

Hondo, TX 78861-6427

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RJ

February 23, 2004

Surface Transportation Board
Case Control Unit
1925 K Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001received
2/25/04

Attention: Rini Ghosh

Re: Finance Docket No. 34284

Dear Ms. Ghosh:

In response to the Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement, I am submitting the following to be considered in the formal scoping process.

My husband and I are retired. We live on a farm about four miles from the proposed quarry site. We are very concerned about the effects a quarry and the related rail and truck traffic would have on us personally and on our community.

I believe Vulcan's proposed quarry and proposed Southwest Gulf Railroad (SGR) rail line are connected actions, and should be studied in the same Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The study should include direct impacts and alternatives to both projects, including no quarry and no rail line at all.

As a bird watcher, I observe many species that travel through our area—and some that stay to winter. The EIS should contain a study of bird migration and the compliance of this project with the Migratory Birds Treaty Act. Birds native to this area may also be affected by the proposed quarry. Habitat alterations cause dramatic changes in bird populations.

Our home is located about 150 yards from FM2676. Where our county road meets FM2676, there is a roadside shrine to mark the spot where four of our neighbors died in a collision with a gravel truck—a young father and mother and two small boys. FM2676 was not built for heavily loaded trucks traveling at high speeds. These trucks are not only dangerous to other vehicles. Since they weigh about 78,000 pounds, the EIS should include a study of the effects this truck traffic would have on maintenance of our state and county roads—and consider who will pay for the maintenance.

There are many more important issues that remain to be answered. I hope the EIS will be very thorough and very fair.

Sincerely,

Katherine Baxter
Katherine Baxter

cc: **U.S. Congressman Henry Bonilla**
U.S. Senator John Cornyn
Texas Senator Frank Madla
Texas Representative Timoteo Garza
Medina County Judge Jim Barden
Medina County Commisioner Royce Hartman