

Surface Transportation Board
Office of Environmental Analysis
395 E. Street SW
Washington, DC 20423-0001

April 19, 2016

Dear Mr. Navecky:

I would like to express my concerns over the proposed Great Lakes Basin Transportation, LLC rail line project. Docket # 35952. I oppose the project and ask the Surface Transportation Board to deny the proposal. My concerns are:

We are land owners (farmers) in
Porter County, Hebron, IN and oppose this rail
line. This rail line divides our land into two
separate pieces of land, which will be land locked.

Please consider the attached article as comments from
us in opposition of this rail line.

See the attached.

Respectfully Submitted by Printed name Roger Clark Signature Roger Clark

Home 219-996-6333

Cell (ph#) 219-242-4377 Address 553 S. State Rd. 2, Hebron, IN 46341

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April 19, 2016

GUEST COMMENTARY

Consider land value in rail plan

Seeing the proposal for the new rail line through southern Porter County caused me to think deeply about the impact this proposal would have on local government. With my unique perspective as assessor-appraiser, I am naturally drawn to the impact this proposed rail line will have on assessed valuation in Porter County.

That being said, a proposed rail line in southern Porter County will have a negative impact upon the assessed valuation within the county. In other words, simply having the rail line run through southern Porter County will decrease the total assessed valuation for the county, thereby increasing the burden upon the remaining taxpayers, such as homeowners and small business owners. There are four reasons I believe this to be true.



JON
SNYDER

First, the property of the railroad itself is assessed by the Indiana Department of Local Government Finance — and not the local assessor. While advocating for the taxpayers in relation to the new Porter Regional Hospital, the state of Indiana attempted to direct an assessment of the facility at a value much less than its true market value.

Downstate lobbyists continue to convince the Legislature to take more control of your local assessor's duties. The state now assesses steel mills, local utilities and railroads. The assessor has no legitimate way to appeal the state's assessment of these facilities.

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Second, the personal property tax on railroads, including rail cars, inventory and engines, are captured by the Indiana Department of Revenue into the Commuter/Electric Rail Service Fund.

This money does not go to local government to pay for schools, police, fire and other necessary services. This money goes to pay for rail-related functions only, in a way similar to that of a tax increment finance district, in the sense that this revenue does not go to pay the costs of local government. Rather, a railroad's tax dollars pay only for the self-serving interests of the railroad itself.

Third, the imposition of the rail line in southern Porter County will have an adverse impact on the assessed value of surrounding properties. Prospective purchasers of real estate obviously will pay less for property adjacent to a noisy freight line. When property becomes worthless, its assessed valuation is less, and therefore it increases the tax burden on the remaining property owners.

Fourth, the rail line in southern Porter County will thwart development in the southern two quadrants of Porter County. Inhibiting development will devalue the assessed valuation of Porter County.

For these reasons, I am strongly opposed to the imposition of the rail line in southern Porter County. We have to plan responsibly for the future growth and development of our county, and this rail line is an obstacle to both progress and growth.

Jon Snyder is Porter County assessor. The opinions are the writer's.

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Attn: Dave Navecky-Docket No. FD35952

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Washington, DC 20423-0001

Dear Mr. Navecky:

I would like to express my concerns over the proposed East Lake Boar, Transportation, & C rail line project. Do Ket # 35952 of express the project and ask the Surface Transportation Board to deny the proposal.

(see page 1 of 2) attached

Roger Clark Roger Clark

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Cell " : 219-242-4377

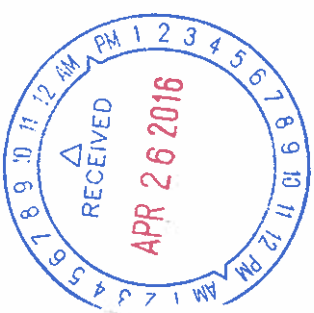
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