

E1- 22595

Belvidere Scoping Mtg
4-19-16

I am writing to the Surface Transportation Board to urge you to stop Great Lakes Basin Railroad. I am 40 years of age and just built my home 5 years ago on one of my family farms. That has been in my family for over 100 years. It has one of the best views in the county and it is so peaceful. Which would all be gone if this train goes through. The train would be a few hundred yards off my house. The noise and vibration would be absolutely devastating. The view of the train every hour or much more would make it not worth living here anymore. The value of my home would plummet. Which may put me under water on my mortgage. All kinds of wild life bed down in the tree lines and waterways that the train would go right through. The land in Boone County has the best soil for growing food in the world! There is not much Mollisols in the world. The USDA has satellite images of the planet and it shows where the best soil is for growing food and some of that is right here in Boone County. USA and Russia have the most. Very little in South America and that's about it. That is why farmland is so important and precious in Boone County. Maps can be seen at <http://www.cals.uidaho.edu/soil/i/mollisols.jpg>. My family just had IDOT I90 put eminent domain on some of that precious land and had to give up 22 acres just so that they did not have to rebuild a bridge. But that was for the public use not PRIVATE use. Great Lakes Basin Railroad is a private firm seeking to use eminent domain for private gain. Allowing this is not acceptable. Union Pacific Railroad has already publicly stated this proposed new rail line is unneeded. Great Lakes Basin does not even own a single train engine or train car. They are simply a developer seeking to build something other railroad companies say is unnecessary. If the project was to move forward, Rivers will be impacted by new bridge construction. The resulting pollution from the construction of the bridges and the daily train traffic would kill wild life. Not to mention the destruction of riverbanks. Streams seasonal and permanent will be blocked by the tracks, resulting in marshlands and stagnant water, breeding ground for mosquitoes and the norovirus. The black sandshell mussel lives in many of the rivers and stream that this train would travel over. And is endangered specie of mussel. Facts can be seen at www.inhs.illinois.edu. Personally I do not see the socioeconomic value of destroying 6700 acres of farmland, pulling millions of dollars out of peoples pockets and destroy natural wildlife refuge. So a (for profit) private company can move freight faster around the south side of Chicago. Just looking at 6700 acres x 150 bushel of corn per acre = 1,005,000 bushels of corn in lost production. And that bushel per acre is on the low side. With corn at \$3.50 per bushel this project would pull 3,517,500.00 out of the affected farm economy per year. Corn at \$7.00 would pull twice that amount out of the affected farm economy. Abuse is what Great Lakes Basin Railroad, which is not a railroad seeks to deliver to the residents of the affected areas. No family should be subjected to the proposed 20 to 100 trains per day running through their back yards and farm fields. No town no matter how small should be forced to have the constant drone of the train. Great lakes Basin Railroad plans to Abuse these towns, home owners an farmland by running one train every hour, half hour, may be one every 13 minutes along its line. More if demand increases. The sheer volume of noise from trains running at 70 miles per hour is unimaginable. Just think if it was your home, house, or farmland destroyed. So I am urging you to save rural Illinois by stopping Great Lakes Basins railroad proposed rail line. Giving Great Lakes Basin, railroad status just gives them the right to use eminent domain.

Sincerely,
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