



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**Office of the Secretary
of Transportation**

1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington DC 20590

May 16, 2016

Mr. Scott Nystrom
Mrs. Amy Nystrom
Nystrom's Nursery, Inc.
4910 Stone Quarry Road
Belvedere, IL 61008

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Nystrom:

Thank you for your letters to Secretary Anthony Foxx regarding a proposed railroad route.

The issue you describe falls under the jurisdiction of the Surface Transportation Board, which became an independent Agency in December 2015 and is no longer administratively aligned with the U.S. Department of Transportation. The Surface Transportation Board may be able to assist you, so I have forwarded your letters to that office for further review.

I hope that you find this information helpful.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Carol Darr".

Carol Darr
Director, Office of the Executive Secretariat

cc: Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW
Washington, DC 20423

From: Nystroms Nursery
To: Anthony Foxx (OST)
Cc: rutsonv@stb.dot.gov; Phillis Johnson-Ball; david.navecky@stb.dot.gov; adam.assenza@stb.dot.gov; rpw@zimwalsh.com
Subject: Vital information regarding GLBR enviromental impact.
Date: Tuesday, April 26, 2016 2:57:16 PM

To all that this concerns,

My name is Scott Nystrom. My wife and I own the farm on the South/East corner of Winnebago County in Illinois. When a local farmer notified us of a railroad potentially impacting our farm on Wednesday 4/13/16, we looked up the route and were shocked that someone would think they could violate us in such a way. After hours of research and contacting numerous bodies of government, we uncovered vital information. Frank Patton and Jim Wilson of GLBR filed an updated narrative route with the Office of Environmental Analysis/ Surface Transportation Board on 3/7/16. In **DETAIL**, the letter explains routes the train will follow, and why alternate routes were not preferred. Our farm is located at MP 186-188 on Frank and Jim's detailed description. Frank and Jim list MP 180-190 as one large section. Here is the exact information they put for why alternative routes were not chosen for this section. "Several impediments preclude this alternative, including adjacent wetlands and hunting areas, and a gradient issue on the Illinois-Wisconsin border."

INSTEAD, they chose a route for MP 186-188, that land locks our entire farm. The route also closes off our road. As you can see from the picture attached, which came directly off of the GLBR website, this route indeed goes directly through wetlands and prime hunting areas. To be more descript, the planned route goes first, through hundreds of thousands of dollars of established nursery tree stock. Then, it crosses land in a CRP program to prevent erosion. Then, it goes through acres of wooded areas which are also prime hunting grounds. Then, it not only crosses wetlands, but it crosses the South branch of the Kishwaukee River. This area has a volatile 990 foot flood plain that continues to grow due to development in neighboring counties.

Frank and Jim's detailed environmental interface for this route states exactly this, " The route goes through greenfield farmland and passes some residences and farmsteads. NO WETLANDS, WOODED AREAS, OR WATERWAYS would be affected by this segment. Again, they state for the image attached below, from their website, that in this segment no wetlands, wooded areas, or waterways would be affected.

We feel that you, the Surface Transportation Board, have an obligation to immediately stop this project! It is not possible to conduct an accurate environment study, when the GLBR gives false information regarding the environmental impact of the routes. We feel with this vital information, if you choose to license the GLBR to run a multi-track, Class 1 railroad, hauling toxic material/oil/fertilizer etc., you the Surface Transportation Board, will be equally as liable for the catastrophic environmental impact this will have, and the hundreds of thousands of lives this will negatively impact. The GLBR lacks leadership, and needs to be held accountable for the false information given to you, the Surface Transportation Board. They lied to us, they lied to you, and they have no credibility. There is no excuse, in a project of this caliber, that any information can be "overlooked". If mistakes like this are happening in phase 1 of this project, as vital as this is, there can be NO phase 2! We trust you will look at all of the information and make the right decision- NO!

Scott Nystrom
Nystroms Nursery, Inc.
4910 Stone Quarry Rd.
Belvidere, IL 61008
815-547-1000 office
www.nystromsnursery.com

From: Amy Nystrom
To: Anthony Foxx (OST)
Subject: GLBR Note to President Obama
Date: Thursday, April 28, 2016 11:48:52 AM

Hi Anthony,

My name is Amy Nystrom. I know my husband has already written you regarding the Great Lakes Basin Railroad, that has plans to run a multi-track Class 1 railroad right through the heart of the Midwest. I am contacting you in hopes that you will read this, and forward it to Mr. Obama. We risked everything 13 years ago to buy a 110 acre farm in southern Winnebago County, in Illinois. Our dream was to one day build a home, a legacy for our children. My husband started with nothing. He did not even graduate from high school. Later, he went on to get his GED. He is very motivated, and works very hard to sustain the dream that we have built. He has his own small business, Nystrom's Nursery, Inc. He employs about 10 people. He pays them well and treats them well. He farms and raises cattle. I am a nurse in the operating room at a local Level 1 Trauma Center. My husband built our dream home on our farm 3 years ago. He, his brother, and one other friend built it by hand. It took a year of dedication and hard work. While building the house, he still ran his company and farmed. We look at America as a great place! We are so lucky to live here. The land of opportunity and freedom. Here, in America, with hard work and dedication you can achieve ANYTHING! My husband is living proof of that. We have an American flag that we hang proudly in front of our house. Every time we drive down our driveway, we are reminded of great America is. Only in America can dreams, like this farm, come true.

On April 13, 2016, just a couple weeks ago we received devastating news. A private, start-up company has a multi-track Class 1 railroad right through our home, our land. When we pulled up the picture, you can not even imagine how violated and devastated we felt. How, how in America can a private company of 2 men, think they can destroy the lives of hundreds of thousands of Americans. Hundreds of thousands of American farmers- the MOST PRECIOUS BUSINESS MEN AND WOMEN IN AMERICA. The people that feed them. This company, Frank Patton and Jim Wilson were quoted in the local paper as saying they will take the land needed by eminent domain. EMINANT DOMAIN- 2 of the most Un-American, selfish words in the legal dictionary. A private company wanting eminent domain to destroy all the farmland, homes and legacy's in it's path. There is no public need for this railroad. It is to haul toxic chemicals, oils and other materials. The environmental impact would be catastrophic if this was ever allowed to go through.

What I am asking is this, I know Abraham Lincoln never intended, when he wrote the Constitution, for eminent domain to be thrown around like this. Farmers feed the world. Life is not sustainable without farmers. Business people and the government should never look at open farm land as opportunity. One of the main reasons we chose to invest our lives in farming was Opra. I remember her saying specifically, farmland is the best investment- God isn't making any more of it. Farmers need to be protected from eminent domain. How are we going to get anyone to invest their lives in the hard, physical responsibility of feeding the world, when at any point everything

they have worked for can be taken away.

We are so broken up about this proposed railroad. There is no way they should be able to destroy so many lives. So many people, farmers, that help the world, feed the world. If this project is allowed to go through, I say with a very heavy heart, that the flag in front of our house will have to come down. Not out of anger, out of sadness, great loss. The America that I grew up in and learned all about in school never taught anything about situations like this. In American, dreams come true with hard work. Never should anything be allowed to be taken through eminent domain. I hope that you realize how significant this is. If Frank and Jim have dreams of building a railroad, fine. But the ONLY way that should ever be allowed if the American way- ask. If people want to sell their land, then build the railroad. They can not be allowed to take selfishly, take from the people that invest their lives feeding them.

Please contact me any time. Amy Nystrom 815-509-0446

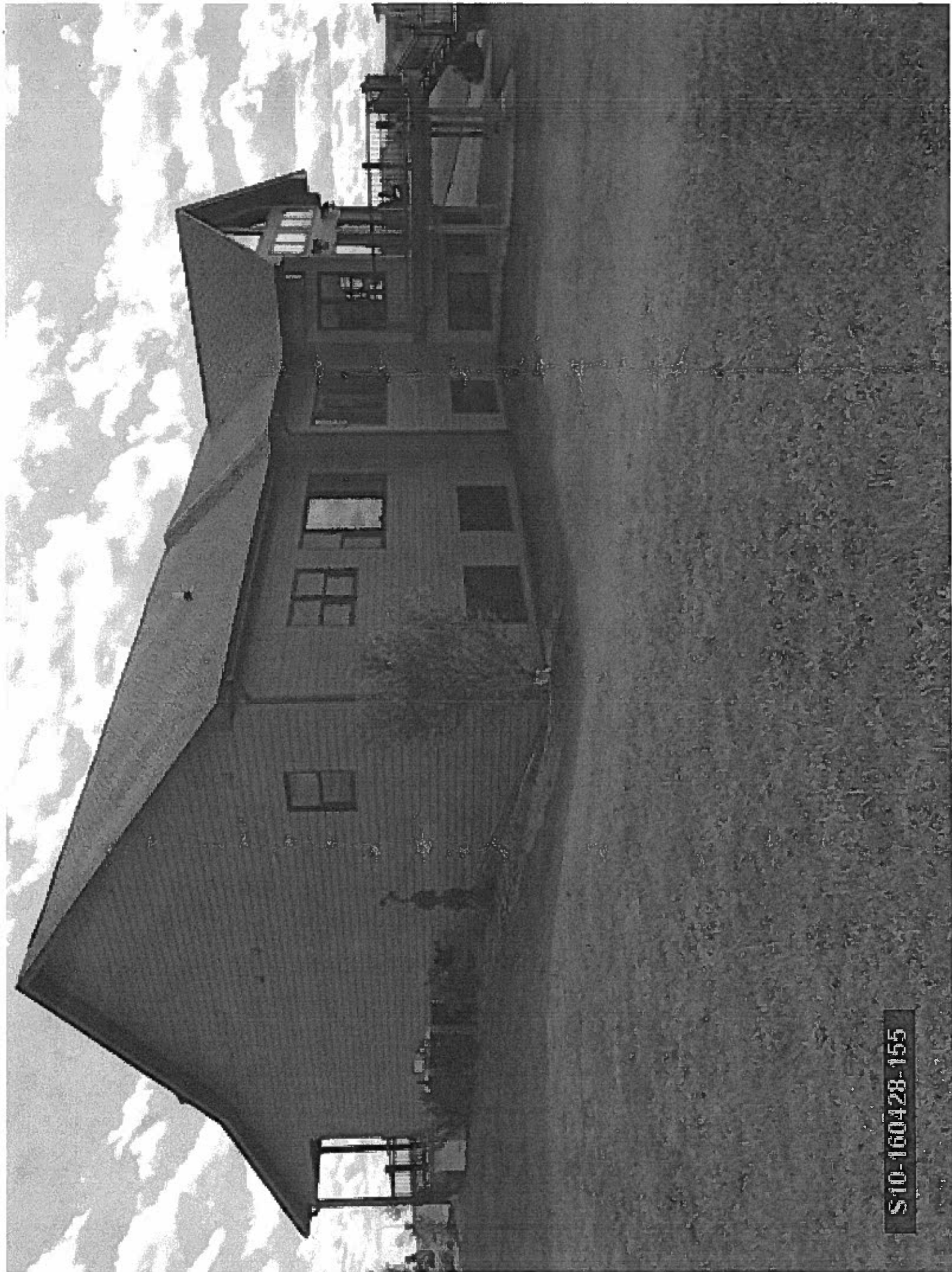
From: Amy Nystrom
To: Anthony Foxx (OST)
Subject: Farm pictures- Nystroms please forward to President Obama
Date: Thursday, April 28, 2016 12:00:00 PM
Attachments: [ATT00006.txt](#)
[ATT00007.txt](#)
[ATT00008.txt](#)
[ATT00009.txt](#)
[ATT00010.txt](#)



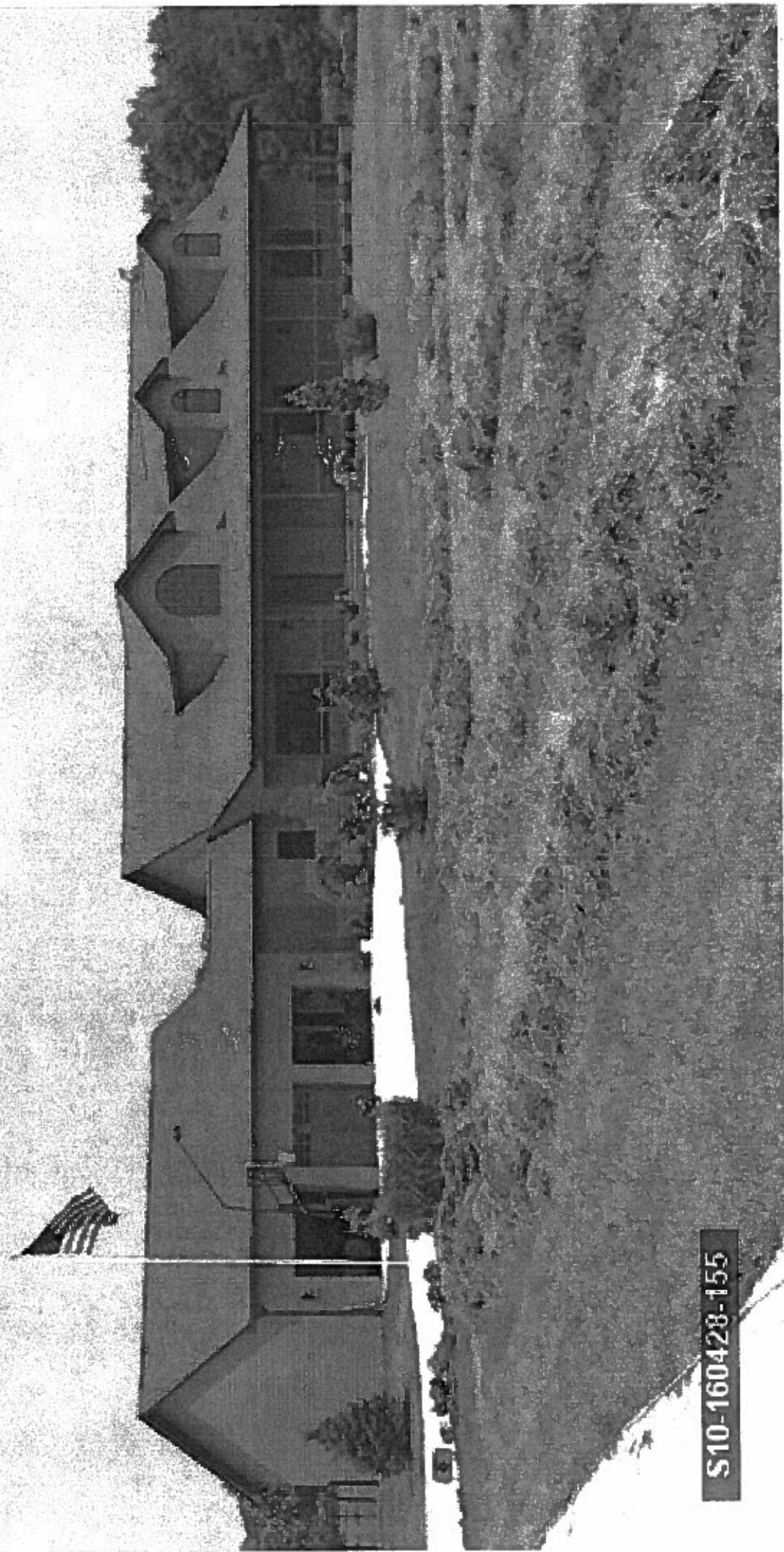
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