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June 6, 2016

ATTN: David Navecky – Docket No. FD35952

Surface Transportation Board
Office of Environmental Analysis
395 E. Street SW
Washington, DC 20423-0001

Dear Mr. Navecky:

I would like to express my concerns over the proposed Great Lakes Basin Transportation, LLC rail line project . Docket # 35952. I oppose the project and ask the Surface Transportation Board to deny the proposal. My concerns are:

1. Closing of township roads impacts rural school bus routes, emergency responders, and moving of farm machinery from one farm to another. If various roads are closed, that means more farm machinery on the more traveled roads, which will create safety hazards for all. We receive pamphlets every year regarding what to do in the case of a nuclear emergency and the area power plants. Evacuation of these “rural, undeveloped” areas would take more time.
2. Permanent destruction of prime farmland. American Farmers feed the world. The acres taken out of production, to be used by the GLB Rail System, can never be replaced. One cannot build, nor can one replace prime farmland. Not only the acres required for the rail are affected, but also the farmland near the railroad. This railway will destroy farm drainage tile, creating more water standing, which environmentally speaking, leave more area for mosquito breeding, which increases everyone's exposure to west Nile virus and the Zika virus, and leave small acreage that would be difficult to farm.
3. Our air quality would be disturbed from the “100” trains daily.
4. Grundy County IL has “Chief Shabbona” historic land that would be intruded on. There are probably undiscovered Indian artifacts on that ground.
5. Grundy County IL also has numerous underground mines. Some are not marked/mapped. They probably would not withstand the numerous and heavily loaded train traffic.
6. If these trains haul oil or other environmentally unsafe materials, there would be an increased possibility of derailments and spills. Our emergency responders would need training and equipment for this type of accident. Also, because of closed roads, or waiting for the numerous trains to pass, there would be a loss of time responding to these incidents.

I also am totally against the possibility of eminent domain in this railroad project. That means that we landowners of farmground would have to give up our business (farming acres), in order for another private group/citizen to create a business! This is wrong!!

In conclusion....please deny the Great Lakes Basin Transportation Railway their request for this rail line as proposed, between Indiana and Wisconsin. Also, I strongly object to eminent domain prevailing in this private business venture!

Sincerely,

Robert J. Parker