



EO-2845

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
Washington, DC 20423

Office of Environmental Analysis

September 8, 2016

Rebecca Graser
US Army Corps of Engineers – St. Paul District
180 5th St. E., Suite 700
St. Paul, MN 55101

Rebecca Hartman
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Regulatory Michiana Branch
2422 Viridian Drive, Suite #200
South Bend, IN 46628-3561

Donna Jones
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – Rock Island District
Regulatory Branch
P.O. Box 2004
Rock Island, IL 61204

Paul Leffler
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – Chicago District
Regulatory Branch
231 South LaSalle Street, Suite 1500
Chicago, IL 60604

Re: Docket No. FD 35952, Great Lakes Basin Transportation, Inc (GLBT)—
Authority to Construct and Operate a Rail Line in Indiana, Illinois, and
Wisconsin; Cooperating Agency Invitation

Dear Ms. Graser, Ms. Hartman, Ms. Jones, and Mr. Leffler:

I am writing to invite you to participate as a cooperating agency in the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) initiated by the Surface Transportation Board (Board) pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, for a proposal by the Great Lakes Basin Transportation, Inc. (GLBT) to build and operate a new rail line in Illinois, Indiana, and Wisconsin. The Board is preparing an EIS to address the environmental impacts associated with the construction and operation of the proposed 278-mile new rail line.

The proposed rail line would extend generally from near La Porte, Indiana, through Illinois to near Milton, Wisconsin, and would connect with existing Class I railroads. According

to GLBT, the purpose of the proposed line is to relieve Chicago-area shipping congestion by creating a bypass for through traffic not destined for or originating in the Chicago area.

Your agency has been identified as an agency that may have an interest in the GLBT's proposed project based on your jurisdiction by law and/or special expertise. As proposed, GLBT's project would have the potential to impact resources under your jurisdiction because of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' (Corps) regulatory authority over the discharge of dredged or fill material into all waters of the United States, including jurisdictional wetlands. In addition, the Corps has special expertise in evaluating whether aspects of the project comply with the Clean Water Act § 404(b)(1) guidelines.

The activities we plan to undertake to facilitate interagency cooperation will likely include the following:

1. Consult with you on any relevant technical analyses that will be required for the project.
2. Provide you with project information, including analytical results.
3. Request your review of relevant sections of the Draft EIS prior to its release for comment by the public and other agencies.
4. Encourage your agency to provide input on subjects within your jurisdiction and expertise.
5. Include information in the EIS required by your agency to meet its NEPA responsibilities and any other requirements regarding jurisdictional approvals, permits, licenses, and/or clearances.

Please be assured that we will work closely with you to ensure that the EIS allows you to meet your NEPA responsibilities. Feel free to let us know at any point in the process if your needs are not being met.

Additional information about the proposed project and maps of the proposed project area are available on the Board sponsored project website at www.greatlakesbasinraileis.com. If you would like to discuss the proposal in more detail or have any questions, please contact Ken Blodgett at 202-245-0305 (e-mail address: kenneth.blodgett@stb.dot.gov) or Alan Summerville of ICF International, our independent third party contractor for this project, at 703-934-3616 (e-mail address: Alan.Summerville@icfi.com). We look forward to your response. Please let us know whether you would like to participate as a cooperating agency by September 28, 2016.

Very truly yours,



Victoria Rutson
Director
Office of Environmental Analysis