

July 6, 2016

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FD 35952

Illinois is blessed with top grade food producing soil that ^{only few} ~~one~~ few patches in the World can match, South Ukraine, section of Argentina, along the China's Yellow River. We are also blessed with temperatures and rainfall conducive to agriculture.

It is through this prime agriculture area Great Lakes Basin Transportation LLC (GLB) plans, if granted Federal Surface transportation Board (STB) consent, to build and manage private toll train tracks.

The amount of soil that will be eternally destroyed and alter in 287 mile GLB with 200 feet easement is estimated 6,394 acres. Add the 15,000 acres Kankakee freight yard, the destroyed fertile land is 21,349 acres.

Not included in amount is the soil destroyed for the massive 47 plus overpasses: five interstate four land expressways, three large rivers, numerous minor rivers and drainage ditches, in Illinois 15 state highways, multitude county roads, 24 existing railroad lines. To achieve 1% grade overpass for high speed unit trains, GLB needs massive earthen dike long ramp extension destroying thousands of fertile acres.

Soil destruction continues. GLB future plans to increase tracks to five and six, construct high voltage transmission lines and gas and oil pipelines in easement. GLB, a hypothetical project, is a gigantic fertile land grab with Federal approval. Before natural non-replaceable natural resource, as prime soil is destroyed, a strong purpose is required. GLB cannot prove a need, ^{except} ~~except~~ to transport raw oil for the wealthy oil industry.

"Illinois Soil Among World's Most Fertile" states "Agriculture is Illinois most important industry. It is the cornerstone for state economy. Thanks to the glaciers, the prairie grass, this soil cannot be duplicated or created. No way to mitigate the loss when acres are converted to other uses. Development on best land" as GLB," ends in reliance on production on marginal land that requires chemical and greater risk for erosion."

What is the best use of non-replaceable World top soil? To grow food or to increase wealth for "non-disclosed" private investors?

We respect our prime grade soil. For years we use soil preservation practices: grass waterways, buffer strips, no till, strip till, vertical till, crop rotation. Minimal soil disturbance and compaction by cover crops. USDA does have a program, which we are part, that takes land out of production to prevent erosion, water quality, and protect wildlife. GLBT breaks all the rules of soil preservation.

Washington D.C is a far from the Ill. corn fields but we are real people, real families, we care about our land. To grant GLB to destroy this land, is a national shame.

Mary Quechettler

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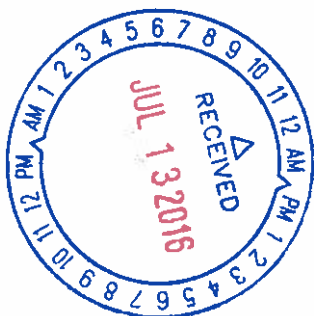
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Please send reply to letter, on your views.

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- sorry for corrections - do not own home computer is 80 year old.

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