

June 20, 2016

Miranda & Richard Serletic
371 West 400 South
Valparaiso, IN 46385

Mr. Dave Navecky
Environmental Analysis
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street SW
Washington DC 20423-0001
Docket No. FD-35952

Dear Mr. Navecky,

We are opposed to the Great Lakes Basin Railway (GLB) for the various reasons outlined in this document. The proposed GLB is set to run through what was once known as the Grand Kankakee Marsh aka The Everglades of the North until man came through in the name of progress and began draining it. Our property is located in Porter Township in Porter County, Indiana and will be approximately one-quarter (1/4) mile from the proposed railway route.

LAND USE

The construction of railways would impact the drainage of water in the fields. There are already existing drainage problems and standing water is not an uncommon happening. Many of the field tiles are unregulated and some locations unknown as they were installed by farmers generations ago. Farmers and the counties have spent hundreds of thousands of dollars on drainage infrastructure. Adding railroad tracks and land being built-up to hold the tracks, would act as a dam causing more water to stand not to mention the weight of the trains and the cargo that would possibly cause field tiles to break, thus water backing up and water not draining correctly into the proper waterways like the Kankakee River. This is a unique area in that it was once marshland that was drained for agricultural uses more than a century ago. Because of this, the drainage was already disrupted once and people have spent more than 100 years correcting the problems. Building a gigantic dam aka the Great Lakes Rail Line would exacerbate 100 years of efforts.

Additionally, the GLB would no doubt have a damaging effect on the Pinney Purdue Agricultural Center (PPAC), 11402 South County Line Road, Wanatah, IN 46390, (LaPorte County). The route would run through research farm fields and parallel to a drainage ditch. This is an agricultural research farm that is operated by Purdue University based out of West Lafayette, Indiana. Purdue University is known worldwide for its College of Agriculture. According to its website, the PPAC contains 664 acres on the Porter-LaPorte County line, with about 560 tillable acres to serve the agricultural research needs of northwestern Indiana. Research capitalizes on resources unique to this part of the state—a sandier soil and abundant water supply. Irrigation is prevalent among vegetable producers. Research at PPAC focuses on agronomic, vegetable, and specialty crops. Researchers in the Departments of Horticulture and Landscape Architecture, Botany and Plant Pathology, Agronomy, Entomology, and Forestry and Natural Resources currently conduct research at PPAC. Obviously, this would be a detriment to the ongoing research and interactive field days with Indiana farmers, who rely on this research to aid in their farming techniques

and livelihoods. Additional information about st research and resources at PPAC is available at <https://ag.purdue.edu/arp/pac/Pages/ppac-home.aspx>.

The construction of a 278-mile rail line running up to 110 trains a day would absolutely be devastating to the people, animals, communities and natural resources along the line. The decision of allowing the GLB to construct this giant railway would be a mistake that would be nearly impossible to undo. Decisions from more than a century ago forever changed the land; let's not make the same mistake again.

Sincerely,

Miranda & Richard Serletic

Miranda & Richard Serletic
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cc: Congressman Pete Visclosky

Senator Joe Donnelly

Senator Dan Coats

Senator Ed Charbonneau

Representative Ed Soliday

Representative Michael Aylesworth

Governor Mike Pence