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Organization:

State: Utah

Agency: STB

Initiative: Uinta Basin Railway EIS

Attachments: No Attachments

Submission Text

I am a business owner but am speaking to this issue personally. I am also in my mid 60's so I've been around the track a few times personally, business-wise and politically. I am also an environmentally conscious left of center Independent voter, so I cannot be considered a reactionary right-wing Republican by any measure. That said, and given all the environmental considerations, both by government and special interest agenda inputs, the idea of a railway being built and used into the Uinta Basin is a needed thing that's been a long time in the happening. Fact is, railway transportation, from building/constructing to utilizing to repairing to ongoing use, is one of the least impactful means of transportation on the environment and ecology of the land there is. Building and construction of a railway is constrained to a specific and very narrow strip of land with the access roads being minimal in number as most rail material is railed in on the already built track. 2. There is minimal to no chemical or pollutant seepage effects as would be seen with the tars, asphalt and oils seepage into the ground as seen with construction, maintaining or rebuilding a highway system. 3. Unlike the ubiquitous trash and litter pollution that is strewn along highways and roads, railways have the lowest trashing and littering along their railway paths - a huge factor in ongoing environmental impact. 4. The exhaust pollution of a train engine is largely of a particulate nature and contained to the railway path, and not of the novel and highly toxic pollutants road vehicles produce and tend to effect the environment well beyond the point of exhaust. 5. The maintenance factor! While highways and roads require constant maintenance, repair and replacement, railways only require minor maintenance and repairs and replacement is decades apart, factors that play a huge role in reduced impact on the environment and surrounding ecology. 6. Any mention of negative impact on communities, etc., is NOT an environmental issue per se' and per this impact study, but is a socio-political and economic issue for the communities to deal with, independent of this study. Yes, there may be other problems to be considered with this project, as there are with any project, but as far as environmental impact problems, the construction, maintenance and repairs of a railway system and its utilization overall pose one of the lowest impacts on the environment when compared to all other forms and types of transportation.