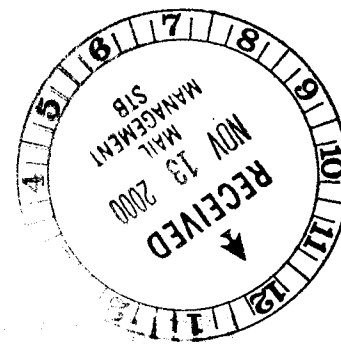


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Vicki L. Wolfe
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(507)625-2596



November 09, 2000

Office of the Secretary
Case Control Unit
STB Finance Docket No. 33407
Surface Transportation Board
1925 N. Street NW
Washington DC 20423-0001

RE: Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Dear Sir,

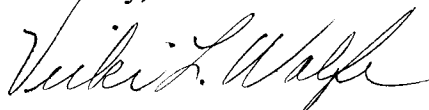
I wish to start by saying I am a homemaker and wife of a railroad employee. The reason I am writing is to give my full support for the D.M.& E. expansion project. There are many reasons for my supporting this project and the main one is safety issues. Being actively involved with Operation Lifesaver, improved safety is a major concern of mine. With new rail and track structures, less derailments will occur because of old rail and infrastructures. New signaling and control systems will mean safer work environment for employees as they are now using radios without the help of computer and communications backup protection. With the new communication systems the dispatchers can see exactly where a train is at all times and if there were to be a problem, would be forewarned in advance (e.g., helping to eliminate the tampering of railroad property as happened with vandalizing this summer in Brookings, S.D.). Crossings would be blocked for shorter periods of time due to faster more efficient trains. Statistics have proven that train speed can effect the amount of damage done, it usually is not a factor in whether a collision will occur. Most highway-rail grade crossing collisions involve train speeds of 35 mph or less. In 25% of collisions the car runs into the side of the train in broad daylight with the vehicle going around gates or in some cases, simply ignoring and not being aware of the train crossing warning signals.

The impact of lower pollution caused by less fuel emissions and wear and tear on the highways from semi-trucks should be of great economical importance. It takes 400 semi-trucks to do the same job as a single train. Along with having newer engines with higher standards for emissions and a shorter more efficient route than competing routes this would be an added bonus. The concern over the coal dust is most exaggerated, in my opinion. Most, if not all of the dust would be disposed of almost before leaving the mine area. If we were to loose as much dust as some would like you to believe, what would be the purpose of hauling a product that will be gone before it gets to it's destination?

Utilizing a passenger service in the future would have a beneficial, economic plus effect alone with nostalgic and historic tourism value throughout the entire area of the D.M.& E. rail service. This would provide more jobs and generate more revenue for all states. New industries along with the ones already in place would naturally be served faster and would have more cost effective transportation for their goods, thus generating millions of dollars in tax revenue created by a newer cost effective rail service. There would be a distinct advantage in having a shorter distance corridor and alleviating some of the congestion associated with other railroad corridors in more densely populated areas. This new expansion could open up new trade areas for all concerned.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter and I urge you to please give a favorable conclusion to this case in time to proceed with this project in the 2001 building season. I feel that the 90 day public comment period is double the normal time and should be more than adequate. All of the scientific and substantive issues have been covered as thoroughly as possible prior to construction process. Thank you again.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Vicki L. Wolfe".

Vicki L. Wolfe

cc: The Honorable Jessie Ventura
cc: Senator Rod Grams
cc: Senator Paul Wellstone
cc: Representative Gil Gutknecht
cc: Representative David Minge
cc: Dakota Minnesota & Eastern Railroad Corporation