

Dear Surface Transportation Board:

Our family is concerned about the possibility of the Great Lakes Basin Railroad taking precious acreage from our operation. We are a small 50 head dairy farm consisting of 240 acres. Our dairy farm has been in the family since 1967. My husband's parents purchased this land because it has good fertile soil and is just the right size for our operation. If the railroad goes through our farm as proposed, we will not only lose 12.12 acres, but also additional property, possibly wasted, due to it being landlocked west of the 12.12 acres. We need that land to sustain our operation. As of now, our 240 acre farm provides us with enough acreage to grow the feed we need for our cows and young stock. We are concerned that if the railroad takes the acreage away, we will have to purchase feed and rent additional ground. Finding affordable nearby ground to rent is not an easy task or something we thought we would have to do.

Our second concern is the possibility of a derailment and the need to evacuate due to hazardous chemicals being transported within one eighth of a mile of our pasture and barn. Derailments happen and to a dairy farmer like us, that would be devastating. It would be impossible for us to arrange for the evacuation of 100 animals (cows and young stock) in a short amount of time. We ourselves could get in a vehicle and leave, but how do you move that many animals quickly (our cattle trailer only holds 6 cows max) and where do you move them to? Cows need to be milked at least two times a day so you can't just move them anywhere. They need to be somewhere that can provide feed and a milking facility. This is not an easy task. If the water and/or food is contaminated, how do we deal with that? Our family can drink bottled water and purchase food from a store, what do we do for our cows? It would be heart wrenching financially and emotionally to be put in a situation like this.

We are also concerned about the safety of our operation due to land being landlocked. How do we get to that area? Will it be farmable? Will we have to deal with crossing train tracks with large equipment and fast moving trains 3 or four times an hour? How many cars will there be with each train? How many tracks will there be? What if the equipment stalls while crossing a track? These are all things we never considered to be a problem we would possibly have to deal with on this farm.

The last thing we are concerned about is the financial burden of fixing drainage problems. We have spent a considerable amount financially on drainage tile to allow us to farm every acre possible. The proposed route of the railroad will enter our farm from the north over an area that used to be wet lands. The trains will cross over a waterway that is crucial to drainage for our fields. If that tile is compromised in any way, we could lose valuable farmland to flooding.

Our farm has fought back and survived a tornado in January of 2008 and a fire in 2014, but we never thought we would have to fight to survive a train taking away some of our precious acreage. Is this railroad absolutely necessary? Is this the best route or just the easiest? Please consider using abandoned tracks now turned in to bike paths or finding land that is not as rich and rural as ours is in Boone County, Illinois.

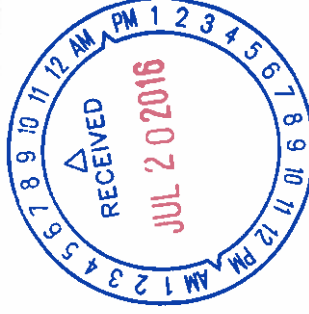
Sincerely,

Chuck & Brenda
Kautring
& family

Charles Kastning
18100 Capron Rd
Capron, IL 61012-9738

CARDL STREAM IL 601

15 JUL 2016 PM 8 1



Dave Navecky
Docket # FD35952
Surface Transportation Board
Office of Environmental Analysis
395 E Street SW
Washington, DC 20423-0001

20423-0001

