

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

THE BURLINGTON NORTHERN	)	DOCKET NO. TR-031505
SANTA FE RAILWAY	)	
COMPANY,	)	ORDER NO. 01
	)	
Petitioner,	)	
	)	ORDER GRANTING PETITION TO
v.	)	UPGRADE RAILROAD WARNING
	)	DEVICES AT OLAF STREET
HARRINGTON, WASHINGTON	)	
	)	USDOT: 065718X
Respondent.	)	WUTC: 2A 1527.40
.....	)	

**BACKGROUND**

- 1     On September 19, 2003, 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 Olaf Street and the petitioner’s tracks, in the NE ¼ of the SE ¼ of Section 15, Township 23 N., Range 36 E., W.M., in Harrington, Washington. Funding for the upgrades 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, Olaf Street is classified as a rural local road. The roadway consists of a gravel surface with one lane for each direction of traffic. The posted vehicle speed limit is 25 mph. Average daily traffic through the crossing is estimated at 50 vehicles, including 25 trucks. The roadway approaches to the crossing (northbound is 2% descending, and southbound is 5-

7% ascending) result in a humped crossing. Sight distance at the crossing is obstructed by vegetation and residential structures in the southeast, northeast, and northwest quadrants of the crossing. Although the crossing experiences low traffic volumes, Olaf Street serves as one of the city's main north-south routes in the event that Sherlock Street (located .38 mile to the west) is blocked by railroad switching activity. In this event, traffic volume increases considerably.

- 4 Respondent maintains two mainline tracks and one siding track 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.
- 5 Warning devices at the crossing consist of standard crossbucks and advance warning signs. Petitioner seeks to install shoulder-mounted flashing light signals with gates. In addition, Staff recommends installing a W10-5 (Hump Crossing) sign at the crossing to warn drivers of low clearance vehicles that they should use an alternate route. 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 Olaf Street grade crossing, identified as USDOT 065718X, 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 making changes in the method and manner of traffic control at public railroad-highway 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 October 8, 2003.
- 11 (6) After examination of the petition filed by the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway Company on September 19, 2003, 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 warning devices at a railroad-highway grade crossing, located at the intersection of Olaf Street and the tracks of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway Company, 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) The City of Harrington must install a W10-5 (Hump Crossing) sign on the southbound approach to the crossing.

- (5) 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 8<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2003.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

CAROLE J. WASHBURN, Secretary