

1281 Potomac Drive
Merritt Island, FL 32952
February 19, 2016

Victoria Rutson, Director
Office of Environmental Analysis
395 E Street SW
Washington, DC 20423

Dear Director Rutson:

I am contacting you because the Surface Transportation Board is moving forward with requests for information in order to approve the proposed freight train through Merritt Island, Florida even though the environmental review process for the proceeding is currently suspended while the Canaveral Port Authority evaluates the feasibility of an additional alignment to be considered – that of a rail routing alignment through Cape Canaveral Air Force Station.

As a long-time Brevard County, Florida resident, I am very concerned about the proposed diesel freight train route from Port Canaveral, Florida through our pristine northern Banana River Lagoon and the Merritt Island Wildlife Refuge, along with critical wetlands. It will be destructive to the environment and natural resources which give value and quality to our island community, not to mention harming eco-tourism in this area. Visit our only healthy lagoon area and the wildlife refuge area while it is still peaceful and clean if this proposal to route the train through Merritt Island is approved.

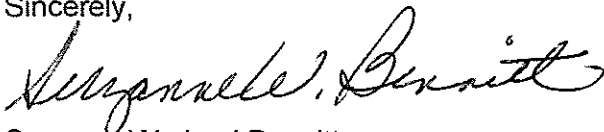
I am objecting to the Canaveral Port Authority and the Surface Transportation Board's actions which could result in the permanent environmental damage of a heavy cargo diesel freight train built through our fragile lagoon, aquatic preserve and wildlife refuge, as well as the citizen public safety issues involved with heavy cargo freight trains possibly carrying volatile cargo.

In December 2015, a Florida East Coast railroad train engine and four freight cars derailed in nearby Rockledge, Florida along U. S. Highway #1 near Viera Boulevard with the spilling of thousands of gallons of diesel fuel into the ground. Roads were closed and lives disrupted. We do not want that to happen on Merritt Island and are asking for our officials' protection.

The St. Johns Water Management District, Environmental Protection Agency and U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service have strong comments against the rail project.

If a heavy cargo diesel freight train is constructed to run through Merritt Island, property values, county revenues and our quality of life are compromised.

Sincerely,



Suzanne Worland Bennitt

cc: David Navecky