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Jim Darlington, Range Manager
Inyan Kara Grazing Ass'n.
P.O. Box 458
Newcastle, WY 82701
(307) 746-4240

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Surface Transportation Board Hearing
D.M. & E. E.I.S.

ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT

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MANAGEMENT

Dear STB Planners:

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on this proposal. I have several questions and concerns on this matter, but since I have not had time to thoroughly review this lengthy document yet, I will have to limit my comments to the following items:

1. What are the "recyclable commodities" that may be hauled on this proposed track?
(Vol. VI; page C-75).
2. There are many charts and graphs in the EIS that make no sense at all because everything is the same shade of black and can't be differentiated.
3. A very misleading statement about what National Grasslands are affected is listed on page 4.2-25 (Vol. III-A). "Much is only 40-80 acre tracts that are inaccessible." Several large tracts are dissected, and only one 40 acre tract is crossed on the TBNG.
4. Much of the EIS seems to be built around a predetermined conclusion. For example in Vol. I - page 2-54, it is stated that non-construction alternatives are not discussed because they, "would not advance Applicant's goals". This EIS is supposed to be a discussion of environmental impacts.
5. Is funding for the project any closer than it was in June of 1997?
6. Do the coal mines have plans to construct additional tipples and separate access for DM & E?
The present bottlenecks are largely at the mines themselves and would only be exacerbated with one more transporter waiting in line, unless this is acted upon.
7. Achievement of a 1% grade will be very difficult through much of the chosen route.
8. Vol. I - Figures 2-15 & 16 show profiles on the rejected Alternative D. Why are not these same types of profiles available for Alternatives B & C? That would make it much easier for people working on mitigations needed. If we don't know how wide an area is affected, our responses are just guesses in many cases. This also relates to above #7.
9. The West Yard in Alternative B lies in a flood plain, that is completely covered with water on a not rare basis - ARE YOU SERIOUS???

Jim Darlington