

8th June 2016

Peter M. Clarke
5520 West Indian Trail Road,
Verona, IL 60479

ATTN: Dave Navecky – Docket No. FD35952

Dear Mr. Navecky

I would like to express my concerns over the proposed Great Lake Basin Transportation, LLC rail line project. Docket # 35952. I oppose the project and ask the Surface Transportation Board to deny the proposal. I am writing as a private citizen and a supporter of our local farming community. I am also someone that would be directly affected by the Great Lakes Basin Railroad project, due to the close proximity of the route to my home. This project will prove harmful to our local communities and farms. It will most certainly have negative financial impacts to the property values and lifestyles of the regions close to or directly affected by the route. Farms, often held by generations of families, will become land locked which will create a loss of revenue for those who rely on farming for their livelihood. There will be significant loss of prime farmland, should this project proceed. The loss would not only be limited to the areas specifically taken for the track and easement, but also losses to drainage pattern, causing flooding of fields.

The past has shown that when eminent domain is enforced, financial settlements to property owners rarely reflect the true value of the land to the owners. I'm sure that settlements will not take into account decreased land value, the visual or noise and restricted use of the land due to that will be caused by such a high speed railroad.

I have some specific concerns that I wish to voice. Under the current plan, the road outside my house will be cut and closed allowing only a single route from my property out of the neighborhood. The road is barely wide enough for two cars to pass. There are only four houses on this road. I moved to the neighborhood five years ago to retire to the peace and quiet of the area and to escape the traffic of the larger towns. The current plan has the railroad cross the field in front of my house within several hundred yards.

My specific concerns are:

1. As the road will be closed will the snow still be able to be cleared as there is nowhere for the plow to turn around.
2. A similar concern is around garbage collection due to the same issue.
3. Again, for emergency services to have access.
4. The noise factor and frequency of the trains is a major factor as this will totally ruin the purpose for my move to this area.
5. The frequency of the trains, as indicated, will make getting around the neighborhood near impossible due to the number of crossings.

6. The presence of the railroad will totally destroy the value of my home, probably making it impossible to sell. This financially has a serious impact on my retirement. This also will seriously impact my lifestyle that I have worked to achieve all my life.
7. The damage that will be caused to the drainage system will pose a serious flood risk to my property.
8. The disruption to the area with both noise and construction will be unbearable. Our roads are small and some are not suited to major construction vehicles.
9. The environment damage that could be caused to the water supply and potential risk to my water supply. Will there be any monitoring of the water, both short and long term to ensure residents are safe?
10. There have been many recent derailments of these freight trains with resulting damage to the environment.
11. The current plan is for a single track, but with such a large easement, that leaves options for expansion. I'm sure this will be in GLB's mind as they will need to have trains running in both directions on a single track.
12. Finally I'm concerned that an investment company, with no experience in railroad building or operating, will be attempting such a large project. As this is a private project, if they fail to raise adequate funds to complete this project, I adamantly oppose the burden being placed on our taxpayers. I also strongly oppose the possible use of eminent domain for the benefit of a private enterprise, where property owners are going to be displaced, disadvantaged or suffer financial significant loss and lifestyle disruption and inconvenience, for the benefit of a private company.

Respectfully Submitted by PETER M. CLARKE

Signed



Phone Number: 630 926 2293 or 815 416 0207

Address: 5520 West Indian Trail Road
Verona
IL 60479



Mr. Peter Clarke
5520 W. Indian Trail Rd.
Verona, IL 60479

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VERONA, IL 60479



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



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