

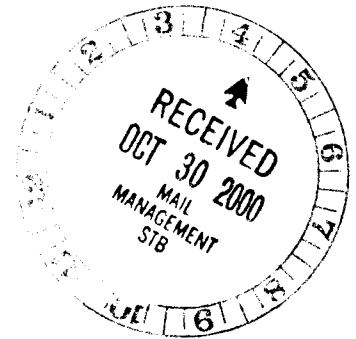
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Carol Sides
P.O. 67
Smithwick, S.D. 57782

October 22, 2000

Office of the Secretary
Case Control Unit
Finance Docket #33407
Surface Transportation Board
1925 K. Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001



Dear Ms. Rutson;

This is in regards to the Environmental Impact Statement draft, which has recently been released, on the DM&E expansion project. The STB has scheduled hearings in our area on November 1 and 2, 2000. I ask that you request the STB to reschedule the hearings after January 1, 2001.

In addition to the short notice of scheduled hearings, the STB has allowed only 90 days for written comments to be submitted. I ask that you request the STB to extend the comment period by at least 180 days.

The time frame allowed has not given the people very long to read a document of several thousand pages. It would be hard to complete an interesting book of this length in that amount of time, especially during this time of the year when many of the people affected are busy with harvest, marketing and weaning of calves, and hunters. What makes it especially hard to read is that the only copy I found is located at the public library and it may not leave the premises. This curtails reading time further by eliminating evenings, weekends, and holidays. I do believe the document should be more accessible to the people if they are to make informed decisions on something that will greatly affect their lives.

I do not believe the STB's timeframe or accessibility of the document is fair to the people it will affect. All I am asking is that we be given a fair and reasonable timeframe in which to review the information.

Sincerely,

Carol Sides