

Adam Assenza
OEA Project Manager
Surface Transportation Board
Docket No. FD 36815
395 E Street SW
Washington, DC 20423

Subject: Formal Objection to Proposed Rail Line Near My Home
Docket No FD 36815 Texas MaterialGroup INC.

Dear Adam Assenza,

I am writing to strongly oppose the proposed Texas Materials Group rail line, which was initially proposed to run through my property and now appears to run VERY near my property. This project presents serious concerns regarding safety, environmental impact, and property devaluation, all of which would have lasting negative effects on my family, my community, and the surrounding land. Our ranch is a family ranch of 550 acres on which we hunt, fish and attempt to run commercial hunting to supplement retirement income. This line will severely impact property utility and negatively impact future lava.

Safety Concerns

The proximity of this railway to my home introduces significant safety hazards. Increased rail traffic raises the risk of derailments, hazardous spills, and emergency response delays. A derailment or accident near my property could have catastrophic consequences, especially considering the potential transport of industrial materials. Additionally, the noise and vibrations caused by passing trains could weaken structural foundations and pose long-term risks to my home's stability, which is only a few 100 feet away.

Environmental Impact

The construction and operation of a rail line this close to my property would result in substantial environmental harm. Noise and air pollution from frequent train activity would disrupt the natural surroundings and negatively affect local wildlife, of which we have several protected species. The increased emissions from diesel-powered trains contribute to air quality degradation, potentially affecting the health of residents. Furthermore, runoff and potential spills from rail operations could contaminate nearby water sources, leading to long-term ecological damage. Our property is also the location of a 60 +/- acre federal funded bird habitat recently initiated, and this line will impact the migration and viability of the project.

Property Devaluation

The installation of a railway so close to my home would significantly decrease the property's value. We will not sit on our back porch and be subject to the sight and sounds of rail cars. The noise, pollution, and increased industrial activity make my property far less desirable to potential buyers, should we ever wish to sell. Home values in areas near heavy rail infrastructure consistently suffer declines due to these factors, creating an unfair financial burden on homeowners like me. Additionally, the loss of privacy and peaceful enjoyment of my land is an unacceptable intrusion on my property rights.

Demand for Alternative Consideration

I urge Texas Materials Group and the relevant authorities to reconsider alternative routes that would not disrupt residential properties and the environment. The lack of transparency and public engagement in this process is deeply concerning, and I demand a thorough explanation of why this route was chosen over less disruptive alternatives. Texas Materials has obviously been preparing for this over a significant period of time; however, we were only allowed a meager 30 + days to submit comments.

I formally request a written response addressing these concerns, including any proposed mitigation strategies or route adjustments. I will continue to oppose this project through all available legal and administrative channels to protect my home, my community, and the surrounding environment.

I expect a prompt response. Please direct all correspondence to my contact information above.

Sincerely,

Michael Riordan