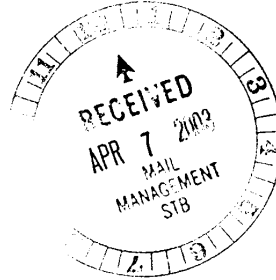


**Illini Valley
Resource Conservation & Development (RC&D)
P.O. Box 122
Hillsboro, Illinois 62049
(217) 532-9577**

March 28, 2003

The Honorable Vernon A. Williams
Secretary, Surface Transportation Board
1925 K Street
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001



Re: **Docket No. AB-103 (Sub-No. 15)** > 207551
Kansas City Southern Railway Company – Adverse Abandonment - In St. Clair County, Illinois

Docket No. AB-849 > 207552
Gateway Eastern Railway Company – Adverse Abandonment - In St. Clair County, Illinois

Dear Mr. Williams:

Illini Valley Resource Conservation and Development Executive Council would like to express our concern on the above Docket Numbers. The Illini Valley RC&D consists of six counties, Greene, Jersey, Macoupin, Morgan, Scott and Montgomery County. Our mission is to "Improve and enhance the quality of life in the Illini Valley RC&D region by promoting opportunity through rural development and stewardship of the region's capital, natural, and human resources."

It has been brought to our attention that the Kansas City Southern Railway Company and the Gateway Eastern Railway Company have to adversely abandon currently owned rail line. These rail carriers are the only railways providing single line rail service to some of these rural areas. The economic effect on some of these counties would be devastating to an already depressed area. A ruling against the KCSRC would cost Illinois mid-west grain producers an estimated \$480,000.00 in potential direct loss of revenue from lower grain prices and higher transportation costs. The prospect of this misfortune would curtail business development and sustainability, increase the unemployment rate, and reduce the asset value of cooperatives in these effected counties. This negative impact may be estimated at as much as \$1,440,000.00 to our local economy.

The Illini Valley Resource Conservation and Development Executive Council firmly supports the position of the Kansas City Southern Railway Company.

Sincerely,

Kendall Cole /cd

Kendall Cole, Chairman
Illini Valley RC&D Executive Council

**ENTERED
Office of Proceedings**

APR 7 2003

**Part of
Public Record**

Cc: Thomas J. Healey
The Honorable Lane Evans
The Honorable Gary Hannig

William A. Mullins
The Honorable John M. Shimkus
The Honorable Vince Demuzio