

*Just a note...*

*Sara:*

*Enclosed copies of  
12 lane NAFTA Super-  
highway and the pipeline  
built in Hutchinson, Mo.  
as per our conversation.  
Thank you.*

*Debbie Gibson*

**RECEIVED**

NOV 15 2007

**SOUTH DAKOTA PUBLIC  
UTILITIES COMMISSION**

# Hutchinson Utilities doesn't know the meaning of 'fair'

from  
Hutchinson  
Minnesota  
newspaper

Management personnel of the Hutchinson Utilities Commission and the city of Hutchinson showed lack of leadership and respect for citizens in connection with the construction and installation of the gas pipeline in 2003. Many landowners and tenants all along the pipeline route formed a group known as Sib-Ren-Fair for the purpose of protecting their rights against Hutchinson Utilities with respect to all aspects of the pipeline, including construction, location and the damages associated with the taking of their land for the placement of the underground pipeline.

Key management at Hutchinson Utilities pushed the pipeline construction process through to get it completed as fast as possible, while ignoring guidelines put in place which required discussions to occur between landowners and Hutchinson Utilities regarding the pipeline location and construction issues. Hutchinson Utilities doesn't really have a good understanding as to what is "fair."

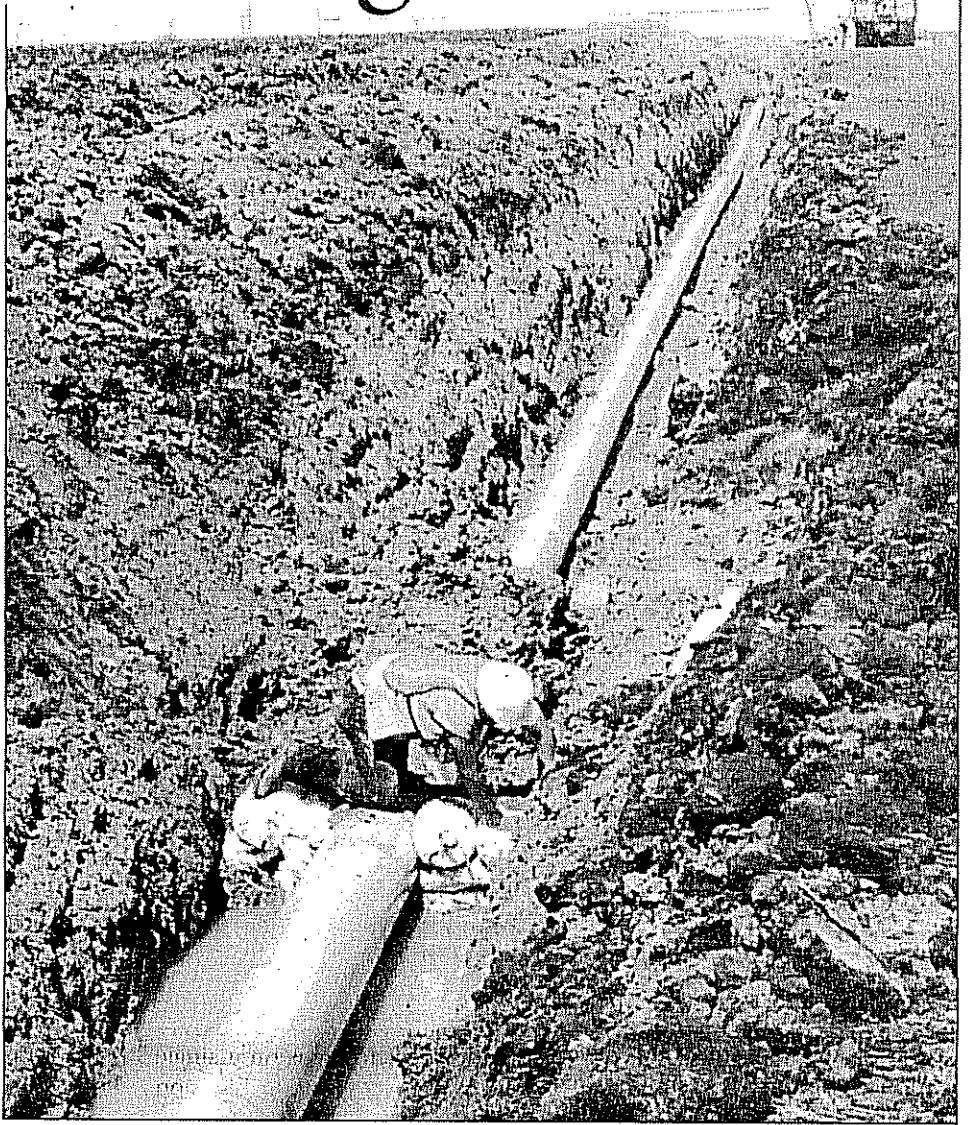
With continued favorable court rulings in their back pockets issued by Judge Stacy in favor of Hutchinson Utilities on many issues, the Hutchinson Utilities Commission forged a pipeline from Trimont to Hutchinson without any cause or concern for the landowners. There was no negotiation involved with any of the processes and many landowners attempted to minimize damages to their property by requesting Hutchinson Utilities accept input from the landowners regarding specific locations, depths and routes of the pipeline. This was actually a requirement from the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission in connection with their granting of the various permits required for the construction and placement of the pipeline.

Once the Hutchinson Utilities Commission had the permits in hand, they were able to effectively move forward and use Judge Stacy's rulings whenever they needed the "arm of the law" to accomplish the results they wanted.

## Poor decisions

Although Hutchinson Utilities Commission had plenty of opportunity to be fair to the property owners and tenants along the construction line, they pushed forward and made poor decisions. Although the construction crew along the proposed route was more than reasonable and advised property owners that locations and depths of the pipeline could be varied, HUC management ignored property owners' concerns and pushed forward with construction on whatever route and method would cause the pipeline to be completed as fast as possible.

The pipeline superintendent on the project advised me that if I were to develop my family's property into a housing project as contemplated, the pipeline should be buried 12-feet deep instead of 5 1/2-feet. HUC also was required to work with landowners to minimize damages to the property along the proposed route. The construction of the pipeline crossed in locations which were convenient to speed up the process, but in fact the pipeline could have been installed along



FILE PHOTO

**A CREW WORKED** on the Trimont-to-Hutchinson natural gas pipeline in 2003.

section or property lines and not diagonally across numerous parcels of property. Hutchinson Utilities' management took it upon themselves to ruin an excellent development property by constructing the pipeline diagonally across the center of my family's property.

In all of my business dealings with individuals, companies and government units, I have never been treated with such disrespect. As a concerned citizen of the city of Hutchinson and McLeod County, I have stepped up to the plate many times in the past years to support the city of Hutchinson in its various community projects and to support the city's leaders. This occurred not only on my family's property which is adjacent to Hutchinson's city limits, it happened on numerous locations along the pipeline.

## Property was ruined

The pipeline is now in and Hutchinson Utilities customers will eventually benefit from the pipeline. I suspect that after all the costs are in, it will be a very long time before those benefits are truly recognized. The process and manner by which it was constructed, however, will force HUC's customers to pay for the higher utility costs due to over-budget legal fees, land-taking damages and many of the costs associated with the various landowner and tenant disputes which could have been avoided by HUC management working with all of the property owners and their tenants along the pipeline.

Numerous parcels of properties were ruined along the path, and future development will be affected for not only my family's property, but other properties in and around the city of Hutchinson and other cities along the pipeline route. Much of this could have been avoided if Hutchinson Utilities had used only a portion of the human compassion we expect out of our public leaders.

## What can be learned?

It is my hope that the utility commissioners will learn from this process. Unfortunately, they will be learning at the expense of those landowners along the pipeline and the utility consumers. The management team at Hutchinson Utilities during the construction process was not qualified to make the decisions and did so without regard to the landowners and their tenants. The commission members should take more responsibility for serving on the commission and protecting the interests of citizens in such processes involving the taking of their property. The city of Hutchinson has direct oversight of the Hutchinson Utilities Commission and had the opportunity to influence the entire process.

I am just one citizen, taxpayer, utility consumer and voter who is unhappy with the results of that proceeding, as well as the entire condemnation process. I expect more out of our community leaders, and all of the voters should do the same.

12 lane road and rail NAFTA Superhighway  
NAFTA SUPERHIGHWAY | An urban myth or reality?

# SUPER SUSPICIOUS FOES

The government denies any such plans, but campaign against it continues.

By MATT STEARNS  
McClatchy Newspapers

WASHINGTON | If the government really has a secret plan for a 12-lane road-and-rail NAFTA Superhighway that will split the heartland from Mexico to Canada, it is playing with a great poker face.

"There is absolutely no U.S. government plan for a NAFTA Superhighway of any sort," said David Bohigian, an assistant secretary of commerce.

Sen. Kit Bond, a Missouri Republican and a powerful member of committees that would authorize and pay for a NAFTA Superhighway, if one were being planned, dismissed the notion as "unfounded theories" with "no credence."

And yet:

■ A pending congressional resolution condemns it.

■ Rep. Ron Paul, a Texas Republican, speaks darkly of "secret funding" for it.

■ Anti-immigrant commentators fulminate against the alleged, four-football-field-wide behemoth as a threat to private property, national security, and "a major lifeline of the plan to merge the United States into a North American Community," as conservative activist Phyllis Schlafly wrote.

Responding to denials, Rep. Virgil Goode, a Virginia Republican, the chief sponsor of the House resolution opposing the NAFTA Superhighway, scoffed: "I've heard that line before. They're just calling it something else ... It's a decrease in our security and an erasing of our borders."

Goode is hardly alone: His resolution has attracted 21 co-sponsors, from both parties.

Authorities say the whole idea, inspired by the free-trade agreement signed by the U.S., Mexico and Canada, is an Internet-based urban myth



NOAH MUSSLER | THE KANSAS CITY STAR

North America's SuperCorridor Coalition advocates for improvements along major trade corridors.

cal enhancements and infrastructure improvements have been turned into something sinister.

For example, conspiracy theorists see Kansas City as a pivotal point for the superhighway because of Kansas City SmartPort, an effort to turn the region into a transportation and logistics center. Officials are working with Mexico to establish an inland customs facility — for exports of U.S.-made goods only, not, as some fear, as a security-reducing inland port for imports from Mexico and Asia, said Chris Gutierrez, president of SmartPort.

"We get hit with it all the time," said Danny Robert a

We try to explain that's not the case."

Here is what Paul, a GOP presidential candidate, told a New Hampshire audience:

"They already have a plan for a highway running from Mexico up to Canada, a 12-lane highway with trains running in the middle. It's going to be an international highway. And there's been some secret funding already into our budgets to start this program moving. There's going to be eminent domain powers used to confiscate tens of thousands of acres to build this."

Variations on the theme abound.

Conservative commentator Dr. Rush Limbaugh says the



Bond



Goode

way, warned that 30,000 acres of private land in Kansas would be taken to build it. Boyda defeated five-term incumbent Rep. Jim Ryun, who called superhighway a myth.

Others see it as a first step, an effort to erase national borders and sovereignty and weld all of North America into a single union, with one currency.

"It's a drift toward a European Union," Goode said. "I don't want to have one currency for all North America support our country being a country."

Those convinced that NAFTA Superhighway is ceiling point to several disparate efforts that they say prove the government isn't telling whole truth:

■ The controversial effort build the "Trans-Texas Corridor," which would largely parallel existing highways, primarily moving freight. The suspicious see it as the NAFTA Superhighway's first leg.

■ A Bush administration proposal to allow some Mexican trucks to drive deeper into the U.S. heartland than previously allowed. Boyda's bill to limit the program passed the House 411-3.

■ North America's SuperCorridor Coalition, or NASSC. The Texas-based nonprofit coalition advocates for improvements along major trade corridors, such as Interstate 35, 29 and 94.

■ The Security and Prosperity Partnership, or SPP. It's collaborative effort on several fronts, including trade and security, by the United States, Canada and Mexico.

Bohigian, the trade official whose portfolio includes the SPP, said the effort is intended only to "reduce the cost of trade and improve the quality of life" through efforts such as decreasing the wait time for trucks idling at international borders. Reducing the average wait time from 35 minutes to six minutes has saved more than \$1 billion, Bohigian said.

## System doesn't produce security

To the Editor: 10/27/07  
The public should know about Senate Bill 289. It's called "Journey Through Hallowed Ground" and concerns our National Heritage Area.

It has been attached to a bill about private property rights and the expansion of government land ownership. If this bill passes, it will control local land use and destroy local businesses that could soon be taken over by the National Park Service to be within a National Heritage Area.

Also of concern is the NAFTA Superhighway, which is a massive toll road 4,000 miles long and four football fields wide. It will be built and leased by a Spanish consortium and will merge Canada, Mexico and the USA. Mexican cargo will no longer be subject to inspection by U.S. Border Patrol agents.

Have you heard of the Lost Treaty, better known as the Law of the Sea Treaty? It will be controlled by the United Nations. It refers to undersea mining in international waters. This bill comes before the Senate in November.

Also of vital concern is the Security and Prosperity Partnership bill (SPP). This bill is about eminent domain and government monopolies. The SPP bill was discussed in August by Bush, Canadian and Mexican officials. This bill gives private developers who have entered into a Public Private Partnership (PPP) with their local governments the right to use eminent domain in any way they wish because they consider all property to be common land belonging to the state.

For example, private companies now buy up water plants to gain control of community water supplies as well as highway systems through use of PPP's through a state's department of