

ORIGINALDecision No. 55985

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the Matter of the Application of)
 SOUTHERN PACIFIC COMPANY and of)
 RAILWAY EXPRESS AGENCY, INCORPORATED,)
 for authority to discontinue agency) Application No. 39261
 at Piru, County of Ventura, State of)
 California, and to maintain said)
 station as a nonagency.)

Harold S. Lentz, for Southern Pacific Company
 and Railway Express Agency, Incorporated,
 applicants.

S. E. Ross, for Piru Citrus Association,
 interested party.

O P I N I O N

The applicants herein request authority to discontinue an agency station at Piru in Ventura County, California. A public hearing was held before Examiner Grant E. Syphers at Piru on November 19, 1957, at which time evidence was adduced and the matter submitted.

Piru is located on State Highway 126, approximately 11 miles west of Castaic Junction and nine miles east of Fillmore. The agency station consists of an office, a waiting room and a warehouse with one agent on duty between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. on week days. There is no one on duty during Saturdays and Sundays. The waiting room is closed up and has not been used for several years.

Witnesses for the railroad presented testimony and exhibits showing the operating revenues received by the Southern Pacific Company on traffic originating at or destined to Piru. The substance of this evidence was to the effect that the revenues are gradually diminishing at this station and that the actual business can be just as satisfactorily handled through the agency station at Fillmore.

Fillmore, it should be noted, is 7.3 miles to the west of Piru by railroad and approximately 9 miles by highway. It is the plan of the railroad to have one of the two agents now stationed at Fillmore travel to Piru whenever his presence is required in order to handle freight.

The testimony further showed that the principal shipper of freight from the Piru station is the Piru Citrus Association, which ships approximately 1,000 cases of oranges per year. The incoming freight consists of supplies for the citrus growers and occasional carloads for other receivers.

At the present time, the railroad operates one local train per day into Piru during the citrus season. This train leaves Oxnard at approximately 2:30 p.m. and arrives at Piru between 6:00 and 8:00 p.m. in the evening. On days when there is no carload freight at Piru, the train does not come to that station.

In addition to this carload freight business there are occasional express shipments handled out of the station. Most of these are outgoing shipments sent by the citrus association although there are occasional outgoing and incoming shipments for other shippers in the area.

The railroad agent handles Western Union telegram business in that he receives messages which he transmits by phone to the Western Union's Ventura office and he also phones incoming messages to the addressees. This service is rendered during the hours the agent is on duty.

There are no passenger trains serving Piru and at the present time rail passengers actually board the trains at other stations such as Saugus, Ventura or Santa Barbara. The agent does sell passenger tickets.

If the agency station is discontinued, the railroad proposes to spot and pickup cars in the same manner as at present, however, instead of the agent at Piru handling the bills of lading, one of the agents at Fillmore will perform this task. The Fillmore agency is open from 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday. Accordingly it was contended that this will provide a better service than is now provided by the Piru agency station.

If this application is granted, the Western Union, according to testimony adduced by one of its representatives, will provide a toll free phone service to its Ventura office when that office is open and otherwise to the Los Angeles office.

So far as the Railway Express is concerned, the shippers would experience some inconvenience as a result of the proposed change since they would have to pick up or deliver their shipments at the Fillmore station. However, it was pointed out that the principal user of the express, the Piru Citrus Association, presently makes its pickups and deliveries by truck and that the change would merely mean that these pickups and deliveries would be made at a station nine miles farther away.

The present agent at the Piru station will be transferred to Anaheim in a similar position.

Opposition to the proposal was expressed by two merchants in Piru and by a representative of the Piru Citrus Association. The two merchants do not use the carload freight service but occasionally use the express service. The protest of the citrus association went principally to the fact that the Fillmore station is about nine miles farther away than the present Piru station.

It should be noted that less than carload shipments now are handled by truck and this would continue if the application is granted.

A consideration of all of the evidence adduced herein leads us to conclude and we now find that it will be no serious inconvenience to the shipper or receiving public if the agency station at Piru is closed. We further find that the present traffic now being handled through the Piru agency station can be adequately handled under the arrangements proposed by the railroad. Therefore, the application will be granted.

O R D E R

Application as above entitled having been filed, a public hearing having been held thereon, the Commission having been fully advised in the premises and hereby finding it to be not adverse to the public interest,

IT IS ORDERED that Southern Pacific Company and Railway Express Agency, Incorporated, are hereby authorized to discontinue agency service at Piru, County of Ventura, subject to the following conditions:

- a. Southern Pacific Company and Railway Express Agency, Incorporated, shall give not less than ten days' notice to the public of discontinuance of agency service by posting notice at the station.
- b. The authorization herein granted shall expire if not exercised within ninety days after the effective date hereof.

- c. Within thirty days after discontinuance of service as herein authorized, Southern Pacific Company and Railway Express Agency, Incorporated, shall notify this Commission thereof and of compliance with the above conditions.
- d. Southern Pacific Company shall maintain said station as a non-agency station.

The effective date of this order shall be twenty days after the date hereof.

Dated at San Francisco, California, this 16th day of December, 1959.

[Signature]
President
[Signature]
[Signature]
[Signature]
Commissioners