

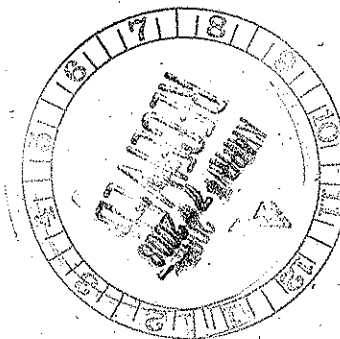
ILLINOIS TRAILS Conservancy



*connecting the state's
communities and countryside
and promoting the use of trails for
recreation and transportation*

March 31, 2008

Surface Transportation Board
395 E. Street S.W.
Washington, DC 20423-0001



RE: STB Finance Docket No. 35087

Dear Sirs;

Illinois Trails Conservancy Members Paul and Jean Mooring sent me a copy of the Comment Form that they filed with your agency regarding a public meeting for the Proposed Canadian National Railway Company Acquisition of the Elgin, Joliet and Eastern Railway Company and the affect it would have on the Illinois Prairie Path.

I am enclosing a copy of the Comment Form so that you will know what I am referring to when I tell you that the 236 members of Illinois Trails Conservancy totally endorse the comments that Jean submitted. Jean and Paul were instrumental in providing The Illinois Prairie Path for their neighbors and community. I have absolute confidence in the concerns that Jean has listed and hope that you will take them seriously.

Illinois Trails Conservancy was formerly the Illinois Chapter of Rails to Trails, an Organization that does fantastic work with railroads. I will send them a copy of this letter along with Jean's Comment Form and ask them to look into this also.

Thank you for giving serious consideration to this letter and the Comment Form that Jean submitted.

Sincerely,

Bev Moore, President & Acting Director

Cc: Kartik Srinivas @ Rails to Trails Conservancy - 1100 Seventeenth St. NW 10
Floor, Washington DC 20036

Surface Transportation Board
CN-EJ&E EIS - FD-35087

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Environmental Impact Statement



Scoping Comment for the Proposed Canadian
National Railway Company Acquisition of the
Elgin, Joliet and Eastern Railway Company
STB Finance Docket No. 35087

Comment Form

copy

How Do I Submit Comments?

- **Written Comments:** Complete and submit this form at the public open house scoping meeting, or follow the directions on the reverse side of this sheet to mail your comments.
- **Recorded Comments:** Provide your comments to a member of the project team or court reporter at this public open house scoping meeting, or call the toll-free project information line: 1-800-347-0689.
- **Electronic Comments:** Submit electronic comments by visiting the Surface Transportation Board's website, www.stb.dot.gov, under the heading "E-Filing."

Please refer to STB Finance Docket No. 35087 in all correspondence addressed to the Surface Transportation Board.
Comments must be submitted by February 1, 2008.

The Illinois Prairie Path is a sixty-two-mile-long National Recreation Trail located on the abandoned Chicago, Aurora and Elgin Railway (electric) right-of-way in Cook, DuPage and Kane Counties and is used for bicycling, hiking, jogging, skiing, horseback riding and nature study. Surveys indicate that there are over 300,000 user trips annually on the trail. It consists of a main stem that runs from Forest Park in Cook County to Wheaton in DuPage County where it splits into two branches, one going to Elgin and the other going to Aurora, both in Kane County. There is a spur from the Elgin Branch that goes to Geneva and one from the Aurora Branch that goes to Batavia. The EJ and E railroad crosses both branches and both spurs.

The proposed CN use of the EJ and E right-of-way would seriously impact this very popular recreational facility. The EJ and E crosses the Elgin Branch at grade south of Army Trail Road in Wayne. It crosses the Geneva Spur just west of Reed-Kepplar Park in West Chicago. Here there is a prize-winning bridge built by DuPage County DOT that carries the trail over the multitude of railroad tracks at this location. There are two more at-grade crossings, one on the Batavia Spur just north of Interstate I-88 and the other on the Aurora Branch west of Frontenac Road and south of Diehl Road.

All three at-grade crossings are at present dangerous but the infrequent use of the EJ and E makes the situation tolerable. The proposed extensive use of the railroad by dozens of CN freight trains every day would make our National Recreation Trail very unpleasant and extremely dangerous for our users. In addition our National Recreation Trail status might be in jeopardy. Therefore we feel that grade separations at all three of the at-grade crossings would be essential.

What scoping meeting did you attend? (Please circle): Mundelein, Barrington, Joliet, Matteson, Gary, West Chicago, Chicago.

YOUR INPUT IS IMPORTANT!

Comments provided by the public
help determine the scope of the
environmental review.

Name: E. Paul Mooring

Address: 295 Abbotsford Court
Glen Ellyn, IL 60137-4803

City, State, Zip: _____

Date: JANUARY 19, 2008

ILLINOIS TRAILS CONSERVANCY

APRIL 2008 TRAIL NEWS

IMPORTANT INFORMATION RE ILLINOIS TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM (ITEP)

- ITEP applications are available at www.dot.il.gov/opp/itep.html with a due date of **MAY 5, 2008**.
- FY 2008 FHWA National Scenic Byways Program Grants are due **April 11, 2008**. Contact FHWA Offices at <http://bywaysonline.org/program/bulletin/200802/> for more information.

NEWS FROM ITC MEMBERS IS HELPFUL, FUN & INFORMATIVE.

- **ITC received Trailblazer annual renewals of \$250.00 from Paul & Jean Mooring in Glen Ellyn, \$150.00 from William & Nancy Scheftner in Hinsdale, \$100.00 each from Jim & Pam Keeling in Rockford, Mark McCabe in Clarendon Hills, Mark & Patricia Tooren in Palatine, Geneva Belford in Mahomet, & John Wilson at Lan Oak Park District in Lansing. John Newberry from Seneca renewed from 2003. THANKS!!**
- **Marc Adami from Morrison sent Bev his new e-mail address. HAS YOUR ADDRESS CHANGED??**
- **Rennie Ballagh from Richmond sent Bev more information on U.S. Transportation Secretary Mary Peters... she is not a very enlightened person. He also volunteered to help with Long Prairie Trail Cleanup & Poker Run.**
- **Peter Botzek from Chicago sent Bev 3 more of his wonderful short stories I now have a list of 50 stories that I could share with you. Just let me know if you would like a copy of the list and I will mail one to you.**
- **Deborah Fagan from DuPage County Planning shared information about the status of Salt Creek Trail as well as dates for Trail Cleanups on Illinois Prairie Path & the Great Western Trail. VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED.**
- **Mike Incopero from Wheaton asked if the Salt Creek Trail was indeed open for 32 miles.**
- **Gordon James from Elgin e-mailed Bev that his address DID NOT change and renewed his membership.**
- **Sylvia Kellogg from Hinsdale sent minutes of the March BRATS meeting at the Wheaton Park District Community Ctr. And reminds us that the next meeting is April 8 at 7:30 p.m.**
- **Karl Kohlrus from Springfield shares information that the InterUrban Trail should be open the end of March. He also shared the good news of a wedding for Todd Hill, IDOT Bikeways Coordinator. BE HAPPY.**
- **Donna Kurtz from Crystal Lake who was in Colorado leading a Sierra Club cross county ski trip now has cabin fever back in Illinois. I think we are all ready to get out on a trail soon. WILL WINTER EVER END??**
- **David Maki from Elmhurst e-mailed Bev that he would meet at the BIKE SHOW in Rosemont. NO LUCK.**
- **Joe Pakovits from Western Springs e-mailed Bev that his address had not changed. COMPUTERS GOOF.**
- **Bonnie Pink from McHenry arrived back in Illinois from Florida and is waiting for winter to end. She is planning to help Bev out on several Earth Day Events and Trail Cleanups. VOLUNTEERS ARE SPECIAL.**
- **Mike Rucker in Peoria is waiting for information about a Side By Side Trail with Keller Branch Railroad..**
- **Don & Donna Shippy from Normal shared news of a Bike/Pedestrian Plan for Normal. PLANNING WORKS**
- **Al Sturges from Park Forest corrected Bev's reference to CBF as "Chicagoland Bicycle Federation".**
- **Greg Valent from Chicago has been attending public meetings on the Skokie Valley Trail Plan. He also encourages us to look to Inter-State Connections of Trails between Illinois & Indiana as well as Illinois & Wisconsin. He also rode his bike to the Bike Show in Rosemont and missed meeting up with Bev.**
- **Cathy Winslow from Galena postal mailed a copy of a newspaper article "City seeks grant for Meeker Street Bridge". Now is the time to send in an application for ITEP funds to replace a very old & ailing bridge.**

ITC BOARD MEMBERS ARE BUSY WORKING FOR YOU

- **George Burrier from Morton shared the minutes from the March Recreational Trails Advocates Meeting.**
- **Bob Hargis from Charleston attended the CCDC Dinner Meeting in Champaign. He agrees that Greg Luttrell would be a great candidate for ITC Board. Bob may be serving on the Planning Committee for Effingham.**
- **Ray Hoven from Gurnee agrees that Greg Luttrell would be an excellent candidate for the ITC Board.**
- **David Landeweer from Arlington Heights shared information about contacting RTC regarding a railbanking project for Wilmette. Citizens are in favor of the trail. ITC will help if we can. COOPERATIONS WORKS.**
- **Greg Luttrell from Granite City would assist with trail building in downstate Illinois as an ITC Board member.**
- **Keith Mistrik from Palatine planed Exhibit Space for Bev at the Bike Show which did not happen. SORRY.**
- **Bruce Perry from Port Byron attended a March 20 meeting regarding connections to the Hennepin Canal over the new Rock River bridge. ITC BOARD WORKS FOR TRAILS STATEWIDE**
- **John Wilson from Lan Oak Park District is working on a project to supply bikes for kids on Lansing Trails.**

ITC ACTIONS IN MARCH INCLUDE:

- **March 1** – Created, copied & distributed MARCH TRAIL NEWS to 236 ITC Members
- **March 1** - Received letter from US Senator Richard J. Durbin thanking Bev for information about the importance of funding for public transportation
- **March 1** - Contacted Tommy Greer at American Bike Trails regarding updating and adding links to our ITC web site. A copy of the ITC Annual Report is updated. **Also previous copies of TRAIL NEWS are there.**
- **March 4** - Received info from SAFERoadways re bussing students to schools when they should walk.
- **March 5** - Received info on Salt Creek Trail from Mary Ellen Weller from DuPage County Forest Preserve
- **March 6** - Jim Schlindler from Ohio has offered his services providing information about Trail Maintenance.
- **March 10** - Received information about Enhancement Applications at <http://www.dot.il.gov/opp/itep.html>
- **March 10** - Received information from Dick Westfall that the next Greenways & Trails Council meeting will be April 16, probably in Collinsville.
- **March 10** - Received notice of a Route 66 meeting in Pontiac on March 13.
- **March 13** - Received information from SAFERoadways re a need to educate elected leaders about how important it is to allow integrating bicycles with any roadway improvement or plan.
- **March 13** - Received info from Amy Madigan re a free Safe Routes to Schools Webinar @ www.americawalks.org/Content/10081/Webinar_Registration_Coaching_Action-Network.htm
- **March 14** - Asked LIB for some brochures "Guide to Municipal Bike/Ped Planning to share as needed.
- **March 20** - Bev mailed a letter to Governor Rod Blagojevich regarding the wonderful plan for a roadway overpass by McHenry Dept. of Transportation on the Rakow Road Project. **GOOD THINGS DO HAPPEN.** Bev met the Design Engineer Walter Dittrich, **who's father is ITC Member - Bob Dittrich. YEAH.**
- **March 22** - Bev clipped a newspaper article "Pec Path finally in line for \$4M improvements" **WOW**
- **March 28** - Bev mailed a letter to Rick Powell at IDOT regarding 3 roadway projects. One is in Ford County along Route I-57, one is in Kendall County on US34 and another in Livingston County on US 24. Bev always asks for wide shoulders on any roadway project or improvement.
- **March 28** - Received e-mail from Keith Sherman thanking Bev for comments on State Transportation Plan.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOU IN 2008:

- **April 6** - ENTICE Teacher Workshop on Illinois Fossils - Register @ <http://www.ilcf.org/Workshop/Courses.asp>
- **April 8** - BRATS MEETING - 7:30-9:00 AT Wheaton Park District Community Center Room 031
- **April 12** - LONG PRAIRIE TRAIL CLEANUP - MEET IN POPLAR GROVE AT 8:30 A.M.
- **April 12** - Clean-Up the Confluence along the Mississippi River. Contact Kevin @ kevinkeach@trailnet.org
- **April 19** - ENTICE Teacher Workshop on Illinois Frogs & Toads - See <http://www.ilcf.org/Workshop/Courses.asp>
- **April 17** - Earth Day in the Parks events sponsored by IDNR. See IDNR Web site for information.
- **April 18** - Deadline for submitting proposals for American Trails Symposium in Little Rock.
- **April 20** - Earth Day Celebration At Fullersburg Wood Forest Preserve in Oak Brook - Noon-4:00 p.m.
- **April 22** - Earth Day Fest in Galena - 8:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
- **April 24** - Earth Day Benefit for Conservation Foundation in Woodbridge Call 630-428-4500 Ext 10 for information.
- **April 26** - EARTH DAY at Boone County Conservation District - 1:00-4:00 p.m.
- **April 26** - ILLINOIS PRAIRIE PATH CLEAN UP. See www.ipp.org or call 630-752-0120 for information
- **April 26** - GREAT WESTERN TRAIL CLEANUP - E-mail Frndsgrtwstntrl@aol.com to help
- **May 17** - KID'S BIKE RODEO at DuPage County Forest Preserve at Herrick Lane FP. Call 630-871-6425 for Info.
- **May 24-26** - ST. JAMES FARM OPEN HOUSE in Warrenville
- **June 1** - UDDER CENTURY BIKE RIDE - See www.mchenrybicycleclub.org for information
- **June 15** - SWEDISH DAYS RIDE - Fox Valley Bike & Ski Club Register @ www.active.com before June 6.
- **June 15 - 21** - GITAP - Grand Illinois Trail and Parks Ride sponsored by LIB & IDNR. Ride begins & ends in Dixon.
- **July 26 & 27** - Chase the Moon Midnight Bike Ride. See www.chasethemoon.com for information.
- **August 16-23** - Lincoln Trail Bike Ride from Kentucky to Springfield, Illinois. Call Todd Volker at 815-431-1999.
- **August 23** - Party on the Path Fundraiser for Riverfront Trail in Belvidere - Building a Path to a Healthy Tomorrow
- **September 17** - CNT's 30 Anniversary Celebration @ Garfield Park Conservatory. Call 773-269-4029 for Info.
- **September 26** - Scientific Symposium on the state of Illinois' natural resources
- **September 27** - Natural History Survey Expo - Visit <http://www.inhs.uiuc.edu/150/index.html> for information.
- **November 15-18** - 2008 NATIONAL TRAILS SYMPOSIUM IN LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS. Theme is Innovative Trails: Transforming the American Way of Life. See www.AmericanTrails.org/2008 for information.

CONTACT ILLINOIS TRAILS CONSERVANCY at www.ILLTrails.com Contact Bev about anything mentioned in TRAIL NEWS. E-Mail her at ITCbebomoore@aol.com for info. Illinois Trails Conservancy is P.O. Box 10, Capron, IL. 61012. Cell phone is 815-289-1024.