

January 7, 2008

Subject: Comments against closure DOT crossing #084737D

Prepared in conjunction with UTC public meetings Mount Vernon WA.

Docket Number: TR-070696

Commenters: Dr. John Haines and Dr. Ruth Haines

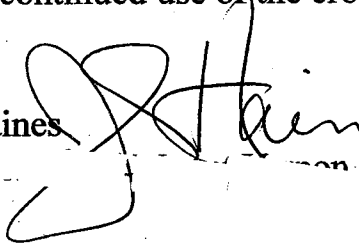
We are alarmed and concerned about your notice TR-070696 of the petition for abandonment and closure of the rail crossing at Hickox Road, Mount Vernon, WA. Our family's home is on Hickox Road very near the crossing. Your proposed closure would significantly threaten our health and safety, along with inconveniencing us on a daily basis as we travel to and from Mount Vernon. This closing will also significantly reduce the value of our property.

Of grave concern is the fact that we would be trapped should the Skagit River flood since Hickox Road joins Dike Road at the river. Second, we would have to wait much longer for local emergency crews to respond to a call from our house. We know already how important a quick response is since our 911 call of several months ago brought aid quickly. If the crossing is closed, the emergency vehicles would travel several extra miles to reach us. In addition, John has a bad heart and we chose this location for its ease of access to the hospital.

We have not yet received any information on the results of any SEPA studies, if any have been completed. Of particular concern to us are the results of ground water studies, light pollution studies, noise studies and flood hazard studies. What results do you have concerning hazardous materials handling and containment including volatile organics? Also, what have been the results of alternate traffic studies? Please advise as to where we can find the above mentioned results.

Surely the State can place railroad sidings in a more isolated area or provide for continued use of the crossing. Do not close the crossing.

Dr. John Haines



Dr. Ruth Haines

