

#E1-620  
RH

2/22/2004

Surface Transportation Board  
Case Control Unit  
1925 K Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001

received  
2/23/04

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.

I believe Vulcan's proposed quarry and proposed SGR rail line, regardless of where the railroad is constructed, are connected actions, and should be studied in the same Environmental Impact Statement, as per 40C.F.R. § 1508.25(a)(1 & 2) (2003) and case law. The study should include direct impacts and alternatives to both projects, including no quarry and no rail line at all.

I am a computer programmer with a wife and 3 daughters, aged 12, 4, and 2. I have had asthma problems all my life and currently take Advair daily to control my symptoms. When my wife and I had our house built, we paid special attention to alleviate things that would trigger my asthma, one of which was not having any carpet in the house. Carpets trap dust that triggers my asthma. Due to the problems I have with dust, I often have to wear a mask when I work outside. A full case study should be done concerning what effects the particular matter produced by both the quarry and the railroad cars would have on the health of local citizens, especially the elderly and those with chronic lung problems, like asthma.

The area of the proposed railroad spur has experienced major flooding in the past which was aggravated by debris clogging the trestles. During periods of heavy rain, it is not uncommon for school buses to not be able to get through. When this occurs, the school calls parents to come pick up their children. Some of the parents must travel the same roads the bus is unable to travel. A full flood analysis should be performed on all proposed routes, the effects these routes would have on flooding, and how that flooding may affect local residents and vehicle travel.

The proposed fuel storage area is on the verge of being over the Edwards Recharge zone. This is not allowed per ruling of the Edwards Aquifer Authority. Vulcan says the proposed storage area is not over the recharge zone, but existing maps of the proposed site put that in question. I believe a complete study should be done to verify the exact location of where the recharge zone ends and whether the proposed fuel storage site is over it.

EIS should also include a full study by the Texas Department of Transportation on the grade separation at FM 2676. This study should include not only the current traffic that crosses FM 2676 at the proposed railroad crossing but also the traffic caused by the quarry. Vulcan has stated that, in addition to the railroad, there will be many truckloads of limestone leaving daily. This study should also include the anticipated traffic over the coming years. Medina county population is growing rapidly and, with the addition of the Toyota plant in Bexar County, the population growth is likely to increase dramatically.

I have personally seen two pickup / train accidents shortly after they have happened. In both cases, these accidents were avoidable; however, the drivers in the pickups were not paying proper attention. We all have distractions in our vehicles, especially those of us with children. The proposed railroad crossing at FM 2676 will be traveled daily by parents taking their children to school and by school buses. I believe EIS should include a complete study on the probability of accidents both with and without grade separation.

Sincerely

  
Dwight Mediger