

4085 East 1553 Road

Earlville, Illinois 60518

June 1, 2016

Mr. Dave Navecky

Surface Transportation Board

395 E Street SW

Washington, D.C. 20423-0001

Re: Docket #FD 35952 Great Lakes Basin Railroad (GLRR)

Dear Mr. Navecky:

I oppose this project and request that the STB deny GLBR's request to build the railroad it has proposed. The following information states the reasons I oppose the project.

The project as presented lacks clear information and detail. For example, the published railroad route is a proposal that can be revised at any time. Every time the GLBR changes the route, new problems will surely arise, and businesses (including farmers), individuals, property owners, and communities will be affected.

When I spoke at the scoping held at Seneca High School on April 21, 2016, I had to state and spell my name for public record before I could proceed. Yet on May 2, 2016, when GLBR representative Mr. Frank Patton was asked to name the individuals who are funding this project, he claimed that he is allowed to hide behind non-disclosure agreements; thus he failed to provide this information for public record. Total lack of information leads me to believe that Mr. Patton could not possibly fund this project without asking the federal government for tax money in the form of loan guarantees. While we faithfully pay our taxes each year, we should **not** be expected to fund a project, thus cutting off our source of income—farming. How could we then possibly pay our taxes?!

Mr. Patton states that the proposed route goes through **"undeveloped"** farmland. **This is an absolute lie!** Most farmland is no longer "undeveloped." Instead it has been developed through tiling, terracing, fencing, construction of office buildings, workshops, storage buildings and bins, as well as homes. **The farms that Mr. Patton proposes to roll through are major investments that business operators (farmers) make in order to produce food and products that you, Mr. Patton, other Americans, and people worldwide eat and use.** Improvements are constantly being made to improve efficiency and production of farmland.

The impact on traffic patterns in the area of the proposed railroad will cause road closures and congestion, which will have a detrimental effect on commercial traffic, public use of roads, and response time for emergency services.

Our local government agencies are not capable of handling emergencies caused by accidents: derailments, hazardous spills, and traffic accidents, etc.

Despite the fact that we have to adjust to weather in order to do our job, farms are the most efficient and important factories in this country. They produce products, generate employment, and generate tax income for local, state, and federal governments. Why would anyone want to run a railroad through these successful "factories"? Results from running a railroad through our farms would be detrimental to our businesses, causing inefficiencies, loss of property value, increased costs, and environmental hazards.

The GLBR is a limited liability investment company. **It is not a railroad.** Just because someone drops the word "railroad" in its investment name **does not make** it a railroad. To my knowledge, this group doesn't own a single mile of track or a single railroad car or locomotive. You can call a pig a dog, **but it is still a pig!** GLBR doesn't even have customers!

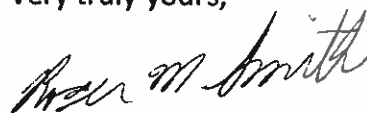
Two major railroads operating in Chicago have publically stated that they are not interested in this proposal.

The proposed route represents a true hazard to wildlife, natural habitats, and it will result in problems with the drainage basin extending for miles around the track. I know of at least one public park this line will pass near!

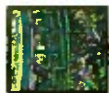
Plans have been made and are being implemented to alleviate railroad congestion in the Chicago area. GLBR is not needed.

I would request that whenever a revision is made to the proposed route, that the STB holds new scoping meetings in order to keep the public informed. I am afraid that when the public comment period ends, the **real shenanigans** will begin! I also request that the STB **require** Mr. Frank Patton to provide, for the public record, the names of the GLBR investors, the amount they have committed to invest, and that it require holding accounts for the investment. Once more I must state my opposition to the proposed railroad and request that the STB deny GLBR permission for its construction.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Roger M. Smith".

Roger M. Smith



Mr. & Mrs. Roger Smith
4085 E. 1553rd Rd.
Earlville, IL 60518-6061

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SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

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