

Surface Transportation Board
Attn: Dave Navecky (Docket #35952)
Office of Environmental Analysis
395 E Street, SW
Washington, DC 20423-0001

April 18, 2016

Dear Mr. Navecky:

We would like to voice our opposition to the proposed Great Lakes Basin Railroad. This project would be absolutely devastating to prime farmland and natural conservancy in our community and others in the Indiana, Illinois and Wisconsin area.

I was born and raised on a farm in Spring Township, Boone County, Illinois, and my husband and I have been Spring Township property owners for 33 years. The negative impact this project would have on our county land is immeasurable. Spring Township is named from the number of natural springs, high water table and wetlands native to the vicinity along with the rare rich, black drummer soil that comprises our neighborhood farms. To slash up this valuable asset with rail lines is unconscionable. The negative economic and ecological impact would be irreversible.

Some of the detrimental impact would include:

- our neighbors' farm buildings would be cut off from their farmland
- small rural roads used to move farm equipment would be closed
- the creation of traffic congestion at railway crossings on major roads such as Genoa Road (which is THE main north/south road in southern Boone County and heavily traveled for people commuting to work and school)
- changes to the abundance of flora and fauna in the area; we have several protected wetlands
- misuse of some of the best crop soil in the world, drummer soil is vital to corn and soybean production

Each spring we look forward to the sweet sound of the red-winged blackbirds nesting in the cattails and frogs hatching in the creek nearby. We urge the Surface Transportation Board to hear our economic and ecological concerns and deny this misuse of prime farmland.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William Boughton / Katie Boughton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

William and Katie Boughton
8505 Huber Road
Belvidere, IL 61008



Ms. Katie Boughton
8505 Huber Rd
Belvidere, IL 61008

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