

GLBL whopper: 15,000 acre rail yard

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Bailey Yard also has a fueling and service center which processes more than 9,000 locomotives each month, using technology like overhead cranes and elevated work bays to maintain fluid operations. The on-site car repair facility annually replaces 10,000 pairs of wheels.

Bailey Yard is division point for UP, where trains are sorted, railroad crews are exchanged, and maintenance or repairs are performed on equipment. Its 2,850 acres and 315 miles of track have adequately and efficiently served *Union Pacific's* needs since it was redesigned in 1980 into its current configuration. In 1995, as a result of its massive size, the yard was recognized in the *Guinness Book of Records* as the largest rail yard in the world.

If *Union Pacific*, the largest and most profitable railroad in the world routinely keeps its 32,200 mile system fluid and efficiently operating with a central rail yard that is a tiny fraction of Frank Patton's proposed 15,000 acre/25 square mile rail yard, then it becomes clear: ***Great Lakes Basin Transportation has put forward a deficient, inadequate, and apparently deceptive proposal to misdirect attention from the real purpose of a new 275 mile railroad.***

Whether through incompetence or intent to defraud investors does not matter, though given the extent of the

material misrepresentations GLBT has placed on the public record, it will be criminal to solicit investors and/or government funding. Until GLBT can accurately and adequately justify its proposed 15,000 acre confiscation of privately-owned and productive land, STB must immediately halt the approval process because:

1. There is nothing in the GLBT proposal that justifies building a rail yard and/or terminal that would exceed the largest freight yard in the world by a factor of 5.
2. Any assessment of environmental impact cannot be made given that the proposal is inadequate at-best and reasonably appears to be fraudulent.
3. Soliciting investments or government funding of any sort based-on the materially false stated need for a 15,000 acre rail yard is potentially criminal. This is looks to be financial fraud.
4. Eminent domain laws were never created to allow private interests to confiscate private property when the purpose is simply for speculation and/or unstated or misrepresented purposes.
5. The entire GLBT proposal is invalid since it is built on the false premise that 15,000 acres is needed for a rail yard.

GLBT proposal: Poorly thought through & full of serious consequences

By Patricia Mussman

By following the proposed rail line by the Great Lakes Basin Transportation Co. LLC (GLBT) we can see serious flaws in the route they have designated. Because Frank Patton has stated that he wants to avoid major cities and populated areas he has assumed that no matter where he drew his line through the country side it would be good for him and his project. He gave no thought to unintended consequences caused by his choices. There are numerous consequences.

1. Proximity to schools creates danger, health risks, and distractions, extended time on school busses, air pollution and noise pollution. It also slows response times to incidents for emergency services.
2. How does this project plan to deal with existing rail lines that it will have to cross in at least five (5) different locations? Do they have a plan to go over or tunnel under these lines? With an expected number of trains reaching one hundred ten (110) per day they can't possibly intersect them and cross them like road traffic does.
3. Where the rail line proposes to cross State Route 2 east of I-65 in Indiana it will create serious problems with traffic. It will also cross State Route 2 again in Porter county making the traffic on that road between Lowell and Hebron as well as Valparaiso. If they do an overpass over Route 2 in Porter County Farmers driving combines or tractors attached to large tillage tools will be an accident waiting to happen. The bridge would be too narrow for them to meet on-coming traffic.
4. Where the rail line crosses Route 2 east of I-65 it is next to two major truck stops. With semi traffic at two major truck stops causing backups that could extend onto I-65. It will create a barrier restricting west bound traffic from getting to both I-65 and the town of Lowell. A freight train that could be from seventy (70) to one hundred (100) cars per train with the proposed number of trains passing through there every thirteen (13) minutes it could conceivably kill the town of Lowell. It would restrict growth and could cause people to leave severely hurting the economy of the area.
5. Loss of income from farm production will also cripple the economy in the area.
6. Potential water contamination through spills of toxic and hazardous materials into the ground and field tiles that drain into the Kankakee River would be devastating to ground water (aquifer), to flora and fauna. This is a very real and serious problem.
7. The proximity to state and county parks will destroy programs that are designed for the preservation of historical artifacts, native grasses and historical sites. Also wildlife and flora.
8. The observatory south and east of Lowell would be irreparably damaged by the placement of the rail line. Purdue University along with the historical society and other people and organizations has spent large sums of money on this awesome and valuable facility.
9. The proposed route this rail line has selected has bisected farms it impossible in some cases to reach the landlocked parcels creating a hardship and serious financial losses for the farmers. The land would be unable to be accessed or sold so it would become worthless. It would create a fire hazard since it would grow up into weed and grass fields. During dry weather sparks from the rails could start fires. Another danger to the environment that could create serious problems for the volunteer fire departments all across the area.
10. The Pinney-Purdue Research Farm near Wanatah, Indiana could lose up to seventy five (75) acres of its six hundred thirty four (634) acre farm. This farm straddles the Porter – La Porte County Line that train is expected to use will destroy seventeen (17) years of research on some projects, destroy the farms ability to use its very costly irrigation equipment since the center pivots can't cross railroad tracks.

There are many other examples of unintended consequences that I have failed to mention. What I have done is site just a few examples but I hope the Surface Transportation Board (STB) can see that at every turn there is something that will negatively impact the environment and the economy of the area. For these reasons STB must to deny this project.

GLBT misrepresents private gain as "public need" & "public use"

By Thomas Patterson

The Surface Transportation Board in Washington D.C. is evaluating Great Lakes Basin rail. If approved through both phases of the process, GLBT will be able to use federal eminent domain laws to force landowners to sell property for the railroad at "market value".

Its purpose, says Frank Patton, founder and managing partner of Great Lakes Basin Transportation (GLBT), is to eliminate freight train congestion in Chicago. He speaks of how it would be a great economic boon to the region but in reality the only boon would be to GLBT and the intermodal rail yards in LaPorte (Kingsbury), Indiana.

A developer like Patton convinces government entities to take private property for redevelopment and do it for the "public good." Landowners new to this type of proceeding have little in the way of resources to protect themselves. Eminent domain favors large businesses who abuse the original intent of the law. In short the law can be used for private profit in the name of public benefit.

Now Patton intends to use the law for "the public good" to improve shipping around Chicago. From a general viewpoint of the landowner or farmer, it's an ongoing matter of lifestyle versus monetary gain—a fight to protect the farm, the country lifestyle, and the environment against the forces of expansion.

The tracks would affect farming, drainage, waterways and water resources, wild-

life, environment and biological resources as well as impact soils, land use, air quality, noise and vibration. Every mile across the county has a county road north and south that the freight trains would cross. The trains would create continual delays, block emergency access and ingress to schools, towns, and homes. In essence generate a public safety issue.

The GLBT may use over and under passes for the largest of the thoroughfares, but facts seem to indicate most country and state roads will be traversed by ground level railroad crossings. Smaller country roads will simply dead end because of the liability to the railroad. Farmers will be forced to use main roads to move equipment. These trains will be hauling everything and firemen are concerned of spills and derailments. The trains will pass close to several schools and through the Pinney Purdue Agricultural center.

Surely the GLBT can utilize existing trucking routes and rail lines running along the north end of the counties. The life style of those who have farmed the land depend on the Surface Transportation Board denying the freight line proposal. The farming lifestyle still thrives across Indiana. It is the bedrock and the foundation of family, work and the economic livelihood of the state. It is too precious to jeopardize with such a scheme that only benefits railroads, truckers and developers like Frank Patton who do not care about the land.