



To: Surface Transportation Board
395 E. Street SW
Washington, DC 20423-0001

Re: Proposed Great Lakes Basin Rail Line

From: Michael Sklavos
4403 N County Line Rd
Whitewater, Wisconsin 53190

To the members of the board, I would like to submit comments pertaining to the Great lakes Basin Rail Line EIS.

In our country (Rock, Wisconsin) many ideas are set forth for one reason or another. Some are good others are bad. The proposed rail line is a bad idea. I would like to express why the RR is a very bad idea for Rock County.

The area, proposed by the rail line, is a pristine rural setting with extensive development in agriculture, rural homes and scattered with small communities. Some of the best cropland lies here and it has taken years to develop these fields into productive areas. They area is a showcase for agriculture and is steeped with beauty and serenity, it is a really beautiful, clean and robust area of farming and families.

The area is used as a flyway for waterfowl that have historically and still do use the Rock Prairie area in their spring and fall migrations. The rail would surely cause disruptions in their migrations, not to mention the pollution that would ensue from this project. There would be odor from trains from several facets of its operation and much noise, that is not presently here nor wanted to any degree in the future.

Residents in this part of Rock County live and have developed an agricultural and rural environment and a proposed rail line is not in the best interest of the residents, wildlife and ambiance cultivated in this area. Simply put, we as residents didn't ask for this and we are in strong opposition of this project would permanently destroy our area and everything we like about it!

As a resident what I see coming from this project: Pollution, pollution and more pollution from smoke, noise, unsightly trains running through our natural landscape (where they have no business). The potential of spills would be greater than now since there is not chance presently because there is not railroad. This

area would be ruined permanently with pollution spills which are inevitable. As much as one would like to think things can be cleaned, they really can't because the scar caused by such a abhorrent event is far reaching and things can not be like the were...ever. The rail cannot, ever guarantee safety. Accidents happen.

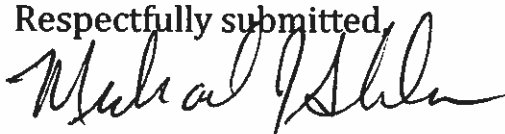
This project also encourages spur line development, which would further degrade this area and environment cultivating more negative implications to any area a spur moves into. Any of these spurs would grossly exacerbate this cancer in our county. Fragmentation of lands would occur that have been held by family members for generations. People living in peace and quiet would suddenly be catapulted into a life with noise, offensive odor, and the ugly scar that it would put on our land. This rail line would totally disrupt the area changing it forever to a noisy dirty area and the rural/agricultural ambience would forever be destroyed. Neighbors once able to wave at each other while in their fields would suddenly be met with the iron horse, ugly, noisy, smelly and turn the area into a permanent dump.

Already two rail companies said they wouldn't use the line and have no need for it. Chicago has a plan in place that has taken some of the burden off the area and expects to ease the time of transit through the area by the time the project is completed. Much of this will negate the need for any further rail development.

The residents of our county want this rail project stopped in the area proposed. We don't want this railroad cutting trough our county and encourage each member of this board to deny any efforts an going forward. Stop this unwanted cancerous railroad project.

Further, this project is for private financial gain. This is nothing that deserves Eminent Domain privilege. These investors have no interest in the area other than to further their financial gain at the expense of the many, many residents of the county that have been and have an intense desire to continue to live their lives without the intervention of big capitol only wishing profit at the expense of our beautiful county countryside and rural lifestyle.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael J. Sklavos", written over the typed name.

Michael J. Sklavos

Mike Sklavos
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