

David and Jana Cothran
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4/13/2025

Adam Assenza

Surface Transportation Board

Docket # FD 36815

Project Name - Texas Materials Group, Inc.

Subject: Formal Rebuttal of Texas Materials Group Rail Proposal on Environmental Grounds

Dear Adam Assenza,

We represent multiple family members with adjacent property.

We are writing to formally oppose the proposed rail project by Texas Materials Group in Burnet and Lampasas Counties due to its significant and irreversible environmental impacts. This project threatens the delicate ecological balance of our region and poses substantial risks to our local wildlife, water resources, and overall environmental health.

This more specifically affects these on our family property where we reside and have over many years taken great care to nurture the condition of the land as a wildlife habitat by removing evasive species of plants, restoring native plants and grasses, managing water sources and providing supplemental food plots and shelter in accordance with a professional wildlife management plan.

Impact on Local Ecosystems and Wildlife

Burnet County and our property is home to a diverse range of flora and fauna, including several species of concern. The construction and operation of this rail line would divide and restrict access to our land and lead to habitat destruction, fragmentation, and increased mortality rates for local wildlife. The increased noise, vibration, and pollution from rail traffic will disrupt nesting and breeding patterns of birds, including migratory

ducks and geese, dove, and protected species such as the bald eagle and others which have been observed in the area.

Threats to Water Quality and Aquatic Life

The proposed rail line's proximity to local creeks, springs, watersheds, and aquifers which run through our land raises serious concerns regarding water contamination. The runoff from construction activities and potential fuel spills from train operations could introduce harmful pollutants into our waterways, endangering aquatic ecosystems and affecting our drinking water supplies. The long-term consequences of such contamination would be detrimental not only to the environment but also to public and personal health and agricultural sustainability in our community.

Air and Noise Pollution Concerns

The increased rail traffic will generate significant amounts of air pollution from diesel-powered locomotives and aggregate dust contributing to higher levels of particulate matter and greenhouse gas emissions. Additionally, the continuous noise and vibrations from rail operations will negatively impact both residents and wildlife, disrupting natural behaviors and degrading the quality of life in our home and rural community. Furthermore, the area is wooded and would be put at higher risk of forest fire. We are currently about 5 miles from an existing rail yard and hear it every morning around 4 am when they begin operations. Having it right in our back yard near our home would cause us serious mental and physical distress and injury forcing us to relocate and start over.

For the reasons outlined above, we strongly urge the STB to deny this rail proposal. The long-term environmental damage far outweighs any potential economic benefits. Instead, we encourage the exploration of alternative transportation solutions that do not come at the cost of our natural heritage, health, and public well-being.

We appreciate your time and consideration of these serious environmental concerns. We look forward to your response and hope that you will take these issues into account when reviewing the feasibility of this project.

Sincerely,

David and Jana Cothran and family

dc@pipeandmetalcenter.com

281-389-9955

Land owners, residents, and concerned citizens