



CHICAGO BOTANIC GARDEN

May 5, 2016

Mr. Dave Navecky  
Surface Transportation Board  
Docket No. FP 35952  
395 E Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20423

Dear Mr. Navecky:

I am writing to express concern over the proposed construction and operation of a 278-mile bypass of the Chicago metropolitan region by the Great Lakes Basin Rail Line. It is my understanding that the Surface Transportation Board's Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA) is currently preparing an Environmental Impact Statement to analyze the potential environmental impacts of the proposed rail line.

The Chicago Botanic Garden, a charter member of the Chicago Wilderness coalition, shares the concerns of our colleagues that this project has the potential to degrade or destroy significant natural resources in the construction area, including two of Chicago Wilderness' Priority Species, the mottled sculpin and ellipse mussel. We request that the OEA evaluate other reasonable alternatives that will cause less damage to meet its purpose and need. As part of this process, we urge the OEA to consider measures to best understand and protect the natural resources that would be impacted by this project.

Thank for your consideration of this request. If you should have any questions please contact me via email at [ghotaling@chicagobotanic.org](mailto:ghotaling@chicagobotanic.org) or by phone at 847-835-6876.

Sincerely,

Ginny Hotaling  
Vice President, Government Affairs



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