

Other Submissions

In order to process your filing, please fill out the following information. If you do not know the docket number, please leave it blank and we will fill it out for you.

Please fill out the following information to help us complete your filing:

Docket #:	- -
Subject: *	Rail Project
First Name: *	Scott
Middle Name:	R.
Last Name: *	McClure
Address: *	155 S. Indiana Ave Room 205
City: *	Valparaiso
State: *	IN
Zip Code: *	46383-5555
Email Address: *	SMcClure@porterco.org
Group/Affiliation:	Porter County Governmenmt
Message:	



Porter County Commissioners Resolution.pdf



Porter County Council Resolution.pdf



Porter County Plan Commission Resolution.pdf



Porter County Storm Water Management Board Resolution.pdf

RESOLUTION NO. 16-01
PORTER COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

WHEREAS, the Porter County Commissioners are the Legislative and Executive Body of Government in Porter County, Indiana; and

WHEREAS, On March 21st, 2016 the County Planning Director received from The Surface Transportation Board, "The Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement"; and

WHEREAS, This Notice is the only communication received by any County Department, from either the Surface Transportation Board or Great Lakes Basin Transportation, Inc. ; and

WHEREAS, Great Lakes Basin Transportation, Inc. plans to file a request, with the Surface Transportation Board, to construct and operate an approximately 278-mile rail line; and

WHEREAS, The proposed rail line could consist of up to six (6) tracks; and

WHEREAS, The residents of Porter County have until May 16th, 2016 to provide the Surface Transportation Board comments on the scope of the environmental impact study; and

WHEREAS, the public meetings, within Indiana, for the scope of the environmental impact study are currently set for:

April 12, 2016

5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Veterans of Foreign Wars
17401 Morse Street
Lowell, IN

April 13, 2016

5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
American Legion
203 S. Washington St.
Wanatah, IN

April 14, 2016

5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Civic Auditorium
1001 Ridge St
La Porte, IN

WHEREAS, No public meetings are scheduled to occur within Porter County; and

WHEREAS, The Porter County Commissioners are alarmed at the significant environmental impacts this proposed rail line, running the entire length of the County, West to East, would have on Porter County; and

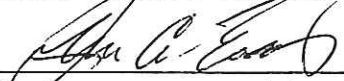
WHEREAS, The significant environmental impacts and dangers would include, transportation of hazardous materials, closure of

local roads, devaluing of property, drainage issues, and negative impacts on future land use. The proposed rail line would also create noise, vibration, and considerable safety concerns at all of the crossings.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the undersigned, that the Porter County Commissioners, foresee no positive economic impact from this new proposed rail line, and foresee significant permanent negative environmental impacts, and therefore are against Great Lakes Basin's proposed 278 mile rail line.

This Resolution passed and adopted this the 5 th day of April, 2016.

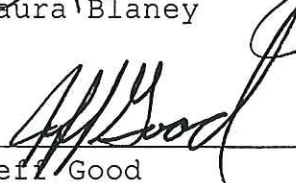
PORTER COUNTY COMMISSIONERS



John Evans, President



Laura Blaney



Jeff Good

RESOLUTION NO. 16-4-26
PORTER COUNTY COUNCIL

WHEREAS, The Porter County Council is the Fiscal Body of Government in Porter County, Indiana; and

WHEREAS, On March 21st, 2016 the County Planning Director received from The Surface Transportation Board, "The Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement"; and

WHEREAS, This notice was the first and only communication received by any Porter County Department, from either the Surface Transportation Board or Great Lakes Basin Transportation, Inc.; and

WHEREAS, Great Lakes Basin Transportation, Inc. plans to file a request with the Surface Transportation Board, to construct and operate an approximately 278-mile rail line; and

WHEREAS, The proposed rail line could consist of up to six (6) tracks, running the entire width of the County East to West; and

WHEREAS, The residents of Porter County have until June 15th, 2016 to provide the Surface Transportation Board comments on the scope of the Environmental Impact Study; and

WHEREAS, The Porter County Council is greatly concerned about the significant negative impact on property values and therefore assessed valuations across south Porter County; and

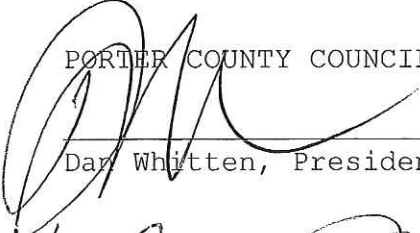
WHEREAS, The Porter County Council is greatly concerned with the impact and associated costs of the disruption in drainage across South Porter County; and

WHEREAS, The Porter County Council is greatly concerned with the impact of "at grade crossings" and/or road closures on response times for law enforcement and emergency service providers.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the undersigned, that the Porter County Council, foresee no short term or long term positive economic impact from this new proposed rail line in Porter County, and foresee significant permanent negative

impacts to property values, drainage, and emergency service providers and therefore are against Great Lakes Basin's proposed 278 mile rail line.

This Resolution passed and adopted this the 26th day of April, 2016.

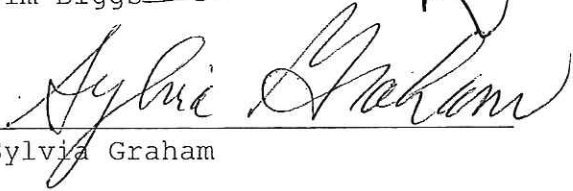

PORTER COUNTY COUNCIL

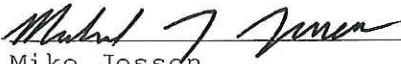
Dan Whitten, President


Karen Conover, Vice President

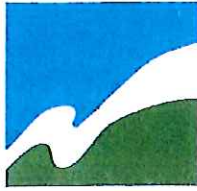

Robert Poparad


Jim Biggs


Sylvia Graham


Mike Jessen


Jeremy Rivas



**PORTER COUNTY PLAN COMMISSION
Resolution No. 16-03**

Resolution concerning Great Lakes Basin, LLC and the proposed Great Lakes Basin Railroad and their proposed request to construct a railroad through southern unincorporated Porter County, Indiana.

Whereas, pursuant to I.C. 36-7-4-200 series, the Porter County Board of Commissioners has established the Porter County Plan Commission as advisory plan commission under Indiana Statute.

Whereas, the Porter County Plan Commission has by law been created to guide the growth and development of the unincorporated area of Porter County, IN accordance with the Porter County Land Use and Thoroughfare Plan (comprehensive plan) for the following purposes:

- To promote the public health, safety, morals, comfort, convenience, and general welfare.
- To promote the orderly, responsible, and beneficial development and growth of the areas within the unincorporated area.
- To protect the character and stability of residential, agricultural, institutional, commercial, industrial and natural areas.
- To minimize or avoid congestion in the public streets and to ensure safe, convenient, and efficient traffic circulation.
- To preserve and enhance the scenic beauty, aesthetics, and environmental integrity of the unincorporated area.
- To protect the scale and character of existing development from the encroachment of incompatible uses.

Whereas, the Plan Commission believes that the establishment of a proposed railroad and utility corridor through Porter County, Indiana is against the principles of the Porter County Land Use and Thoroughfare Plan and the Porter County Unified Development Ordinance.

Whereas, the Plan Commission believes that the creation of the Great Lakes Basin route as proposed before the Federal Surface Transportation Board will pose significant negative impacts upon the citizens of Porter County, Indiana, due to:

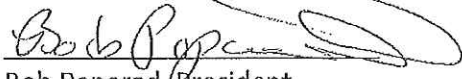
1. Proposed route is through the prime farmland of Porter County and some of the most productive soils in the Country. Said route will further damage the agricultural business with the proposed line going through Pinney-Purdue Research Farm. Said research farm that educates farmers on best practices and crop research for quality products. Said farm was positioned to be away from the urban area so as not to be affected by lights, noise, and vibration.
2. The agricultural drainage system is extensive and damage to this system that drains either towards the Lake Michigan or Kankakee River water shed could result in substantial loss of revenue due to flooded fields from broken drain tiles and interruption of the storm water flow. Numerous ditches traverse southern Porter County to drain unincorporated Porter County and cities such as Valparaiso. Maintenance of this drainage system is of vital importance.
3. Negatively impacting the agricultural land with a non-compatible land use will disrupt farm operations that counties strive to protect and foster the agricultural environment. The Porter County Land Use and Thoroughfare Plan outlines goals and visions for the preservation of farm land and protection of their operations.
4. The Future Land Use map attached to this Resolution from the Land Use and Thoroughfare Plan the protection of Porter County's valued land by focusing development next to the cities and towns for the use of their water and sanitary services. The map also shows the industrial nodes and the locations for future industrial development within the county. Proposing spurs along the Great Lakes Basin contradicts the goals set forth by Porter County's citizens and their elected officials. The industrial areas are focused next to the cities and towns for their services and to take advantage of the infrastructure in these areas. Spurs for future development shall bring in incompatible land uses next to existing; increase the costs of municipalities to develop safe infrastructure for the traveling public and place an undue burden on the costly to maintain such facilities. This is not economic development but fostering sprawl in the worst way in the costs to the counties air, water and visual qualities.
5. Increasing the probability of train accidents at any number of newly proposed at-grade railroad crossings.
6. Closed roads for railroad tracks will increase traffic trips and mileage for vehicular trips and most importantly farm operations furthering the emissions and damage of the air quality.

7. Effecting the transportation routes of local schools with increase route times added vehicular times and an increase danger due to railroad crossings.
8. Increasing critical response time for emergency response personnel with route changes to avoid train traffic and stoppage at grade crossings further endangering the health and safety of the citizens.
9. Increasing the costs of local emergency responders to handle train accidents or incidents due to lack of necessary equipment to deal with such situations.

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved, that effective April 27, 2016, the Porter County Plan Commission that the proposed railroad by Great Lakes Basin, LLC will burden the citizens of Porter County, Indiana and said impacts cannot be mitigated or engineered.

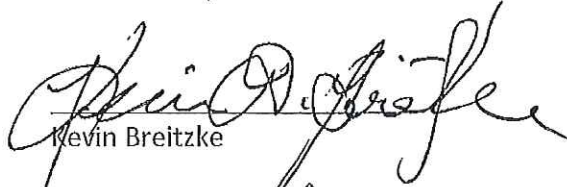
Therefore and Be It Further Resolved, for all reasons stated herein the Porter County Plan Commission hereby opposes and recommends the denial of the Great Lakes Basin Railroad project.

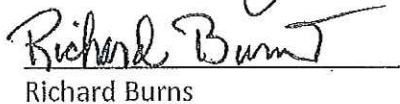
This Day of April 27, 2016


Bob Poparad, President


Mitch Peters, Vice-President


Laura Blaney

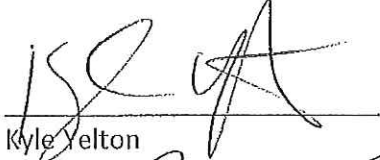

Kevin Breitzke


Richard Burns


Lyndsay Ploehn


Ken Williams


Luther Williams

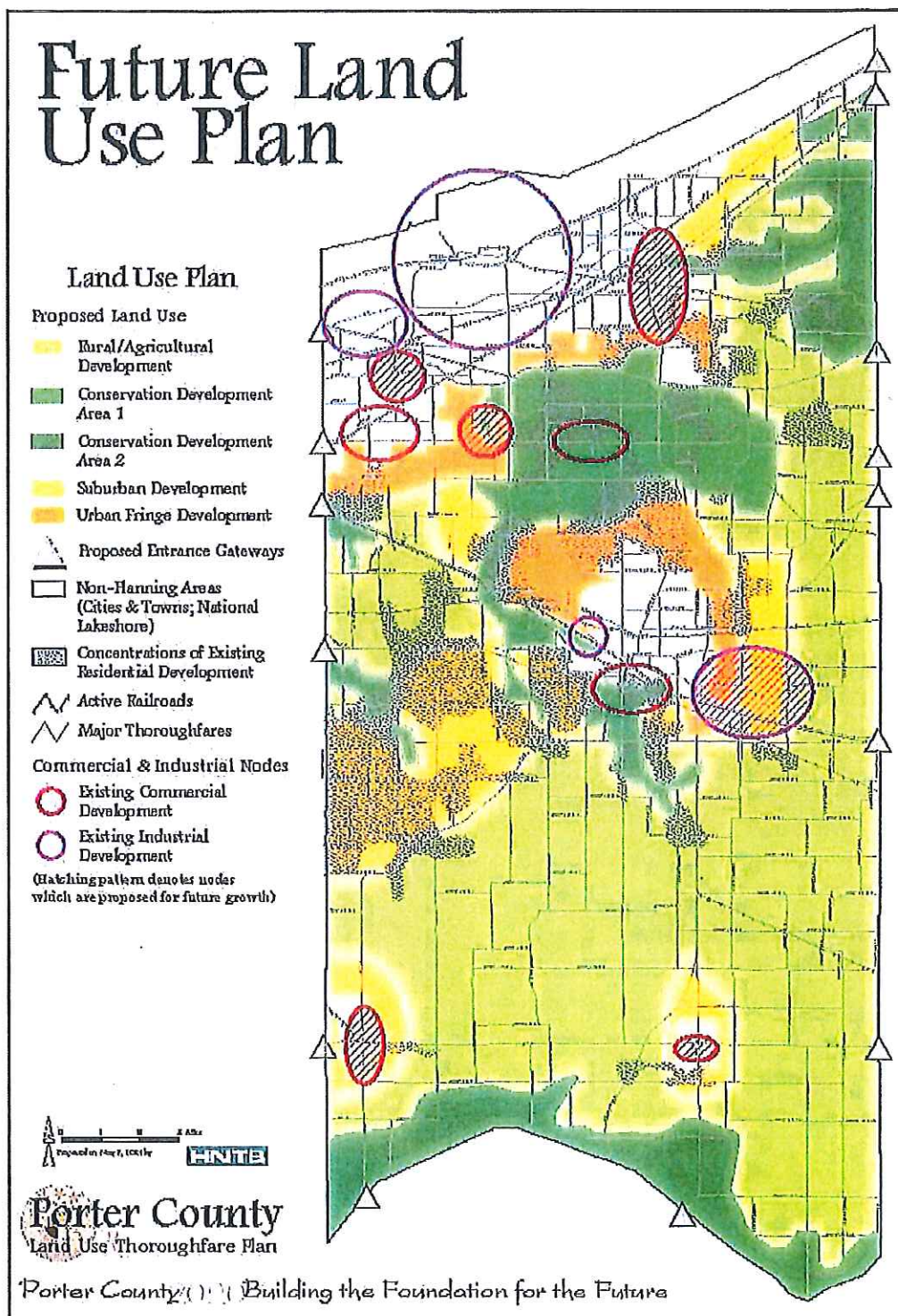

Kyle Yelton

Attest: 
Robert W. Thompson, Jr., AICP
Director

PORTER COUNTY LAND USE & THOROUGHFARE PLAN



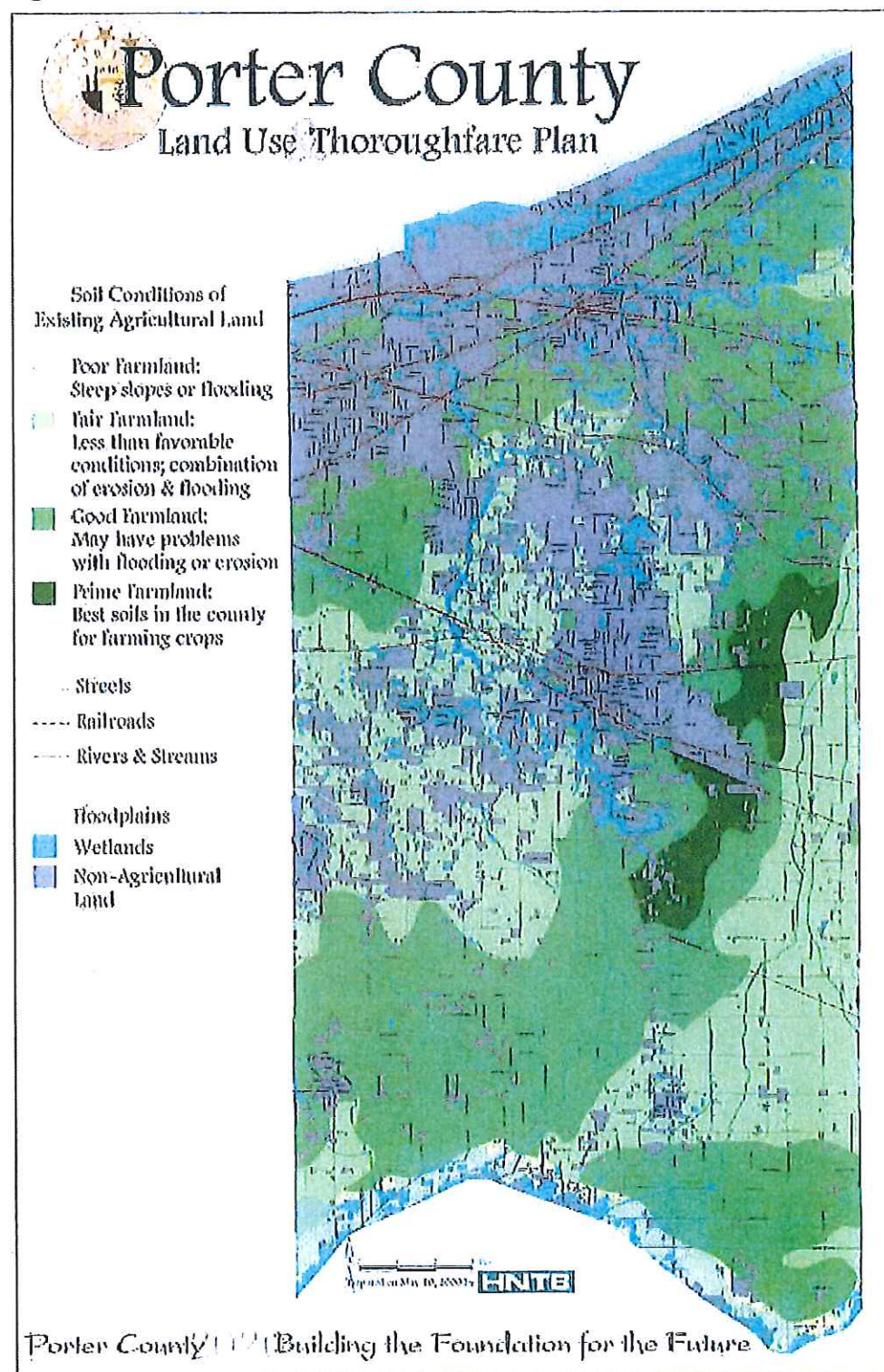
Figure 25: Future Land Use Plan

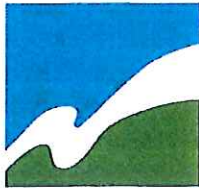


PORTER COUNTY LAND USE & THOROUGHFARE PLAN



Figure 9: Prime Farmland





**PORTER COUNTY STORM WATER MANAGEMENT BOARD
Resolution No. 16-01**

Resolution concerning Great Lakes Basin, LLC and the proposed Great Lakes Basin Railroad and their proposed request to construct a railroad through southern and eastern unincorporated Porter County, Indiana.

Whereas, the County has established a storm water management program under the provisions of IC 8.1.5-5; and,

Whereas, the benefits of flood control and surface water quality extend to all citizens, institutions and businesses in the County; and,

Whereas, the Porter County Storm Water Management Board has by law been created to manage the storm water runoff and water quality along with guiding the growth and development of the unincorporated area of Porter County, IN accordance with the Porter County Drainage Codes established to protect the citizens from the following:

- To promote the public health and safety of the citizens of Porter County.
- To promote the orderly, responsible, and beneficial development and growth of the areas within the unincorporated area.
- To protect the character and stability of unincorporated area against flooding and storm water pollution.
- To preserve and enhance the scenic beauty, aesthetics, and environmental integrity of the unincorporated area.

Whereas, the Storm Water Management Board believes that the establishment of a proposed railroad and utility corridor through Porter County, Indiana will severely impact the southern and eastern portions of Porter County adversely with flooding and storm water pollution.

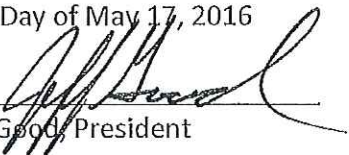
Whereas, the Storm Water Management Board believes that the creation of the Great Lakes Basin route as proposed before the Federal Surface Transportation Board will pose significant negative impacts upon the citizens of Porter County, Indiana, due to:

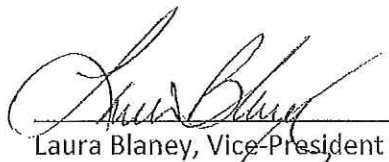
1. Proposed route is through the prime farmland of Porter County and some of the most productive soils in the Country. Said route will further damage the agricultural business with the proposed line going through Pinney-Purdue Research Farm. Said research farm that educates farmers on best practices and crop research for quality products. Said farm was positioned to be away from the urban area so as not to be affected by lights, noise, and vibration.
2. The agricultural drainage system is extensive and damage to this system that drains either towards the Lake Michigan or Kankakee River water shed could result in substantial loss of revenue due to flooded fields from broken drain tiles and interruption of the storm water flow. Numerous ditches traverse southern Porter County to drain unincorporated Porter County and cities such as Valparaiso. Maintenance of this drainage system is of vital importance.
3. The Storm Water Management Board is responsible for the timely response to emergency repairs and flooding along the drainage ways. Said railroad as with all railroads will not allow for a timely response to emergency flooding relief due to obstructions that may be created by the railroad crossing of a drainage way. Said timing is critical to the farm community to prevent permanent crop damage and loss of revenue due to the flooded fields.
4. The Storm Water Management Board has records of the county regulated drains but numerous drains have been placed in agricultural fields over the years that the land owners have not kept records. Said tiles will be broken during construction of the railroad and evidence of this will not happen till after the fact. The broken tile will create significant drainage problems resulting in crop loss and costly repairs or new construction of drainage system.
5. Negatively impacting the agricultural land with a non-compatible land use will disrupt farm operations that counties strive to protect and foster the agricultural environment. The Porter County Land Use and Thoroughfare Plan outlines goals and visions for the preservation of farm land and protection of their operations.

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved, that effective May 17, 2016, by Porter County Storm Water Management Board that the proposed railroad by Great Lakes Basin, LLC will burden the citizens of Porter County, Indiana and said impacts cannot be mitigated or engineered.

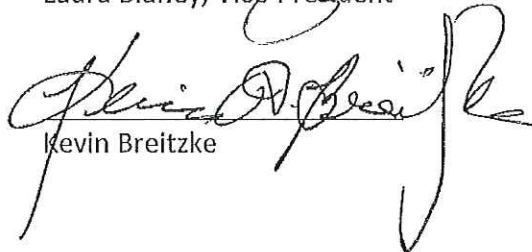
Therefore and Be It Further Resolved, for all reasons stated herein the Porter County Storm Water Management Board hereby opposes and recommends the denial of the Great Lakes Basin Railroad project.

This Day of May 17, 2016


Jeff Good, President


Laura Blaney, Vice-President


John A. Evans


Kevin Breitzke

Attest: 
Robert W. Thompson, Jr., AICP
Director