



Lake County Soil & Water Conservation District

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April 14, 2016

The Lake County Soil and Water Conservation District is opposed to the proposed Great Lakes Basin rail line for the following reasons:

The impact on current land use with smaller fields; this will lead to increased compaction of the soil due to shorter rows and the need to turn around more with point rows.

Who will maintain the unused portion of the 200 foot wide easement; this could be the breeding ground for invasive species plants and should not become the financial burden on the farmer. These easements could also lead to an increase use of non-selective herbicides and increased risk to wildlife and water sources.

The impact on agricultural activities (Biological Resources) Damage to existing field tiles and cutting off these lines reducing the health of the soil due to standing water and or poor drainage. Most of our farmers affected by this rail line are good stewards of the land and practice good conservation techniques.

Water Resources will be affected because of the loss of the natural grade of the land, altered natural water flows that conservation efforts have been working to preserve since the dust bowl days. The potential for groundwater contamination due to spills and or derailments.

(Geology and Soils) this project risks permanent damage to surrounding soil with the transportation of oil, chemicals and other environmental hazards and disturbing 24 acres of mostly prime farmland, per mile of track. Farmland should be considered an endangered natural resource. The compaction of these valuable soils during construction, defeats the many conservation efforts that responsible property owners have implemented to preserve and protect our most valuable resources both soil and water.

The Social Economic damage that 24 acres per mile for the railroad taken out of production FOREVER, causing loss of farm income for current and future farm owners. 6000 plus acres of land that could feed the growing population, absorb water, and provide the farmer with income to reinvest in protecting this nonrenewable resource.

For these reasons the Lake County Soil and Water Conservation District Board of directors and Associates are opposed to this project. We must protect our nonrenewable valuable life sustaining resources of Soil and Water for the future of this area.

Yours in Conservation,

Brian Wietbrock

Kevin Garling Lyle Patchett Brian Wietbrock Donna Molchan Kim Peterson
Chairman Vice Chairman Secretary Member Member

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