

Wayland, Joshua

From: Wayland, Joshua
Sent: Friday, March 26, 2021 1:39 PM
To: Wendy Park
Subject: RE: Uinta Basin Rail EIS and BA

You're welcome, Wendy. Have a great weekend.

From: Wendy Park <WPark@biologicaldiversity.org>
Sent: Friday, March 26, 2021 12:57 PM
To: Wayland, Joshua <Joshua.Wayland@stb.gov>
Subject: RE: Uinta Basin Rail EIS and BA

Thank you, Josh!

From: Wayland, Joshua <Joshua.Wayland@stb.gov>
Sent: Friday, March 26, 2021 9:13 AM
To: Wendy Park <WPark@biologicaldiversity.org>
Subject: RE: Uinta Basin Rail EIS and BA

Hi Wendy,

I hope all is well with you. The Surface Transportation Board's Office of Environmental Analysis did prepare a Biological Assessment for the Uinta Basin Railway project. A draft BA was included as an appendix to the Draft EIS issued on October 30, 2020 and is available on the project website here: https://icfbiometrics.blob.core.windows.net/uinta-basin/Appendix_I_Biological%20Assessment.pdf.

After considering public comments and following additional coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, OEA prepared a final BA and submitted it to USFWS on March 18, 2021 to begin formal consultation pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act. The final BA is also on the project website here: https://icfbiometrics.blob.core.windows.net/uinta-basin/UintaBasinRailway_BA_submission_2021_03_18.pdf.

Regarding schedule, it is difficult for me to provide any specific timeframes. The timing of the issuance of the Final EIS will depend on the time it takes to make any necessary changes to the Draft EIS, as well as the time needed for review by our cooperating agencies. All things considered, I believe that August 2021 is not unreasonable as an estimated timeframe for the issuance of the Final EIS. Following the issuance of the Final EIS, the Surface Transportation Board would then consider the entire environmental record and issue their final decision on the proposed rail line. This decision would serve as the agency's ROD. I cannot speak to the timing of any Board decision since that will be up to the Board, not OEA.

I hope this information is helpful. Please let me know if you have any other questions about the environmental review process for this proposed project.

Best,
Josh

Joshua Wayland, PhD
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Office of Environmental Analysis

Surface Transportation Board
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From: Wendy Park <WPark@biologicaldiversity.org>
Sent: Monday, March 22, 2021 3:22 PM
To: Wayland, Joshua <Joshua.Wayland@stb.gov>
Cc: Elise Ferguson <EFerguson@biologicaldiversity.org>
Subject: Uinta Basin Rail EIS and BA

Good afternoon, Josh,

I hope you are well. I was wondering if the STB has prepared a Biological Assessment for the Uinta Basin Railway. We have found the Baseline Technical Memo for Biological Resources online but it isn't clear whether this serves as the BA or if there is another document? Could you please provide us a copy of the BA if it is available?

Also, we were wondering the STB's schedule for release of the final EIS and ROD. We have heard from the Forest Service that the ROD will likely be issued in August 2021. Is this correct?

Thanks so much,

Wendy