



SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
Washington, DC 20423

Office of Environmental Analysis

June 14, 2019

Betsy Chapoose
Cultural Rights and Protection Director
Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation
P.O. Box 190
Fort Duchesne, UT 84026-0190

RE: Docket No. FD 36284, Seven County Infrastructure Coalition—Construction & Operation
Exemption—in Utah, Carbon, Duchesne, and Uintah Counties, Utah

Dear Ms. Chapoose:

The purpose of this letter is to formally invite Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation (Ute Indian Tribe) to consult with the Surface Transportation Board (Board) pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) regarding the above-referenced project. The Board assumes that the Ute Indian Tribe has assumed the role of the State Historic Preservation Office with respect to undertakings taking place on tribal lands. The Board, therefore, extends this invitation pursuant to 36 CFR Section 800.2 (c) (2) (i) (B).

The Seven County Infrastructure Coalition (Coalition) plans to file a request with the Board for authority to construct and operate an approximately 80-mile rail line between two terminus points in the Uinta Basin near Myton, Utah, and Leland Bench, Utah, and the interstate rail network. The Board's Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA) has determined that the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is appropriate pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended (42 U.S.C. §§ 4321 *et seq.*) and related laws and regulations, including historic preservation reviews under Section 106 of the NHPA.

As currently proposed, the Coalition's rail line would be constructed and operated between two terminus points within the Uinta Basin in Utah and an existing Union Pacific rail line near Kyune, Utah, for a distance of approximately 80 miles (see attached map). The Coalition has evaluated potential routes connecting the Uinta Basin to the national rail network and has identified three alternative routes that would be both technically and commercially feasible: the Indian Canyon Route (~80 miles), the Craig Route (~185 miles), and the Wells Draw Route (~105 miles). One of the potential alternatives, the Indian Canyon Route, would cross Ute tribal land in the Uintah and Ouray Reservation (see the attached map.) More information is available on the project website at www.UintaBasinRailwayEIS.com.

Over the coming months, OEA will develop a reasonable range of alternatives to evaluate in the EIS and for NHPA analysis. Public scoping meetings will assist OEA in identifying other agencies with an interest or expertise in the project and defining the range of alternatives and potential impacts on the human and natural environment to be considered in the EIS. Once that range of alternatives is established, OEA will develop a proposed the Area of Potential Effects (APE) for Section 106. OEA intends to invite your comments on the proposed APE. OEA also invites your comments on properties of cultural or religious significance.

OEA intends to consult with the State Historic Preservation Officers of Utah and Colorado.

The Uintah and Ouray Reservation is the only tribal land crossed by the currently proposed alternatives. The Board intends to invite the following tribes to consult regarding properties of cultural or religious significance pursuant to 36 CFR 800.2 (c) (2) (ii).

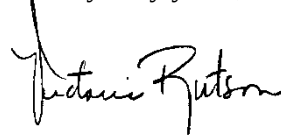
- Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation, Utah
- Apache Tribe of Oklahoma
- Eastern Shoshone Tribe of the Wind River Reservation, Wyoming
- Confederated Tribes of the Goshute Reservation, Nevada and Utah
- Fort Belknap Indian Community of the Fort Belknap Reservation of Montana
- Hopi Tribe of Arizona
- Navajo Nation, Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah
- Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation, Utah
- Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah (Cedar Band of Paiutes, Kanosh Band of Paiutes, Koosharem Band of Paiutes, Indian Peaks Band of Paiutes, and Shivwits Band of Paiutes)
- Shoshone-Bannock Tribes of the Fort Hall Reservation, Idaho
- Skull Valley Band of Goshute Indians
- White Mesa/Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, Utah and Colorado

We welcome your comments or suggestions regarding consulting parties.

Additional information is available on the project website at www.UintaBasinRailwayEIS.com. At any time, if you would like to discuss the undertaking in more detail, please contact Joshua Wayland, PhD, OEA's Project Manager for the EIS at (202) 245-0330 or by email at Joshua.Wayland@stb.gov

We look forward to continuing consultation with you on this undertaking.

Very truly yours,



Victoria Rutson
Director
Office of Environmental Analysis

Enclosures:

- Figure 1 - Uinta Basin Railway Proposed Alternatives
- Figure 2 - Indian Canyon Route
- Figure 3 - Craig Route
- Figure 4 - Wells Draw Route

