

EI-25137



Docket#FD 35952

RYAN ROTZIEN

to:

david.navecky@stb.dot.gov

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From: RYAN ROTZIEN <firehelmet05@yahoo.com>

To: "david.navecky@stb.dot.gov" <david.navecky@stb.dot.gov>

Please respond to RYAN ROTZIEN <firehelmet05@yahoo.com>

Dear Mr Navecky,

My name is Ryan Rotzien and i reside at 8451 W US HWY 6 in Westville Indiana.

i inherited our farm from my great uncle who was my grandmothers brother. our family farm means so much to myself and the rest of our family.

i am writing you in opposition to the great lakes basin railway project from many different views. first as a farmer and landowner, secondly as an emergency responder in this county, and thirdly as a lifelong resident of Westville.

first as a farmer this project will without a doubt engulf and destroy very many acres of prime farmland along its route which will be FOREVER taken out of production. this is very important as land is no longer made. secondly as a landowner i am worried for my farm in particular being split into two parcels and not having access to over 2/3 of my tillable ground. thirdly a portion of our farm could be considered erodible but through many years of no till farming and conservation minded drainage practices it is in very good shape. i have no idea with the lay of the land how portions of the farm will ever drain properly without impeding water onto other property owners or vise versa with the rail line in its current route. as far as moving our grain this rail line will have no affect on the way we do this as no farmers in this county would even be able to afford to put in any kind of spur as mentioned in previous articles..

Not only am i a farmer but i also am a full time EMT for Laporte County Emergency Medical Services, and a Captain on the Westville Volunteer Fire Department entering my 15th year of service. most of our main roads in this county will be affected by this rail line and even though it has been mentioned that the lines will travel over most roads there is still numerous concerns from an emergency stand point as bridges are often a common setting for motor vehicle crashes in particular. Most of our rural county is very easy to travel however this rail line will be crossing very many rural roads and even closing some of them which will lead to longer response times to sick and injured citizens of our county as well as anyone traveling through or county. from a Fire Dept. standpoint my concerns are more leaning toward the hazardous materials in which will be hauled in close proximity to homes and even whole towns in our county. crude oil in particular is very volatile and dangerous and for some reason seem to be hauled more and more by rail. this poses a very large threat to the people of this county and our greatest natural resources such as Lake Michigan, Trail Creek, the Little Calumet River, and the Grand Kankakee Marsh and River Basin. another concern is that the fire departments in this county, including my own are not even close to being equipped enough to handle these large scale explosions crude oil crashes are noted for which would come at an expense to the tax payer to provide.

lastly, as a life long resident of Westville i am concerned for my town as well. this is a very beautiful, peaceful little town in which the rail line travels right through the heart of all future development and growth for the town and basicay surrounds the town with rail lines on multiple sides. and places very dangerous crude oil trains as well as other hazardous materials right through the heart of town.

In conclusion i will add that my family was moved to our farm in the late 1940's after they were relocated via eminent domain when beatty memorial mental hospital was built. our family was removed from better quality ground than we are currently on now and a smaller parcel as well. this we believe is not right and should not be allowed to happen. thank you for your time and i pray your board will make the right decision.

Sincerely, Ryan Rotzien