail service on the WSBL returned when the Yakama Forest Products Log Mill facility began operations west of White Swan. Today, a minimum of two train trips occur each day through the proposed project corridor. Approximately 40% of the 3000 railcars servicing the WSBL in 2005 passed through the White Swan community. Several times each day (7:00 – 8:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., and 2:30 – 3:30 p.m.), elementary, middle and high school students residing in and around the unincorporated community of White Swan cross the WSBL line on their way to/from the Middle / High School campus. Quite often, students fail to utilize existing railway crossing zones and meander along the railway right of way, occasionally coming in conflict with railroad operations.

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:*

Yakima County proposes to install 650 linear feet of **WSDOT – Design Standard** six-foot cyclone fencing on the south side of the WSBL Railway between Curtis Rd. (east) and Signal Peak Rd (west). Installation of the trespass-prevention security fencing would deter students and other pedestrians from using this active railway as a pathway and cross at designated (marked) public crossings on Curtis, 1st Street, and Signal Peak Roads.

A site-map showing location of the trespass-prevention project is attached.

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

Cost figures as follows:

| Item | Unit | Quantity | Price | Cost |
|----------------------------|-------------|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|
| Mobilization | LS | 1 | \$2,500.00 | \$ 2,500.00 |
| Fencing | LF | 650 | \$ 13.00 | \$ 8,450.00 |
| Pull Posts | EA | 6 | \$ 50.00 | \$ 300.00 |
| Traffic Control | LS | 1 | \$3,000.00 | \$ 3,000.00 |
| Construction Eng. & Survey | LS | 1 | \$2,250.00 | \$ 2,250.00 |
| TERO | LS | 1 | 3.00 % | <u>\$ 500.00</u> |
| Construction Total | | | | \$17,000.00 |
| Preliminary Engineering | LS | 1 | \$3,000.00 | <u>\$ 3,000.00</u> |
| Project Total | | | | \$20,000.00 |

Long-term maintenance costs will be the responsibility of the railroad operator and funded through revenue generated through freight rail operations.

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

Yakima County will install the trespass prevention barrier within 120 days of receipt of funds.

- 5) *If known, provide a description of how the project's success would be measured:*
- Tracking by the railway operator of trespassing or train/pedestrian conflicts (near-accidents, train warnings) can be documented and compared to past operator experiences.
 - Direct observation by county or school district staff at unannounced times can provide a “random-sampling” effort in tracking pedestrian habits during high foot / rail traffic times.

6) *Other comments:*
Photographs of WSBL (White Swan) Security Project Zone are attached.



Photo compilation of (middle / high school) students walking along tracks after school.



(Left) -- East Half of corridor Zone with school bus crossing WSBL on Curtis Road w/ library fencing at left. (Middle) -- White Swan Library location next to WSBL. (Right) -- Student approaching 1st Street Crossing of WSBL (school campus and buses [center of picture] loading students only one block south of rail project corridor).

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)



Locomotive approaching project area (Signal Peak Road Crossing) from west.



Three students (in **red** oval) crossing railroad right-of-way as locomotive enters project area.



Person (in **red** oval) walking next to moving locomotive

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.