

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

THE PUGET SOUND AND)	DOCKET NO. TR-040948
PACIFIC RAILROAD COMPANY,)	
)	ORDER NO. 01
)	
Petitioner,)	ORDER GRANTING PETITION TO
)	RECONSTRUCT A RAILROAD
v.)	HIGHWAY GRADE CROSSING AT
)	FORON ROAD
THE CITY OF CENTRALIA,)	
)	USDOT: 092559P
Respondent.)	WUTC: 40D 3.50
.....)	

BACKGROUND

- 1 On May 21, 2004, the Puget Sound and Pacific Railroad Company (PSAP) filed a petition with the Commission, seeking approval to reconstruct a railroad-highway grade crossing. The crossing is located at the intersection of Foron Road (AKA "Foran" Road) and the PSAP tracks, in Section 30, Township 15 N., Range 2 W., W.M., in Lewis County, Washington.

- 2 Although the crossing is located outside of the Centralia city limits in Lewis County, Foron Road is maintained by the City of Centralia. The City of Centralia, as respondent in this proceeding, has consented to an entry of an Order by the Commission without further notice or hearing.

- 3 In the vicinity of the crossing, Foron Road is classified as an urban local road, with one lane for each direction of traffic and a vehicle speed limit of 30 mph. Foron Road intersects with the PSAP tracks at an acute angle. Sight distance at the crossing is obscured by vegetation in the southern quadrants and the skewed crossing angle. Average daily traffic through the crossing is estimated at less than 100 vehicles per day, consisting primarily of truck traffic.

- 4 Petitioner currently maintains one mainline track through the crossing. Average daily train traffic is estimated at 30 freight trains, including operations related to switching. The maximum timetable speed for trains in the vicinity is 20 MPH.
- 5 Warning devices at the crossing consist of shoulder-mounted flashing light signals and required warning signs.
- 6 The Foron road grade crossing is located approximately 1.4 miles northwest of a railroad junction called Blakeslee Junction. Rail operations at Blakeslee Junction include those of the petitioner, the Union Pacific Railroad Company, and the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad Company. The high level of rail activity coupled with the limited track space in the vicinity of Blakeslee Junction typically results in train delays, as well as frequent blockages of a public grade crossing at Blakeslee Junction (Reynolds Road).
- 7 The petitioner proposes to construct a 7,000-foot siding, beginning immediately northwest of the Reynolds Road grade crossing, and extends northwest through the Foron Road grade crossing. The siding will provide more track space in the vicinity of Blakeslee Junction, thereby improving efficiency of rail operations and mitigating the duration of blockages at public grade crossings in Centralia. The siding track would be parallel to the existing main tracks, with 17 feet between track centers.
- 8 The proposal requires that the existing shoulder mounted flashing light signal in the southeast quadrant of the Foron Road grade crossing be relocated with respect to required clearance from the new track. No other changes to warning devices are proposed.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

- 9 (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.*
- 10 (2) The Foron grade crossing, identified as USDOT 092559P, is a public railroad-highway grade crossing within the state of Washington.
- 11 (3) RCW 81.53.030 requires that the Commission grant approval prior to any railroad track crossing a public roadway at-grade within the state of Washington.
- 12 (4) Commission Staff investigated the petition and recommended that it be granted, subject to specified conditions.
- 13 (5) This matter was brought before the Commission at its regularly scheduled meeting on June 9, 2004.
- 14 (6) After examination of the petition filed by the Puget Sound and Pacific Railroad Company on May 21, 2004, and giving consideration to all relevant matters and for good cause shown, the Commission grants the petition.

ORDER

THE COMMISSION ORDERS:

- 15 The petition of the Puget Sound and Pacific Railroad Company to reconstruct a railroad-highway grade crossing to accommodate an additional siding track, at the intersection of Foron Road and the petitioner's tracks, in Lewis County, Washington, is granted, subject to the following conditions:

- (1) The reconstruction must conform to the plans filed in this proceeding.
- (2) 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.
- (3) To the extent practicable, the roadway approaches must be level with the plane created by the top of the rails.
- (4) PSAP must install R15-2 ("2 Tracks") signs as required by the U.S. Department of Transportation *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices*.
- (5) All other traffic control devices must comply with applicable standards specified in the U.S. Department of Transportation *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices*.
- (6) 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.
- (7) Upon completion of the reconstruction authorized herein, petitioner must notify the Commission. Acceptance of the reconstruction 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.

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DATED at Olympia, Washington, and effective this 9th day of June, 2004.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

CAROLE J. WASHBURN, Secretary