

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

THE WASHINGTON STATE	)	DOCKET TR-060212
DEPARTMENT OF	)	
TRANSPORTATION	)	ORDER 01
	)	
Petitioner,	)	
	)	ORDER GRANTING PETITION TO
v.	)	RECONSTRUCT A RAILROAD-
	)	HIGHWAY GRADE CROSSING
THE BNSF RAILWAY COMPANY	)	
	)	USDOT: 084929V
Respondent.	)	WUTC: 1G 124.20
.....	)	

**BACKGROUND**

- 1 On February 7, 2006, the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) filed a petition with the Commission, seeking approval to relocate a railroad-highway grade crossing. The crossing is designated as USDOT Crossing No. 084929V, and is located at the intersection of Garrison Road and the tracks of the BNSF Railway Company (BNSF) in Whatcom County, Washington.
- 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, Garrison Road is currently classified as a local access road with one 9' lane for each direction of travel, and a maximum speed limit of 35 mph. Average daily traffic through the crossing is estimated at 200 vehicles. The crossing is located less than 50 feet south of the Garrison Road/East Badger Road intersection.
- 4 BNSF maintains one mainline track through the crossing. Average daily train traffic includes two freight trains, traveling at a maximum speed of 10 mph.
- 5 The proposal is related to a larger WSDOT project that will realign and widen State Route 9 in the vicinity of Sumas, Washington. As part of the project, Garrison Road will be realigned to the west, resulting in the relocation of the grade crossing approximately 306' to the southwest. In addition, the roadway through the crossing will curve slightly to the northwest, thereby crossing the BNSF tracks at a better angle than its current configuration (the current crossing angle is approximately 118 degrees - the relocation

will result in a slightly obtuse angle of roughly 95 degrees). At project completion, the roadway will consist of one 12' lane and 4' shoulder in each direction of travel. Vehicle storage space between the grade crossing and the Garrison/ E. Badger Road intersection will also be improved. The existing crossing is located less than 50 feet south of the intersection. The relocated crossing will be located about 150 feet south of the roadway intersection. The roadway intersection will be controlled by a stop sign.

- 6 Warning devices at the crossing consist of shoulder-mounted signals with gates, and are activated by AC/DC-type train detection circuitry. In addition to the proposed crossing relocation, petitioner seeks to replace the existing warning devices with new shoulder-mounted signals with gates, activated by constant warning-type train detection circuitry. The changes are proposed in the interest of conforming to standards for railroad warning devices and improving safety for roadway users.

#### FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

- 7 (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.*
- 8 (2) The Garrison Road grade crossing, identified as USDOT 084929V, is a public railroad-highway grade crossing within the state of Washington.
- 9 (3) RCW 81.53.060 requires that the Commission grant approval prior to any change in the location of existing public railroad-highway grade crossings within the state of Washington.
- 10 (4) Commission Staff investigated the petition and recommended that it be granted, subject to specified conditions.
- 11 (5) This matter was brought before the Commission at its regularly scheduled meeting on March 15, 2006.
- 12 (6) After examination of the petition filed by the Washington State Department of Transportation on February 7, 2006, and giving consideration to all relevant matters and for good cause shown, the Commission grants the petition.

**ORDER**

THE COMMISSION ORDERS:

13 The petition of the Washington State Department of Transportation to relocate a railroad-highway grade crossing, located at the intersection of Garrison Road and the tracks of the BNSF Railway Company, in Whatcom County, Washington, is granted, subject to the following conditions:

- (1) The relocation and all new 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 from both the roadway and railroad tracks.
- (5) Upon completion of the changes 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 81.53.060, directed the Secretary to enter this Order.

DATED at Olympia, Washington, and effective March 15, 2006.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

CAROLE J. WASHBURN, Executive Secretary