

TOWN OF FULTON, ROCK COUNTY, WISCONSIN
RESOLUTION 2016-1
ON SCOPE OF STUDY FOR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR
PROPOSED GREAT LAKES BASIN RAILROAD

WHEREAS, Great Lakes Basin Transportation, Inc., (“GLBT”) has sought authority from the Surface Transportation Board of the United States Department of Transportation to construct and operate a rail line of approximately 278 miles in length, from La Porte, Indiana, through the State of Illinois to a point in the Town of Lima in Rock County, Wisconsin; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the Town of Lima, the proposed rail line would pass through the Towns of Johnstown, Bradford and Clinton in Rock County, Wisconsin, said towns being the local units of government under Wisconsin law governing all of the lands through which the rail line would pass; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Fulton is located within 30 miles of the corridor, share the concerns about the proposed rail line raised by the town boards of Johnstown, Bradford, Harmony, and Clinton; and

WHEREAS, the construction and operation of the proposed rail line would have significant environmental impacts, such that the Office of Environmental Analysis (“OEA”) has determined that an Environmental Impact Statement (“EIS”) is required; and

WHEREAS, the OEA has, on March 18, 2016, issued a Notice of Intent to Prepare an EIS, a Notice of Availability of the Draft Scope of Study for the EIS, a Notice of Scoping Meetings, and a Request for Comments on Draft Scope of Study; and

WHEREAS, the draft Scope of Study proposes categories to be included in the EIS as follows: transportation systems, safety, land use, recreation, biological resources, water resources, including wetlands and other waters of the United States, navigation, geology and soils, air quality, noise, energy resources, socioeconomics, cultural and historic resources, aesthetics and environmental justice; and

WHEREAS, the purported “Purpose and Need” of the proposed rail line as reflected in the Draft Scope of Study is to create “more efficient options to route trains around” Chicago by allowing “freight traffic not destined for or originating in Chicago to bypass” Chicago, and to accommodate unspecified “existing and future growth”; and

WHEREAS, the only attempted quantification of the purported “Purpose and Need” for the proposed rail line is the suggestion that “transit times through the Chicago area, which currently can take up to 30 hours to complete, would be reduced to under 8 hours depending on” certain unspecified variables; and

WHEREAS, unlike the installation of railroads in the 19th century, the installation of a rail line of the nature proposed is of no significant value to agriculture; and

WHEREAS, the proposed rail line would pass through some of the richest farm land in the world, disrupting the safety and aesthetics of local residents and the economics of local agriculture; in addition to placing a heavy burden on traffic patterns and our local emergency response units;

WHEREAS, the purported benefits of efficiency and time-savings attributed to the proposed rail line must properly be weighed against the enormous tangible and intangible costs that would be imposed on the residents and owners of property through which the rail line would run; and

WHEREAS, the residents of the towns through which the proposed rail line would pass in the State of Wisconsin have expressed to the governing boards of those towns their strong concerns regarding the effects of that rail line;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF FULTON THAT:

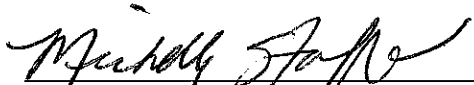
1. The Town Board believes that the purported gains in efficiency from the proposed rail line would be far outweighed by the negative environmental impact from that rail line.
2. The Town Board calls upon the Surface Transportation Board, as part of the EIS, to assure that the scope of the EIS include a socioeconomic study that weighs the relative impact of the proposed rail line upon social and economic resources in relation to the purported efficiency to be gained from such rail line.
3. The Town Board, on behalf of the residents of the Town and in the strongest possible terms, expresses its opposition to the construction of the proposed rail line, and urges the Surface Transportation Board to pursue the "no-action alternative" of denying the petition or application of GLBT.

Adopted this 1 day of June, 2016

(Ayes 4) Noes 0 Absent 1


Chairman – Evan Sayre

ATTEST:


Pro-Tempore – Michelle Staff