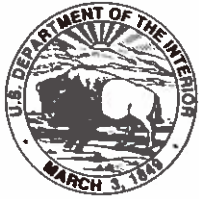


From: [Higgins, Mary](#)
To: [Wayland, Joshua](#); [Uinta Basin Rail Environment](#); [Shered Mullins](#); [Kevin Oliver](#); [Christina Price](#); [Quincy Bahr](#)
Cc: [Matthew Preston](#); [cconrad](#); [Roger Bankert](#); [Gerald Kenczka](#)
Subject: BLM Utah comments on the Uinta Basin Railway Project
Date: Tuesday, September 03, 2019 4:42:55 PM
Attachments: [Utah Scoping Comments Signed.pdf](#)

Attached are Utah BLM's preliminary scoping comments for the project.
A hard copy will be sent to the NEPA contractor in the mail tomorrow. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Mary Higgins, Realty Specialist

BLM, Utah State Office
440 West 200 South, Suite 550
Salt Lake City City, UT 84111
Office (801) 539-4105
email mhiggins@blm.gov



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
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440 West 200 South, Suite 500
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<http://www.blm.gov/utah>

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UTU-094286

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Surface Transportation Board
Attn: Joshua Wayland, Ph.D.
c/o ICF
9300 Lee Highway
Fairfax, VA 22031

Dear Mr. Wayland:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Utah State Office is providing this preliminary response to your request for comments on "*The Seven County Infrastructure Coalition Rail Construction & Operation in Utah, Carbon, Duchesne, and Uintah Counties, Utah*, (the Proposal)," listed under Docket Number FD 36284.

Our preliminary review of the public lands affected by the Proposal are as follows:

1. The Indian Canyon Route as currently proposed would cross approximately 1.6 miles of Federal surface estate within the Salt Lake Field Office, and 1.3 miles within the Price Field Office.
2. The Wells Draw Route as currently proposed would cross approximately 1.6 miles of Federal surface estate within the Salt Lake Field Office, 1.3 miles within the Price Field Office, and 54.7 miles within the Vernal Field Office.
3. The Craig Route as currently proposed would cross approximately 33 miles of Federal surface estate within the Vernal Field Office.
4. A new right of way would be subject to mineral development on the Federal surface/mineral estate parcels. This also includes both State and private parcels with a reservation of minerals to the U.S, and Federal mineral interests held in trust for the Indian Tribes.
5. The Proposal may impact authorized mineral leases. The applicant would be required to work with permit holders to mitigate impacts to their existing rights.
6. Any of the three proposed routes may require land use plan amendments for the three associated resource management plans to ensure a major infrastructure project, such as a

rail line, is in conformance with the plans in order to be considered for approval by the BLM.

7. The Wells Draw route, as proposed, would cross the Lears Canyon Area Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) (T. 11 S., R. 13 E.) and the Nine Mile Canyon ACEC (T. 11 S., R. 14 E.). Any development within the ACECs will have to ensure the values for which the ACEC was designated are protected.
8. The terminus point of the Indian Canyon and Wells Draw routes would cross at least one Greater Sage-Grouse Priority Habitat Management Area.
9. The Proposal may impact Federally listed threatened and endangered species habitat, as well as habitat for BLM sensitive species. Impacts to all these species must be in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), as well as all the necessary consultations for listed species. In addition, the EIS should consider impacts to and plan conformance with management for visual resources, historic or cultural sites, fish, wildlife, soils and vegetation, big game migration and winter/spring range habitat for moose, elk, mule deer, pronghorn and bighorn sheep, wilderness characteristics, wild and scenic rivers, recreation opportunities, and mineral development opportunities.
10. The Proposal may also effect public health and safety, air quality, wildland fire risk, firefighter safety, and increased construction and traffic on roadways.
11. The BLM has notified adjacent and nearby land use permit holders as the railway may present conflicts with current land uses. The applicant will be required to work with these permit holders to mitigate impacts to their existing rights.

The BLM, as a cooperating agency, appreciates the opportunity to review and comment on the Proposal and anticipates further more in-depth analysis throughout the EIS process.

If you have any questions, please contact Shered Mullins, Project Manager, at 435-688-3225, or by e-mail at s5mullin@blm.gov.

Sincerely,



Edwin L. Roberson
State Director