

#19

Docket No. FD 35952

Environmental Comments

Attention: David Navecky, Phillis Johnson-Ball and Victoria Rutson

In a letter written to Great Lakes Basin Transportation's law firm, Venable, dated September 22, 2015 Victoria Rutson states that she was waiving the proposed rail line project out of the six-month prefilng notice. This prefilng notice is normally required for construction projects under 49 C. F. R. & 1105.10 (a)(1). What was the basis for this waiver?

This lack of transparency is very troubling for those of us who will be directly impacted by the construction of this rail project if it is approved. How can an Environmental Impact Statement be granted to Frank Patton before we know the facts about the purpose of the project? The lack of an application to proceed means that he has not had to certify that his statements are true because he this process was waived.

Ms Rutson is the director of the Office of Environmental Analysis so we want to know what she analyzed that led her to make the decision to waive this process. When requests were made by Freedom of Information and open records to see this information, the Surface Transportation Board (STB) said that no such relevant records existed. What does this mean? The waiver was given with absolutely no information? How could this happen?

We feel strongly that everyone, especially those of us directly impacted by this project, have a right to know what this project involves. This is an extremely serious concern on our part. We believe the process should cease going forward until such time as this information is made public.

Once again we have seen another very horrific train crash occur yesterday in Panhandle, Texas where two trains hit head on causing a huge explosion and fire. Frank Patton and Jim Wilson of GLBT have stated publically that the proposed rail line would carry hazardous materials and chemicals through the area at high speed, 70 mph or more over six rails with 110 trains per day. That many trains at that high rate of speed are a scenario that could result in disaster.

Until these questions are answered publicly and explained thoroughly we recommend this project be denied.

Respectfully,

Patricia Mussman, unincorporated West Creek Township

Lowell, Indiana