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Project Background

Great
Lakes
Basin



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Transportation, Inc. (GLBT) states that the principal purpose of the proposed rail line is to provide Class I railroads and a regional railroad utilizing the Chicago metropolitan terminal area with more efficient options to route trains around the city. The Class I railroads include: BNSF Railway Company, Union Pacific Railroad Company, Canadian National Railway Company, Norfolk Southern Railway Company, Canadian Pacific Railway Company, and CSX Transportation, Inc. The regional railroad is the Wisconsin and Southern Railroad LLC. GLBT anticipates that the proposed rail line would (1) provide an alternative route for freight traffic not destined for or originating in Chicago to bypass the existing congested Chicago terminal area, and (2) add capacity to accommodate existing and anticipated future growth while avoiding major population centers.

GLBT anticipates that the proposed rail line would be utilized by unit commodity trains and mixed carload and intermodal trains that do not require transport to the Chicago terminal area for sorting or delivery.

GLBT would construct a terminal for its proposed rail operations near Manteno, Illinois to provide switching, servicing, and car and locomotive repair to its railroad customers. According to GLBT, 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 the specific interchange points and applicable speed restrictions on the rail line. The expected congestion relief would allow the railroads to better handle their Chicago proper and suburban traffic and make room for potential future growth within the existing terminal network.

The proposed project is not a federal government-proposed or sponsored project. Thus, the project's purpose and need should be informed by both the applicant's goals and the agency's enabling statute codified in 49 U.S.C. S 10901.

Proposed Action and Alternatives

GLBT's proposed rail line would involve either a petition for exemption or an application seeking authority from the Board to construct and operate an approximately 278-mile rail line that would extend generally from La Porte, Indiana through Illinois to Milton, Wisconsin. The proposed rail line would consist mostly of double track. The tracks would use modern signaling and automated controls (e.g., Centralized Traffic Control signals and Positive Train Control) to allow for movements of up to 110 trains per day. As proposed by GLBT, other major elements of the proposed project would include a 200-foot-wide right-of-way, flyovers at crossings of other railroads, four major river crossings in the State of Illinois (the Illinois, Kankakee, Fox, and Rock rivers), and grade-separated crossings of interstate highways and many roadways.

The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will analyze and compare the potential impacts of (1) construction and operation of a range of reasonable and feasible alternative routes for the proposed GLBT rail line and (2) the no-action alternative (denial of the petition or application).

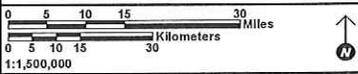
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- GLB Proposed Alignment
- GLB Proposed Railroad Interchange
- GLB Proposed Railport
- Interstate Highway
- Highway

**GREAT LAKES BASIN
RAIL LINE EIS - FD 35952**

Project Area





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Public Involvement

The Surface Transportation Board's (Board) Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA) appreciates and encourages the public to be actively involved in the NEPA process. OEA will host eight public scoping meetings to provide the public with information on the proposed action, the environmental review process, and to solicit comments on the scope and content of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The public scoping meetings will be held at the dates, times, and locations provided below:

April 11, 2016

5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Manteno Sportsmen's Club Banquet
Hall
851 N. Main St.
Manteno, IL

April 12, 2016

5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Lowell Town Hall
501 E. Main St.
Lowell, IN

April 13, 2016

5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

American Legion Banquet Hall
203 S. Washington St.
Wanatah, IN

April 14, 2016

5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Civic Auditorium Banquet
Room
1001 Ridge St.
La Porte, IN

April 18, 2016

5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Craig High School Cafeteria
401 S. Randall St.
Janesville, WI

April 19, 2016

5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Cherry Valley Fire Station
#2 Hall
4919 Blackhawk Rd.
Rockford, IL

April 20, 2016

5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Rochelle Township High School
Auditorium

April 21, 2016

5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Seneca High School
Auditorium

1401 Flagg Rd.
Rochelle, IL

307 E. Scott St.
Seneca, IL

The scoping meetings will be held in an open house format for the first hour followed by a brief presentation by OEA. After the presentation, interested parties will be provided an opportunity for public comment at an open microphone for the balance of the scoping meeting. A court reporter will transcribe these oral public comments.

Additionally, OEA will host an online public scoping meeting on Wednesday, April 27, 2016 from 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. (Central Time). To register to attend this online public scoping meeting, please [click here](#).

Filing Scoping Comments

We invite you to participate in this EIS scoping process and would appreciate your written comments on the Draft Scope of Study and potential alternatives to GLBT's proposed alignment by the close of the scoping comment period on May 16, 2016. To submit public scoping comments, please use one of the following methods:

Electronically (E-FILING) - We encourage you to submit your scoping comments electronically by [clicking here](#). Log-in accounts are not needed to file environmental comments electronically, and comments may be typed into the text box provided or attached as a file. If you have difficulties with the e-filing process, please call the Board at 202-245-0350. NOTE: When an individual chooses to submit a Formal Filing, a Recordation, an Environmental Comment, or some Other Submissions, his or her personal contact information is considered public information and is shared within and outside of STB without additional authorization.

Mail Submission - You can also send your written comments to Dave Navecky, OEA's Project Manager for the EIS, at:

Dave Navecky
Surface Transportation Board
Docket No. FD 35952
395 E Street SW
Washington, DC 20423-0001

Please refer to **Docket No. FD 35952** in all correspondence, including e-filings, addressed to the Board and address all correspondence to Dave Navecky.

Please note, scoping comments are due by May 16, 2016.