

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

May 25, 2017

Mr. Ken Blodgett
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001

Re: Docket # FD 35952

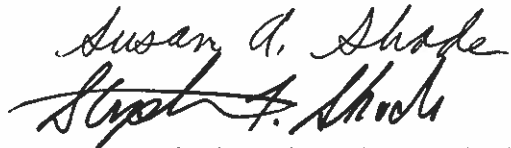
Dear Mr. Blodgett:

As landowners facing the prospect of a Great Lakes Basin Railroad project within feet of our farmland and close to our farmstead, we oppose its construction for reasons explained in our previous letters to the Surface Transportation Board. (Copies are enclosed.)

An additional objection to the GLB Railroad is projected in this letter and refers to the motion for the protective order to keep the ten principal stakeholders and their holdings hidden from the public knowledge. We, as affected landowners, have the right to view this information.

If the GLB Railroad's proposal is accepted, we can all forget about "for the public good ". With speculative financing, and little usage and participation, as predicted, the GLB railroad project will result in a financial disaster, and most important, in the ruination of many acres of productive farmland.

Opponents to the GLB Railroad and to the protective order,

The block contains two handwritten signatures in black ink. The first signature is "Susan A. Shade" and the second is "Stephen T. Shade". Both are written in a cursive, flowing style.

Susan A. Shade and Stephen T. Shade

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.

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.

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.

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,

Susan A. and Stephen T. Shade

Stephen T Shade
6320 Favor Rd
Rockton IL 61072

Nov 11, 2016

Victoria Ruston
Director, Office of Environmental Analysis
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001

Re: Docket # FD 35952 Great Lakes Basin Transportation, Inc.

Dear Director Ruston:

We oppose the Great Lakes Basin railroad project for environmental reasons.

As the proposed route of the railroad has now been shifted westward, we are hopeful that another public hearing might be scheduled where Winnebago County residents may voice their opinion and reservations on the proposed project.

The threatened freshwater mollusk, *Elliptio dilatata*, native to the Pecatonica and Rock Rivers would suffer further decline. The numbers of the mollusk plummeted in the Pecatonica River following the construction of the Meridian Rd bridge (42.4375N 89.1746W). The proposed route would result in another bridge crossing the Pecatonica River within a mile of the aforementioned bridge. The fear is another construction project would result in the demise of the bivalve species in this area. The proposal would also require crossing the Rock River in Illinois.

Sincerely,

Stephen T Shade

S T Shade
6320 Favor Rd
Rockton, IL 61072

Mr. Ken Blodgett
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001

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