

January 9, 2008

I am writing to express extreme concern over the Canadian National Railroad plan to increase rail traffic through northwest Cook County on the EJ&E line by 400%.

This rail line runs directly behind my home at Rolling Knolls Estates in unincorporated Cook County, on an easement between my property and the Shoe Factory Woods branch of the Forest Preserve District of Cook County. (map attached)

The Barrington communities will be significantly affected in a negative way, but I wish to point out that they are not alone. There are hundreds of additional homes within 300 feet of the EJ&E line, just south of Barrington, in Hoffman Estates and Elgin that will also feel the negative impact of CN's plan should it be allowed to proceed.

The proposed increase in rail traffic will have a severe negative impact on my property value and the quality of life in my neighborhood due to increased noise levels throughout the day and night. There are currently about 5 trains per day, which sometimes stop for extended periods of time with the engines running. The current noise level when trains pass or stop is occasionally offensive, but most of the time within a range of reasonableness.

With the outrageous proposed increase rail traffic, up to 23 or more trains per day, the disruption of noise will most assuredly reach a level, both night and day, that can only be described as invasive and utterly intolerable. The tranquil country character of my neighborhood will be permanently shattered. Property values along with quality of life – *and hours of peaceful sleep* - will proportionately suffer the damage. The health risk alone due to loss of sleep from noise disruption is enough to cause me to vigorously oppose this CN plan. As a homeowner and taxpayer, it is utterly reprehensible that I and the other 57 property owners at Rolling Knolls Estates should no longer have the privilege of opening our windows without being assaulted by ear-splitting noise for up to 2 hours or more every day.

In addition, I am extremely concerned about the impact of this increased rail traffic on the natural environment of the adjacent Forest Preserve. According to the Preserve District of Cook County, there are currently 173 species of plants and animals designated as endangered or threatened by the Illinois Endangered Species Protection Board. As far as I know, there has been no study performed by an independent agency to determine the impact of the increased rail volume on any of these species of plants, birds and other wildlife. The rail line is a major crossing point for deer and other mammals. With the additional trains passing along this corridor, animal mortality rates due to train collisions will undoubtedly increase by double digits.

I understand that change is a part of life and transportation needs are important. However, the profit goals of a single corporation cannot be allowed overrule issues of public safety, general health, quality of life, and the environment. I urge the STB to support the Barrington Communities Against CN Rail Congestion (<http://www.fightrailcongestion.com>) and reject the plans of Canadian National Railroad.

Respectfully submitted,



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**Rolling Knolls Estates Subdivision (see circled area below)
Elgin, in Unincorporated Cook County**

