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EI-31080

Received: 11/19/2020 4:07:10 PM**Commenter:** Mike Stengel**Organization:****State:** Utah**Agency:** STB**Initiative:** Uinta Basin Railway EIS**Attachments:** No Attachments**Submission Text**

I have been following the railroad project since the first meeting in Moab I attended several years ago. There the seven counties Infrastructure coalition requested grant money to begin the EIS from the CIB that is now in draft review. I was also in attendance during the CIB meeting at the Uintah Conference Center in Vernal, where the CIB approved the balance of the grant money requested to continue this EIS. I cannot express enough how important this project is to the future of the Uintah Basin economy, which is largely dependent on revenue from oil and gas companies. While the railroad will greatly increase the export of oil from the basin, it also does another thing that will allow the opportunity to connect with the rest of the world. Allow for the Uintah basin to compete with other oil suppliers, and allow opportunity for manufacturing, both inbound raw materials, and export of finished goods. This project allows for additional opportunity for the basin to bid for the Utah inland port that is currently being worked on by Utah legislators. Every rural town in Utah has a railroad which supports the economy. This project is 90 years late, and couldn't have come at a better time. I have taken the time to read through the draft EIS and I appreciate the time and care that has been put into the report. I believe we have a solemn responsibility to be good Stewards of the land and resources. I'd like to thank each organization that has work diligently in creating this document. I have reviewed the environmental and mitigation factors in this report and feel that SCIC has not only done a good job in considering these routes, they have done a fantastic job listening to the concerns of land owners and making changes where possible to accommodate their concerns. Based on the information in this report, I ask that the STB approve the draft EIS and pave the way for the construction of the Uinta Basin Railroad, without further delay. I fully support the railroad project and ask the the STB approve the Uinta Basin Railroad so that the SCIC can begin construction. This means so much to the families of the Uintah Basin. I'd like to publicly thank Mike McKee with SCIC for his leadership on this project. Without Mike this project would not have happened. He is a friend to the people of the Uintah Basin.