

MEMORANDUM# 60-)
R94

To: David Coburn, Steptoe & Johnson
 From: Jaya Zyman-Ponebshek, URS Corporation
 Subject: Data needs for Preparation of the Environmental Assessment on the Proposed Southwest Gulf Railroad (SGR) Line in Medina County, Texas
 Date: February 12, 2003

As we discussed earlier today by telephone, find below the information needs that I would like to receive from Vulcan Materials to begin this analysis. I understand that some of this information may not be readily available, so feel free to forward the information to me as it becomes available. As more information needs arise, I would continue to send those requests through you. Hopefully, this memorandum covers the major requests. If you have any questions, please feel free to call me at (512-419-5316) to discuss further

INFORMATION NEEDS**I. PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE PROJECT**

The purpose of the proposed action is to more efficiently transport limestone aggregate from the proposed quarry to the main Union Pacific line in order to reach more distant markets in the Houston and Southwest region and to better serve the local markets around the Austin and San Antonio areas. (Confirm validity, modify as appropriate).

For project need, please provide quantitative estimates, where possible, of the following:

1. Current demand to be met by the proposed Medina County Quarry (e.g. "Of the approximately _____ million tons per year required for road and building construction in the Houston and Southeast region of Texas, some _____ million tons are provided by quarries in Medina County of which Vulcan Material existing quarries provide _____, of which the Medina County Quarry alone will provide _____ tons per year).
2. Future demand that could be met with construction of quarry and use of rail.
3. Difference in transportation costs (per ton-mile) between rail and via truck.
4. Estimate of the volume of truck traffic that would be displaced by rail (compare trucks needed to transport limestone from the quarry to distant and local markets (without rail) and trucks needed to transport limestone from the quarry to the main Union Pacific line (if the short line is not built).

II. CONSTRUCTION (as available)

1. Electronic map of project (I have a hard copy, but will need electronic copies of alignment and location maps done by the Brownlow Group).
2. Schedule of construction and operation (with several milestones such as clear ROW, construct grade, ballast and rail, begin operations).
3. Description of construction phases (describe equipment and phases of construction in no more than one page: e.g. grubbing and clearing of brush; excavation and embankment construction, installation of culverts; grading, seeding and erosion control; subballast placement, etc).

4. Provide drawing (preferably electronic) showing a profile of a typical section of the rail showing track dimensions, ballast depth, ROW width, track grade, materials, etc).
5. Provide drawing (preferably electronic) showing a profile of any stream crossing detail or road crossing (even if it is just dirt roads) similar to typical section described above.
6. Provide drawing showing tie-in with Union Pacific line.
7. Provide line drawing showing topographic profile of rail line and percent grade.
8. Estimate cut and fill volumes (discuss source of fill and/or disposal of cut)
9. Description of rail line and features crossed using milepost stationing (e.g. 20-ft culvert at 22+00; or crossing of buried natural gas pipeline at mile 0.67)
10. What is approximate construction costs (breakdown between labor and materials)
11. Approximately how many construction workers will be required and for how long.

III. OPERATION AND MAINTENNECE

1. Describe the types of locomotives to be used
2. Describe the number and type of cars to be used, average number of cars per train
3. Describe switching operations and interface with UP (ownership of cars, operational responsibility, who do crews work for)
4. Describe length of typical train in terms of number of cars and length in ft
5. Describe the number of train movements per week (where a movement is either a loaded or an empty train passing across rails)
6. How many workers will be employed and what is the estimated payroll for the operation of the train?
7. Describe maintenance procedures including weed control (use of herbicides or mechanical controls)
8. Describe any public or private road crossings, and type of safety or warning devices proposed.
9. What are the average and maximum speeds expected
10. Describe the buffer zone between the nearest mining and the rail line (distance, plants and trees, fencing, etc).
11. What other materials or what other shippers might use the rail in the future?

IV. ALTERNATIVES

1. Alternative routes- It is important to describe at least one alternative routing, and several if there were others, for the proposed line.
2. Describe the advantages and disadvantages of the proposed routing over the alternative (s) (e.g. distance, engineering or geo-tech considerations, property owners, road crossings, etc.)
3. One alternative that must be considered is the no build alternative. Presumably if the rail project were not to go forward, the no-build alternative would result in truck transport to the UP line or truck transport for the entire route. How would this affect plans to build the quarry? How would the inability to go forward with proposed action affect operations of the proposed quarry and business opportunities?