

February 6, 2004

Surface Transportation Board
Section of Environmental Analysis
Attention: Rini Ghosh

RE: STB Finance Docket No. 34284



The proposed railroad would split my property which has been in the family for well over 100 years, as it appears in the Texas Land Heritage book (1986-1990, page 50 Gerdes T4 Ranch. We worked hard to increase the size of this place to 530 acres and keep things in good shape. A railroad would be devastating and a nuisance to our operation. Traffic at the railroad crossings and air and noise pollution will be a problem. Cattle would be hard to control because of the trains. Property values would decrease. Constant blasting in the Quarry could cause wells to cave in and the spring-fed water holes to go dry and also water would be contaminated. The Quarry would be right on the Edwards Aquifer. Five or Six counties depend on water from the Edwards underground water system. What will happen to caves and sink holes in the Quarry area?

Hunting is a big economic boost to Medina County. My concern is that land owners along the railroad tracks will lose their hunters and revenue due to wildlife disruption from the trains. Hunters also spend time on their lease throughout the year to enjoy the peace and quiet in this area.

Most of the rail line will be in the 100 year flood plan. If they put any type of crossing across the Elm and Quihi creeks, it will be like a Dam and block the water with all types of debris and when this breaks, there will be a wall of water going downstream flooding everything in its path. This happened a few years ago where the Union Pacific Railroad crosses the Hondo creek next to Highway 90.

Respectfully,

Archie Gerdes
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