

Barrington Hills Conservation Trust

17 Oakdene Road East, Barrington Hills IL 60010

Surface Transportation Project
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January 29, 2008

To Whom it May Concern;

RE: STB Finance Docket #35087

The Barrington Area Conservation Trust (BACTrust) would like to express our concerns about the following issues in regards to the expansion of the historically known EJ&E railroad line through the Barrington Area. There are several issues that we feel are significant to the health, welfare, and safety of the residents who live in this region.

One of the primary concerns is water and water quality protection. This is an area that relies upon aquifers to provide all the drinking water to residents. These aquifers in both the Flint Creek Watershed, and Spring Creek Watershed, are protected by numerous wetlands and waterways. These water bodies serve as filtering devices for the wetlands. The waterways surround the rail line and have been kept intact over time by low impact development, and concern and protection by the communities they serve. The increase in rail traffic will impact these wetlands in a variety of ways;

- Potential contamination, the railroad has a history of 'derailments causing chemical spills'. A spill in these wetlands will virtually shut down the water resources of the region, without any alternative source.
- Disruption of natural habitat through vibrations, wind effects, and potential contamination. These rail lines were laid in the early days of development before wetland impacts and disruption to habitat and water quality were considered. The Barrington Area has an unprecedented number of original wetlands remaining (nearly 60%), as opposed to 10% of the original wetlands that remain in Northeastern Illinois.

Another concern BACTrust has for the expansion is the impact on the historic/rural character of the communities in the Barrington Area. This impact will be felt in a number of manners including;

- Impact on area roadways as traffic is slowed or blocked from increased rail use. Residents and travelers will be forced to find alternate routes to destinations including increased use of rural roads designed for local traffic use. This will increase non-point source pollution, wear on rural roadways, risk of speeding along normally local roadways, and general disruption of quiet neighborhoods.

- Increases in noise pollution, air pollution, and water pollution will impact the quality of life in the region.
- There are the concerns about access to the rail lines, in the event of a derailment, or line improvement. These railroads were designed for limited use and improvements to the rail would be difficult and invasive to both natural ecosystems, and personal property. The curve in the rail along Brinker Road would mean that train speed would be reduced, and length of travel time would increase dramatically both for automobile travel, and for freight movement. This would also impact the character of the community.

These reasons listed above are of grave concern to the BACTrust. We are dedicated to the preservation of the open land, rural character, and the scenic, historic, recreational, and ecologically significant resources of the greater Barrington Area. We would appreciate consideration and attention to these issues.

Respectfully Submitted;

Nancy Schumm-Burgess
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