

Other Submissions

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Docket #: -35087 - -

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Message: In response to your draft environmental impact statement dated July 25,2008. I find the following areas to be in factual error.

First, given the current fuel costs and supply limitations, the use of an extra 3/4 of a million gallons of motor fuel is not a minor matter. If anything, initial estimates have historically proven to be low making it an even more important matter.

Second, historically, communities have paid for grade separation when the community was the primary party responsible for the traffic increase. In other cases such as a major increase in rail activity, the railroads have been required to pay for the remediation efforts, I have example which you should have found yourself. In other words, the responsible party for creating the congestion pays for the remediation. In this case it should be the C.P. Railroad. This is particularly true of the Illinois route 34 crossing.

Third, you listed the vibration as being of structural concern for only 250 ft off the track center-line. As a mechanical Engineer and Material Scientist, I have measured vibrations sufficient to greatly increase fatigue effects out to 500 meters from the center-line of the tracks, this is in very good agreement with the German standards and requirements.

Fourth, We live 1.31 miles from the EJ&E tracks and 1.33 miles from the Burlington Northern tracks, or just under 3 kilometers from either set of tracks. (closest distance) Using three acoustic pick-ups to determine direction and source of the sound, I have measured 78DbA outside and 74 DbA inside our house from the EJ&E train whistles. Given that the German standards state anything over 64 DbA (equivalent spectra response curve), is considered highly disruptive during "Sleeping hours". The 10 kilometer sound effected area on each side of track center-line is a reasonable consideration. Quiet zones must be established along the entire route or roughly 2.2 million additional people will be exposed to an increase probability of 400 percent more sound disruptions as opposed to a reduction of sound disruptions of 40 percent or less for 1.47 million. I considered overlap areas as a no change as all that would occur is a change in source direction. You also have to factor in the effects of "Warning Fatigue". This effect is well documented and results in an increased accident rate due to people

being habituated to the warning sounds from excess exposure.

When the negative effects on the forest preserves, protected species in several of the preserves, the likely disruption of commuter train schedules (C.P. does not have a good record of working well with commuter or U.S. passenger services, only with Canadian passenger services), and the probable increase in accidents. The net result is that this acquisition is not in the best interest of the overall area transportation requirements. It would result in a very localized gain at the cost of excess fuel usage, reduced ability to move goods by surface truck over a much wider area and increased environmental damage and increased accident rates. Overall a very poor trade-off