

The Bates Family Farm

Established in 1857



Above is all seven generations of the Bates Family

Roger & Judy Bates 5th Generation Farmers.

10794 Bates Road, Rockton, IL



6th generation Michael & Sue Bates

7271 Freeport Rd. Rockton, I.L

7th generation farmers, Michael, Kyle & Matthew

To whom it may concern,

Docket # 35952 1/17/17

At this point and time we are very concerned about the purposed Great Lakes Basin Railroad. We are very concerned what impact this train is going to have in our area of Winnebago County.

We farmers feed the world. As the world population increases, we wonder who is going to feed all those hungry mouths? We are, if we still have our land to farm. Farming is a difficult way of life. The soil has been in our blood for 7 generations. Family farms are small businesses that work to create a thriving community. Farms are the backbone of many small communities.

We believe that being a farmer, we are leaving the land in better shape than what they found it, increasing the chances for our next generation to enjoy bountiful harvests to feed the world. What better way to give back to your fellow man?

Let's not dissect and destroy family farms. This purposed route would slice through four of our farms, Six different roads could be closed that we use on a daily basis . . . Some fields are even land locked and impossible to work.

On a more personal note, we are extremely proud of our heritage. We take great pride in being part of the Ag industry. We are the only Sesquicentennial farm in Winnebago County, now 160 years in the same family-7 generations. We are so proud our 3 grandsons who are following in our ancestors foot steps and are farming on their own..

I would like to say one of our grandson is graduating from Iowa State College with a degree in Agriculture.

The Bates family is very rich in the history of Winnebago County and the Macktown Forest Preserve. This is where Henry Bates first started in 1835. Here he decided that he and his family would start their family farm. He would be our grandsons, great, great, great, great grandfather. Two books have been published telling about the Bates history.

In our spare time we visit other area family business, such as, William Family Tree Farm, Edwards Family Apple Orchard, the Copperstone Inn and The Pavilion. All these family business are visited often by city people, who come to the our countryside to enjoy our peace and quiet. Northern Winnebago County has the most concentrated areas for wildlife, including the Nygren Wet Lands, Severson Dells and many other parks, preserves and campgrounds. All of which we patronize.

All these wetlands, creeks and rivers could seriously be affected by any chemical releases that the train could carry. Our aquifer starts here and any spills would destroy our water table which is very close to the surface. .

Please consider these facts when making vital decisions about this railroad. You are welcome to the Bates family farm at any time. Please help keep our history alive and well. We don't want to lose our heritage that we've all worked many life-times to build.

Thank you for taking the time to read this,

Judy Bates

