

EI-23298



Great Lakes Basin toll road

Maury Collins

to:

david.navecky

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From: Maury Collins &lt;westabbeyfeale@gmail.com&gt;

To: david.navecky@stb.dot.gov

RE: Docket No. FD 35952

Dear Mr. Navecky,

I am writing regarding the proposed Great Lakes Basin private toll rail line that is to be built near my farm in Lee County, IL.

This proposed toll road would run within less than a quarter of a mile from my farm, which will be impacted in the following ways:

The noise of 110 trains per day at 70 mph (one every 13 minutes) will make it impossible to be outside or enjoy any of the benefits of an active, outdoor farm life. The Ldn (the cumulative decibel exposure over 24 hours) of a freight train is estimated to be between 90 and 95 dB – and that's at 50 mph, not 70 – and up to 115 dB with the train horns. Multiple sources say that hearing damage begins after as few as 2 up to 8 hours per day exposure to such consistent noise.

The proximity to the noise and the risk of damage from spills and leakage will severely depress my property's value.

Because of the overpass necessary to be built on route 30, the field drainage system which consists of tiling as well as ditches that feed into Dry Run Creek, (considered a navigable waterway by the USACE) will be severely altered (if not obliterated) in terms of its capacity to remove water from the farm fields on my farm as well as in the general area. This drainage system will also be negatively affected because of the dirt necessary to be moved to create the level 200 foot right of way.

Prairies and trees planted under the Conservation Resource Program of the USDA will be diminished, if not wiped out. Designated wetlands on the southwest corner of my farm will be filled in in order to make the over pass.

The worst environmental effect, however, is the effect of taking any part of my farmland out of production, either through the negative effects of loosing the drainage system or the potential effect of hazmat spillage/leakage from the trains. The area of North America through which this toll road is intended to run is one of the few sites in the world of the most productive soil on earth.

My class A soil feeds the world at a routine harvest of 210 to 240 bu/acre corn and 65 to 80 bu/acre of soybeans.

The average Western diet consists of about 2400 calories per day; in the third world the average is often fewer than 2000, and some fewer than 1600.

An average field in the US produces about 150 bu/acre of corn. At 1600 calories per pound, a dry bushel of corn weighs about 56 pounds. So each bushel is worth 89,600 calories and the average US acre is worth 13,440,000 calories.

My class A soil yielding 210 bushels per acre produces 18,816,000 calories to the acre.

An acre of my Class A soil (at the low end of my yields) feeds 7,804 Westerners for a day, or a family of five for more than four years. In many countries to which my corn is exported, at 1800 calories a day, my soil feeds 10,450 people per day

Do you think it makes sense to give up more than 18 million calories per acre for a private company to create a business that has no customers?

This proposed GLB project is inconsistent with the public good, environmentally harmful and unnecessary. I respectfully request that you shut this project down and let us get on with feeding at least part of the world. Thank you for your attention.

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