



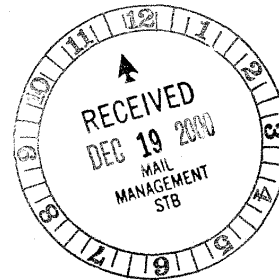
PO BOX 503
WASECA, MN 56093
camp@kieslers.com
507-835-3179
FAX #507-835-5731

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December 12, 2000

Office of the Secretary
Case Control Unit
STB Finance Docket No. 33407
Surface Transportation Board
1925 K Street NW
Washington, DC 20423-0001

ATTN: Victoria Rutson
Environmental Project Manager
Environmental Filing

Dear Surface Transportation Board Members:

We are asking for mitigation of the noise impacts to our business located at 14360 Hwy 14 East Waseca, MN 56093, if the DM&E expansion is approved.

As outlined in the attached letters previously sent to the STB dated November 3, 1998 and DM&E dated April 3, 1998, this project would severely affect our business if the additional noise created isn't reduced or eliminated.

As described on page ES-3 of the Executive Summary, the quantity of trains is projected to go from three per day to a maximum of 37 per day. This is a 1200 percent increase in train traffic.

Anyone living in the area may become tolerant of this additional noise over time. However, our customers are visitors to our area. They are not used to the kind of noise that much train traffic would create. Additionally they are at our facility to relax and enjoy a relatively quiet camping experience, especially at night.

Although the Draft Environmental Impact Statement did not address our specific location it did address recreation at Sibley Park and Minneopa State Park in Volume II, Chapter 3, page 3.2-118 third paragraph. It states: "Overnight campers and users would likely experience disturbance from nighttime train operations, interrupting sleep and enjoyment

of the quiet rural setting. Some patrons utilizing recreation sites may elect to use other areas. Any revenues generated to the facilities and local communities could be reduced.”

This is exactly our concern!

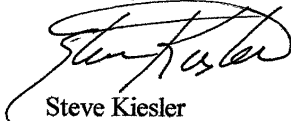
As stated on pages ES-81 #9 and ES-101 #95 of the Executive Summary. The City of Waseca and Waseca County have requested that DM&E install whistle free crossings in Waseca and at the crossing near our business.

We are aware that whistle free crossings are currently under review by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA). If the FRA rules that whistle free crossings may be utilized (with four quadrant gates etc.) then this should be the type of solution that is required in a situation such as ours.

It is extremely important that mitigation of the noise impacts of this project are completely implemented. This will allow both DM&E and its neighbors to be successful.

Thank you, we look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Steve Kiesler
Kiesler's Campground

Enclosure: Letter sent to STB dated November 3, 1998
Letter sent to DM&E President dated April 3, 1998



KIESLER'S

CAMPGROUND

PO Box 4
Waseca, MN 56093
camp@kieslers.com
507-835-3179

November 3, 1998

Office of the Secretary
Case Control Unit
STB Finance Docket No. 33407
Surface Transportation Board
1925 K Street NW
Washington, DC 20423-0001

ATTN: Elaine K Kaiser
Chief, Section of Environmental Analysis
Environmental Filing

Dear Surface Transportation Board Members:

I am writing to you to express our concerns over the pending DM&E railroad expansion and to ask for your help.

We own and operate Kiesler's Campground located at 14360 Hwy 14 E Waseca, MN 56093. We are approximately 4/10 mile from DM&E railroad tracks and an intersection. Our campground is a family business that was started in 1972 and has evolved into one of the largest, most respected and highly rated campgrounds in the state. On any weekend between Memorial Day and Labor Day there is an average of 1000 people vacationing at our facility. These customers are looking for an entertaining, but relatively quiet camping experience.

Noise is our biggest concern with the DM&E project. The noise created by up to 40 trains per day coming through our area could cripple our business.

DM&E currently run a few trains a day through our area and you can hear the train whistle for miles. On still nights it sounds like they are coming down one of our campground roads. I can't imagine 40 times a day at 8 crossings. At each crossing they pull the whistle 3 times minimum which would equal 960 whistles per day.

The City of Waseca, Waseca County, and us have all requested that DM&E install the proper crossings and safety equipment to make Waseca out through the crossing at 355th Ave and 145th Street, which is by our business, No Whistle Crossings. Without this our business will suffer substantially.

I have been told that the tracks will be seamless and the new engines will generate less noise and use quieter or directional whistles. This may help some, but with the sheer volume of trains projected to come through including the partial use of older engines we will experience substantial noise problems if additional changes are not made.

Also of concern is the switching yard, which I understand is to be moved out of Waseca. This could be a positive move. The information we have received is that they are looking east of Waseca, which is ok if it is east of the town of Meriden. Any closer to us and the noise from the switchyard would again be a major problem for our business.

Besides our business concerns we want to maintain the quality of life that we have grown to enjoy living in Waseca and Waseca County.

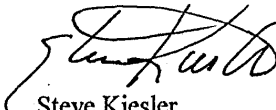
Please find enclosed a copy of the letter we sent to DM&E President, Kevin Schieffer, dated April 3, 1998, which outlines some of these concerns. To date we have not received a written response. I have verbally discussed these issues with Mr. Schieffer. He was optimistic about these items being done. However the lack of a written commitment is what concerns us and is why I am writing to you.

It is critical that these items be included in any approved plan of expansion for DM&E:

1. Upgrade the crossings in the City of Waseca and the County crossing at 355th Avenue and 145th Street so the trains do not have to blow their whistles.
2. Move switching yard out of Waseca to east of the town of Meriden (or west of Waseca).
3. Install burms or sound barriers wherever needed.

For our future and our area's quality of life I hope that I have properly expressed how important these issues are. Thank you for your time. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Steve Kiesler
Kiesler's Campground

Enclosure: Letter sent to DM&E President
Kiesler's Campground Brochure

KIESLER'S CAMPGROUND

Box 4 - Waseca, Minnesota 56093 Phone (507) 835-3179



April 3, 1998

DM & E Railroad
P. O. Box 178
Brookings, SD 57006

Attn.: Kevin Schieffer

Dear Kevin,

I am writing to express both my support and concern over the pending coal line project. The project itself seems to make sense and could provide many benefits for industry and DM & E.

However, on a personal level I would like to ask your help in reducing the negative impact it would have on our business. We own & operate Kiesler's Campground located at 14360 Hwy 14 East in Waseca. We are approximately 4 tenths of a mile from the railroad tracks running from Waseca to Owatonna. Please see attached map.

With the increased use of the tracks we are very concerned about the additional noise associated with that many trains going through our area. Especially at night when all our customers are trying to sleep or just enjoy a quiet evening. I have been told that the tracks will be seamless and the new engines will generate less noise and use quieter or directional whistles.

This may help some, but with the sheer volume of trains projected to come through including the partial use of older engines I believe we will experience substantial noise problems if additional changes are not made.

I understand the railroad is willing to install dirt berms along the tracks in areas such as ours to help contain the noise. Is this a possibility?

I have also learned the city can pass an ordinance stating the trains not blow their whistles as they pass through town. Is this something the railroad will support as it does in other areas?

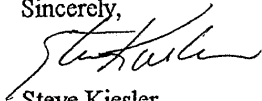
How would it affect the crossing at 355th Avenue and 145th St. which is in the county? Could that be a closed crossing also (No Whistle)?

I have discussed our situation with Roy Srp at the Waseca DM & E facility and he was very positive about your company helping us in this area.

We sincerely hope this can be a project that is a win-win for all involved.

I look forward to hearing from you. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Steve Kiesler", written in a cursive style.

Steve Kiesler
Kiesler's Campground
P. O. Box 4
Waseca, MN 56093

cc: Roy Srp

