

080214 Anderson

This is Bob Anderson. 791 Clear Wood Court, Aurora IL 60504. This comment is given on February 14, 2008 and my phone number if you need it is 630-820-1546 and this is for STB finance docket #35087; it's a scoping comment for the proposed Canadian National Railway acquisition of the Elgon Joliet & Eastern Railroad. STB finance docket 35087. Regarding switch placements, sidings and trackage. Canadian National community relations representative Jim Caverus stated in answer to one of my questions regarding sidings and switch placements planned that a passing siding was planned south of Route 34, Ogden Avenue in Aurora and a switch was to be placed somewhere between 100 and 700 feet south of that crossing. Don't recall the exact numbers but it was somewhere in that range. And another thing a Canadian National rep confirmed that possibility at the West Chicago STB meeting, though he said that the track plans were not finalized. This would really be placing a switch in a residential area. The noise and vibration we endure currently at 8 to 10 trains a day is barely tolerable. Placing this switch in this residential area will only add to the noise from rail cars and track and couplers and add to the chronic vibration problems as well. No matter what other track improvements might be made i.e. weld the track or better ballast or small burms on each side of the track. I would like the Surface Transportation Board as a requirement of the approval, if approved, of the acquisition that the Canadian National/EJE should be prohibited from placing switches or cross-overs, etc. within 1000 feet or perhaps even a quarter mile of any home or subdivision. And a second requirement that I would like to see the Surface Transportation Board attach to the sale is to at least double track the entire line. Basically for safety, especially for hazardous materials, easier scheduling of windows...flow use windows that is and ease of track maintenance. And the reason I bring up the safety issue is having done a little research on the internet, the Wikipedia.org site has summaries of certain types of accidents or certain recent accidents which are fairly major that the Canadian National has had and the Federal Railway Authority which is fra.dot.gov for accident data over the last 10 years is what I am citing and basically I think this railroad needs to have an improved. . . although all railroads are safer than they were 10 years ago, it does seem to be that this railroad may need an extra margin of safety and double tracking or triple tracking the entire line will probably bring it up to standards more like the Burlington Northern, Santa Fe, and the UP lines in the area which are basically double and triple tracks for the most part. It would increase their margin for error and reduce their accident percentages from 2 ½ percent to down to maybe I'd say 2 ½ per million miles to 1 ½ per million miles where same general amounts as (call ended)

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