

Submission Number: *FD-30186-000015*

Received: 5/8/2015 3:10:07 PM

Commenter: Dan Cohn

Organization: Western Organization of Resource Councils

State: Montana

Agency: Surface Transportation Board

Initiative: Tongue River Railroad

Submission Text

Attached, please find a letter requesting an extension of the public comment period for the draft EIS for the proposed Tongue River Railroad, submitted on behalf of the eight undersigned groups: Climate Solutions - Olympia, WA Friends of the Earth - Washington, DC Greenpeace USA - Denver, CO Montana Wildlife Federation - Helena, MT Natural Resources Defense Council - New York, NY RE Sources for Sustainable Communities - Bellingham, WA Sightline Institute - Seattle, WA Western Organization of Resource Councils - Billings, MT

**Climate Solutions • Friends of the Earth • Greenpeace USA
Montana Wildlife Federation • Natural Resources Defense Council • Sightline Institute
RE Sources for Sustainable Communities • Western Organization of Resource Councils**

May 8, 2015

Victoria Rutson, Director
Office of Environmental Analysis
Surface Transportation Board
395 E. Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20423

Dear Ms. Rutson:

On behalf of our many members across the United States, our organizations are writing to urge the Surface Transportation Board (STB) to grant a 60-day extension to the public comment period allowed for the Tongue River Railroad (TRR) draft environmental impact statement (DEIS). We believe that granting the interested public 120 days to review and comment on this important document is warranted by the demonstrated public interest in the proposal and the substantial length and complexity of the DEIS.

The Tongue River Railroad was first proposed in 1979. In the intervening 36 years, the proposal has garnered intense and growing public interest from communities and organizations within and beyond Montana, as evidenced in the volume of scoping comments received by the Board. Furthermore, our organizations recognize the many months that went into preparing the thousands of pages of DEIS documents. We believe the public should have the fullest opportunity to respond.

Given the sheer size of the DEIS and the vibrant public interest in the Tongue River Railroad proposal, we believe it is in the best interests of the STB to open a full comment period so that the engaged public may offer the Board constructive, substantive comments. We urge you to extend the comment period by 60 days.

Sincerely,

Bob LeResche, Chair
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