

EI-18186

May 8, 2010

David Navecky  
STB Finance Docket N. 35095  
Surface Transportation Board  
395 E. Street SW  
Washington, DC 20423-0001

RE: Comments on Draft EIS

Dear Mr. Navecky,

Deshka Landing Outdoor Association, LLC represents 170 members that have bought into operating a year-round facility (boating and snowmachining) to access the pristine Susitna River Drainage directly west of Willow, Alaska. Our facility provides access to over 34,000 yearly users of the Willow area and drainage area. Our organization would like to have some concerns addressed in regards to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement regarding the proposed Port MacKenzie Rail Project (Docket N. 35095) in specific regards to the routes named Mac East and Mac West Willow Alternatives.

As stated in the Draft EIS, the Willow Alternative will have the most severe amount of negative impact on the vegetative loss (S.6.3.1), wildlife and fish habitat loss (S. 6.3.2-3), and cultural and historical resources (S.6.4), and noise and vibration (S.6.7).

We are deeply concerned with the affects of the construction and usage of the rail tracks through the Willow Creek SRA and the Little Susitna SRA. Crossing the Willow Creek will inevitably cause harm to the creek and fish habitat. In the summer this area receives a very large amount of sport fisherman and recreationalists (as confirmed in the EIS in 13.2-12). The train trestle will severely tarnish the enjoyment of this area, adversely affect the fish habitat. The Willow alternative also crosses the Little Susitna River, which will see the same affects as crossing the Willow Creek. These two areas are very important to the local economy and if fishing is disrupted it will mean millions of dollars lost and many jobs lost.

Willow's historic winter trail system will be adversely affected if the rail line would be constructed. The rail line would cross over at least 6 main East-West snowmachining and dog mushing trails. We fear that the North-South rail corridor will subsequently cut off users of these trails and expose the railroad to unwanted trespassing on their property.

The transmission of coal and other bulk products in open rail cars will subject the landscape to unwanted non-native dust and debris being cast down into the immediate area of the rail line. Although currently stated that hazardous materials will not be transmitted, if they are transmitted and an accident takes place what are the plans to mitigate the effects on the environment? Any hazardous accident will be absolutely devastating to the area.

We are concerned that the environmental impacts in the Willow area will be very severe. The impact of the rail line will affect residents of the area, recreationalists from all of the state and country, and to the abundant wildlife.

Thank you for letting us comment on this project. We hope our concerns will be taken seriously and addressed in a manner which does not jeopardize the environment or users in this area.

Sincerely,



Joseph R. Wright  
President

Deshka Landing Outdoor Association, LLC