

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

THE BURLINGTON NORTHERN	)	DOCKET NO. TR-040067
SANTA FE RAILWAY)	
COMPANY,	)	ORDER NO. 01
)	
Petitioner,	)	ORDER GRANTING PETITION TO
	)	UPGRADE TRAIN DETECTION
v.	)	CIRCUITRY AND INTERCONNECT
	)	WARNING SIGNALS AT KELSEY
THE CITY OF MONROE	)	STREET
)	
Respondent.	)	USDOT: 084565X
.....	)	WUTC: 2A 1769.10
)	

BACKGROUND

- 1 On January 15, 2004, the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway Company filed a petition with the Commission, seeking approval to upgrade train detection circuitry and interconnect railroad warning signals with nearby highway traffic signals at a railroad-highway grade crossing. The crossing is located at the intersection of Kelsey Street and the petitioner’s tracks, in NW ¼ of the NE ¼ of Section 1, Township 27 N., Range 6 E., W.M., in Monroe, Washington. Funding for the upgrade is pursuant to the Inter-modal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act, in cooperation with the Washington State Department of Transportation.
- 2 Respondent has consented to an entry of an Order by the Commission without further notice or hearing.
- 3 In the vicinity of the crossing, Kelsey Street is classified as a collector-road, with one lane for each direction of traffic and a speed limit of 25 mph. Average daily traffic over the crossing is estimated at 4,365 vehicles, including 549 trucks and 25 school bus trips. The railroad-highway grade crossing is located 235 feet south of the Kelsey Street/SR-2 roadway intersection. The roadway intersection

is controlled by a highway traffic signal that is maintained by the Washington State Department of Transportation. According to representatives of the City of Monroe's Engineering Department, it is not uncommon for vehicle queues that originate at the Kelsey Street/SR-2 traffic signal to extend back over the railroad tracks, thereby exposing motorists to the possibility of being trapped on the crossing when a train is approaching.

4 Petitioner maintains two main tracks through the crossing. Average daily train traffic includes 25 freight trains and two passenger trains traveling at maximum speeds of 45 mph.

5 Railroad warning devices at the Kelsey Street grade crossing consist of cantilever-mounted flashing light signals and gates that are activated by 1950s era constant-warning train-detection equipment. The petitioner proposes to replace the existing circuitry with newer and more reliable constant warning circuitry, and to interconnect the railroad warning signals with the highway traffic signals at the Kelsey Street/SR-2 roadway intersection. When the signals are interconnected, approaching trains will preempt the highway traffic signals, causing them to display a green light to clear vehicle queues originating from the roadway intersection and extending back over the tracks. While the queue is being cleared, activation of the railroad warning signals and gates will prevent more vehicles from entering the grade crossing. The interconnection and train detection circuitry upgrade are being proposed in the interest of improving public safety at the crossing.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

6 (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.*

- 7 (2) The Kelsey Street grade crossing, identified as USDOT 084565X, is a public
railroad-highway grade crossing within the state of Washington.
- 8 (3) WAC 480-62-150 requires that the Commission grant approval prior to any
changes to train detection circuitry or interconnecting warning devices
with highway traffic signals at public railroad-highway grade crossings
within the state of Washington.
- 9 (5) Commission Staff investigated the petition and recommended that it be
granted, subject to specified conditions.
- 10 (6) This matter was brought before the Commission at its regularly scheduled
meeting on February 11, 2004.
- 11 (7) After examination of the petition filed by the Burlington Northern Santa
Fe Railway Company on January 15, 2004, and giving consideration to all
relevant matters and for good cause shown, the Commission grants the
petition.

ORDER

THE COMMISSION ORDERS:

- 12 The petition of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway Company to upgrade
train detection circuitry and interconnect the railroad warning signals with
highway traffic signals at a railroad-highway grade crossing, located at the
intersection of Kelsey Street and the petitioner's tracks, in Monroe, Washington,
is granted. Approval of the petition is subject to the following conditions:

- (1) Traffic control devices must comply with all applicable
standards specified in the U.S. Department of Transportation
Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

- (2) The Washington State Department of Transportation, as the agency responsible for programming and maintaining the Kelsey Street/SR-2 highway traffic signal, must ensure that the timing of each railroad preemption phase for the highway traffic signal is sufficient to clear vehicle queues that may extend from the Kelsey Street/SR-2 intersection back over the railroad tracks, as determined by an engineering analysis.
- (3) Upon completion of the upgrades authorized herein, petitioner must notify the Commission. Acceptance of the changes is subject to inspection by Commission Staff, verifying that the crossing is in full compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and the conditions specified herein.

The Commissioners, having determined that this filing complies with the requirements of WAC 480-62-150 and RCW 81.53.261, directed the Secretary to enter this Order.

DATED at Olympia, Washington, and effective this 11th day of February, 2004.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

CAROLE J. WASHBURN, Secretary