

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

180 PROMENADE CIRCLE, SUITE 115
SACRAMENTO, CA 95834



September 8, 2011

File Number: G.11-07-004
Unincorporated, County of Kern

Randy Perry
General Manager
San Joaquin Valley Railroad
221 North F Street
Exeter, CA 93221

Re: General Order 88-B Request for Authority to Modify the South Chester Avenue Highway-Rail Crossing, CPUC Crossing No. 103BT-317.50, DOT No. 750991T in an Unincorporated section of Kern County.

Dear Mr. Perry:

This refers to your letter, dated June 16, 2011 (received July 13, 2011), requesting authorization, pursuant to Commission General Order (GO) 88-B, to modify the existing at-grade crossing of the San Joaquin Valley Railroad (SJVR) Buttonwillow Subdivision tracks and South Chester Avenue in an unincorporated area of Kern County. The crossing is identified by CPUC Crossing No. 103BT-317.50, DOT No. 750991T.

South Chester Avenue is a four lane roadway over one SJVR branch line freight track. The crossing is currently equipped with four Commission Standard No. 8 (flashing light signal assembly) warning devices, two curb and two median mounted, raised medians separating northbound and southbound traffic, pavement markings and advanced warning signage. SJVR and Union Pacific Railroad Company (UPRR) operate freight rail service over the crossing.

SJVR proposes to make the following modifications to the crossing:

- Install one curb mounted and one median mounted Commission Standard No. 9 (flashing light signal assembly with automatic gate) warning device for southbound vehicular approach, with 12" LED flashing lights in the northwest quadrant;
- Install one curb mounted and one median mounted Commission Standard No. 9 warning device for northbound vehicular approach with 12" LED flashing lights in the southeast quadrant; and
- Application of MUTCD compliant pavement markings and signage including W10-1 advanced warning signs;

The Commission's Rail Crossings Engineering Section (RCES) investigated the request filed by SJVR and finds it adequately addresses compliance and safety. As SJVR, UPRR and Kern County are all in agreement as to the design and apportionments of the cost under the provisions of GO 88-B, the improvements as described in your request dated June 16, 2011 and summarized above are authorized.

Temporary traffic controls shall be provided in compliance with Section 8A.05, Temporary Traffic Control Zones, of the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (CA MUTCD), published by the California Department of Transportation. All parties shall comply with all applicable rules, including Commission General Orders and the CA MUTCD.

This project is categorically exempt from the requirements of the California Environment Quality Act of 1970, as amended. [California Pubic Resources Code 21084].

This authorization shall expire if the above conditions are not complied with or if the work is not completed within three years of the date of this letter. Upon written request to this office, the time to complete the project may be extended. Any written request for a time extension must include concurrence letters by involved parties in support of the time extension. If an extension is requested, RCES may reevaluate the crossing prior to granting an extension.

Within 30 days after completion of this project, SJVR shall notify RCES that the authorized work is completed, by submitting a completed Commission Standard Form G titled *Report of Changes at Highway Grade Crossings and Separations*. Form G requirements and forms can be obtained at the CPUC web site Form G page at <http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/formg>. This report may be submitted electronically to rces@cpuc.ca.gov as outlined on the web page.

SJVR should also submit an updated FRA inventory form to the Federal Railroad Administration, reflecting the changes. CPUC requests a concurrent copy of the updated inventory form be submitted to rces@cpuc.ca.gov.

If you have any questions, please contact Sergio Licon at (213) 576-7085 or sal@cpuc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Daren Gilbert, Manager
Rail Transit and Crossings Branch
Consumer Protection and Safety Division

C: Lauren Clausen, (Caltrans)
Barry Nienke, (Tulare County)
Jim Smith, (UPRR)