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SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

Washington, DC 20423

Office of Economics, Environmental Analysis, and Administration

August 8, 2003

Robert Hancock
Chairman
Medina County Historical Commission
Medina County Courthouse
Hondo, TX 78861

**Re: STB Finance Docket No. 34284, Southwest Gulf Railroad Company –
Construction and Operation Exemption – Medina County, TX –
Invitation to be Consulting Party under section 106 of the National
Historic Preservation Act**

Dear Mr. Hancock:

As you know, the Surface Transportation Board's Section of Environmental Analysis (SEA) is conducting an environmental review of Southwest Gulf Railroad Company's proposed rail construction and operation in Medina County, Texas, pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act and related environmental regulations, including the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA).

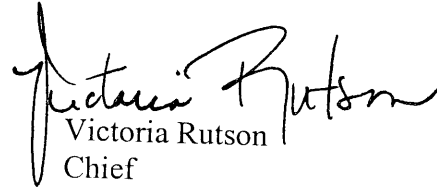
In consultation with Ms. Pamela Opiela of the Texas Historical Commission, we have identified your organization as a potential consulting party to the section 106 process of the NHPA and are writing to invite you to participate as a consulting party in the section 106 process. If you would like to be included as a consulting party, we request that you provide us with the name and contact information for the individual who will act as the spokesperson for your organization throughout the section 106 process.

Pursuant to the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's regulations for implementing the section 106 process at 36 CFR Part 800, consulting parties participate throughout the section 106 process and work with all involved parties to try to resolve any issues. However, the concurrence of consulting parties in the final outcome of the section 106 process is not required.

If you have any information regarding historic and cultural resources that you would like to submit to us please feel free to do so. We welcome information from all sources throughout our environmental review process.

If you have additional questions about the section 106 process or the role of consulting parties in the process, please do not hesitate to contact me or Rini Ghosh of my staff at (202) 565-1539.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Victoria Rutson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Victoria" and last name "Rutson" clearly distinguishable.

Victoria Rutson

Chief

Section of Environmental Analysis

cc: Pamela Opiela, Texas Historical Commission