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Ref. STB Finance Docket No. 34284

Memorandum, Jan 28, 2004

TO: Surface Transportation Board, Case Control Unit
1925 K Street, N.W., Washington, DC
Attn: Rini Goshok

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the scope (proposed) for the EIS relative to this case. Although your scope may inherently cover these specific areas, I am requesting that you make sure that they are adequately dealt with in the final report.

1. Recently, Vulcan Materials/SGA has disclosed plans to use "at-grade" Railroad Crossings, instead of "overpass" Crossings, at all intersections with State and County Roads which lie between the proposed quarry and the Dunlap TX Union Pacific connect point. This is not the plan initially "pitched" to local residents. Therefore, I believe it vitally important that your study place special efforts on determining the effects on road safety and traffic on FM 2676 and the County Roads involved. Please try to project these

effects 50 years into the future considering population growth patterns in this area.

2. Vulcan Materials truck traffic from the proposed quarry (in addition to the rail traffic) has been projected as at least 70 trucks per day. What is the road safety, noise and road wear cost for this traffic over the 50 year period? How many trucks per day are projected to travel through the town of Hondo and Castroville?
3. The cumulative effects of the noise created at the Denley Connect point with US Rail line (switching / marshalling of cars added to existing rail traffic) are of concern. Please try to document this as best you can. The noise carries northward with prevailing winds.
4. You have indicated that potential for increased flooding risk will be studied. It is a vital area of concern and I hope you will thoroughly document your findings.

5. The Environmental justice section of your proposed scope is of interest to me. Why should you emphasize the adverse impact on any single group (minority or low-income is indicated)? Shouldn't you answer the question: How does the construction/operation of this Railroad affect the majority of land owners/residents in the area as compared to the minority who own the proposed quarry site?

I would like to suggest an alternative, but the only answer, as I see it now, is to deny the SGR request for the proposed Railroad.

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