

August 27, 2008

Surface Transportation Board,

My name is Terry Mastandrea; I am the Director/Fire Chief for the Lake Zurich Fire Rescue Department that provides emergency services within Lake Zurich, Hawthorn Woods, North Barrington, Lake Barrington, Deer Park, Kildeer and unincorporated Lake County.

The acquisition of the EJ&E by the CN will diminish our long-standing tradition of preserving and protecting the health, safety and welfare of our residents.

The purchase provides no benefit and, in fact, will result in a significant negative environmental impact for public safety.

The SEA accurately indicates the CN acquisition will have a significant negative impact on our ability to effectively respond to emergency calls and does not address, or is flawed, in the following points.

- Train accidents on the EJ&E rail line are likely to increase by 28% but does not address the type, risk factor, or local resource impact and capacity.
- An increase from 5.3 to 20.3 trains/day with an increased 9.4 hazardous materials cars/train (141/day) presents high risk challenges first responders will be mandated to respond to with little to no additional resources.
- The SEA is silent, and CN has been unresponsive after multiple meetings, email and phone requests for information on proposed types and quantities of hazardous materials that will be transported.
- The SEA does not address chemical release/spill/plume information for public protection/evacuation planning.
- 15 crossings are defined as being "substantially affected" Two of them are within our response area yet the SEA does not address the affect delays will have on public safety response times.

- Without mitigation, 11 fire and emergency medical service providers would potentially experience "substantial" effects. The SEA is flawed in only listing Lake Zurich station #3 since the impact at the other 3 stations/depts that respond for, and provide support for, them will equally be affected.
- Lives may be saved if ALS is initiated within 4-6 minutes. The SEA does not address the impact delayed response will have on the preservation of life.
- Fire typically increases in size every minute. The SEA does not address the impact delayed response will have on firefighter safety and property loss to the residents or community tax base.

Major changes on rail lines that require major mitigation to address the significant environmental impact issues must be thoroughly reviewed. Mitigation efforts must be firmly established, funded and scheduled before any consideration be given to an acquisition of this magnitude. The public safety impact and voluntary mitigation efforts outlined in the SEA are significantly deficient.

Emergency responders must have unimpeded access across rail lines to ensure effective emergency services can be delivered during life threatening events. Delays in our business are unacceptable and mission critical to sustaining life and property and should not be worsened to appease the private sectors mission of simply generating more profit. The STB and applicant must be responsive to the basic public safety needs of a community and must be responsible for all actions (funding or infrastructure) to preserve those services.

I ask that the STB take the necessary time to thoroughly evaluate the environmental public safety impact this proposed purchase will have on our area and not succumb to the request of CN to expedite the process. The safest solution from an emergency services standpoint is to find an alternate route through open areas to move this increased rail traffic and not shift the risk from one community to another. I would also ask that the burden to effectively and totally mitigate the items discussed be demanded of the applicant prior to consideration.

Thank you

*TERRY MASTANDREA*

*Fire Chief - Lake Zurich Fire Rescue*