

# Surface Transportation Board

## Incoming Correspondence Record



#EI-1752

**E-Filing Correspondence Information** **Status: Complete**

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*Name of Sender:	Dr. Robert T. Fitzgerald	Letter Type:	Letter
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Attention Of:	Rini Ghosh	In Public Docket?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
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**Submitter's Comments**

Dear Rini,

We wish to make something explicit about the Original Medina Dam Route ("Original MDR") and Medina Dam Alternative ("MDA") that may have been implicit in our previous letters and comments. That is, there is no need or requirement for these routes to pass through the Castroville West subdivision. If necessary, extremely minor deviations to the east of the subdivision, traveling in the general northward direction of the historic route on the level topography that characterizes that area, can easily be devised to avoid the subdivision boundary. We refer you to the topographic maps submitted by us earlier in the proceeding and by Vulcan in EI-1664.

We think that point should have been obvious from the start, if the agency, which studies rail design nationwide, is doing anything more than stenography with Vulcan's submissions. Nevertheless, we are stating it explicitly now. And indeed, this obvious point did not stop Vulcan from analogizing straw men routes to the Original MDR and MDA. It is no surprise that Vulcan would ignore the obvious need to detour around existing homes, because it does not desire a feasible eastern alternative.

It is true that the original MDR went through the eastern edge of the Castroville West Subdivision. However, the land east of the subdivision boundary is level. There should be no problem devising a feasible deviation that avoids the subdivision, is a suitable distance away from the homes to avoid safety impacts, and would not cross a dirt road (driveway) leading south from CR4516 approximately 1/4 to 1/2 mile away. As we have stated in the past, it would be best to design such a route once the agency has defined a consistent, uniformly applied set of physically feasible criteria for alternative routes. There is NO reason to dismiss the eastern alternatives such as the Medina Dam Alternative simply because Vulcan's straw men analogs to this route refuse to recognize a feasible route slightly eastward from the Castroville West Subdivision. It should be noted that the deviation required by the MDA would not come any closer to homes than any of the original routes proposed by SGR and would cross fewer county roads, and cross in safer locations on level ground.

Sincerely,

Dr. Robert T. Fitzgerald

**STB's Comments**

**Image Attachment(s)**