

11/21/20116

Mr. Ken Blodgett
Surface Transportation Board
Docket # FD 35952
395 E Street SW
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001

Attn: Docket No. 35952

Subject: The purposed Great Lakes Basin Railroad new purposed route

Dear Mr. Blodgett,

As the Great Lakes Railroad Group (here after refereed to as GLB) has moved planed route from Boone County IL. To Winnebago county IL. We respectfully request that the comment period be reopened.

As I'm sure you are aware that the GLB headed by Mr. Frank Patton, chief executive officer and other unknown investors wish to provide a private for profit toll railway bypass around Chicago, IL. This railway would run between Laporte, IN and Milton, WI. effecting the lives and welfare of thousands of families in 11 counties within 3 states. My family included as the present planed route would pass within 2,000 feet of our residence.

Many of the adversities that effect my family as well as the families of all 3 states and in particular the 11 counties.

Environmental Concerns:

1. Damage to wet lands.
2. Changes to water run off.
3. Lighting pollution.
4. Noise pollution and property damage due to air born sound waves.
5. Damage to wells and ground water in general.
6. Increased standing water causing increased mosquito born illness.
7. Possible permanent damage to soil.
8. Effects on wildlife, fishing and hunting.
9. Harm to rivers, streams, and ponds.
10. Exhaust emissions from many trains with 2 to 4 locomotives each day.

Concern of impact on the agricultural industry in the effected areas:

1. Loss of 24 acres per mile caused by 200 foot right away.
2. The inability to access land, or increased time and operating cost taking longer routes due to road closures, or acreage bisected by the LB.
3. Adverse effects on irrigation systems.
4. Loss of income due to loss of land and production, reduced land values resulting in less tax dollars for communities, cities, state and the federal governments.
5. Damage to many government funded conservation programs protecting woodlands, rivers, streams, and soil.

Concerns for public Safety:

1. At grade road crossing for commuters with 70 MPH trains many per day.
2. Delays for medical attention, as well as fire and police protection.
3. Increased danger for school buses crossing GLB right of ways. **Buses that are carrying Americas greatest future assets.** It's not if but when a school bus accident will happen. Closed roads will result in higher cost for schools to operate buses and increase the students time on buses.
4. Derailments, fire, explosions, ground, air, and water contamination. As well as local governments ability respond to these hazards due to a lack of equipment or training.

Additional Information:

1. Reduced property and home values will result in reduced tax income to support schools, fire, police, parks, libraries, streets of all towns and cities effected by GLB route.
2. Should any one effected by the GLB wish to sell their property it will result in reduced value as well as difficulties selling, if you can sell at all.
3. The GLB is toll rail right away is a private for profit corporation that will benefit a few large investors. This right away would be used as through (likely non stop) way to bypass Chicago. The freight will be commodities such crude oil and or oil byproducts. This rail way **Will not provide passenger rail service of any type.** As a expedited route to move hazardous material the GLB will be no benefit to present or future industries along it's route.
4. Although the GLB is routed near a local airport it is of no value to the airport as it will not provide passenger service. It should all so be noted that the GLB is of no value to air freight as air freight moves in and out of airports via trucks. Rail freight service experiences to many delays to be able to provide value to industries requiring air freight.
5. The belief that if the GLB is approved by the Federal Surfaces Transportation Board it will provide jobs in the effected area. Well there are no guarantees here, more times than not work of this type is contract to companies such as the Railroad Construction Co. They may purchase some bed rock or hire a few truck drivers and heavy equipment operators, but it will not be boom to the local economy.
6. Should the GLB be granted the go ahead to build this rail right away not only will areas affected be burdened with hardships and financial losses, but could suffer additional insult should the GLB qualify for Federal Grants paid for with our tax dollars.
7. Six major railroads servicing the Chicago area have expressed no interest in using this bypass. And, are developing methods to eliminate commodity delays around Chicago.
8. It should be noted that Mr. Frank Patton and his investors have no prior railroad experience nor due they own any railroad equipment. They simply want provide tracks for railroads to use for a fee. It should be noted that normal right a ways are 150' wide, GLB is requesting 200' right away for a future pipe line (could be oil or natural gas) and utilities.
9. What happens after the start up or completion of the GLB, if they files bankruptcy who is burdened with all cost related damages of the environment, the roadways, farmland, or any other cost associated with a project such as this.

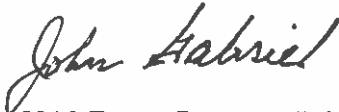
10. Use of eminent domain for private gain is wrong. And, could be used regardless of what GLB states resulting in a financial burden to farmers and home owners. Eminent domain will only allows payment at assessed value not market value.

As noted above are the major concerns that would effect our quality of life as well as the lives of many others. So with these thoughts in mind we respectfully request the comment period be reopened.

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Respectfully,

John Gabriel

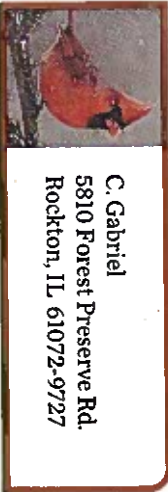


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