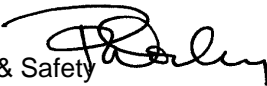


STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

BEVERLY EAVES PERDUE
GOVERNOR

EUGENE A. CONTI, JR.
SECRETARY

TO: Jared Withers, Program Manager
Federal Railroad Administration
Office of Research & Development

FROM: Paul C. Worley, CPM 
Director – Engineering & Safety

SUBJECT: *Quarterly Progress Report No. 54 – October-December, 2010*
North Carolina Federal Rail Grant Progress Report
North Carolina Sealed Corridor Initiative and Various Projects

DATE: January 20, 2011

During fourth quarter of 2010, the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) advanced projects funded by Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) to develop and improve the Sealed Corridor. This report updates you on progress achieved through the end of the quarter for the projects funded specifically through rail grant number DTFR-53-96-H-00047. Coming to you under separate cover from the office of our Division Director Patrick B. Simmons is the required Quarterly Rail Grant Financial Report which provides a complete accounting for quarterly expenditures. Unless otherwise noted, all projects reported about below involve Norfolk Southern Railway Company (NS).

Private Crossing Safety Initiative (PCSI) Crossing Closures

- Carl C. Barber Crossing (Crossing No. 904 413T), Gibsonville – After evaluating options for providing alternative access for the Barber property for the closure of this private crossing, consulting staff from Gannett Fleming and Rail Safety Consultants (RSC) continued to work with Mrs. Barber (Mr. Barber died in spring 2010) about the location of alternative access. In the meanwhile, the consultants secured verbal approval from adjacent property owner Jeffrey Deal for an easement through his property for alternative access via a driveway from the Barber property to Frieden Church Road (SR 2746). Since NS and North Carolina Railroad (NCR) indicated that they support the closure as long as access can be provided, the Rail Division is negotiating a three-party agreement for review by the parties based on a Term Sheet submitted to Mr. Deal about the alternative access easement.
- Public Service Company of NC (PSNC) Crossing (Crossing No. 630 659F), Cary – The new access road was put into service in November. The excess pavement in the NCR right-of-way was removed. CSXT removed the pavement from their crossing as well as that of NS, and the Division of Highways (DOH) removed the pavement adjacent Chatham Street. With the final walk-through completed in December, the project has been completed; and the contribution from FRA has been fully expended.

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- Recreational Ventures Crossing (Crossing No. 630 652H), Raleigh – At the request of the Rail Division, the NCDOT Right of Way Branch (ROW) had provided a preliminary appraisal of the property and expected to provide a full property appraisal on December 31, 2010. As soon as ROW receives the full appraisal and completes its review, the Rail Division plans to acquire the property and negotiate an agreement among NCDOT and the stakeholders in order to gate and lock the crossing thereby providing only railroad and other occasional access.
- Thomas & Howard Crossing (Crossing No. 722 963P), Greensboro – The NCDOT Right of Way Branch has been working to secure the last of three signatures of property owners in order to acquire the needed property to create a state road to standard. The new roadway provides the alternative access to the next adjacent crossing at Maxfield Road (SR 3025). Once the right-of-way has been certified, the DOH will schedule the paving of Maxfield Road, thereby enabling the ultimate closure of Thomas & Howard.
- Andrew B. Lloyd Crossing (Crossing No. 735 147G), Hillsborough – Alternate access to this large farm property will be provided from the US70/I-85 connector. The Rail Division completed the environmental document and drafted a stakeholder agreement for review by the affected parties. With a survey in hand, Gannett Fleming is preparing concept plans for the driveway/median crossover for review by the Rail Division and DOH.
- Progress Energy Crossing, (Crossing No. 734 754R), Raleigh – The Rail Division continued its work with property owners on the location of alternate access which will allow for completion of the environmental review. The Triangle Transit Authority had suggested alternative alignment across its property to provide permanent access to the substation and cell tower site. Gannett Fleming is producing 25% plans for preliminary design. Ultimately this commercial crossing is planned for closure with easier and quicker alternative access provided for heavy electrical equipment and for emergency responders.
- Partin's/Terrell's Trailer Park Crossing, (Crossing No. 735 160V), Hillsborough – At the time of initial PCSI evaluation and analysis, this crossing served four permanent structures and twelve mobile homes. As a result of this evaluation, the Rail Division replaced the then existing crossbucks with signals and gates. Recommended long-term alternatives included future curve realignment which would necessitate acquiring most or all properties and/or providing alternative access to any remaining parcels, as well as acquiring additional right-of-way for NCRRT to accommodate an alignment that would handle 90 mph train-operating speeds. In more recent times the possibility of locating a train station in close proximity to the trailer park has been suggested. Given the scope of the future project and current negotiations with the town to implement a Traffic Separation Study (TSS) to analyze further rail/highway improvements for the area encompassing the trailer park crossing, the Rail Division's plans to implement a crossing closure at this location are on hold.
- Ethel Lane Crossing (Crossing No. 724 377C) and Juke Box Road Crossing (Crossing No. 724 378J), China Grove – After reviewing options to develop alternate access to the six properties served by these two crossings, the Rail Division has completed the environmental document. The private engineering firm is working on the final right-of-way acquisition plan to construct alternative access onto the state route Mt. Hope Church Road (SR 1505). The Division reviewed the preliminary combined field inspection plans in October with a field inspection and a review of final plans scheduled in January.
- Old Hillsborough Road/Gordon Thomas Drive Private Crossing (Crossing No. 735 199Y), Hillsborough – This crossing closure project provides public roadway alternative access to Couch Mountain Rd (SR 1716)/Paschall Drive. The area had been flown to provide aerials as a part of producing preliminary design. The Rail Division is negotiating with a private engineering firm as well as Division 7 to determine the most cost effective way to complete the preliminary design. The Rail Division has not completed any environmental work.
- Greenbrier Drive Private Crossing (Crossing No. 726 305F), Hillsborough – This crossing closure project provides public roadway alternative access to Spruce Pine Trail. The area has been flown to provide aerials as a part of producing preliminary design. The Rail Division is negotiating with a private engineering firm as well as Division 7 to determine the most cost effective way to complete the preliminary design. The Rail Division has not completed any environmental work.

- Byrdsville Road Private Crossing (Crossing No. 735 189T), Hillsborough – With funding from this grant, the Rail Division earlier replaced crossbucks with signals and gates. Now the closure of this crossing will provide public roadway alternative access to Lonnie Court (SR 1893) for all properties served by the crossing. The area has been flown to provide aerials as a part of producing preliminary design. The Rail Division is negotiating with a private engineering firm as well as Division 7 to determine the most cost effective way to complete the preliminary design. The Rail Division has not completed any environmental work.
- Long & Patterson Private Crossing (Crossing No. 722 974C), McLeansville – Preliminary plans call for alternative access via a parallel frontage road connecting to McLeansville Road at Frieden Church Road (SR 2746) and a driveway on an easement. The Rail Division's options for closure also include the acquisition of two properties, relocation of the owners, and demolition of structures if alternative access under consideration proves unfeasible. Like the three projects described immediately above, the area has been flown to provide aerials as a part of producing preliminary design. The Rail Division is negotiating with a private engineering firm and Division 7 to determine the most cost effective way to complete the preliminary design. The Rail Division has not completed any environmental work.
- Frank E. Freeman Private Crossing (Crossing No. 735 148N), Hillsborough – This project required the total take of property and structures of two landowners to provide for curve realignment and maintaining the NCRR Right-of-Way corridor. With one landowner a willing seller, a final appraisal is underway as well as the request for right-of-way acquisition. The Rail Division has requested the environmental. Ultimately the crossing will be gated and locked with limited access for the railroads and other occasional access.
- NCDOT and Gannett Fleming developed concept plans and cost estimates for alternative access or possible buyout of other private crossings included in the Private Crossing Safety Initiative (PCSI) program, and the Rail Division will advance plans along the Sealed Corridor as is feasible; however, any projects newly initiated will not be reported in our upcoming Quarterly Reports for 2011. NCDOT and FRA will execute an Amendment 10 to Rail Grant No. DTFR-53-96-H-00047 that will provide a no-cost extension to the term of the grant through July 31, 2011. At that time the grant expires, and NCDOT will prepare appropriate final reports to show that all funds have been appropriately expended.

If you have questions about contents of this report or need additional information, please contact me at pworley@ncdot.gov or by calling 919-715-8740. When needed, we will involve specific project engineers to respond in detail as well.

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