



STATE OF WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

1300 S. Evergreen Park Dr. S.W., P.O. Box 47250 • Olympia, Washington 98504-7250
(360) 664-1160 • TTY (360) 586-8203

May 24, 2007

Ann Marie Gutwein, Programs Manager
W. Eugene Sampley, PE, Director of Public Works
Skagit County Public Works Department
1800 Continental Place
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

RE: Docket TR-070618, Proposed Blanchard Quiet Zone, Skagit County

Dear Ms. Gutwein and Mr. Sampley:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Skagit County's Notice of Intent to create the Blanchard Quiet Zone, dated March 26, 2007.

On May 1, 2006, Ray Gardner, railroad staff for the Utilities and Transportation Commission participated in a diagnostic review which includes the crossings named in this most recent notice. Attached is a copy a letter that we previously filed, which still accurately reflect our comments.

Commission staff supports the county's proposal to install a supplemental safety measure, mountable medians with reflective traffic channelization devices, at the Colony Road crossing.

If you have questions or comments, you may contact Kathy Hunter, Transportation Safety Compliance Manager, at (360) 664-1257 or by e-mail khunter@utc.wa.gov.

Sincerely,

Carole J. Washburn
Executive Secretary

Attachment





STATE OF WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

1300 S. Evergreen Park Dr. S.W., P.O. Box 47250 • Olympia, Washington 98504-7250
(360) 664-1160 • TTY (360) 586-8203

May 15, 2006

Chal Martin
PE, Director of Public Works
Skagit County Public Works Department
1800 Continental Place
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

TR-060386
Re: Docket TR-~~060095~~, Proposed Quiet Zone, Skagit County

Dear Mr. Martin:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment the Skagit County proposed quiet zone, as described in Docket TR-060095.

On May 1, 2006, Ray Gardner, railroad staff for the Utilities and Transportation Commission (commission) participated in a diagnostic review for a quiet zone proposed by Skagit County, which includes five crossing north of Mt. Vernon. The crossings would be silent from 10 p.m. and 7 a.m. daily for all five crossings.

The diagnostic team included Skagit County Program Manager Ann Marie Gutwein and Traffic Engineer Given Kutz, BNSF Manager of Public Projects Dannel MacDonal, and Mr. Gardner, representing the commission. The purpose of the diagnostic review was to determine if the proposed quiet zone meets the requirements outlined by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA). As you know, the commission may comment on the quiet zone proposal, but may not approve or disapprove the proposal since states have been preempted in this area by federal rule. The crossings within the proposed quiet zone are:

1. Bow Hill Road, DOT# 84785T
2. Colony Road, DOT# 84787G
3. Blanchard Road, DOT# 084788N
4. South Legg Road, DOT# 84789V
5. North Legg Road, DOT# 84791W

The diagnostic team found the Bow Hill Road crossing did not qualify under the FRA requirements as a quiet zone. The average daily traffic count requires that median



Chal Martin
May 15, 2006
Page 2

separators be installed at this crossing. With the current physical configuration of the Bow Hill Road crossing, median separators are not possible. Because of an intersecting road located close to the crossing, there is insufficient room to install the separators. The county stated that it would revise the request and remove Bow Hill Road from the proposal.

The diagnostic team found the other four crossings currently meet the criteria required under FRA rules for inclusion in a quiet zone; however, the county must install signage to indicate the quiet zone.

Dan McDonald informed the county that if it qualified the four crossings under the "exception of national average" criteria available under federal rules, it would be subject to annual approval. The county stated it was aware of this requirement. Mr. MacDonald stated that BNSF would not support the quiet zone request at these four crossing unless median separators were installed, even though he acknowledged that the crossings qualify under the federal rules. The county is prepared to go forward with the request of the quiet zone on these four crossings and does not plan to install median separators.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to comment. Based on our comments, we expect the county to refile its notice at the commission to remove Bow Hill Road from the proposed quiet zone. If you have questions or comments, you may contact Vicki Elliott, Assistant Director, Transportation Safety, at 360-664-1100 or by e-mail at velliott.wutc.wa.gov.

Sincerely,



Carole J. Washburn
Executive Secretary