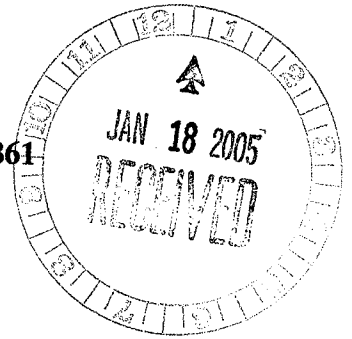


EI-1324

Max Walden

655 CR 365

Hondo, Texas 78861



Re: Finance Docket No. 34284 - Southwest Gulf Railroad Company

Comments on the Environmental Impact Study
Finance Docket no. 34284
Southwest Gulf Railroad Company

General comments:

The first public statements by Vulcan occurred at a local meeting at the Quihi Gun Club with an impromptu attendance by several employees of Vulcan. The president of the SW division, I believe his name is Ransdell, stated, "If you folks don't want the railroad we won't build it but we also will not do the Quarry as trucking would be too expensive". (I heard it with my own ears, he denies it now)

TRUTH! They thought the threat of losing the quarry would create pressure to drop opposition of the RR. He didn't say trucking would harm the environment, their current reason for not trucking.

The quarry and the railroad are one project. As they say in the old song "Love and marriage, you cant have one without the other" Also this same night, in conversation with a very exuberant geologist, " You guys are not very progressive, if we don't get new sources of cheap limestone, foundations in Houston will double in price" Yeah, lets ruin our environment for million dollar houses. Vulcan is not concerned with the environment, just their bottom line.

There is no justification for common carrier status. Rail line has been available from Hondo to Houston for 100 years, no more is needed.

TRUTH! If you grant this status to them, you will be granting an unconstitutional use of eminent domain.

One more comment that indicates ethical malfeasance by SGR and inadequate investigation by SEA occurs in ES2.1.2, page 7. I suggest inadequate investigation because they admit that the information used was provided only by SGR. The Medina Dam route elevation alone would refute the claim "significant adverse impacts to floodplains, hydrology soils etc. There are no flood plains or wetlands, it is 50 feet higher than the routes crossing Quihi creek. All other routes cross Quihi creek which is nothing but flood plain. We pay out many dollars for our flood insurance. I doubt any house on the Medina Dam route pays flood insurance.

TRUTH! It would just cost SGR more to build the Medina dam route and less expensive to go across Quihi creek Refer back to our statement about "bottom line".

Now on to specific comments. Mitigation - Since we have no government out here to voice complaints, I suggest Vulcan fund a committee to oversee the required mitigations. These committee members will live adjacent the RR line or Quarry and appointed by the county commissioner. The fund will include attorney fees if legal council is necessary.

Noise - ES15/16

I suggest SEA folks go to AVE M/highway 90 in Hondo and record train noise, then go to the intersection of 365/4512 and measure the difference. That will demonstrate the significance.

Air Quality - ES 14

NO-ACTION alternative will not create truck emissions because they will not mine the Quarry without the RR Mr. Ransdell said so and we know he would not lie.

Socioeconomic - ES 17

The impact is already being felt, real estate sales are rare and will get worse near the RR site when it begins operation. May I recommend some mitigation? Vulcan should have to compensate all landowners within a certain distance from the RR. Would you allow a RR or a quarry to be built near your home without compensation? I hope the three directors voting have access to this thought.

Indirect Impacts - ES 17

Years from now, the undesirable presence of the RR will cause a steady deterioration and a federal superfund will have to renew it.

Environmentally preferable alternatives

NO ACTION, they wont mine the quarry. There is limestone all the way west to Del Rio and south of the balcones escarpment and the union pacific RR goes that way also.