

Submission Number: *UBR-DEIS-00451-0042*

EI-30859

Received: 1/27/2021 12:00:00 AM**Commenter:** James McClure**Organization:****State:** Colorado**Agency:** STB**Initiative:** Uinta Basin Railway EIS**Attachments:** No Attachments**Submission Text**

I strongly urge you to 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. This draft environmental impact statement completely fails to properly evaluate the harm this oil-driven railway would have on the environment, wildlife, and nearby communities. The new oil production resulting from the railway expansion - potentially four times the current amount - will contribute irreversibly to increased greenhouse gas emissions. Our climate is already at a tipping point, and the critical need is to sharply reduce fossil-fuel use rather expanding it. The railway's emissions will also increase air pollution in the Uinta Basin, which already exceeds federal standards because of existing oil and gas development. Traversing roadless areas, steep canyons and rugged terrain, the railway 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. The preferred project route would 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 would 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 would rip through sensitive areas like Browns Canyon, a rugged 22,000-acre national monument designated in 2015 to protect one of the last-remaining wild and scenic 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 explosions and/or wildfires. The people in Colorado would be exposed to the air pollution drifting downwind from Uinta Basin, even as the railway rips through a national monument and other scenic areas supporting outdoors 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. Again, I strongly urge you to choose the no-action alternative.