

1 May 2017

Ken Blodgett
Surface Transportation Board
Docket # FD 35952
395 E Street, SW
Washington, DC 20423-0001

Dear Mr. Blodgett,

I write on behalf of my clients, Mr. Gary Nefstead and Mr. Craig Nefstead. Written objection to the Great Lakes Basin Railroad plans to lay tracks across Ogle County, Illinois is hereby made. I interviewed Mr. Gary Nefstead as to the basis for his objection and below is an outline of my notes of interview. As you can see, there is a “gem in the rough” in north central Ogle County in the land owned by the Nefstead family. ***The Nefstead land is treasure of history, wetlands, and wildlife and woodlands unlike any other in northern Illinois---Forest that is left alone, uninhabited by humans. This land that has been protected by the Nefstead family for generations, stands unique and unequivocal any other in the state. The nature of this land is such that it cannot be “mitigated” or reproduced at another site.*** Please give this matter your serious consideration.

Notes of Interview Gary Nefstead 19 April 2017:

1842 History of Driscoll Brothers, the White Rock Bandits

Address: 1888 N Blind Road, Kings, Illinois 61068
Where John Campbell, captain of the Regulators lived;
Where the Driscolls murdered John Campbell
Manhunt ended in Grand Detour
Stone marker located here behind the house

Indian Encampment

Larabee Farm, now part of Kings Camp and part owned by Dr. Cicero
There was an indian encampment on that farm
Believed to be on the north American trading route for the Indians
Because previous owners had found arrowheads and ax heads not typical to this area
Bertha Larabee had milk jugs full of arrowheads from this farm
Bertha advised Melvin Nefstead
Melvin Nefstead advised Gary Nefstead
The Nefsteads have located artifacts on their farm, skinning knife made of wood (on mantle at

Major)

Dick Chudoba found arrowheads on his property

Arrowheads on the land across from Nefsteads found

Chaney Cemetary

On Nefstead land is the Chaney Cemetary

This part of the land was settled in the early 1800's

The Chaney family is buried here

The settlement was south of the creek south of the cemetary.

The impressions on the ground can be found there today.

Homestead site early 1800's

There exists a hand dug well with limestone lining on the north side of Nefstead farm

There are depressions in the ground where it is believed root cellars existed

1860 Mansion

2307 N. White Rock Road, Kings, Illinois 61068

It took nearly seven years to build and is made from limestone and granite from cities of Oregon, Geneva and Galena.

Rumored to have been a link in the underground railroad but could never be established. The first owner, John Hayes, was an abolitionist.

John Hayes was friends with Abe Lincoln. John Hayes' son, when in his 80's, stopped at the home on White Rock Road and visited with its then owner, Melvin and Margaret Nefstead. The son stated that his friend was Abe Lincoln and that he stayed here because it was a days ride out and a days ride back.

Gary Nefstead remembers the son of John Hayes being here when he was a small child.

Melvin and Margaret Nefstead advised Gary Nefstead of the conversation.

Major House

10200 E Holcomb Road, Stillman Valley, Illinois 61084

Built in 1856

Was a cattle buying station, to sell cattle for market

Built from the limestone quarry in the woods north of the home

Natural Resources

1. Bald eagles nest, fish and live on this land
2. In 2016 a mama black bear and three cubs were caught on trail camera just south of the woods
3. In 2016, a mama black bear and three cubs were sighted just north of the Major woods
4. In 2015, a black bear was traveling west along Gristmill road to the south of the woods
5. The Illinois Natural History Survey conducts regular surveys of the bird life on Nefstead farm

6. One of the most prolific areas in the state for bird species, including Black Rail
7. There exist multiple natural springs throughout the lands
8. Approximately 20 acres of wetlands and sloughs
9. Stillman creek and its tributaries run through the property
10. There are 500 acres of contiguous undisturbed woodlands
11. Healthy deer population
12. Healthy turkey population
13. Prairie plant populations
14. Oak savannah woodlands
15. Twelve ponds with healthy duck (multiple species) populations
16. Historically, bobcats were present on this land
17. Two mountain lions were present on this land in the 1990's
18. Albino wild turkey present on the land currently

Truly yours,

Deborah S. Maas
Attorney at Law

DSM

Enclosures: photos