



SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
Washington, DC 20423

Office of Environmental Analysis

September 22, 2015

Kathryn Kusske Floyd
Venable LLP
575 Seventh Street, NW
Washington, DC 20004

Re: STB Docket No. FD 35952, Great Lakes Basin LLC – Authority to Construct and Operate a Rail Line in Wisconsin, Illinois and Indiana - Granting Waiver of Six-Month Prefiling Notice Requirement

Dear Ms. Floyd:

Pursuant to 49 C.F.R. § 1105.10(c), we are granting your request of September 16, 2015 for a waiver of the six-month prefiling notice generally required for construction projects under 49 C.F.R. § 1105.10(a)(1).

The Surface Transportation Board's (Board) Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA) met with you and Jay Johnson of Venable LLP, and representatives of Great Lakes Basin LLC (GLB) on September 14, 2015. The GLB representatives included Jim Wilson, President, and Frank Patton, Managing Partner. At the meeting, GLB explained that it would be seeking authority from the Board to construct and operate a new rail line that would connect several Class 1 railroads and serve as a loop around the Chicago rail hub. As GLB explained, the proposed rail line would enable through traffic to bypass Chicago and provide more consistent and decreased rail travel times in the Midwest region. The proposed rail line would be approximately 275 miles long and would extend from southern Wisconsin, through Illinois to northwestern Indiana. The project is known as the Great Lakes Basin Railroad Project (GLBRP).

At the September 14, 2015 meeting, OEA provided a general overview of the Board's environmental review process, OEA's role in the process, and the use of third-party consultants. Based on this initial meeting and your letter request, OEA believes it has adequate information to grant this request and that GLB is sufficiently aware of OEA's environmental process.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Phillis Johnson-Ball of my staff at 202-245-0304.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Victoria Rutson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Victoria" and last name "Rutson" clearly distinguishable.

Victoria Rutson
Director
Office of Environmental Analysis

cc: Jay Johnson