

Decision No. 22154.

BEFORE THE RAILROAD COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA.

ORIGINAL

In the Matter of the Application of SOUTHERN PACIFIC COMPANY for authority to change its present separate passenger and freight train service on its Owenyo Branch between Mojave and Owenyo and to provide certain mixed and local freight train service in lieu thereof.

Application No. 15803.

H. W. Hobbs for Applicant.  
W. H. Cameron for Inyo Chemical Company, Protestant.  
J. H. Sutliff and Alex C. Krater, for Town of Independence and Independence Chamber of Commerce, Protestants.  
Edward Uhlig, for Bishop Chamber of Commerce, Protestant.  
Harvey W. Guthrie, District Attorney, for Inyo County Board of Supervisors, Protestant.  
John Morris, for Lone Pine Chamber of Commerce, Protestant.  
L. J. Wiltfang and H. L. Birdlong, in propria persona, Protestants.

WHITSELL, COMMISSIONER:

O P I N I O N

In this proceeding Southern Pacific Company requests authority to effect changes in the present separate passenger and freight service on its Owenyo Branch between Mojave and Owenyo by providing certain mixed train and local freight train service in lieu thereof.

A public hearing was held in this matter at Independence,

Inyo County.

The existing service on the Owenyo Branch consists of the following train operations:

Local freight, Mojave to Owenyo, daily except Saturday.  
 Local freight, Owenyo to Mojave, daily except Sunday.  
 Local freight, Mojave to Searls, and return, daily except Monday.  
 Passenger Train No. 88, Mojave to Owenyo, daily.  
 Passenger Train No. 89, Owenyo to Mojave, daily.

It is proposed to substitute for the above train, the following mixed and freight train service:

Mixed train, Mojave to Owenyo, daily.  
 Mixed train, Owenyo to Mojave, daily.  
 Local freight, Mojave to Searls, and return, daily.  
 Local freight, Owenyo to Cartago, and return, daily except Sunday.

It is proposed that the mixed train will handle all local freight between Searls and Cartago, a distance of approximately 69.3 miles, and the local freight trains will take care of the local freight between Mojave and Searls, a distance of approximately 37.7 miles, and also between Cartago and Owenyo, a distance of approximately 25.3 miles.

The record shows that very little local freight is moved between Searls and Cartago; therefore, it appears that the mixed trains can handle this business on practically a passenger train schedule. It is the contention of the applicant that business has fallen off to such an extent that the revenues do not warrant the continuation of the present service. The following table shows the decrease in earnings of passenger Trains Nos. 88 and 89 between Mojave and Owenyo:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total Earnings</u>	<u>Percentage Of decrease Over 1925</u>
1925	\$115,705.	-
1926	109,207.	5.6
1927	94,034.	18.7
1928	72,731.	37.1
Jan. to Aug., incl., 1929, 2/3 of year,	40,591.	47.4

The substitution of mixed train service for the present service would result in an estimated saving in operation of \$42,818. per year, as shown on Applicant's Exhibit No.1.

Pullman car service will be continued between Los Angeles and Owenyo three nights a week as at present and the schedule of the mixed train will be substantially the same as Trains Nos. 88 and 89.

A daily stage service is operated between Los Angeles and Owens Valley points in addition to the train service.

The granting of this application was protested by certain residents of Owens Valley on the ground that mixed service would not be satisfactory to the travelling public and that it would discourage people from coming into the valley and that if daily Pullman service were installed instead of tri-weekly as at present, the passenger business would be increased. Passengers handled on the Pullman cars are shown in Exhibit No. 5 and it appears that the tri-weekly Pullman service is sufficient at the present time and it should be continued.

It is appreciated that mixed service is not as satisfactory as straight passenger train service, but owing to the material falling off of passenger business it appears that separate passenger and freight service is not justifiable.

The following form of order is recommended.

ORDER

Southern Pacific Company having made application for

permission to change its present separate passenger and freight train service on its Owenyo Branch by providing mixed train service and local freight train service in lieu thereof, a public hearing having been held, the Commission being apprised of the facts, the matter being under submission and ready for decision,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that permission and authority be and it is hereby granted to Southern Pacific Company to withdraw its present separate passenger and freight train service on its Owenyo Branch between Mojave, County of Kern, and Owenyo, County of Inyo, providing the following mixed and freight train service is established:

- a. Mixed train, Mojave to Owenyo, daily.
- b. Mixed train, Owenyo to Mojave, daily.
- c. Local Freight, Mojave to Searls, and return, daily.
- d. Local Freight, Owenyo to Cartago, and return, daily except Sunday.

Subject, however, to the following conditions:

(1) Said mixed trains shall operate on a schedule substantially the same as that now maintained on Passenger Trains Nos. 88 and 89, as shown in San Joaquin Division time table No. 147.

*HEM*  
 (2) No local freight will be handled by said mixed trains between ~~Engage~~ <sup>Mojave</sup> and Searls, or between Cartago and Owenyo.

(3) Applicant shall post notices at all stations on said Owenyo Branch for at least ten (10) days before mixed train service is inaugurated.

The effective date of this order shall be twenty (20) days from the date hereof.

The foregoing Opinion and Order are hereby approved

and ordered filed as the Opinion and Order of the Railroad Commission of the State of California.

Dated at San Francisco, California, this 25th day of February, 1930.

*C. L. Jones*  
*Emmett*  
*Leon Williams*  
*Wm. J. L. ...*  
*W. J. ...*

Commissioners.