

June 9, 2016

Mr. Dave Navecky
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street SW
Washington, DC 20423-0001

Dear Mr. Navecky:

Subject: Docket No. FD 35952

I am deeply concerned about the following issues:

- The potential for massive flooding around the perimeter of the 15,000 acre rail yard.
- Stream banks, drainage ditches and creeks will be altered, affecting flow of water during large rain events.
- The natural grade of the land will be altered disrupting the natural flow of surface water essentially creating artificial ponds and wetlands.
- Field tile lines will be crushed affecting subsoil drainage.
- Large areas of fields would be rendered useless for agriculture production due to increased flooding.
- Many township roads will be altered or closed affecting the response time of Volunteer First Responders.
- Who will be responsible for training the Volunteer First Responders on derailments and chemical spills?
- Concern for the long-term economic impact.
- Decreased values of houses and farm ground located where the rail line is proposed to go through.
- Small towns and their surrounding areas that are already struggling will see even more people leave due to their way of life being changed by the rail yard.
- Illinois has some of the most productive farm ground in the world that cannot be duplicated or replaced.
- The decreased production of grains, vegetables and livestock will be staggering, possibly leading to some farmers being forced out of business.
- Large derailments will tax all emergency services in many towns in the area.
- What affect will there be on wildlife including rabbits, pheasants, fish, wild turkey, deer, ducks, geese, crane, beaver and an occasional bald eagle?

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On a personal note, I am a seventy-three-year-old farmer and carpenter. I live on the home farm "Hamann Homestead" that has been owned and farmed by my family since 1891 (125 years). This farm and an additional 680 acres owned by my family are in the footprint of the 15,000 acre "rail yard." We also rent an additional 550 acres in the "rail yard." In addition to my home, my mother's, my brother's, my sister's, my daughter's, and my son's homes are in the "rail yard." I have built or remodeled every one of these homes. We have worked hard all of our lives to create what we have to pass down to future generations and are now faced with a massive land grab by private investors who want to take what we have worked seven generations to acquire for their personal gain. We do not object to progress. If the rail line is needed, we do not object to the 150 foot right of way, but the 15,000 acre rail yard is not fair to privately owned land owners and not needed when the world's largest rail yard is in operation in North Platte, Nebraska. Other rail lines are not on board for this private venture.

I sincerely hope you will consider my concerns and those of the many landowners affected by the "rail yard" and rail line. I also hope that the scope of the Environmental Impact Study associated with this project be as broad and stringent as possible to ensure the committee's decision will best serve our community and the other communities involved in this private endeavor.

Sincerely,

Larry D. Hamann
9781 N 8000E Road
Grant Park, IL60940
Sumner Township Trustee
Canavan Drainage District Commissioner
(Concerned Fifth Generation Farmer)

Larry Hamann
9781 N. 8000 E. Rd.
Grant Park, IL 60940

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