

January 27, 2021

Referencing: Docket No. FD 36284

To Whom it May Concern,

We are writing to you today to express concerns about Colorado Midland and Pacific Railway's application for an exemption of Board approval for the lease and operation of 163.1 miles of the Tennessee Pass Rail line, Docket No. FD 36284.

The 163.1-mile Tennessee Pass Line segment between Parkdale and Sage, Colorado closely parallels critical waterways, including the upper Arkansas River and the Eagle River. The rail line was routed through numerous rivers and mountain-oriented communities that place a high value on the recreational, ecological, cultural, scenic and historical attractions. With the line being dormant for the last 24 years, both the ecological and human environments have adapted and flourished in the absence of any rail traffic. Including our community in Eagle County, Colorado.

As homeowners in Avon, CO our house and community will be directly impacted as the rail lines run through the heart of the downtown and adjacent to the popular ski destination, Beaver Creek. Our home sits directly between the train tracks and the Eagle River in the Eagle Bend community. We are extremely concerned about the impacts to our property value, our local community in Avon, the economic impacts to Eagle County and the environmental impacts in the Arkansas and Eagle River corridors.

The economic impacts of this rail line will weigh heavily on the tourism and hospitality industries and individuals who rely on winter and summer recreational tourism for their livelihood.

- According to the Eagle Country Economy Overview, the top three industries in 2019 were Restaurants, Traveler Accommodations and Amusement and Recreation Industries. With trains barreling through town multiple times a day, tourists will find other areas to visit. Resulting in job and business loss among these industries, as well as others.
Source: https://files.vailvalleypartnership.com/sites/4/2020/01/Economy_Overview_Eagle_County_CO_9523.pdf
- The tourism sector accounts for 44% of all Eagle County jobs. Those jobs have an average annual salary just shy of \$35,000 — about \$17.50 an hour based on working 2,000 hours a year.
Source: <https://www.aspentimes.com/news/eagle-county-economy-growing-slightly-more-diverse/>
- The Arkansas River sees 40% of Colorado's total commercial rafting days and contributes close to \$100 million to the local economy. Source: <https://www.cobizmag.com/outdoor-industries-report-rafting-economy/>

We also believe there will be significant environmental impacts not only in Avon and the Eagle River, but to the scenic and natural values of the Arkansas River that flows through Colorado's newest national monument, Browns Canyon. Not to mention the 10,000 acres of wildlife habitat in northeastern Utah that will disrupt migration corridors negatively impact wetlands.

We request you deny the Colorado Midland and Pacific Railway this exemption on the grounds that it is not in the best interest of the public and environment.

Best,

Elaine & Jared Schoch

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