

6522 Thunderbird  
San Antonio, Texas 78240  
January 8, 2005

EI-1337

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

Attn: Rini Ghosh  
Re: Finance Docket #32484

received  
1/11/05

Dear Ms. Ghosh:

As property owners in north central Medina County, just west of the proposed Vulcan Materials Quarry site and the proposed SGR railroad, we wish to make known a few of our many concerns. Our concerns deal with several issues, the primary one being air quality.

In our area of north central Medina County, we do not have paved county roads. In all cases, the roads are constructed from a crushed limestone placed over a caliche base. When we experience a period of time in which there is little or no rain, the dust from increasing vehicle traffic is almost unbearable. We can go for months without any rainfall in this area. I guess that the citizens living in this area failed to realize that the dust conditions could and would get much worse. The additional dust that will be generated from uncovered railcars will make it unbearable. This is not taking into account the dust that will be generated from the proposed 1700 acre rock quarry that the rail line will serve. Naturally, this concern of our family and all other families who happen to live or own property in this area, falls right behind Vulcan Material's concern to make a huge profit at our sacrifice and expense. Who would want to farm, ranch and live where you are chocked with dust. Even plant life would find it hard to exist under these conditions.

Another concern of our family, is for our good neighbors who would be forced to relinquish land to allow a railroad through, should SGR be granted to operate with common carrier status. The right of eminent domain would be misused, in this case, to allow Vulcan Materials to obtain land for rail right of way. It would be strictly for their commercial use only. There is no other, and probably will never be, proposed industry or customer needing to use rail transportation along any of the proposed rail routes. How eminent domain can be justified, in this case is beyond all common sense and it seems to be a violation of a citizen's constitutional property rights. This is WRONG, WRONG, WRONG! At this point, our family almost feels lucky that we do not have land that would be coveted by SGR.

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Another concern is the safety of our only source of water which happened to be the Edwards Underground Aquifer. The proposed quarry and a portion of the SGR are directly over the recharge zone of this aquifer. The water level at the quarry's material and rail loading site is extremely shallow---at times less than 200 feet from the ground surface. This is a karst type reservoir and any fuel or chemical spill will immediately be introduced into the aquifer. At this time we will not cover our concerns about what we definitely believe to be a connected action quarry and what it will do to all the water wells on adjacent property to this project with blasting.

Safety at all the effected rail and road crossing sites is a big concern. Our vehicular traffic is increasing everyday and grade level crossings are extremely dangerous. SGR has planned for all crossings to be grade level. This isn't safe and definitely is not the right thing to do.

If this project is approved and Vulcan Materials proceeds with the operation of the rail road and quarry---one cannot be profitable or necessary with the other---our property values will surely decline. The simple fact is that it will be very hard to find anyone who would want to own property anywhere in this area should we decide to get away from the proximity of this project and place our property up for sale. Is this just a sacrifice all effected little citizens must make so that a giant corporation and a few families can make a tremendous profit? If so, it isn't right.

Thank you for allowing us to voice some of our concerns and opinions and we await your reply.

Sincerely,

  
Scott and Jacquie Conrad

cc: Henry Bonilla, U. S. Representative  
John Cornyn, Senator  
Kay Bailey Hutchison, Senator  
Frank Madla. Texas Senator