

October 29, 2016

Dave Navecky
Surface Transportation Board
Docket No. FdD35952
395 E. Street SW
Washington, DC 20423-0001

I am writing this after finding out that GLBR is trying to run a multiple track railroad a quarter mile from our neighborhood. I know I can't address how wrong it is for eminent domain to be used by a private for profit business, but I can voice how dangerous and harmful this would be for Winnebago County.

The safety of all the children in Winnebago schools is a concern because of all the crossings the buses would have to use. This is one of the largest school district areas in Illinois and a large portion of those students rely on buses to get to school. Not only is this a concern about safety but just getting to school with the amount of rail traffic these tracks could accommodate.

There are three major neighborhoods just by us that this would run by that would be greatly affected. Quality of life, lower property values, noise pollution and safety are just a few of our concerns. This area has many wetlands, creeks and marshlands that would be ruined with a railroad going through plus dangerous to put it on with a wet, shifting land that could move the tracks and cause derailments.

This area is made of many family farms that are the heartbeat of the community. So many would be ruined because of the tracks land locking, dividing farms and the stress the noise would put on all the animals, especially the dairy cows. These are our friend's and neighbor's livelihood, not just dots on a map with buildings. All three area hospitals are east of the proposed route, so emergency vehicles would have to cross at least one of multiple track crossings. Delays mean life or death and EMT's have voiced concern over this.

The biggest concern of mine is the route goes over one of the largest, shallow aquifers in Northern Illinois. This provides water for the entire area. Any possible accident/derailment of hazardous material would be catastrophic.

I believe in economic development, but this makes no sense in a route that harms so much valuable land, disrupts so many lives, affects so much wildlife and causes huge safety concerns. Please listen to our voices. This will negatively affect thousands of people, acres of land, sensitive environments and quality of life.

Thank you,



Melinda Thomas

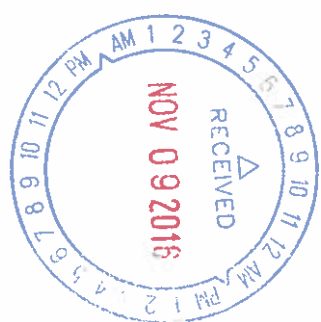
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