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The Medina County Environmental Action Association, Inc.

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December 10, 2007

Subject: Request for Public Meeting regarding impacts on FM 2676 and Junction CR 353
by Vulcan Materials Trucks and Southwest Gulf Rail Traffic

Participants: TxDOT Officials, Medina County Commissioners,
Vulcan Materials/SGR and interested public.

Dear Sir:

As president of MCEAA, I am requesting that Texas Department of Transportation arrange a local public meeting for the proposed Vulcan Southwest Gulf Railroad (SGR) and FM 2676 rail crossing, plus the FM 2676 junction to the quarry road CR 353. (You and Mr. Darin Kosmak met with Medina County Judge James E. Barden on March 17, 2006 on some of these concerns.)

This public meeting could be similar to your Hwy 211 public meeting at Potranco School on July 24, 2007, and could even be held in the same location. This meeting is needed for local citizens' input and education concerning road safety and road traffic relating to Vulcan Material's truck and SGR's train traffic. Support for this meeting is evidenced by Judge Barden's letter January 7, 2005 to STB in which he stated "it is important that we address and button down as much as possible at these early stages, because experience has shown us that once railroads are sanctioned to operate there is no leverage on the part of local government to correct problems or adjust concerns that may arise from its operation".

Vulcan Materials officials have stated that the Quihi 1760 acre limestone quarry will open in early 2008. As you are aware the quarry will be an aggregate source to be delivered by SGR and aggregate trucks, and would be one of the largest in the state. Vulcan drilled a well, obtained core samples, cleared land for fencing, and is preparing a quarry entrance. Vulcan has also opened a new office in nearby Hondo, TX.

The Surface Transportation Board Section of Environmental Analysis is now preparing the Final Draft Programmatic Agreement (PA) which addresses the cultural and historical concerns of this project, and will be finished soon. The Final EIS that could designate which of the eastern railroad alternatives will be chosen should be completed for publication in the next few weeks. With these permitting procedures coming to a conclusion, planning for railroad crossings and local road access and egress with public input is imperative. Former Medina County Commissioner Chris Mitchell's letter of May 10, 2006 to STB stated, "after speaking with

TxDot engineers out of Austin, Medina Co. Precinct 1 will seek more stringent requirements for the crossing at FM 2676 (overpass) and CR 4516 (proper low water crossing such as a bridge with boxed culverts)". Mrs. Mitchell also reiterated in the same letter "mitigating circumstances and issues regarding roads, low water crossings, flooding, etc., will mean nothing as Medina County will have no say at all unless we receive these commitments in writing before any permits are issued".

Some of the concerns that the local public would like TXDoT to address are listed below. TXDoT traffic count on FM2676 should be extrapolated to reflect the following variables:

1. A fast growing urban area expanding westward from San Antonio as denoted by new construction along FM1957 (Potranco Road) and the completion of Hwy 211.
2. Slow moving large farm machines on FM 2676 and CR 353, as well as other county roads..
3. Grain elevators and chemical suppliers located at each end of FM 2676.
4. Data for quarry trucks and traffic expressed in some future average and not just at opening operations.
5. Slow moving cattle trucks and feed trucks along FM 2676.
6. Future expansion of Hwy173 to an outer loop for multi-county traffic.
7. Slow moving 100-car trains some 4-6 times daily. At various points along the approach to FM 2676, the train speed could be only an estimated 6 miles per hour or even less depending on the acceleration out of the quarry or the deceleration into the quarry.
8. A rural area, growing very rapidly and not reflected by average state or county growth numbers.
9. 250 gravel trucks entering and/or exiting quarry from CR 353, and possibly traveling in clusters.
10. The FM 2676 is the main artery to Hondo on the west, and Castroville and San Antonio on the east, and used not only by the
11. Even with the proposed railroad, up to 250 gravel trucks each day will enter or exit FM 2676 to CR 353. Turn lanes and acceleration lanes must be designed and installed to insure safe movement of large heavy gravel trucks to FM 2676. These 80,000-88,000 pound trucks need room to make a 90 degree turn and then mesh into traffic safely and smoothly.
12. Truck safety warning signs need to be added to FM 2676

MCEAA believes by requiring an overpass at the FM 2676 rail crossing during the initial rail construction Tx DoT will prevent needless loss of life and property. By doing so, TxDot will insure that future traffic requirements are met, thus avoiding future road alterations such as were required by TXDoT in San Patricio County over Hwy 181 crossing the UP railroad there.

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I hope TxDOT will see our need, and will honor our request for a public meeting to discuss the above topics. Citizens of this area do not want their safety compromised, nor do they want to bear the cost of road improvements required by private enterprises' intervention in the area. We do want to promote responsible, sustainable development in a fast growing area and at the same time protect our road safety.

Please promptly forward this request for the public meeting to any other appropriate TxDOT officials necessary for action. I am also asking that you reply to this letter promptly. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Yours truly,



Dr. Robert Fitzgerald
President, MCEAA

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- cc: Carlos A. Lopez, PE
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- cc: Victoria Rutson, Chief, Section on Environmental Analysis
Surface Transportation Board
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- cc: Representative Tracy King
P.O. Box 418, Batesville, TX 78829
- cc: Representative David Liebowitz
Bandera Road, San Antonio, Tx
- cc: Medina County Judge Jim Barden
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- cc: Medina County Pct 1 Commissioner Ronnie Ulbrich
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MCEAA, Inc., for your Home, Health, and Heritage