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Surface Transportation Board
Office of the secretary
Case Control Unit
Attention: STB FD #33407
1925 K St. NW
Washington, DC 20423-0001
Attention: Victoria Rutson, Environmental Project Manager

RE: Environmental Impact Study (DEIS) concerning the Powder River Basin Expansion Project of the DM&E Railroad.

Dear Ms. Ruston:

On approximately ~~November 13, 2000~~ a man came to my door telling me of the Mankato Area Coal Train Coalition meeting set for November 15, 2000. This is the first I knew that our small town of Skyline was involved in the DM&E Railroad route. The local paper kept showing a map that was sent to your agency over three years ago as the route that was being considered. We live in a small incorporated city of Skyline, Minnesota which has 120 homes and is connected to the City of Mankato, Minnesota. Our city is an all-volunteer city.

This past couple of years we have reshingled and put seamless aluminum siding on our home in the amount of approximately \$17,000.00. We would not have invested this money if we had been informed that a railroad track was being considered to be constructed within one block of our beautiful home which sits on a large ravine lot above the Blue Earth River. We have seen, as many as 14 deer walk through our back yard and have watched as the many wildlife habitat have been busy building their flocks in this beautiful wildlife area of Southern Minnesota.

I urge you to investigate why this so called M-2 route, (commonly referred to as the Southern By-Pass Route) was not presented showing this new route until the Mankato Township Board found out, quite by accident, that the original map presented was not the route the DM&E would be taking. The map we had been told for three years that the route DM&E would be taking was docketed in your office as No. 33407.

I urge you to deny the request for expansion and allow the people of the Mankato Area to live a life that is undisturbed and free of all of the negative impacts of 37 coal trains a day running through our city and river valley which would be within one block of our home. (This is a train every 45 minutes a day.)

Our environment, wildlife, wetlands, fish, aesthetics, health, and cultural values will be greatly effected if you do not stop this unfair tactic of the DM&E. Erosion is a major problem in our area and the County Engineer's Office can confirm this if they review the erosion along County Road 33 in Blue Earth County when land was used for the North Star Highway Bridge. Once this sandy land in Skyline is once tampered with the banks will erode and wash away and will not tolerate the jarring of 37 coal trains running through this land.

[Handwritten signature]

This area is also known as having historical sites as Fort Le Hillier and Indian Burial Grounds. I am sure that there must be Federal Lands along this M-2 route which is not Eminent Domain property. Please allow us more than 10 to 20 days to review the lengthy DEIS report as we in the City of Skyline have just found out on November 13, 2000 that the DM& E route would include the City of Skyline. Seven to eight homes will be destroyed in the City of 120 home. This would be very unfair not to allow at least a period of 180 days for the deadline, as the Citizens of Skyline were not informed that their properties would be involved with this M-2 Route.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Bea Edwards

Bea Edwards
52 Skyline Drive
Mankato, MN 56001

Enclosure (5)

CC: Senator Elect-Mark Dayton, Senate Office Bldg., Washington, DC 20510
Senator Paul Wellstone, 717 Hart Senate Office Bldg., Washington DC 20510-2303
Congressman Gil Gutknecht, Attention: Richard Larson, 1530 Greenview Drive SW Suite
108, Rochester, MN 55902
Former Vice President of the USA, Walter Mondale.
Corps of Engineers, St. Paul District, 190 Fifth Street East, St. Paul, MN 55101
Blue Earth County Commissioners, 204 South Fifth Street, Mankato, MN 56001
Representative John Dorn, 1021 Orchard Road, Mankato, MN 56001
Senator John Hottinger, Nicollet County Attorney's Office, P O Box 360, St. Peter, MN
56082