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MEMORANDUM

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Arizona Corporation Commission
DOCKETED
AUG 19 2014
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To: THE COMMISSION

From: Robert Marvin
Director
Safety Division

Date: August 19, 2014

RE: IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION OF PINAL COUNTY FOR APPROVAL TO MODIFY AN EXISTING CROSSING OF THE COPPER BASIN RAILWAY AS PART OF THE PROPOSED KELVIN BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT IN PINAL COUNTY, ARIZONA, AT USDOT NO. 742-396-E.

DOCKET NO. RR-02636A-14-0181

ORIGINAL

Background

On June 6, 2014, Pinal County ("County") filed with the Arizona Corporation Commission ("Commission") an application for approval for the Copper Basin Railway ("Railroad") to modify an existing crossing as part of the proposed Kelvin Bridge Replacement Project in Pinal County, Arizona, at USDOT No. 742-396-E.

Kelvin Highway

Kelvin Highway is rural roadway located approximately 20 miles southwest of Superior, when traveling south on State Route 177. This two-lane east-west roadway is an at-grade crossing with flashing lights, automatic gates and bells. The proposed project will close the at-grade crossing to vehicular traffic, and convert the crossing into a pedestrian/equestrian only crossing. Upon Commission approval, the existing flashing lights and gates will be removed from the crossing and a pedestrian/equestrian maze installed by the Railroad. Concurrently, the County will construct a new grade-separated crossing for vehicular traffic over the railroad tracks. The project is estimated to start construction in early 2015.

This project is being funded with Federal and County funds. The total cost of the entire project is estimated to be $6.5million. Federal funds amount to $1million, while the County will contribute $5.5 million.

According to the County, the Average Daily Traffic ("ADT") is 249 vehicles per day ("vpd"). No Level of Service ("LOS") was given. The posted speed limit on the Kelvin Highway is 35 mph. According to the Safety Division's Railroad Safety Section, ("Staff") and the Federal Railroad Administration's ("FRA") databases, no accidents or incidents have occurred at the crossing.

Note: The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Geometric Design of Highways and Streets, 2004, states that the Level of Service characterizes the operating conditions on a facility in terms of traffic performance measures related to speed and travel time, freedom to maneuver, traffic interruptions, and comfort and

convenience. This is a measure of roadway congestion ranging from LOS A--least congested--to LOS F--most congested. LOS is one of the most common terms used to describe how "good" or how "bad" traffic is projected to be.

Train Data

Data provided by the Railroad to the County regarding train movements through this crossing are as follows:

Train Count: 2 average trains per day.
Train Speed: 10 to 25 mph for freight, no passenger trains.
Thru Freight/Switching Moves: All moves through this crossing are thru freight.

Schools and Bus Routes

The County stated that the Kearney School District does utilize the current at-grade crossing for its buses. However, the new grade separated roadway will eliminate any chance for a bus/train incident.

Hospitals

The nearest hospital to the Kelvin Highway crossing is 42 miles away in Globe.

Hazardous Materials

The County gave the following response when asked about hazardous materials using this crossing:

It is not known how much hazardous materials traffic uses the existing crossing each day.

Grade Separation

The existing at-grade crossing will be closed to vehicular traffic and a new grade separated crossing constructed over the railroad tracks. A portion of the current at-grade crossing will remain open and re-configured exclusively for pedestrian/equestrian use.

Staff Conclusions

Having reviewed all applicable data, Staff supports the County's application. Staff believes the grade separation is in the public's interest and is reasonable. Staff believes that the measures proposed by the County are consistent with other similar grade-separated crossings in the State and will provide for the public's safety. Therefore, Staff recommends approval of the County's application.

Brian H. Lehman
Railroad Safety Supervisor
Safety Division

Originator: BHL

Original and thirteen (13) copies
of the foregoing were filed this
_19th_ day of August, 2014 with:

Docket Control
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Copy of the foregoing mailed
this 19th day of August, 2014 to:

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