

EI-18158



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Subject STB Finance Docket No 35095

Mike Whedbee
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May 10, 2010
David Navecky
STB Finance Docket No. 35095
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW
Washington, DC 20423
REFERENCE: 4 (f) requirements

Dear Sir:

The current EIS has made it almost impossible for you to chose any route other than Houston South or the Big Lake alternatives because of the unreasonableness of the Alaska Department of Natural Resources (DNR). There are numerous examples of the DNR allowing use of the parks when it is in Alaska's economic best interest. This finding of no de-minimus is not in keeping with the normal procedures of the park system and speaks to the un-do influence of the Mat-Su Borough Management. Every property of DNR's has long range goals which allow for roads, foresting, mining, hunting, fishing, trails and other activities for the benefit of Alaskans. This railroad falls into the classification of economic benefit for all Alaskans, but must have the proper mitigation measures to protect the public land. The NEPA process and the multitude of government agencies were developed with the intent to provide this protection.

The NEPA process for 4 (f) states that you may use a route that has a no de-minimus when it is not feasible or prudent to use other routes. All routes are feasible although we still need to look at what cost we will pay, not only monetarily but to the environment, the lifestyle of people, train safety, train energy, loss of wetlands, dissecting watershed and recreational trails and the total disregard to the wishes of the majority of the people who live in the area. You have been presented with 1172 signatures of local residents who want the only reasonable route to be used, the Willow Route.

What prudent person would chose any route other than the one that has been proven to be the best, time and time again, over 30 years of studies. What prudent person would ignore the economics of using any route that is not the best for the future development of the State of Alaska. What prudent person would ignore the letter from Bruce Carr of Alaska Railroad to Tryck Nyman Hayes dated 12/11/02 in which he says that the Willow route is the only reasonable route, and which he still believes is the best route, per our conversation of May 5, 2010. What prudent person would ignore the wishes of 1172 petitioners. What prudent

person would ignore the future costs of operations and maintenance on the railroad if the optimal route is not chosen, a saving of as much as 46%. What prudent person would chose a route that has double the safety risks as the optimal route.

There are enough factors involved in the Houston South and Big Lake routes that would allow you to make a ruling that the only route that is Prudent, reasonable and therefore feasible is the Willow route.

I submit that you should find that the Willow route is the only prudent, reasonable and feasible route. If you can't find for the Willow route, you should find for the "No Build" option.

Sincerely,
Mike Whedbee