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1 SCOPING MEETING FOR THE PROPOSED CANADIAN
2 NATIONAL RAILWAY COMPANY ACQUISITION OF THE
3 ELGIN, JOLIET AND EASTERN RAILWAY COMPANY

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STATEMENT OF:

7

NANCY SCHUMM-BURGESS

8

AUGUST 27, 2008

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BARRINGTON HIGH SCHOOL

13

616 WEST MAIN STREET

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BARRINGTON, ILLINOIS

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MS. SCHUMM-BURGESS: Nancy
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2 Schumm-Burgess with the Barrington Area
3 Conservation Trust, Barrington Hills,
4 Illinois. As a not-for-profit with
5 environmental concerns in the Barrington
6 area, we have several observations and
7 concerns about the Draft Environmental
8 Impact Statement. By its very nature the
9 EIS is required to address environmental
10 concerns and at the very least comment on
11 them.

12 The SEA identified that it
13 received its biological resources from
14 several agencies. However, they did not
15 list the Forest Preserve District of Lake
16 County, Illinois as one of their resources
17 or the Flint Creek Watershed Plan. There
18 is significant data missing from our region
19 with these omissions. While the EIS
20 describes several plant communities through
21 descriptions supplied by Chicago
22 wilderness, it does not simultaneously
23 identify where those plant communities
24 exist in relation to the study areas.

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1 The SEA does confirm that the
2 Chicago wilderness area offers refuge to
3 native wildlife and that this network of
4 wild places contains globally significant
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5 natural communities. This plan simply
6 states that they exist. However, no
7 protection, strategy or estimate of the
8 impact to these communities has been
9 clearly identified.

10 For instance, the EIS addresses
11 that Chicago Wilderness is an important
12 resource for the area and an expert source
13 for data. The EIS also recognizes that
14 defragmentation is one of the largest
15 contributing factors to habitat degradation
16 for a large number of species. However,
17 the EIS does not identify the recommended
18 resource protection areas recognized by
19 both Chicago Wilderness and Chicago
20 Metropolitan Planning Agency. If the EIS
21 had included this data, they would know
22 that these areas, including Barrington,
23 provide the largest contiguous regions of
24 nonfragmented natural resources that remain

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1 in northeastern Illinois, making them
2 regionally significant to the quality of
3 life that exists here.

4 In fact the EJ&E rail lines are
5 some of the only features that bisect many
6 of these natural areas. The increase in
7 rail traffic along these lines would

8 absolutely affect the migration, diversity,
9 population density and quality of life of
10 these natural resources. What does CN plan
11 to do to address the important of these
12 areas?

13 The EIS acknowledges that
14 certain wildlife is killed by rail cars but
15 that it's most apparent when it involves
16 big game and the predators that feed upon
17 the carcasses. However, CN does not keep
18 records of animal kills on any of its line.
19 This is of concern because many of the
20 large tracks of continuous habitat, both
21 publicly and privately owned, are connected
22 in the Chicago wilderness Identified
23 Resource Protection Plan and bisected by
24 these rail lines. Increased Traffic will

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1 affect population and density of these
2 areas. How does CN plan to address the
3 issue of wildlife destruction?

4 The EIS confirms that the
5 conditions of these present habitats ranges
6 from low quality to high quality and that
7 certain high quality areas can be
8 negatively affected by land use changes.
9 Yet the EIS does not address the negative
10 impact to these areas that will occur

11 because of their own increase in traffic,
12 vibration and leaching of materials.

13 For instance, the Lockport
14 Prairie infrastructure is the real cause of
15 the issues that they have down in the South
16 Side near Lockport. How does Chicago --
17 Canadian National plan to address both the
18 infrastructure needs and the affect on the
19 environment in these sensitive areas of
20 high quality in the Barrington community
21 study area?

22 The EIS claims to have confirmed
23 the quality of these areas by limited field
24 investigations, railroad right-of-ways and

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1 a rail trip. where is the field data for
2 these investigations? How can natural
3 areas be investigated by standing at the
4 corner of public roadways only as they
5 defined it in the EIS?

6 The EIS addresses the importance
7 and quality of Illinois natural area
8 inventory and identifies properties
9 including the Cuba Marsh, forest preserve
10 at Crabtree Nature Center and Spring Creek
11 valley forest preserve but never addresses
12 what measures will be taken to increase CN
13 usage or what impact that increased traffic

14 will have on these natural areas.

15 The EIS admits that in
16 Barrington the vibrational measures were
17 well above normal. At the same time they
18 claim to have had equipment malfunctions at
19 these sites.

20 Were these actually monitored
21 and how do they intend to mitigate the high
22 vibrational readings? What do they
23 anticipate these readings to be with the
24 substantial increase in traffic? Given

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1 that these high quality natural areas do
2 exist within the rail corridors and they
3 merit protection and attention, how does CN
4 propose to do this? Will they agree to
5 four to six miles per hour through these
6 regions to reduce mortality and minimize
7 impacts on the ground? If they do reduce
8 the speed, what impact will this have on
9 rail traffic itself or on train staging
10 locations?

11 The EIS identifies Barrington as
12 having an unacceptable mobility because of
13 the combinations of a roadway operating at
14 LOS E through F and two rail lines crossing
15 the adjacent to downtown. They offer no
16 solutions to this problem however.

17 The EIS confirms that
18 groundwater protection is an important
19 issue for consideration. Given that
20 there's no data that studies the
21 vibrational effects of increased rail
22 traffic along areas of thin highly
23 permeable materials, such as important
24 groundwater recharge areas, they have been

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1 identified in recent studies and are
2 omitted from the report including but not
3 limited to the Flint Creek Watershed Plan.
4 The EIS study claims the access to this
5 data is limited to purposes for Homeland
6 Security. Does that make this data
7 unavailable or inconsequential? How do
8 they plan on identifying/addressing the
9 impacts to these systems?

10 The EIS identifies the
11 surrounding roadways as alternatives during
12 times of high traffic. Do they consider
13 these true alternatives? Have they
14 addressed these issues with individual or
15 metropolitan plan commissions? Have they
16 identified this impact to the communities
17 affected, and how do they plan on
18 addressing the impact of increased traffic
19 to smaller roadways designed for lighter

20 traffic?

21 The EIS claims that it will
22 address global warming issues like fuel
23 usage and climate change but never really
24 addresses this directly. What will the

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1 actual proposed impact be on the local
2 communities including but not limited to
3 increases in traffic wait times at rail
4 crossings, increased heat island profile
5 based on figure 3.9-3, the increase in fuel
6 use by the railroad itself.

7 In conclusion, while this report
8 claims to be an environmental study, there
9 is very little real data that identifies
10 potential problems and potential solutions
11 to those problems. Increasing rail traffic
12 through semirural areas will have real
13 impact to the local flora, fauna and
14 quality of life of the residents both human
15 and animal. This report solely lacks the
16 information to determine what those impacts
17 may be and how they may be resolved.

18 (End of statement.)

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