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To diana.wood@stb.dot.gov

cc

bcc

04/09/2007 02:21 PM

Subject STB Finance Docket No. 34284 - Quihi

Please respond to
C Eisenhower
<ceisenhauer@peoplepc.com>

History:

✉ This message has been replied to.

Good Afternoon Diana,

Please take my letter into consideration when making decisions about the proposed rail line in/around Quihi. I am a homeowner that will be directly affected by the eastern routes.

Also, please send a short reply email to let me know my letter was received.

Thanks in advance for your time in reading and considering my letter.

Courtney Eisenhower

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April 4, 2007

Ms. Diana Wood
Surface Transportation Board
395 E. Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001

Re: STB Finance Docket No. 34284
Southwest Gulf Railroad Company
Construction and Operation Exemption
Medina County, Texas

Dear Ms. Wood,

I AM A HOMEOWNER THAT WILL BE DIRECTLY AFFECTED IF AN EASTERN ROUTE IS CHOSEN. I, ALONG WITH MY HUSBAND SHOULD BE INVITED TO ATTEND THE MEETING ON APRIL 20, 2007. AFTER REVIEWING THE INFORMATION PROVIDED FROM THE STB, I DO NOT FEEL THAT MY HOUSE WAS CONSIDERED IN THE STUDY.

Just as concluded in the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement, I feel that the most feasible route would be the original Proposed Route that crosses the fewest roadways and private property. Please consider this question when making your final decision; "Why are falling down 'historical' structures (which were not previously considered 'historic' until the railroad was proposed) more valuable than my home that I have maintained and lived in for nine years?"

I am a direct descent of Bernard Bruks, one of the original settlers of Quihi. The historical value of the area is the land which the settlers depended on for their livelihood. It was not their homes or rock fences as some historical people may want to conclude to. I choose to live in this area to be close to my family, stay close to my original roots and enjoy the culture of the farming and ranching atmosphere. My family continues to farm in this area and they would rather preserve the land they have worked for many, many years than falling down rock houses.

My husband and I drove the original proposed route to photograph the so called 'historic' structures that need to be preserved. Please take a second to view these photos at the end of this letter and honestly consider the previously stated question: Why are falling down historical structures more valuable than my home? And why did the Texas Historical Commission (THC) not work to preserve these structures or bring attention to them before the railroad proposed that route? I strongly feel that the MCEAA is only using the 'historical' feature as a crutch to push the railroad onto their neighbors.

I strongly request that the THC change their position to not support the eastern routes.

Below are excerpts from a letter that I sent in dated January 9, 2007:

I reside in the Castroville West Subdivision, which is located at the southeast corner of County Road 4516 and County Road 4643. This subdivision is in very close proximity to the SGR's Modified Medina Dam Route, the Eastern Bypass Route and the MCEAA Medina Dam Alternative Route.

The Castroville West Subdivision is a deed restricted subdivision in which the people that reside here have taken pride in their properties and conformed to the restrictions since the subdivision was formed. This subdivision has a Declaration of Restrictions that are filed in the Medina County Records Volume 219, Page 839. The houses located in this subdivision were not considered when the eastern routes were studied. In addition, there are school bus stops along the stretch of County Road 4516 close to the proposed rail crossings for the kids whose parents reside in the subdivision. This creates a very unsafe situation to have children, who are often times unsupervised, waiting for or being dropped off within walking distance to the proposed tracks.

The above stated routes traverse both County Roads 4516 and 4643. These two crossings are in very close propinquity to each other and the probability that both roads could be blocked at any one given time is almost a certainty. If there were to be an emergency situation such as the need for medical services or the fire department, my home could not be reached in a reasonable amount of time. My home could burn to the ground before the fire department could arrive or a member of my family could die due to the delay in the response time of the medical service units.

Another major concern not addressed is that County Road 4516 has grown to be a very heavily traveled thoroughfare for a barely two lane, pot hole ridden, county road. The idea that the proposed train would cross at an unlighted area of the road where there is an abrupt left curve, while simultaneously dropping 50-75 feet in elevation and completely blocking the driver's visibility scares me. I drive this road on a daily basis and have seen and heard of many horrible wrecks, some that have resulted in deaths. This proposed crossing would make conditions on this road even worse and the number of reported wrecks is sure to increase.

In the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement, it states that my home will not be impacted by the 'noise and vibration' emitted from the train. I strongly disagree with the stated findings. I can clearly hear the existing train that follows the Highway 90 rails, which are approximately 1.5 miles from my home. By stating this fact, how can you stand behind the findings in your report? In addition, was it considered that my home fronts County Road 4516, the point at where the proposed trains will cross and therefore will blow their horn with greater intensity and for longer periods of time to warn the crossing traffic?

Thanks you for taking the time to read this letter and considering some of the very serious concerns that I have for my property and my family.

Sincerely, ↗

Courtney M. Eisenhower

CC: Mr. Rick Perry, Governor of Texas

The following photos are of 'historic', unpreserved, falling down homes along the proposed route:

