

October 21, 2016

Edward Specht
5255 Yale Bridge Rd.
Rockton, IL 61072

Dave Navecky
Surface Transportation Board
Docket No. FD 35952
395 E Street SW, Washington, DC 20423-0001

Surface Transportation Board,

This may fall on deaf ears or blind eyes however I must relate to you my story. My family has worked nearly 25 years to plant trees, bushes, native grasses as well as developing a pond for fish and wild life. We have seen a number of wetland fowl and mammals such as Sand Hill Cranes, King Fishers, Blue Heron, Canadian Geese, Otter, Coyotes, Fox, Turkeys, Pheasants and White Tail Deer.

On February 26, 2015 my wife, Anita, put what she thought was dead ashes into our garbage as it was collection day. Unfortunately, there was live coals in the ashes, and caught the garbage container and garage on fire. She tried to save the cars however was trapped in the garage after the fire caused the door to malfunction. She died in the fire as well as the house and everything in it was destroyed.

I have embarked on trying to put my life back together. At the present I am rebuilding on the property that was part of my wife's family farm and where our three sons grew up. Now GLB Railroad, a Private For Profit Corporation has the audacity to approach the Federal Government to attempt to acquire private lands with eminent domain. This train will be several hundred yards from my house. After removing many tracks and relinquishing railroad land they are trying now to sell the need for new tracks, rather than investing in existing infrastructure. They instead want to shove this track down our throats.

This proposed track would only present negatives for our community's safety, numerous road crossings, dead-end roads, response deterrent for emergency and fire vehicles, train derailments causing spills of hazardous or semi-hazardous materials, and the subsequent contamination of surface and ground water resources. The tracks traverse through substantial wetlands which the Federal Government has sworn to protect as well as the wildlife that use these lands as habitat.

There would be a significant loss of value and function to farmland cut off by the tracks. Some underlying and perhaps not so evident is the disruption of the farmland drainage. The value of homes, such as mine and many others, would diminish significantly. Sadly these declining values are not compensated as by Federal Law. The Federal Government pays only market value of properties they purchase via eminent domain.

I also object to the secrecy that has surrounded this proposed project by governmental and private parties. The first I heard about this proposal was this past month from a neighbor.

If allowed, this would be a tragedy! Tramping on citizen's rights in the name of wealthy investors profits and gains is unconscionable. Take a look at your dictionary and look up the definition of the word "Railroaded". I say 'DERAIL' GLB Railroad.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Edward Specht". The signature is fluid and extends to the right with a long horizontal stroke.

Edward Specht

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