

May 7, 20016

ATTN: Dave Navecky -Docket No. FD35952
Surface Transportation Board
Office of Environmental Analysis
395 E. Street SW
Washington, DC 20423-0001

Dear Mr. Navecky:

I understand you are gathering input from community residents on their thought regarding the proposed Great Lakes Basin Transportation, LLC rail line project, Docket # 35952. I want to be very clear, I whole heartily I oppose the project and ask the Surface Transportation Board to deny the proposal.

My concerns:

1. **Safety:** The proposed route cuts Boone County in half, leaving those on the east side of the tracks at risk. With a proposed 110 trains a day, that's every 13 minutes. The chance of responders being stopped not just once, but twice is very likely. What about the commuter traffic? "Beating the train" could be an issue, I live out near Marengo Road and Grange Hall Rd, where there is a 4-way stop, it's common place for those traveling Marengo Road to fail to stop. I also have concerns with its close proximity to Capron School and the farm traffic. Currently farmers are able to go from field to field, decreasing their need to travel on the roads as this is a potential hazard to the farmer, their equipment and regular road traffic. With the tracks, they will have to use the roadways more often creating a bigger risk for all factors mentioned.
2. **Financial Loss:** Boone County offers some of the richest farmland in the state. Reducing tillable acres is a loss of revenue to Boone County in real estate taxes, (estimated at \$484,000.00 per year). Once the farmland is gone, there is no replacing it. I understand each mile of track will result in 24 acres of lost land, not to mention the land lost to compaction during construction or flooding after construction due to altered natural water flow and crushed field tile. What if, or should I say what happens when there is a spill? Proposing to transport a variety of toxic materials would mean when a spill occurs, much more land will be damaged than is originally taken. Loss of crops means loss of income, which means loss of taxable dollars. There are other financial losses to

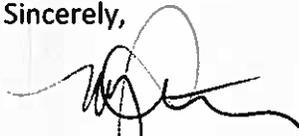
consider. Loss of home values, means loss of property tax. My home is close enough that what drew me to the area, a quiet rural setting will now be disrupted 110 times a day with the sound and rumble of trains which will most certainly affect my value. Loss of jobs for our over-the-road truckers. The idea is to move product by rail instead of truck. Trucks are driven by individuals, when they no longer have product to move what will they do for jobs? They pay taxes on their earnings and purchase fuel that provides taxes to fund our roads. Truckers replace tires and have their rigs services creating more jobs and tax revenue. Boone County has become a bedroom community to those working in Chicago and suburbs, this route will impact EVERY non-tollway commute. The increase time to travel due to train traffic may cause some to reconsider the move. The train could easily add another 15-20 minutes to their commute each way and has demand decreased, property values fall and that results in financial loss to the homeowner and to the taxing city/county. The financial losses are staggering!

3. Environmental: Boone County is home to a large aquifer which is wonderful considering so many rural homes have wells, including myself even though I am in a neighborhood. What impact will the train have on this precious water supply? What if there is a spill? What if there is an accident or derailment? Water or lack of water can be huge impact, just ask California or Flint Michigan. Wildlife is abundant, home to deer, eagles, hawks, fish and fowl. What impact would the train have on those species and many others? I have a friend who lives on Fruit Farm Road which is very near the proposed tracks and she said bird watchers are always coming out there to see the snowy white owl, not endangered but not prolific either. It's sad to think all these creatures may be without a home. Our wetlands, rivers and streams, springs and wells, they rely on a tenuous eco structure, what will the train do to them?
4. Loss of a way of life: Boone County is rural, farmland. Some of the families living there go back well over 100 years. Is it right to take their land? To take their heritage? To disrupt their farming, ranching or livestock practices? Disrupt, forever changing another's right for the peace, solitude and enjoyment of nature they currently hold. How is it right to take that from anyone? We have plenty of abandoned rail road tracks, if a train must be built (which I don't see where it is necessary) then shouldn't we try to leave the rural as is and route it through the urban developed areas or utilized abandoned tracks?
5. Imminent Domain for Private Gain: Frank Patton's Great Lakes Basin Transportation, LLC is a private company seeking eminent domain. If this request is granted, what precedent does it set? How is one man's dream more valuable than another's? How would it be right to grant him this access at the cost of hundreds of others rights to their OWN land. The very thought seems unbelievable and frankly un-American.

6. Lifelong repair and maintenance: If the rail is not as successful as Mr. Patton believes and it is not a viable long term company who will maintain the tracks? Who will insure it does not fall into disrepair. If there is a spill and he files for bankruptcy who will be responsible for the EPA cleanup and law suits? It is my understanding that he hopes to seek the funds from the government, what happens if he can't repay that loan? What happens if he sells the company to a foreign company? Should any project that utilized government funding and eminent domain have the potential to become a holding of a foreign country?

In closing Mr. Navecky, I implore you to deny the request of Mr. Patton! If you feel you must go forward, I beseech you to demand a full environmental impact study and some assurances that funds are available to insure the project is maintained for at least 100 years. This doesn't seem excessive since we are talking about the largest train project in over 100 years. They say only Superman can stop a train, but Mr. Navecky I'm praying that the STB can too!

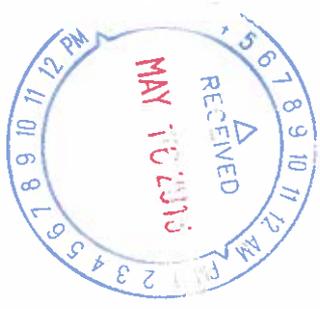
Sincerely,



N. Yvonne Peterson

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