

Received 1/31/07

RJ

January 20, 2007

Surface Transportation Board
Rini Ghosh
Section of Environmental Analysis
1925 K Street NW
Washington, DC 20423-0001

Re: Finance Docket # 34284
Vulcan Materials Co. / Southwest Gulf Railroad

Dear Ms. Ghosh,

This letter is to inform you of our concerns about the Vulcan Quarry and the Southwest Gulf Railroad.

Our homestead and land is located at the end of Alternate Route 1. My husband's grandfather purchased this land. My husband grew up here and now we have raised our family here. This land was not free - each son had to pay siblings for it. Each family put many back-breaking hours into improving this land. This includes in the early years clearing brush and mesquite trees with wagons and mules to the present - planting grains and

coastal grass for our cattle. We are also members of the Hondo Creek Watershed, which is a program established by the USDA - United States Department of Agriculture - that provides guidelines to practice conservation measures to conserve soil.

We have worked hard to manage our wildlife and conserve habitats for them. We are able to enjoy wildlife such as, deer, turkeys, bobcats, rabbits, quail, doves, and many bird species. The raw land provides habitats for endangered species as the Horned toad, Golden-Cheeked Warbler, and the Texas Tortoise.

Alternate Route I would go straight through our raw land and destroy our wildlife habitats including the endangered species. It would go through our field and destroy wildlife and cattle food sources. The railroad would be within 100 yards from our house. We would have to move because of the noise, dust, and loss of income that the fields provide.

And last but not least, the railroad is located too close to creeks and the floodplain. The Verdi and Lucki Creeks run together on our land. They run into the Hondo Creek approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ mile south. In average rainfall years the creeks easily flood. I'm enclosing pictures of how the '97 flood devastated our fields. Needless to say, this is the wrong place to put a railroad.

We are also concerned about the Quarry destroying our water supply. How can digging hundreds of feet down into the earth with big diesel machinery not be harmful to the Edwards Aquifer? When it rains the quarry is just an open pit for pollution. The polluted water will go straight into the aquifer.

Many people that live or own property along the different railroad routes share the same concerns that we have. We value our family heritage, our historical sites, our wildlife and our farms and ranches. The railroad would destroy our homes,

our heritage, our retirement,
our tranquility, our wildlife,
our farms, our ranches, and
our childrens' dreams of being
able to come back home and live.
They will never be able to relive
their wonderful childhood memories
with their own children if the
railroad comes through our property.

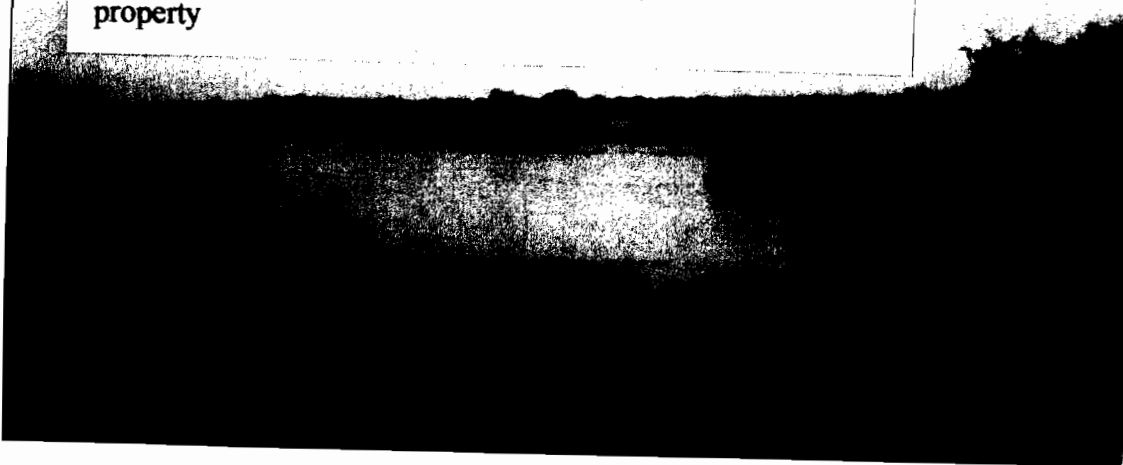
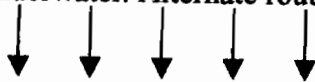
Sincerely,
Carolyn & Duane Wiemers
Carolyn Wiemers &
Duane Wiemers
400 CR 455
Hondo, Tx. 78861

Originals of photographs
submitted in color.

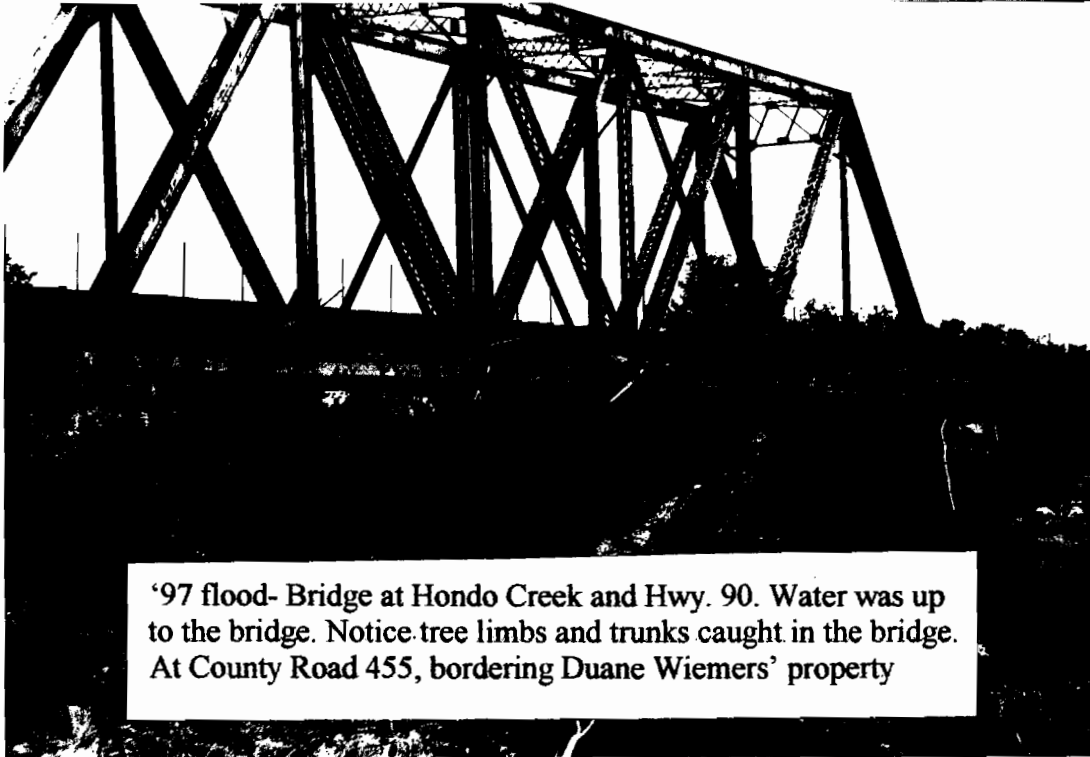
'97 flood- Picture taken from our roof facing the Quihi and
Verdi Creeks. Duane Wiemers' property



'97 flood- Picture taken from our roof looking toward our
fields. Milo crop underwater. Alternate route 1 loops
here in our fields.
Duane Wiemers' property



'97 flood- Our driveway facing our fields. County road 455 is underwater by the trees. Duane Wiemers' property



'97 flood- Bridge at Hondo Creek and Hwy. 90. Water was up to the bridge. Notice tree limbs and trunks caught in the bridge. At County Road 455, bordering Duane Wiemers' property

'97 flood- Picture taken from our roof looking toward our fields. Milo crop underwater. Alternate route 1 loops here in our fields. Duane Wiemers' property

