

P. O. Box 402
Sheridan, IL 60551
March 27, 2017

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

ATTN: Dave Navecky - Docket No. 35952

Dear Mr. Navecky:

The meeting on March 23, 2017, at the Kings School regarding the Great Lakes Basin Railroad presented a number of excellent reasons for NOT having the project some of which were the destruction of highly productive farmland and separation of farms which would put a hardship on farmers. Numerous parcels will be land locked, the length of school bus routes will be greatly lengthened, field tile will be crushed, wildlife and raptor sanctuaries will be destroyed, streams and the Fox River will be polluted, property value will be diminished, Indian burial grounds will be desecrated, CRP contracts will be broken, and unmapped coal mining tunnels will cause sink holes.

The above mentioned reasons affect one of the most important industries—farming on which our very lives exist. Destroy the farm land, and you destroy the future generations. Another important aspect to consider is that in Sheridan, Illinois, there is a 26 member volunteer fire department all of whom will need to be trained in hazardous material control and will need access to 135 square miles which will be physically impossible, especially with dead-end roads.

All of the afore mentioned reasons are very important, but the emotional trauma to the involved landowners has not been addressed. When/if a spill or derailment occurs, **evacuation of the town of Sheridan and especially the 2,900 inmates who currently reside in Sheridan Correctional Center will be impossible.** The figure of 42 buses will be needed, not to mention the time and staff needed, to move these inmates, and exactly where will they be moved? To date, the names of the investors are undisclosed. **Since inmates are wards of the State of Illinois, who will the families of the inmates sue if inmates become ill; or Lord forbid, die because of the logistics of evacuation, staff, time, or temporary housing? Who will be paying these claims? Everyone know that the State of Illinois is broke, and we taxpayers cannot assume this liability.**

Will the Great Lakes Basin Railroad pay these claims? Or will the Surface Transportation Board pay these claims? Please check with your attorneys!! As a taxpayer and land owner, I'd really like to hear from you on this issue.

Respectfully,



(Linda Zirzow)
Retired Educator
Sheridan Correctional Center
State of Illinois

Ms Linda Zirzow
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Attention: Ms. Dave Nareddy 20423-0001

