

Submission Number: *UBR-DEIS-00451-0175*

EI-30512

Received: 1/27/2021 12:00:00 AM**Commenter:** MARC COLES-RITCHIE**Organization:****State:** Utah**Agency:** STB**Initiative:** Uinta Basin Railway EIS**Attachments:** No Attachments**Submission Text**

This proposal is bad for the environment and an unwise investment in infrastructure that will increase fossil fuel combustion and lead to more climate chaos. I ask that you choose the no-action alternative for the proposed Uinta Basin Railway. The proposed railway would do irreparable harm to our region's air, water, land and wildlife and should not be built. An environmental impact statement should assess the harm this oil railway could have on the environment, wildlife and nearby communities. It does not do that. Expanding the railway will contribute irreversibly to increased greenhouse gas emissions. Our climate is already at a tipping point, so we need to sharply reduce fossil fuel use instead of expanding it. The railway's emissions will also further pollute the air in the Uinta Basin in Utah, which already exceeds federal standards because of existing oil and gas development. The railway would cross roadless areas, steep canyons and rugged terrain, which will degrade more than 10,000 acres of habitat for migratory wildlife and will harm important habitat needed by the rare greater sage grouse and the endangered Barnaby ridge-cress. It is a terrible idea to have the railway run almost the entire length of Utah's Indian Canyon Creek, crossing and degrading more than 400 streams and important wetlands along the Price River - harming the semi-arid state's precious perennial waterways. In Colorado, the project could mean reopening a rail line through scenic Tennessee Pass, despoiling scenic lands and wildlife habitat to get oil trains to the Gulf Coast. Mile-long oil trains could rip through sensitive areas like Browns Canyon, a rugged 22,000-acre national monument designated in 2015 to protect one of the wildest stretches of the Arkansas River. Finally the Uinta Basin Railway would harm people who live and recreate in both states. Landowners in Utah's Argyle Canyon and nearby off-grid canyon communities fear the disruptive noise, traffic delays, and clouds of diesel smoke oil trains will bring along the proposed routes - not to mention the significant potential for accidents, derailments, spills and even sparks that could ignite disastrous wildfires. And people in Colorado won't escape the air pollution drifting downwind from Uinta Basin, even as the railway rips through a national monument and other scenic areas supporting outdoorsy tourism many locals rely on for their livelihood. This project is an unacceptable threat to the health, safety and well-being of wildlife, humans and the planet. Please choose the no-action alternative.