BEFORE THE WASHINGTON STATE UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

THE BURLINGTON NORTHERN)	DOCKET NO. TR-040421
SANTA FE RAILWAY)	
COMPANY,)	ORDER NO. 01
)	
Petitioner,)	ORDER GRANTING PETITION TO
)	UPGRADE RAILROAD WARNING
v.)	DEVICES AT THE STONE ROAD
)	RAILROAD-HIGHWAY GRADE
LINCOLN COUNTY,)	CROSSING
WASHINGTON)	
)	USDOT: 065724B
Respondent.)	WUTC: 2A 1530.80
)	

BACKGROUND

- On March 3, 2004, The Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway Company filed a petition with the Commission, seeking approval to upgrade warning devices at a railroad-highway grade crossing. The crossing is located at the intersection of Stone Road and the petitioner's tracks, in the SE ¼ of the NE ¼ of Section 33, Township 23 N., Range 36 E., W.M., in Lincoln County, Washington. Funding for the upgrades is pursuant to the Inter-modal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act, in cooperation with the Washington State Department of Transportation.
- Respondent has consented to an entry of an Order by the Commission without further notice or hearing.
- In the vicinity of the crossing, Stone Road is a two-lane gravel road. Stone Road intersects with Coal Coulee Road approximately 50 feet west of the railroad-highway grade crossing. Although the legal speed limit for vehicles on Stone Road is 50 mph, the proximity of the Stone Road/Coal Coulee Road intersection limits vehicles crossing the tracks to significantly lesser speeds. Stone Road crosses the petitioner's track at an obtuse angle, and sight distance of

approaching trains is obscured for westbound motorists by vegetation in the crossing's northeast quadrant. Average daily traffic through the Stone Road grade crossing is estimated at less than 100 vehicles, and includes four school bus trips.

- 4 Respondent maintains two mainline tracks through the crossing. Average daily train traffic includes 25 freight trains and two passenger trains, traveling at a maximum speed of 50 mph and 60 mph respectively.
- Warning devices at the crossing consist of standard crossbuck signs. Petitioner seeks to install shoulder-mounted flashing light signals with gates. The upgrades are proposed in the interest of improving safety for roadway users.

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 Stone Road grade crossing, identified as USDOT 065724B, is a public railroad-highway grade crossing within the state of Washington.
- 8 (3) RCW 81.53.261 requires that the Commission grant approval prior to any changes in the method and manner of traffic control at public railroadhighway grade crossings within the state of Washington.
- 9 (4) Commission Staff investigated the petition and recommended that it be granted, subject to specified conditions.
- 10 (5) This matter was brought before the Commission at its regularly scheduled meeting on March 24, 2004.

11 (6) After examination of the petition filed by the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway Company on March 3, 2004, and giving consideration to all relevant matters and for good cause shown, the Commission grants the petition.

ORDER

THE COMMISSION ORDERS:

- The petition of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway Company to upgrade warning devices at a railroad-highway grade crossing, located at the intersection of Stone Road and the petitioner's tracks, in Lincoln County, Washington, is granted, subject to the following conditions:
 - (1) The upgrades 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) Traffic control devices and instrument housing must be installed in such a manner as to provide required clearances from both the roadway and railroad tracks.
 - (4) 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 RCW 81.53.261, directed the Secretary to enter this Order.

DATED at Olympia, Washington, and effective this 24th day of March, 2004.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

CAROLE J. WASHBURN, Secretary