

Wood, Diana

From: Wood, Diana
Sent: Thursday, August 02, 2018 10:00 AM
To: baxterfarm86@gmail.com
Subject: FD 34284 Southwest Gulf Railroad Construction - Reply to your letter
Attachments: EI-26345 Morris Baxter Ltr 7-2018.pdf; 2008 Board Decision.pdf; 8-12-16 AMENDED SOUTHWEST GULF RAILROAD PROGRAMMATIC AGREEMENT.docx.pdf; EO-3018 Ltr to ACHP and Consulting Parties phase II report and project update 7-20-18.pdf; FD 34284 SGR FINAL VERSION Final Resolution Plan9-7-2017.pdf; Copy of 2ndQTR 2018 Mitigation Progress Report.xlsx; EI-26274.pdf

Dear Mr. Baxter,

I received your letter of July 26, 2018 that discusses four problem areas that you have observed in the above referenced rail line construction project in Medina County Texas. As the project has been through over 10 years of review and approvals, please note that the answers to your concerns and observations may be found in 6 of the 7 attached documents (I've also included your letter in the attachments as reference). Specifically, for problem area #1, please see the attached EI-26274. For problem area #2, please refer to FD 34284 Final Version Resolution Plan and EO-3018 Ltr to ACHP. For problem area #3, please refer to Copy of 2nd quarter 2018 mitigation progress report as well as the 2008 Board decision. And for problem area #4, please refer to the 8-12-16 Amended Programmatic Agreement, which specifies that the railroad is single-track.

Thank you for your comments.

Sincerely,
Diana Wood

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US Surface Transportation Board
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#E1-26345

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July 26, 2018

Ms. Diana Wood
Section of Environmental Analysis
Surface Transportation Board
1925 K Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20423

Re: STB Finance Docket No. 34284, Southwest Gulf Railroad Company

Dear Ms. Wood:

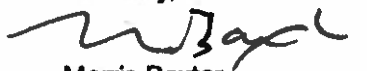
There have been several recent problems caused by the Southwest Gulf Railroad Company (SGR). Some of these problems are:

1. There is an old adobe/log cabin on SGR property not fifty yards from the railroad construction. A tree has fallen on the structure and SGR has done nothing to save it. It probably dates from the late 1800's. A picture is included of this structure. The building is easily seen from FM2676.
2. According to SGR, they are going to plant mountain cedar trees along the railroad right of way. These trees are probably the worst they could find. Cedar(juniper) trees require more water, so they take subsurface moisture from the surrounding area. The USDA has provided grants in the past to remove cedar from this area. Many South Texans suffer from cedar allergies from December to February each year, so these trees will increase these allergies.
3. Last weekend(July 20-22), SGR closed FM 2676 in order to place railroad tracks across the highway. Texas Department of Highways(TXDOT) and Medina County provided a detour route consisting of CR265, CR354, and CR353. Sunday morning, we were on that detour route and on CR353 at the location where the railroad will cross that road, the SGR contractors were working and had a flagman out. I do not know if any vehicles were stopped during the weekend, but it is incredible they were even working on a detour route.
4. Since this railroad was proposed, it was my understanding that it was to be a single track railroad. However, there is a double track extending from the Union Pacific main line northward across CR4516 for about three miles. Was this double track proposed in SGR's plans?

You do not have to take the time to reply to my letter, but I wish you would look into these issues and complaints.

Thank you.

Sincerely,


Morris Baxter
830-741-4506
baxterfarm86@gmail.com

Enclosure: Photograph