

BEFORE THE WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION  
COMMISSION

WASHINGTON STATE	)	DOCKET NO. TR-010766
DEPARTMENT OF	)	
TRANSPORTATION	)	ORDER GRANTING PETITION
	)	TO INSTALL MEDIAN
Petitioner,	)	BARRIERS AT RICH ROAD SE
	)	
BURLINGTON NORTHERN	)	D.O.T. 085773C
SANTA FE RAILWAY COMPANY	)	
	)	W.U.T.C. 1K 34.40
Respondent	)	
.....	)	

**BACKGROUND**

- 1 On May 23, 2001, the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) filed a petition with the Commission, seeking authority to install median barriers at a highway-rail grade crossing. The crossing is located at the intersection of the respondent's tracks and Rich Road SE in Section 17, Township 17, Range 1W, W.M., in Thurston County, Washington.
- 2 Respondent has consented to an entry of an order by the Commission without further notice or hearing.

**DISCUSSION**

- 3 In the vicinity of the crossing, Rich Road is classified as a rural collector road, with one lane for each direction of traffic, and a vehicle speed limit of 35 mph. Average daily traffic through the crossing is estimated at 3,073 vehicles.
- 4 Respondent maintains two main-line tracks and one siding track through the crossing. Current daily train traffic averages 62 trains, including freight and commuter operations. The maximum allowable speeds for trains through the crossing are 50 mph for freight trains and 79 mph for passenger trains.
- 5 The crossing is equipped with flashing light signals and gates. The petitioner proposes to install a raised median barrier on both approaches to the crossing, that consists of yellow center-line curbing with flexible guide posts. The curbing will be 12 inches wide and 3 ½ to 4 inches high. The median barriers will extend 100 feet to the west and approximately 70 feet to the east, beginning at a point on the roadway center-line located across from each railroad gate arm. The eastern installation will be shorter than the western installation due to the presence of an intersecting roadway (Diagonal Road) located 90 feet east of the crossing. The installations will deter attempts by motorists to drive around lowered gates upon the approach of a train.

This crossing was chosen for median barrier installation due to its “high priority ranking” by WSDOT for such installations.

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

7 The Commissioners have reviewed the petition and have been fully 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 Washington State Department of Transportation for the installation of median separators at a highway-rail grade crossing, designated as WUTC 1K 34.40 and located at the intersection of Rich Road SE and the tracks of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad Company, in Thurston County, Washington, subject to the following conditions:

- (1) The installations must conform to the plans filed in this proceeding.
- (2) All devices must be installed in such a manner as to provide the required clearances for rail and vehicular traffic, and to allow a sufficient turning radius for left-turns from Diagonal Road towards the Rich Road grade crossing.
- (3) Upon completion of the installations authorized herein, petitioner must notify the Commission. Acceptance of the installation is subject to a compliance inspection and report by Commission Staff, verifying that the grade crossing is in full compliance with law and regulation and the conditions specified herein.

Dated at Olympia, Washington, and effective this 13<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2001.

THE WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

CAROLE J. WASHBURN, Secretary