

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

320 W 4th Street, Suite 500
Los Angeles, CA 90013



June 2, 2015

File Number: XREQ 2015040013
Mills Lane
City of St. Helena

Patrick Coggins
Senior Right of Way Agent
California Department of Transportation
111 Grand Avenue
Oakland, CA 94612

SENT VIA EMAIL

Re: General Order 88-B Request for Authority to Alter the Mills Lane At-Grade Highway–Rail Crossing, Identified as CPUC Crossing No. 87-86.80, and DOT No. 751436Y, in the City of St. Helena, County of Napa.

Dear Mr. Coggins:

This refers to your letter, dated April 1, 2015, received by us on April 16, 2015, requesting authorization, pursuant to California Public Utilities Commission (Commission) General Order (GO) 88-B, to modify the Mills Lane at-grade highway-rail crossing (crossing) of the Napa Valley Railroad track which operates the Napa Valley Wine Train, Inc. (NVWT) in the City of St. Helena (City). The NVWT assumes maintenance responsibilities and operating rights at the crossing. The crossing is identified as CPUC Crossing No. 87-86.80, DOT No. 751436Y.

The crossing consists of one industrial main track over a two lane roadway. The crossing has two Commission Standard 1-R (crossbuck sign on a post) warning devices.

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) states in its request letter, "Traffic congestion and associated vehicle queues across the track will be reduced through the widening of the access into and out of SR-29. A refuge area for vehicles turning north onto SR-29 will also be constructed. This refuge area allows room for vehicles to cross over the tracks and improves the ability to merge onto the northbound direction."

Caltrans proposal to modify the crossing shall consist of the following alterations as indicated in its request letter and/or shown on its plans:

- Constructing curb returns with larger radii (50') to accommodate large truck turning movements;
- Constructing a 110' long northbound refuge lane on State Route 29 in the northwest quadrant. The refuge lane will be 4' wide in addition to the proposed 8' highway shoulder thereby making a width of 12' beyond travel lane;
- Replacing the Commission Standard 1-R in the northeast quadrant with a new Commission Standard 8 (flashing light signal assembly) with light emitting diode (LED) lights and additional sidelights pointed at the driveway northeast of the crossing;

- Replacing the Commission Standard 1-R in the southwest quadrant with a new Commission Standard 8 with LED lights and additional sidelights pointed at State Route 29;
- Replacing the existing crossing surface with a new concrete panel crossing surface; and
- Applying California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (CA MUTCD) compliant signage and pavement markings, as shown on plans.

Commission's Rail Crossings and Engineering Branch (RCEB) investigated the request by Caltrans and finds it adequately addresses compliance and safety. As Caltrans, City, and NVWT are in agreement as to the design and apportionments of the cost under the provisions of GO 88-B, Caltrans may proceed with the alternations as described in its request letter and attachments, and summarized above.

NVWT must ensure that Emergency Notification System signs are installed to comply with Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations, Section 234.309.

Temporary traffic controls shall be provided in compliance with Section 8A.08, Temporary Traffic Control Zones, of the CA MUTCD, 2014 Edition, published by the California Department of Transportation.

All parties shall comply with all applicable rules, including Commission GOs and the CA MUTCD.

This project is categorically exempt from the requirements of the California Environment Quality Act of 1970, as amended [California Public 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 RCEB, 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, RCEB may re-evaluate the crossing prior to granting an extension.

Within 30 days after completion of this project, Caltrans and/or NVWT shall notify RCEB that the authorized work is completed, by submitting a completed Commission Standard Form G title *Report of Changes at Highway Grade Crossings and Separation*. Form G requirements and forms can be obtained at the Commission web site Form G page at <http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/PUC/safety/Rail/Crossings/formg.htm>. This report may be submitted electronically to rceb@cpuc.ca.gov.

At the conclusion of the project, NVWT should electronically submit an updated Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) inventory form (Form F6180.71) reflecting the changes. 49 CFR 234 Section 234.409 requires the railroads to submit periodic crossing inventory updates a minimum of once every three years. Commission requests a concurrent copy of the updated inventory form be submitted to rceb@cpuc.ca.gov.

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If you have any questions, please contact Daniellia Fristoe at (916) 928-2108 or daniellia.fristoe@cpuc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anton Garabetian". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "A" and "G".

Anton Garabetian, P.E.
Program and Project Supervisor
Rail Crossings and Engineering Branch
Safety and Enforcement Division

cc: **(SENT VIA EMAIL)**

Steve Palmer, City of St. Helena
Anthony J. Giaccio, Napa Valley Wine Train, Inc.

