

Surface Transportation Board

Incoming Correspondence Record

#EI-20842

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*Docket #:	FD 35852 0	Affiliation:	Self / Individual
*Name of Sender:	Susan Chapman	Letter Type:	Letter
Group:			
Attention Of:			
*Date Received:	12/19/2014	NEPA Type:	Scoping
Date of Letter:	12/19/2014	In Public Docket?	☐ Yes ☒ No
Group's Address:	3685 Savannahs Trail		
		Phone Number:	
Group's City:	Merritt Island	Email Address:	
Group's State:	FL	Group's Zip Code:	32953-

Submitter's Comments

STB's Comments

Image Attachment(s)

An attachment has not been added.

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Redd 12/19/14

**Port Canaveral Rail Extension
Environmental Impact Study
Scoping Comments**

Submitted by:
Susan Chapman
3685 Savannahs Trail
Merritt Island, FL 32953
Dated: December 16, 2014

Submitted to: Dave Navecky
Dave Navecky
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001

Attention: Environmental Filing, Docket No. FD 35852

Dear Mr. Navecky,

I am writing to you to as a resident of the Savannahs at Sykes Creek community and as a very concerned citizen.

You must stop the cargo Port Canaveral/KSC rail extension from traversing across our pristine Indian River Lagoon and the negative impact it will have by running through our protected Merritt Island Wildlife Refuge including KARS Park.

When I selected this area to live my decision was primarily based on the natural beauty of the area and the great quality of life. I found quiet, wildlife (birds, manatees, Ibis, Spoonbills, Cranes) all living nearby and in our backyards with no pollution (neither water or air or noise).

Although it is very hard to put into words I would like to share my most profound moments that I discovered within Merritt Island which hopefully will convey the sensitivity of this area:

- My first visit to Kennedy Athletic, Recreation, and Social (KARS) Park was the most exhilarating. Having lived in Florida since the 1970s I am very aware of the Manatee as an endangered species. And right there in a cove adjacent to KARS Park were approximately 20 plus manatees frolicking and

playing. They were floating, rolling, and breaching, as much as this mammoth mammal can. I took as many pictures as I could. It was great experience one that I have shared many times.

- Sitting outside of my home you can only hear how “quiet” the area truly is. The different species of birds (Ibis, Pink Spoonbills, White Cranes, and Gray Cranes) make their homes in and around our community. Other wildlife also come to visit.
- When driving on Hall Road (which is our only way in and out of our community) you always see the Ibis and Cranes enjoying the wetlands and sea grasses. The quiet surrounding the area allows you to feel you are living among nature.
- The area is pristine with an obvious lack of pollution. We must ensure the air quality, water quality and noise pollution not be sacrificed.

Yes, I do care about the environment. And yes based on history we acknowledge the negative impact we as individuals have committed against sensitive areas such as wildlife refuges, endangered species, pollutants (noise, air, water, land, etc.) in the past.

It is time to stop and take stock in how sensitive the last bastions of our environment are to us and to preserve them for our next generation to enjoy. We need to heed the negative impact this proposed Port Canaveral Rail Extension will have on the KARS Park, Merritt Island Wildlife Refuge, Banana River, Indian River, Mosquito Lagoon and all of the adjacent areas. Construction and operation of a rail extension for heavy cargo is not conducive to traversing these pristine and sensitive areas.

As stewards of maintaining the integrity of the largest ecological preserve in eastern Florida, we must remain committed and ensure the negative impacts this rail extension imposes will be eliminated. Areas of particular concern are as follows:

- Increased infrastructure which will be required for the Port Canaveral Rail Extension:
 - Construction and ongoing operational negative impact due to additional traffic, air, water, and noise pollution
 - Hazardous waste due to increased density from rail operations, employees, and tourists
 - Evacuation in case of hazardous waste accident
 - Rail and resident safety in the event of a terrorist threat
 - Traffic and emergency vehicle access
 - Consideration of an alternate route for the rail extension
 - Flooding and drainage – Hall Road is very susceptible to flooding
 - Discharge of dredged or fill material (as it relates to the Clean Water Act)
- Negative impact on the Indian River Lagoon (IRL), KARS Park, Banana River, Merritt Island Wildlife Refuge
 - Recreational activities (such as camping, tennis, fishing, hiking)
 - Endangered species (manatee survival), wildlife habitat and mortality
 - Economic consequences to commercial fishing, Florida’s Indian River citrus

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- Noise nuisance and vibration from rumbling heavy cargo trains through environmentally sensitive areas and residential communities

I respectfully submit my comments to you and implore you to consider these areas of extreme concern.

Please **do not allow** the Port Canaveral Rail Extension as drafted to proceed any further. A more viable solution must be sought.

Sincerely,

Susan Chapman