

ORIGINAL

Decision No. 42192

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the Matter of the Application of PLACER COUNTY)
for alteration of railroad crossing authorizing) Application
stock overhead crossing to be used by light vehicle) No. 29552
travel.)

LELAND J. PROPP, Deputy District Attorney, and
CEAS. A. GEISENDORFER, Supervisor, for Applicant.
R. S. MYERS, for Southern Pacific Company, Interested Party.

O P I N I O N

In this application the County of Placer requests permission to use the overhead crossing at Gold Run (Crossing No. A-152.0-AD) for light vehicular traffic.

A public hearing was held in this matter in Auburn on October 21, 1948, at which time the matter was submitted.

Prior to 1931 the overhead bridge at this location was a part of U.S. Highway No. 40, running between Sacramento and Truckee. Subsequent to 1931 the State highway was relocated and instead of crossing the railroad at Gold Run it passed under the tracks at Towle, several miles east.

By its Decision No. 24261, dated November 30, 1931, in Application No. 17660, the Commission authorized the construction of the Towle subway (Crossing No. A-157.4-B), provided the grade separation at Gold Run was closed. Subsequently, at the request of the California Cattlemen's Association and the California Wool Growers' Association, the matter was reopened and the Commission, by its Decision No. 26323, authorized the Gold Run overhead to remain open as a cattle pass and pedestrian crossing only.

Recently this overhead crossing was reconstructed to a width of 12 feet, with a distributed load limit of 16,000 pounds, and with sharp gravel approaches on each end. Barrier posts are in place to prohibit vehicular movement over the structure.

Applicant now requests that this structure be opened for light vehicular traffic not to exceed 8,000 pounds gross per vehicle.

Assuming that the railroad runs in an easterly and westerly direction, portions of the town of Gold Run lie to the south of the railroad and portions lie to the north. The school house and cemetery are on a hill north of the crossing.

Testimony showed that a large number of children attend the school from the southerly portion of the town and outlying areas to the south and that the only available crossing for vehicles is at Gold Run station located about 0.2 miles east of the overhead crossing herein involved. The railroad at the grade crossing (Crossing No. A-152.2), consists of two main lines, two side tracks, and one wye.

Witnesses for applicant testified that very often the grade crossing is blocked by freight trains and delays of as long as 20 minutes occur before traffic can proceed over the crossing. Furthermore, these witnesses showed that this grade crossing is very hazardous as it is on an oblique angle to the railroad and the view of approaching trains is very poor.

The record shows that with the opening of the overhead crossing to light vehicular traffic almost all of the traffic over the railroad would be taken care of as there are very few truck movements in that area. Should the grade crossing be eliminated, trucks desiring to cross the railroad would use the Dutch Flat crossing (Crossing No. A-152.6), about 0.4 miles to the east.

Witnesses all agreed that if the grade separation were opened to light vehicular traffic, the Gold Run grade crossing (Crossing No. A-152.2) could be eliminated, even if it caused some inconvenience to truck operation. In this event truck traffic would have to use the Dutch Flat grade crossing (Crossing No. A-152.6) located about 0.4 of a mile east of Gold Run Station, and trucks originating in Gold Run on the south side of the railroad, destined to points north of the railroad, would require to drive about one additional mile.

Should this application be granted, applicant agreed to immediately cause to be passed an ordinance prohibiting the use of this overhead crossing by vehicles weighing more than 8,000 pounds gross; would erect signs notifying the public that the crossing could not be used by heavy traffic; and would require law enforcement officers to police the crossing.

In reviewing the entire testimony in this proceeding it is clear that this grade separation would be a convenience to the people residing in Gold Run, particularly those living to the south of the railroad who are now required to transport children to the school on the north side; that general automobile traffic would be facilitated between both sides of the railroad, particularly when the grade crossing at Gold Run is blocked by freight trains; and that the existing grade crossing at Gold Run (Crossing No. A-152.2) is hazardous and should be closed if the grade separation is opened to light vehicular traffic.

It appears that public convenience and necessity require the reopening of the Gold Run grade separation to light vehicular traffic, provided the existing grade crossing at Gold Run station is closed, and it will be so ordered.

O R D E R

A public hearing having been held and the matter being submitted,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the Board of Supervisors of the County of Placer be and it is hereby authorized to open the grade separation in the vicinity of Gold Run for the use of light vehicles not to exceed 8,000 pounds gross weight. This authorization shall not become effective unless applicant shall have prohibited by ordinance the use of said grade separation by vehicles exceeding 8,000 pounds gross weight, and shall have filed with the Commission a certified copy of such ordinance. This authorization is subject to the following conditions:

- (1) The number of said crossing shall be changed from A-152.0-AD to Crossing No. A-152.0-A.
- (2) Applicant shall install appropriate signs on each side of said grade separation and in the vicinity of Gold Run station notifying the traveling public of the limited use of the structure.
- (3) The expense of maintenance of that portion of the structure including the dock, railings, and floor stringers shall be borne by applicant. The supporting structure and tracks shall be maintained by Southern Pacific Company.
- (4) Prior to the opening of said separation to limited use as herein authorized the Board of Supervisors of the County of Placer shall file with this Commission a certified copy of an appropriate ordinance or resolution duly and regularly passed instituting all necessary steps to legally abandon and effectively close to public use and travel the existing public grade crossing at Gold Run station (Crossing No. A-152.2). Upon said grade separation being opened to limited vehicular use, said crossing No. A-152.2 shall be legally abandoned and effectively closed to public use and travel.

Within thirty days after completion pursuant to this order applicant shall so advise the Commission in writing. This authorization shall become void if not exercised within one year, unless time be extended, or if above conditions are not complied with. Authorization may be revoked or modified if public convenience, necessity, or safety so require. This order shall be effective twenty days from the date hereof.

Dated at San Francisco, California, this 3rd day of November, 1948.

J. F. Dinsmore
Justus P. Casner
Maxwell Russell
Harold P. Kula
Samuel P. Pitter
 Commissioners