

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

PORT OF CENTRALIA,)	DOCKET NO. TR-050974
)	
Petitioner,)	ORDER NO. 01
)	
v.)	
)	
PUGET SOUND AND PACIFIC)	ORDER GRANTING PETITION TO
RAILROAD CO.,)	ESTABLISH A PUBLIC RAILROAD-
)	HIGHWAY GRADE CROSSING AT
Respondent.)	KUPER ROAD
.....)	

BACKGROUND

- 1 On November 24, 2004, the Port of Centralia filed a petition with the Commission, seeking approval to establish a new public railroad-highway grade crossing. The location of the proposed crossing is the intersection of the proposed Kuper Road and the tracks of the Puget Sound and Pacific Railroad Company, in the N ½ of the SE ¼ of Section 25, Township 15 N., Range 3 W., W.M., in Centralia, Washington.
- 2 The Puget Sound and Pacific Railroad Company has consented to an entry of an order by the Commission without further notice or hearing.
- 3 Port of Centralia is proposing a new crossing that would serve several homes and an industrial site. The Port expects additional businesses to locate in its site, which will increase truck traffic. As proposed, Kuper Road will be a two lane industrial collector with a speed limit of 25 mph. Daily vehicle traffic is estimated to be 370 trucks, 2 school buses and 28 other vehicles. The crossing surface will be level for at least 25 feet on each side of the centerline of the tracks. Approach grades will be less than 5%.
- 4 The owners of the homes on the east side of the tracks and the several businesses that currently use the port site access the area on Foron Road. Foron Road

intersects Harrison Avenue (Old Highway 99) at a skewed angle, which makes it difficult for trucks to turn onto Foron Road from Harrison Avenue, and onto Harrison Avenue from Foron Road. Foron Road crosses the respondent's tracks at a point where there is a siding track as well as a main line track. The crossing is often blocked by the respondent's operations. When Kuper Road is constructed, the Port of Centralia plans to petition the Commission to close the Foron Road crossing because the new crossing eliminates the need for the Foron Road crossing. Access for the Port of Centralia property and for the homes on the east side of the tracks will shift to the new road and crossing. The new road intersects Harrison Avenue at a ninety degree angle, making access for trucks easier and safer. The new crossing includes only the main line tracks. Although the siding that Kuper Road crosses begins several hundred feet south of the proposed crossing, the new crossing will be blocked less frequently than Foron Road.

- 5 The Puget Sound and Pacific Railroad Co. maintains a single, main line track through the proposed crossing. Eight trains per day cross the proposed crossing, including switching movements. The maximum train speed is 20 mph.
- 6 Constructing an overcrossing or undercrossing is not economically feasible given the small amount of vehicular traffic, the high cost of overcrossings or undercrossings, and the unavailability of funding for such a project.
- 7 Warning devices proposed at the crossing include shoulder-mounted signals with gates.

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 proposed Kuper Road crossing will be a public railroad-highway grade crossing, as defined in RCW 81.53.010.
- 10 (3) RCW 81.53.030 and WAC 480-62-150(1)(a) require that the Commission grant approval prior to establishing new public railroad-highway grade crossings within the state of Washington.
- 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 October 26, 2005.
- 13 (6) After examination of the petition filed by Port of Centralia, 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 Port of Centralia to establish a public railroad-highway grade crossing at the intersection of the proposed Kuper Road and the tracks of the Puget Sound and Pacific Railroad Company in Centralia, Washington, is granted, subject to the following conditions:
- (1) All construction and installations must conform to the plans filed in this proceeding.
 - (2) The crossing must be hard-surfaced between the rails and for a distance of at least one foot outside each rail for the full width of the traveled roadway, including the shoulders.
 - (3) Traffic control devices, advance warning signs, and pavement markings must comply with applicable standards specified in

the U.S. Department of Transportation *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices*.

- (4) Traffic control devices and instrument housing must be installed in such a manner as to provide required clearances for both rail and vehicular traffic.
- (5) Trees and other vegetation along the tracks that obstruct sight distance of approaching trains must be cleared for a distance of at least 100 feet on either side of Kuper Road.
- (6) Upon completion of the construction authorized herein, Petitioner must notify the Commission. Acceptance of the installations is subject to inspection by Commission Staff, verifying that the crossing is in full compliance with law, regulation, and the conditions specified herein.

The Commissioners, having determined that this filing complies with the requirements of RCW 81.53.030, directed the Secretary to enter this Order.

DATED at Olympia, Washington, and effective this 26th day of October, 2005.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

CAROLE J. WASHBURN, Secretary