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To: Surface Transportation Board

Re: Port Mackenzie, Alaska Railroad Extension Project, Finance Docket No. 35095

I am submitting comments in opposition to the Port Mackenzie, Alaska Railroad Extension Project. I am specifically opposed to the route designated as Conn 3, although have seen no clear economic or other justification for any of the proposed routes.

I am the owner of a parcel of land which will be impacted by the Conn 3 route. I have no interest in having a railroad through my yard., as I suspect many others would not either regardless of location.

The railroad will destroy the quiet rural character of the area. The area in the vicinity of Conn 3 is a small community currently consisting of a close knit group of small farms and family businesses struggling to survive. Other uses include the Carpenter lake public use area, a heavily used lakeside recreation area. The noise, dust, emissions, general auditory, visual disturbance provided by the railroad will permanently mar the landscape. Some of the family farms and businesses will likely be forced out of existence, particularly those whose land is in the path of the railroad, but also those within range of the noise and vibrations created with each passing train.

Aside from my particular objection to proximity of the Conn 3 route, any of the proposed routes will disrupt miles of wetlands and forest used by a multitude of fish and wildlife as noted in the EIS. The potential for spills of fuels or other hazardous cargo along many of the proposed rail routes has the potential for far more devastating effects on the fragile wetland ecosystems, along with the fish and migratory birds that utilize these ecosystems. I have read that herbicides have been widely used in past to control rail bed vegetation encroachment; this also seems undesirable for the local community and for fish and wildlife.

Justification for any rail extension seems rather nebulous at this time, somewhat of a "build it and they will come mentality". It is unclear what cargo is likely to come. Port Mackenzie seems to have little sustained industry since it has been built. It is not apparent there is adequate natural resource transport requirements to justify expense of the rail extension. I have not heard of any form industry requesting rail access to port Mackenzie.

In summary, with the lack of a clear need for the rail extension, the impacts to landowners, families, small farms, recreational users, and the destruction or fragmentation of wildlife habitat, I am not in favor of the Port Mackenzie Rail Extension at this time. I am particularly opposed to the Conn 3 route as it adversely impacts my quality of life in the Point Mackenzie area.

Sincerely,

Daniel B. Robertson

May 8, 2009