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Received
via Fax
4/21/06

April 12, 2006

Ms. Rini Ghosh
Section of Environmental Analysis
Surface Transportation Board
1925 K Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001

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

Dear Ms. Ghosh:

My family has farmed about 1,200 acres of land that is shown in yellow on the enclosed plat—a copy of Figure 1 attached to your Notice of Intent to Prepare Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement—since my grandfather acquired this land in 1942.

My brother, Fred and I are the present active farmers. Our partnership is the source of income for our parents and our families. We have through hard work and frugal lifestyles been able to purchase and install large pivoting water towers with arms from which irrigation water is served to 300 acres from a single pivot. The water is delivered through 10 inch and 12 inch pipe buried below plow depth from two Edwards Aquifer water wells. Several booster pumps powered by ~~diesel~~ motors furnish the pressure necessary to rotate the delivery arms and spray the water on the surface. We grow ~~corn~~, cotton and milo.

The MCEAA Medina Dam Alternative Route and the Eastern Bypass Route both pass through our farm in locations that would disrupt our irrigation systems in which we have invested more than \$400,000. But even of greater concern to us is the resulting destruction of our irrigated farm land upon which we depend for livelihood. Our production, if we are deprived of

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our irrigation system, would not afford income adequate to meet the needs of our families. Dry land farming in this drought-consistent area is almost impossible. We would be forced to find other means of support.

However, if your section can possibly look with favor on our suggested revision of the route shown by red line on the enclosed plat, our large circular watering systems will remain unaffected and our farming operation saved. Our suggested route comes off the Proposed Route of the Southwest Gulf Railroad Company, runs along our west property boundary, curves eastward across our northwest corner and connects with either the Eastern Bypass Route or the MCEAA Medina Dam Alternate Route. It will render useless about 50 acres of land in our northwest corner that is a wooded area not in cultivation. Similarly, Mr. Russell Mangold, our neighbor on the north will be intersected across his southeast corner affecting about 30 acres of his land. This route offers the railroad a route through the escarpment north of us that is probably the least severe in grade escalation. The route along our western border is level in grade, except for a slight incline in the northwest corner that is wooded. The land lost by us, and by Russell Mangold, is not as hurtful as we would be if the route passes through the heart of our farm and our installed irrigation system is rendered unusable.

We simply ask you to please take into consideration the proposed somewhat modest change in the route, which, if approved, will save our farm and our means of survival.

Sincerely yours,

Harold Weisberg

