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Public Utilities
Commission of Ohio

Memo

To: Docketing Division
From: George Martin, Grade Crossing Planner, Rail Division *GM*
Re: PUCO Case No. 11-3182-RR-RCP
Date: June 7, 2011

Please docket the attached staff report in the above referenced case.

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2011 JUN -7 AM 10:17
PUCO



The Public Utilities
Commission of Ohio

A report by the Staff of the
Public Utilities Commission of Ohio

June 7, 2011



INTRODUCTION

Rail Division

The Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) works with local highway authorities and communities to provide safety for the citizens of Ohio at highway-railroad grade crossings.

The PUCO has the statutory authority to regulate and promote the welfare and safety of railroad employees and the traveling public pursuant to Ohio Revised Code Section 4905.471; and

The PUCO has the authority to close public at grade crossings pursuant to Ohio Revised Code Sections 4907.474 and 4907.475. The sections set forth a variety of factors to be considered by the Commission in determining whether there is a demonstrable need for any public grade crossing to exist and whether any such crossing could be closed to vehicular traffic, pedestrian traffic, or both and the travel over the grade crossing diverted to other grade crossings.

The PUCO is responsible for evaluating public highway-railroad grade crossings to determine the need for upgrading the warning devices and apportioning the cost thereof pursuant to Ohio Revised Code Section 4907.471.

The PUCO has the authority under Ohio Revised Code Section 4511.63 (B) to declare a grade crossing exempt, whereby vehicles normally required to stop at a grade crossing under that title and Code of Federal Regulations Title 49, 392.10 would be able to proceed through the crossing without stopping.

The PUCO enforces all aspects of the Federal Railroad Administration regulations through inspections and evaluations of Ohio's public highway-railroad grade crossings.

I. DESCRIPTION OF APPLICANT

The Norfolk Southern Railway (NS) is a Class I railroad headquartered in Norfolk, Virginia. NS operates over 21,500 route miles in 22 eastern and parts of Canada. The most common commodity transported is coal. NS also handles an extensive amount of intermodal freight.

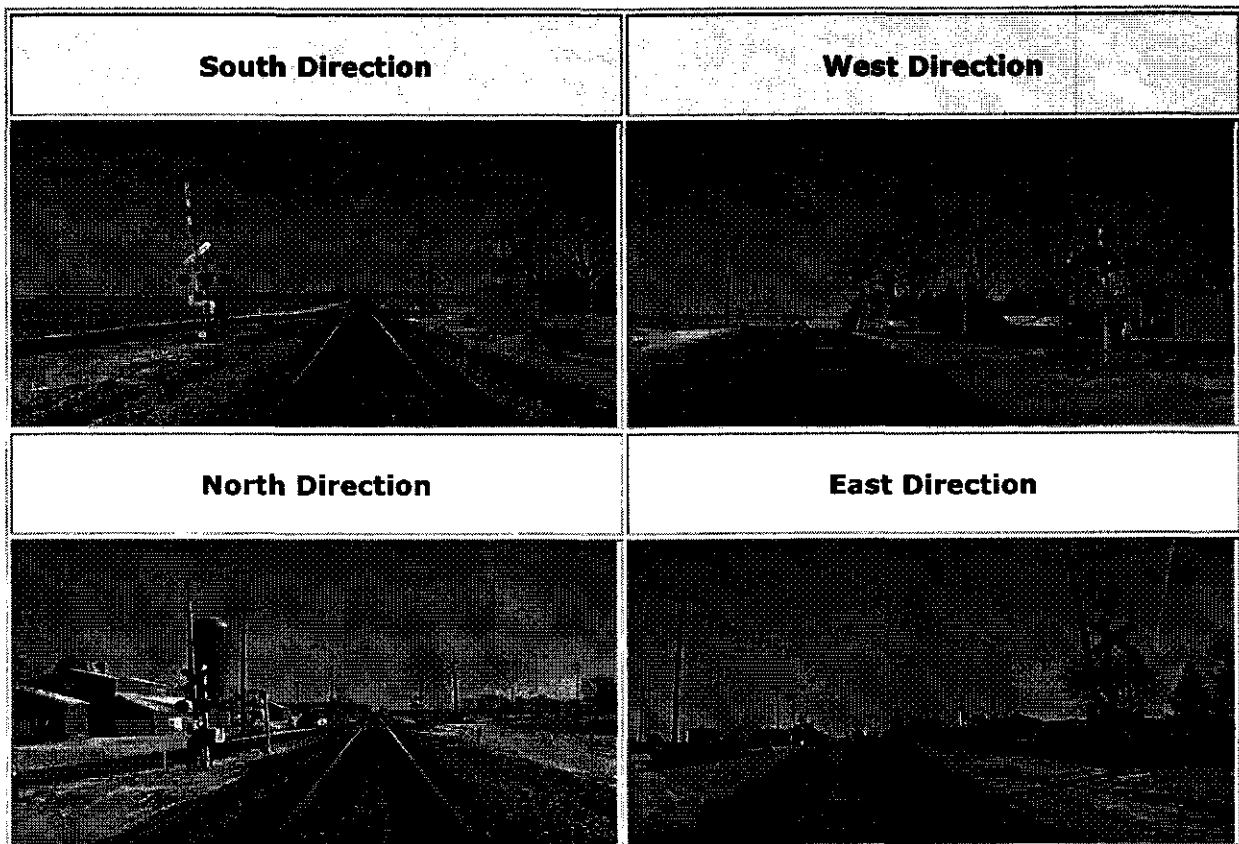
II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

On May 26, 2011, under Case No. 11-3182-RR-RCP, Norfolk Southern Railway (NS) filed a request to modify an existing highway-railway traffic control device, to wit, a flashing "No Turn" sign located at Seneca County, Adams Township, near Green Springs, Seneca County Line Rd/CR 62, DOT# 472394U. In its petition, NS seeks to remove this device.

III. Photo's from RRIS Database



Public Utilities Commission of Ohio



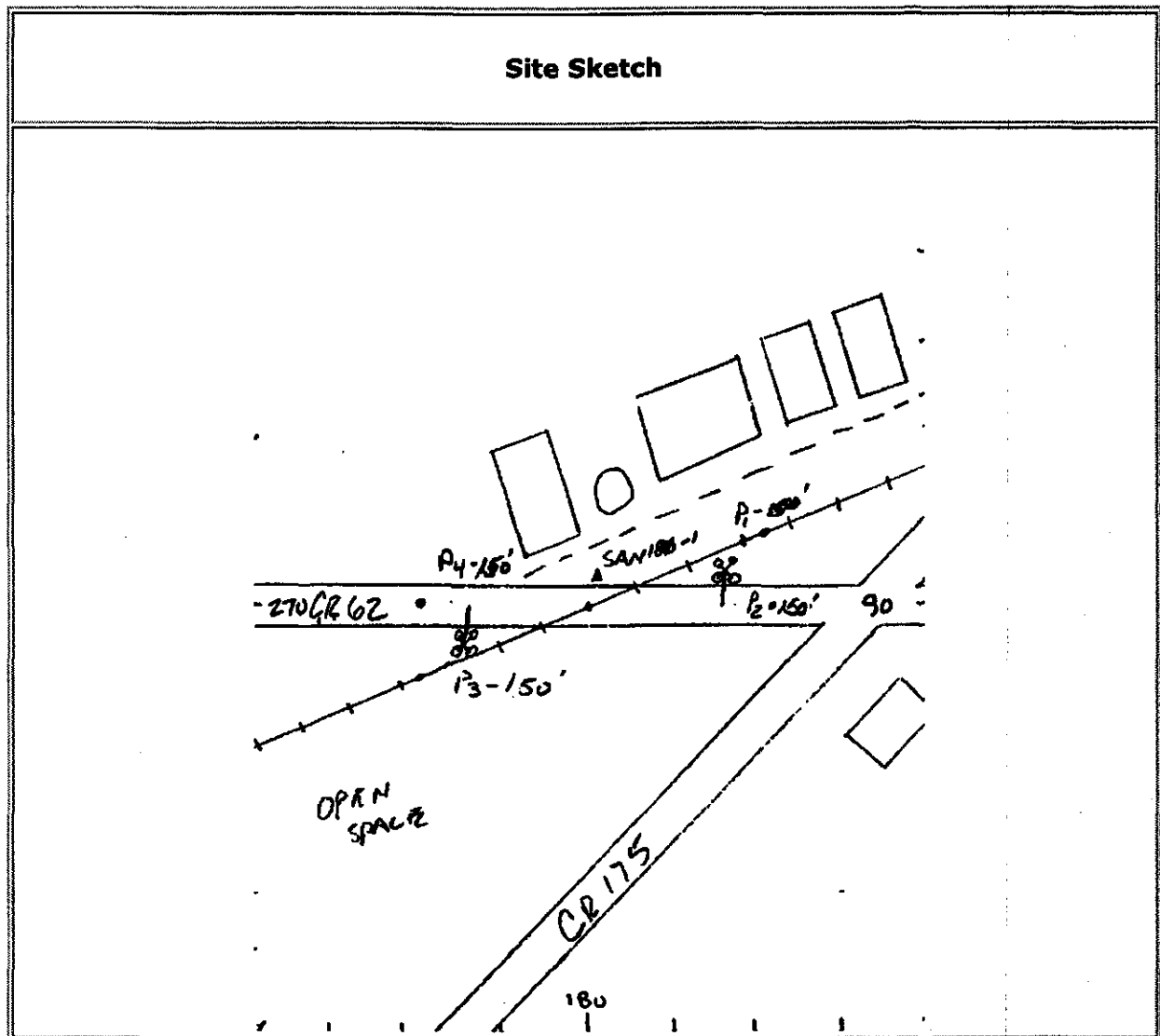
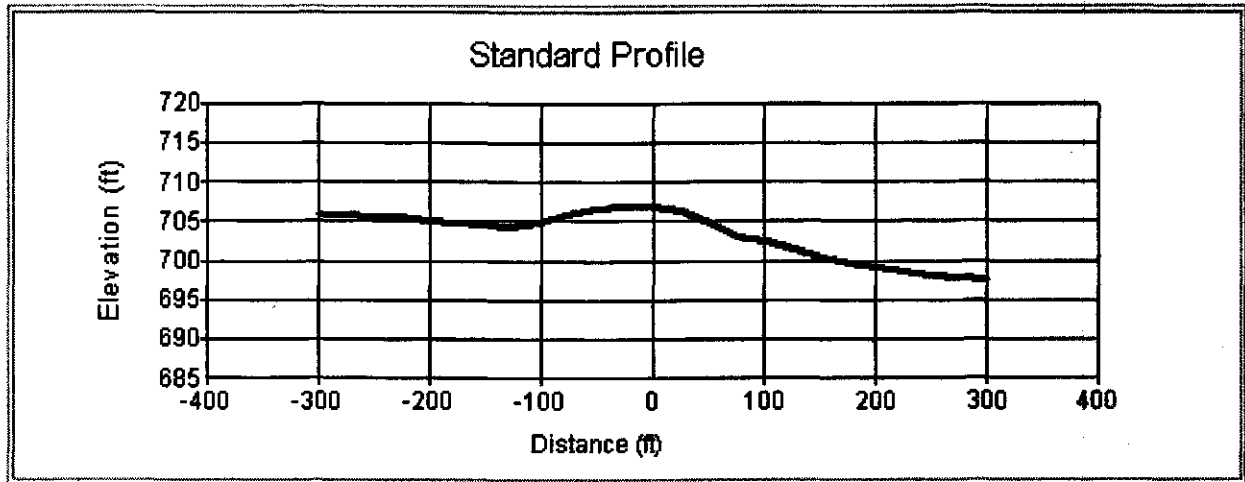
Site Information	
AARDOT:	472394U
AARDOT Source:	Field
Adj. AARDOT:	
Adj. AARDOT Source:	Field
Survey Site ID:	SEN903

Init. Agency for Change:		State
Reason for Change:		Updated Record
Effective Date:		May 27 2011 12:00AM
Railroad Information		
Operating RR:		Norfolk Southern Corp
Division:		LAKE
Sub-Division:		FORTWAYNE
Branch/Line Name:		FOSTORIA DIST
Milepost:		257.85
Railroad ID:		
Nearest Time Table Station:		GREEN SPRINGS
Parent RR Company:		NS
Crossing Owner:		NS
Location and Classification Information		
County:		SENECA
(Nearest) City:		GREEN SPRINGS
Street:		SENECA COUNTY LINE
Highway and SLM:		CR62
High Speed Corridor:		
County Map Ref. Number:		
ODOT NLF ID:		CSENCR00062**C
Latitude:		41.2559060
Longitude:		-83.0131958
Elevation (ft):		706.8551
Crossing Type:		Public
Position:		At-Grade
Emergency Contact:		
Railroad Contact:		
State Contact:		
LHA:		SENECA COUNTY

LHA2:	
Dev. Type:	Residential
Crossing Angle:	0-29 Degrees
Tracks:	1
Lanes:	2
Warning Devices	
Crossbucks, Standard:	2
Crossbucks, Buckeye:	0
Lights, Mast Mounted:	2
Lights, Cantilevered:	0
Lights, Other:	0
Gates:	2
Traffic Information	
Day Thru Trains:	12
Day Switching Trains:	1
Night Thru Trains:	12
Night Switch Trains:	1
Date of Train Count:	
Highway AADT:	1238
Date of AADT:	2008

Highway Information	
Distance to Nearest Intersection:	50
Type of Intersection:	Residential Drive
Number of HW-HW Intersections:	0

Site Comments	
Sandusky Co. Engr's office confirmed that LHA is Seneca Co.	



**PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO
TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT
RAIL DIVISION**

Date of Assignment: May 26, 2011

Date of Inspection: June 2, 2011

Subject: PUCO Case No. 11-3182-RR-RCP, Request of Norfolk Southern Railway to remove a "No Turn" signal from Seneca County Line Rd/CR 62.

DOT No: 472394U

FINDINGS

On June 2, 2011, I reviewed the Seneca County Line Rd/CR 62, DOT# 472394U, grade crossing in response to the request filed by Norfolk Southern Railway for the removal a "No Turn" signal at the crossing.

The crossing consists of a single track, running northwest and southeast, which is crossed by a two lane county road, running east and west, at approximately a 45 degree angle. The crossing also consists of a pair of operating flashing lights, two lights to a pair, for each direction of traffic, as well as roadway gates on each side of the highway lanes as well as advance warning signs and pavement markings in all lanes. The highway speed at the crossing is 55 mph and the maximum train speed over this crossing is 60 miles per hour; however, typical speed is 50 miles per hour. The average train count at the crossing is 24 trains per day, and the average daily traffic, as measured in 2008, was 1,238.

The "No Turn" signal was installed to provide warning to a vehicle(s) exiting a private drive located approximately 50 feet from the crossing. This private drive has since been relocated farther to the west, and in fact looks to be unused, as it is blocked by a commercial truck trailer.

RECOMMENDATIONS

I recommend that the Commission proceed with the necessary actions to grant Norfolk Southern Railway's request in regard to this grade crossing.

George Martin
Grade Crossing Planner
PUCO Rail Division
June 7, 2011

Ohio's Rail Grade Crossing Programs

Ohio is a national leader in terms of railroad operations. Ohio is home to nearly 40 railroads that operate thousands of trains in Ohio every day over approximately 5,200 miles of track and 6,000 public grade crossings. The Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) is the state agency with regulatory authority over railroads operating in Ohio. The Commission works in partnership with the Federal Railroad Administration to ensure that rail operations and infrastructure are safe and in compliance with federal and state regulations.

In addition to central office planners and other support staff, the PUCO employs federally certified railroad inspectors throughout Ohio. These inspectors respond to inquiries and complaints and conduct specialized inspections of railroad tracks and equipment, rail operations, hazardous material transportation, and grade crossing signal circuitry. The inspectors also monitor railroad rights-of-way and grade crossings for surface conditions, view obstruction, fencing and drainage concerns, conditions on railroad equipment and at rail yards and other facilities, and related safety concerns of both the PUCO and railroad employees.

PUCO inspectors investigate all grade crossing and railroad employee fatalities and monitor company inspections of rail bridges throughout the state.

Safety is our highest priority

Grade crossing safety is one of the PUCO's highest priorities, and we are proud of our accomplishments. Since 1990, motor vehicle/train crashes at grade crossings in Ohio have declined by 66 percent and the number of fatalities has dropped by 77 percent. This dramatic improvement has been achieved during a period of steady increase in the amount of train traffic and in the number of registered motor vehicles and licensed drivers in Ohio. Over the past 10 years, the PUCO has participated in the installation of lights and gates at more than 1,000 grade crossings across Ohio. We look forward to working with your community to help make grade crossings as safe as possible.

Questions or Concerns?

Call the Ohio Rail Hotline at (866) 814-RAIL or log on to www.OhioRail.ohio.gov for answers to all of your railroad crossing needs.

The Public Utilities Commission of Ohio
John Kasich, Governor • Todd Snitchler, Chairman
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