

Adam Assenza
OEA Project Manager
Surface Transportation Board
Docket No. FD 36815
395 E. Street SW
Washington, DC 20423

Subject: Formal Opposition to Texas Materials Rail Line Proposal Docket No. FD 36815 Texas Materials Group, Inc.

Dear Mr. Assenza,

I oppose the Texas Materials Group rail line, as both routes will run through the flood zone and threaten the safety net that Mesquite Creek provides in the area for flood drainage. Mesquite Creek is also the main flood drainage for many, many miles of hill country upstream.

Safety Concerns

Mesquite Creek is the safety drainage for this area. It prevents flooding for my property, and it also is the safety net drainage from Highway 281 to Highway 183. Also, from County Road 207 to my property there is a 75-foot cliff. Both routes will run along this 75-foot cliff. It's possible the cliff will collapse, and tons of toxins will dump into the Mesquite Creek. That would be dangerous for everyone.

Environmental

Mesquite Creek deserves to be preserved. There are Indian artifacts and many natural springs along Mesquite Creek. Both routes for the rail line will run across 300 pecan trees, thousands of trees including Live Oaks, Spanish Oaks, and Red Buds. Once these trees are taken out, it will widen the flood zone. And again, the 75-foot cliff is endangered.

Property Devaluation

Without a water well, 300 pecan trees, thousands of trees including Live Oaks, Spanish Oaks, Red Buds, a pump house, an irrigation system, Indian artifacts, and springs, my property value goes down. When property value goes down, so does the property tax revenues to Burnet County. It hurts both Burnet County and me.

Demand for Alternative Consideration

My top concern is to preserve Mesquite Creek and keep the flood safety drainage that Mesquite Creek provides in this area and for many, many miles of hill country upstream.

Alternative Routes

My first choice is for the rail lines to avoid crossing Mesquite Creek. You can do this by running the rail line at least 2 miles south of Mesquite Creek from County Road 207 to Highway 183.

A second alternative route is, if you must cross the Mesquite Creek, use the old railroad tracks that run from Lake Victor all the way to the U.S. 190 South Loop.

A third alternative route is, if you still choose to run the rail line on the north side of Mesquite Creek, from County Road 207 to Highway 183, I recommend that you move the rail line at least 2 miles north of Mesquite Creek. Both of the currently planned routes are in the flood zone. Once you take out the 300 pecan trees, thousands of trees including Live Oaks, Spanish Oaks, and Red Buds, this will widen the flood zone. Moving the rail lines two miles north of Mesquite Creek will preserve the flood safety net for the area.

Sincerely,



Lynne L. Rathman
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