

Susan A. and Stephen T. Shade
6320 Favor Rd
Rockton, IL 61072

April 3, 2017

Mr. Ken Blodgett
Surface Transportation Board
395 E. Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 201423-0001

Re: Docket No. FD 35952

Dear Mr. Blodgett:

We, as landowners in Winnebago County, resolve to oppose the Great Lakes Basin Railroad project. As stands on this date, the construction of the GLB Railroad through northern and central Illinois will be routed over some of the most prime farmland in the US. Not only will its construction reduce crop production, but will also effect the livelihoods of today's and future generations. It will devalue property and most likely increase taxes. Productive farmland should be preserved, not destroyed. It cannot be replaced. As more and more acres continue to be put out of production, food costs to the general public will increase.

~~RE ROUTE GLB RAILROAD FROM~~

Rerouting the GLB Railroad through Winnebago County will also have a damaging impact on the environment. Disrupted river flowage and destruction of field drainage tiles will eventually effect the water table-resulting in possible flooding, soil erosion, and contaminated wells. Noise and air pollution as well as safety issues are also of great concern. Derailments may cause spills and explosions. A few years ago, a neighbor lost his life crossing a railroad track in the middle of his field.

The GLB Railroad will also have a disturbing effect on wildlife habitats. For example, it will disrupt the endangered whooping cranes' flyway to wintering grounds in the south.

In our opinion, a more sensible approach to the construction of the railroad would be to utilize unproductive land and bedrock for the railway bed. Using Eminent Domain to acquire land for the construction of the railroad should be used only if it is in the public interest, not for personal monetary gain.

~~THE GLB RAILROAD SHOULD BE REROUTED~~

We are unable to see any benefit to the public for this project- only the destruction of livelihoods, personal property, and wildlife habitats. Furthermore, an economic boost to Winnebago County would be negligible. Jobs created, if any, would be temporary. Supposed industrial development on the railroad corridor would be unwise, undesirable, unwanted, and detrimental to the community.

Very truly yours,

Instead, support should be continued for the "Create" project-a public – private plan to decongest rail usage. This plan has already met ongoing success and will hopefully continue.

To conclude, we are unaware of any landowners in Winnebago County who favor the GLB project. Illinois Farm Bureau, who represents farm owners and other landowners throughout the entire proposed path of the railroad, opposes the project. We think the GLB Railroad project is misguided and unwise, and hope to persuade you to come to a similar conclusion.

Sincerely,

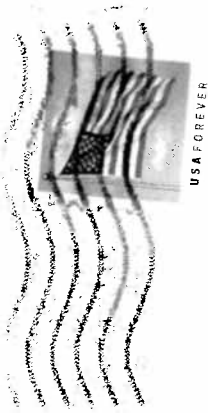
Handwritten signatures of Susan A. Shade and Stephen T. Shade. The signature of Susan A. Shade is written in a cursive script, and the signature of Stephen T. Shade is written in a similar cursive script below it.

Susan A. and Stephen T. Shade

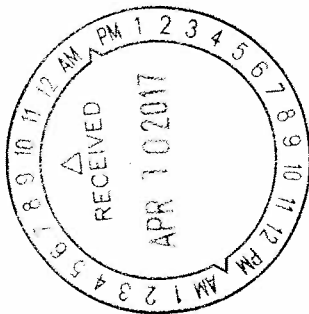
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USA FOREVER



MR. KEN BLODGETT
SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20423-0001

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