

**Scoping Comment for the Proposed Canadian National Railway Company
Acquisition of the Elgin, Joliet and Eastern Railway Company
STB Finance Docket No. 35087 - January 2008**

1/28/08

Picture this: A sleepy little community bordered by a back lane with the occasional vehicle passing by is suddenly and unwittingly found to be bordered by a super highway with traffic zooming by continually. This is a comparison of what we are faced with in the Frankfort, Illinois community of Sandalwood Estates with impending and probable sale of the EJ & E railroad to CN.

Increased rail traffic will considerably affect the safety and lifestyle of our community. Sandalwood Estates is bordered by two rail crossings. One is at 116 Ave. which is currently uncontrolled by arms. The second is at Wolf Rd.

The issues affecting the residents of Sandalwood Estates on a daily, continual basis are as follows:

- 1) Huge risk of train derailments and consequent spills of hazardous materials: As the EJ & E line will now be a main line with approximately 30 trains passing per day, the increased risk of a derailment with possible hazardous materials will increase drastically.
- 2) Increased noise pollution from train traffic: There will be a huge effect on the sense of peace and quiet of our area.
- 3) Pedestrian, bike and automobile safety will be compromised greatly: As these two track crossings are part of our lives on a daily basis, the 5 fold increase in train traffic promises to pose a potential safety hazard for those that walk, run, bike or drive over the crossings. Our older children now cross the tracks unsupervised while bike riding or walking. Their safety would be a considerable concern with the increased rail traffic.
- 4) Train whistles will blow continuously with increased traffic: Train whistles now blow all night and all day long. It will be intolerable and unacceptable with five or six times the volume of train traffic. This will greatly affect the quality of sleep and will deteriorate lifestyle considerably.
- 5) Trains will produce considerable ground vibration: The rumbling and vibration from the increased traffic will be incredible. This will place a dramatic impact on the stability of the homes, yards, trees and existing roadways bordering the tracks.
- 6) Quality of life: The citizens of Sandalwood Estates bought their homes knowing that there would be minimal rail traffic passing by. For those homes near the tracks, the decision to buy that particular lot was based on what they considered to be a 'tolerable' level of train traffic. A 5 fold

Surface Transportation Board

N-EJ&E EIS - FD-35087

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increase in rail traffic was not part of the bargain. The noise will be continuous and very loud. The rumbling will be intolerable. The affect of the continuous stress of possible safety issues will be very trying.

- 7) Market Value: Would you buy a house in an area that bordered tracks traversed by 30 trains per day? Market values of homes in the Sandalwood area will plummet and will be very difficult to sell. How will this be compensated?

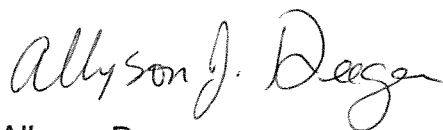
It is therefore essential that the Safety Board strongly consider the following:

- 1) Additional safety considerations for pedestrian and bike crossings
- 2) Pedestrian and bike overpass at Wolf Road and/or 116 Ave. to allow access to Old Plank Trail and connecting neighborhoods
- 3) Possible gradation differences (under or overpasses) for vehicles at effected crossings
- 4) Noise/Safety barriers protecting our community
- 5) Monitoring of effects of vibration on our homes, yards, and trees
- 6) "Quiet Zones" established to obliterate whistle blowing
- 7) Compensation by CN for decreases in Market Value of our homes

These issues are very important to the lives of those in Sandalwood Estates and to those in Frankfort in general.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,



Allyson Deegan
Concerned citizen

11214 Cedarwood Court
Frankfort IL 60423