

**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON STATE  
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

THE BURLINGTON NORTHERN	)	DOCKET NO. TR-021369
SANTA FE RAILWAY	)	
COMPANY,	)	
	)	
Petitioner,	)	
	)	
v.	)	ORDER GRANTING PETITION TO
	)	RELOCATE A RAILROAD-
THE WASHINGTON STATE	)	HIGHWAY GRADE CROSSING.
DEPARTMENT OF	)	
TRANSPORTATION,	)	USDOT: 097202S
	)	
Respondent.	)	WUTC: 1P 9.67

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**BACKGROUND**

- 1     On October 23, 2002, the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway Company filed two separate petitions with the Commission, seeking authority to close one railroad-highway grade crossing (TR-021369) and establish another crossing in the immediate vicinity (TR-021370). After discussions with the petitioner and respondent parties, it became clear that both petitions were essentially one proposal concerning the relocation of an existing crossing. Accordingly, the petitions were consolidated under TR-021369 and investigated as one project. The crossing is currently located at the intersection of Two Rivers Road and the petitioner’s tracks, in the SW ¼ of the SE ¼ of Section 28, Township 8 N., Range 31 E., W.M., in Walla Walla County, Washington.
- 2     Respondent has consented to an entry of an Order by the Commission without further notice or hearing.
- 3     The proposal is related to a Washington State Department of Transportation plan to implement a safety improvement along SR-12 in the vicinity of the crossing. SR-12 and the petitioner’s tracks are parallel and separated by roughly 400 feet.

The Two Rivers Road railroad-highway grade crossing is located approximately 400 feet west of the roadway intersection of SR-12 and Two Rivers Road. Two Rivers Road only intersects SR-12 on its west side, creating a "T" intersection. Approximately 1300 feet south of the SR-12/Two Rivers Road intersection, SR-12 intersects Dodd Road on its east side only, creating another "T" intersection on the opposite side of SR-12. WSDOT traffic engineers have determined that relocating Two Rivers Road south to a point directly opposite of where Dodd Road currently intersects SR-12 will improve traffic safety by consolidating all turning movements to one intersection. The relocation of the roadway necessitates the relocation of the Two Rivers Road railroad crossing approximately 1,350 feet south of its current location (i.e. relative to the new alignment of the roadway).

- 4 Currently, Two Rivers Road is a two lane roadway with a vehicle speed limit of 20 mph. The road crosses the petitioner's tracks at an obtuse angle, and the roadway approach grades to the crossing are less than 2%. There are no major sight distance obstructions at the crossing. Warning devices at the crossing consist of advance warning signs and crossbucks. Average daily traffic through the crossing is estimated at less than 200 vehicles per day.
- 5 Respondent maintains a single branch line through the crossing. Average daily train traffic includes 12 freight trains traveling at a maximum speed of 20 mph.
- 6 The plans submitted with the petition indicate that, after relocation, the roadway will be designated as Dodd Road and the crossing will become the Dodd Road grade crossing. The road will cross the petitioners tracks at an obtuse angle, and will have roadway approach grades of less than 1%. No property or access options will be adversely affected by the relocation. The physical and operational characteristics of the new Dodd Road crossing will be essentially identical to the current Two Rivers Road crossing. Proposed warning devices at the Dodd Road crossing will also be identical to the warning devices currently at the Two Rivers Road Crossing (i.e. passive devices).

7 The Washington State Department of Transportation has satisfied all environmental requirements for the project and has issued a Finding of No Significant Impact under the National Environmental Policy Act.

### FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

8 (1) The Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission is an agency of the State of Washington having jurisdiction over public railroad-highway grade crossings within the state of Washington. *Chapter 81.53 RCW.*

9 (2) The Two Rivers Road grade crossing, designated as USDOT 097202S, is a public railroad-highway grade crossing within the state of Washington.

10 (3) RCW 81.53.060 and WAC 480-62-150 require that the Commission grant approval prior to changing the location of an existing railroad-highway grade crossing.

11 (4) Commission Staff investigated the petition and recommended that it be granted, subject to specified conditions.

12 (5) This matter was brought before the Commission at its regularly scheduled meeting on December 31, 2002.

13 (6) After examination of the petition filed by the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway Company on October 23, 2002, and giving consideration to all relevant matters and for good cause shown, the Commission grants the petition.

### ORDER

#### THE COMMISSION ORDERS:

14 The petition of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway Company for the relocation of a railroad-highway grade crossing, located at the intersection of

Two Rivers Road and the Petitioner's tracks, to a location approximately 1,350 feet to the east at the proposed Dodd Road, in Walla Walla County, Washington, is granted subject to the following conditions:

- (1) The relocation must conform to the plans filed in this proceeding.
- (2) Traffic control devices must comply with all applicable standards specified in the U.S. Department of Transportation *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices*.
- (3) The crossing must be hard-surfaced between the rails, and for a distance of one foot outside each rail for the full width of the traveled roadway, including the shoulders.
- (4) Upon completion of the relocation authorized herein, petitioner must notify the Commission. Acceptance of the changes is subject to a compliance inspection by Commission Staff, verifying that the Dodd Road crossing is in full compliance with law, regulation, and the conditions specified herein.

15 The Commissioners, having determined that this filing complies with the requirements of RCW 81.53.060, directed the Secretary to enter this Order.

DATED at Olympia, Washington, and effective this 31<sup>st</sup> day of December, 2002.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

CAROLE J. WASHBURN, Secretary