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Dave Navecky

Docket No. FD 35952
Environmental Comments

Because there are already existing rail lines and abandoned rail lines located in Wisconsin, Illinois and Indiana that parallel the proposed Great Lakes Basin Rail Line there appears to be no sound reason for a new rail line to be built. Building this new rail line would destroy thousands of acres of highly productive farmland harming the economies of these rural areas. It would create serious environmental problems for the ecology, flora, fauna and aquifer.

Trains carrying hazardous chemicals, waste, crude oil and other hazardous materials are not inspected properly at this time. Many of these tanker cars leak or are not constructed to stay intact when involved in collisions. This poses catastrophic possibilities in case of a derailment. Rail cars that are stored at rail yard facilities that leak poison the ground under them. This in turn leaches into the soil where it reaches field tiles that carry excess water and moisture on a path to rivers, streams and creeks. All of this contributes to contamination of water sources such as ground water wells and river water that in the case of the Kankakee River, provides drinking water to the cities, towns and villages that border the river.

Water is our most valuable resource and if it becomes contaminated wildlife that lives in these areas will die. Those animals, birds and marine life don't have access to bottled water.

The economies of the rural communities this proposed rail line will traverse depend in large part upon agriculture. The loss of sixteen thousand (16,000) acres of highly productive farmland in Kankakee County alone would be crippling and for what purpose? A rail line that has no rail companies that want to lease it. Frank Patton owns no rail cars, no locomotives and has no experience running or operating a railroad so why does he want to build this rail line? The other rail companies have spent millions of dollars upgrading their own lines and making them more efficient. They don't need this new rail line.

For these and numerous other reasons we are asking the Surface Transportation Board to deny this project.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Patricia Mussman
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