

Edward and Mary Jo Schultz

October 30, 2016

15531 Will Road

Rockton, Illinois 61072

Dave Navecky, Surface Transportation Board

ATTN Docket No. FD 35952

395 E. Street, SW

Washington, D.C. 201423-0001

Dear Mr. Navecky,

My husband and I have been Winnebago County tax payers for 40 years and I never thought I would have to write a letter to protect our property from a private, for-profit group threatening "eminent domain". We have been to several meetings and feel adequately informed to be vehemently opposed to this proposal for the following reasons:

*negative impact on the environment: creeks, lakes, rivers, wetlands and forests, disruption of plant and animal habitats, noise and vibration impacts, possible hazardous waste spills (for which there is no insurance), and the destruction of the soils, property, and current roadways due to heavy gravel operations to build railway

*negative impact on transportation: rural road closings, first responders delay in getting to emergencies, school bus safety, rural traffic safety, increased probability of train accidents at 70 mph, not to mention who is going to pay for the maintenance of these crossings and land along the tracks.

*negative impacts on land use: farm fields and pasture will be bisected and become land locked, loss of production of crops and livestock, more herbicides to maintain unused portions of ROW easement, less farm income, more farm equipment on county and township roads, destruction of natural grade of the land changing flow of surface water, destruction of existing irrigation systems, creating an environment that is unhealthy to livestock production, dairy production and increased cost in fuel for farmers to get to their productive fields.

*safety: increased amount of RR crossings, 70 mph train vs slow moving farm equipment, 70 mph train vs bicyclist (our road is designated county cycling path), spraying of chemicals to kill vegetation along the track, longer response times for police, fire department, ambulance, and caregivers due to length of trains, special training for first responders for emergency spills

and/or derailments creating public health hazard and the potential of water contamination for generations to come.

*financial: decreased value of homes and land adjacent and indirectly affected by rail, 24 acres per mile of RR taken out of production forever equals loss of farm income with decreased productivity and efficiency of farmers leaving a negative effect on local economy. GLB does not provide long term jobs or increased income for this area. Loss of rural environment will force people to relocate, AND property taxes will have to increase to pay for all the district services.

For the sake of our lands and farms, many of them surrounding us are multi-generational, we ask that you request an additional public hearing session for those of us in Winnebago County. STB Docket #FD35952. We also ask that you do anything in your power to help protect this area from a private for-profit company taking our land with little concern for the environment, safety, and financial aspects of our community.

Sincerely,

Edward J. Schuetz
Mary Jo Schuetz

