

April 11, 2016

Surface Transportation Board, Docket No. FD 35952

Mr. David Navecky,

I would like to take a moment of your time to address the proposed plan of Great Lakes Transportation Inc. to build a railway directly through the middle of the magnificent natural resource, the soil of Rock Prairie, in Rock County, Wisconsin. This soil is considered some of the richest soil in the country. It has a long history of being the most productive food producing land, due to its incredibly perfect mix of elements. Sadly though, Great Lakes Transportation representatives are blind to this valuable resource, and call it "vacant land".

I am not a farmer, but I am a third generation owner of a home on this magnificent Rock Prairie soil.. I have incredible respect for the hard-working farmers who have cared for this land for decades. The impact this proposed railway would have on the land and our way of life would be devastating. The railroad would permanently take out 24 acres of prime soil per mile FOREVER. This is PERMANENT DESTRUCTION of an extremely valuable resource. In addition, the soil on either side of the railway would be compacted irreparably by construction equipment. And who knows what GLT has in mind for future expansion. Once this land is gone, it is gone forever.

Furthermore, the noise level of these nearly constant trains would cause severe stress issues with livestock and milk production would decrease greatly. In fact, livestock of all kinds would be disrupted not only by noise, but by broken, disjointed pastures, and the inability of farmers to get to their fields. People's homes and barns would literally shake with vibration from this proposed railway. The value of our property will also go down. Rock County would LOSE tax dollars as well, as railroads do not pay taxes. The people that live here love this rural way of life. We are not just expendable non-entities.

This railway would also bring many safety issues. These trains will be constantly disruptive to normal traffic flow, and emergency response times could be increased greatly. There is absolutely NO benefit to Rock County by having this railway plow through here. Not one good thing.

Please, I urge you to consider denying access to GLT. We are a valuable rural ecosystem that functions beautifully, as it is. It is an incredible natural resource that, once gone, can never, EVER be used again. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Barbara M. Ford

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