

PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING

July 16, 2019

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July 16, 2019

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3 PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING
4 FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
5 ON THE UINTA BASIN RAILWAY
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10 Taken on Tuesday, July 16, 2019

11
12 from 5:00 to 7:00 P.M.
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15 At Moffat County Fairgrounds
16 640 East Victory Way
17 Craig, Colorado 81625
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24 Reported by: Kellie Peterson, RPR, CSR
25

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 2</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A P P E A R A N C E S</p> <p>1</p> <p>2</p> <p>3 Dr. Joshua Wayland, OEA Project Manager</p> <p>4 Laura Ziemke, Meeting Facilitator</p> <p>5 David Navecky, OEA</p> <p>6</p> <p>7</p> <p>8</p> <p>9</p> <p>10</p> <p>11</p> <p>12</p> <p>13</p> <p>14</p> <p>15</p> <p>16</p> <p>17</p> <p>18</p> <p>19</p> <p>20</p> <p>21</p> <p>22</p> <p>23</p> <p>24</p> <p>25</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 4</p> <p>1 First, I'm going to introduce myself and the</p> <p>2 Surface Transportation Board, and then I will briefly</p> <p>3 explain our environmental review process. And then I'll</p> <p>4 review some basic information about the proposal and I'll</p> <p>5 discuss some categories of potential environmental</p> <p>6 impacts of the proposed rail line. And then, finally,</p> <p>7 I'm going to review how you can comment on this proposal.</p> <p>8 So let's start with a few introductions. My</p> <p>9 name is Josh Wayland. I work for the Surface</p> <p>10 Transportation Board's Office of Environmental Analysis,</p> <p>11 or OEA. Also here from OEA is Dave Navecky, sitting next</p> <p>12 to me. Then I see in the audience we have Jennifer</p> <p>13 Whyte, from the BLM, one of our cooperating agencies, and</p> <p>14 then Jeff Comstock is here representing Moffat County.</p> <p>15 You might have also met some technical staff</p> <p>16 as you looked at the poster boards and walked around the</p> <p>17 room. These folks work for ICF. ICF is an environmental</p> <p>18 consulting company that's working as our third-party</p> <p>19 contractor for this proposal.</p> <p>20 Our office at OEA is very small, so we often</p> <p>21 work with a contractor to help us with our environmental</p> <p>22 reviews.</p> <p>23 So this slide summarizes the role of the</p> <p>24 Surface Transportation Board in this project. The board</p> <p>25 is a federal agency that has jurisdiction over the</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 3</p> <p style="text-align: center;">P R O C E E D I N G S</p> <p>1</p> <p>2</p> <p>3 LAURA ZIEMKE: All right. My name is Laura</p> <p>4 Ziemke. I'll be your facilitator for the evening. And</p> <p>5 at this time, I would like to introduce Dr. Josh Wayland,</p> <p>6 of the Surface Transportation Board, Office of the</p> <p>7 Environmental Analysis.</p> <p>8 Also I will just state, every once in a</p> <p>9 while, you'll hear us say OEA. That's for the Office of</p> <p>10 Environmental Analysis.</p> <p>11 DR. JOSHUA WAYLAND: Okay. Can everyone hear</p> <p>12 me? I think so. This volume? We're good?</p> <p>13 Hi, everyone, and thank you for coming to</p> <p>14 this scoping meeting for the proposed Uinta Basin Railway</p> <p>15 project. Hopefully, you've all had the opportunity to</p> <p>16 look at the poster boards around the room and speak with</p> <p>17 some of the staff and learn a little bit about the</p> <p>18 project already.</p> <p>19 This presentation is just going to be a very</p> <p>20 brief, high-level overview of the project and of the role</p> <p>21 of my agency, the Surface Transportation Board.</p> <p>22 LAURA ZIEMKE: Matt, go ahead and turn the</p> <p>23 lights off, please.</p> <p>24 DR. JOSHUA WAYLAND: So here's a brief agenda</p> <p>25 of what I would like to talk about today.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 5</p> <p>1 interstate freight railroad network. So before a</p> <p>2 railroad company can construct a new line of railroad</p> <p>3 that would connect to that network, they need to get</p> <p>4 approval from the Surface Transportation Board.</p> <p>5 In this case, the Seven County Infrastructure</p> <p>6 Coalition plans to request approval to construct a new</p> <p>7 rail line that would connect to the Uinta Basin in Utah</p> <p>8 to the infrastructure freight railroad network.</p> <p>9 Before the board -- before the Surface</p> <p>10 Transportation Board can make a decision on that</p> <p>11 proposal, the board has to consider the potential</p> <p>12 environmental impact of the proposed rail line. And my</p> <p>13 office, OEA, is the office at the board that will be</p> <p>14 responsible for preparing an Environmental Impact</p> <p>15 Statement or EIS, to inform the board and the public</p> <p>16 about those potential environmental impacts.</p> <p>17 This slide shows OEA's environmental review</p> <p>18 process. I'd like to emphasize right away that we are</p> <p>19 still very early in this process. Right now we are in</p> <p>20 the scoping phase, which is the first step of preparing</p> <p>21 an EIS. After scoping is complete, OEA will begin</p> <p>22 preparing a draft EIS. That will examine the potential</p> <p>23 environmental impacts of the Seven County Infrastructure</p> <p>24 Coalition's proposal.</p> <p>25 Now you will notice that the public will have</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 6</p> <p>1 another opportunity to comment on that draft EIS and we 2 will hold another series of public meetings at that time. 3 After receiving comments on the draft EIS, 4 OEA will prepare a final EIS, a final Environmental 5 Impact Statement that will document our final conclusions 6 and recommendations. The board will make its final 7 decision on the coalition proposal only after the 8 environmental review process is complete. In making that 9 final decision, the board will consider both the 10 environmental impacts of the proposal and the 11 transportation merits. 12 So I would like to emphasize again, that the 13 Uinta Basin Railway is not a project that is being 14 proposed or sponsored by the federal government. The 15 coalition, the Seven County Infrastructure Coalition, is 16 the applicant in this case, and according to the 17 coalition, the purpose of the proposed rail line would be 18 to provide common carrier rail service connecting the 19 Uinta Basin to the interstate rail network using a route 20 that would allow the coalition to attract shippers with a 21 cost-effective rail alternative to trucking. 22 To meet that objective, the coalition is 23 proposing to construct and operate an approximately 80 24 mile rail line that would extend from two terminus points 25 within the Uinta Basin, near Myton, Utah, and Leland</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 8</p> <p>1 the same end point as the Indian Canyon route, but it 2 would follow a different route in between those end 3 points and be somewhat longer at approximately 105 miles. 4 Then the third alternative is the Craig 5 route, which would extend eastward approximately 185 6 miles, from Myton and Leland Bench, Utah, to an existing 7 rail line near Axial, Colorado. 8 As part of this scoping process, OEA welcomes 9 your comments on these proposed alternatives or other 10 alternatives that OEA should consider in the EIS. 11 In addition to identifying potential 12 alternatives, another objective of this scoping process 13 that we are in right now, is to identify the potential 14 environmental impacts or categories of potential 15 environmental impacts that could occur as a result of 16 this proposed rail line. 17 So this slide shows some of the resourced 18 areas that OEA has identified to date to be considered in 19 EIS. They include public safety and transportation, air 20 quality and climate change, noise and vibration, land 21 use, cultural and historic resources, biological 22 resources, food and wildlife, socioeconomics, recreation, 23 water resources, visual resources, geology and soils and 24 environmental justice. 25 So I would like to turn now to a discussion</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 7</p> <p>1 Bench, Utah, to an existing rail line near Kyune, Utah. 2 The coalition has also identified two other 3 alternatives that would meet their purpose. The three 4 proposed alternatives together are called the Indian 5 Canyon route. That is the applicant's preferred route, 6 that is the coalition's preferred route. Then there's 7 the Wells Draw route and the Craig route. 8 The coalition has estimated that regardless 9 of which alternative were to be, if any were to be, 10 alternately approved and constructed, approximately seven 11 trains would move on the proposed rail line per day on 12 average. Those trains would carry such commodities as 13 crude oil, fracturing sand and other fracking equipment 14 and machinery and other mineral and agriculture products. 15 This slide shows a screenshot from our 16 project website that the board has put together. You can 17 access it at www.uintabasinrailwayeis.com. This page 18 shows a map of the proposed rail line and the proposed 19 alternatives. Once again, the coalition's preferred 20 alternative is the Indian Canyon route, which is shown 21 here in the purple. 22 It would, again, be approximately 80 miles 23 long and would extend from Myton and Leland Bench to an 24 existing rail line near Kyune, all in Utah. The Wells 25 Draw route is shown in red, the dark red. It would have</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 9</p> <p>1 of how you can submit your comments during this scoping 2 process. This is a screenshot of the board's website, 3 www.stb.gov. From this home page you can find 4 information about the case, including the notice of 5 intent to prepare an EIS, which started this scoping 6 process that we are in now. 7 On the upper left-hand side of the screen you 8 will see a link called e-filing where you can make 9 comments on the project. 10 Here's a screenshot, another screenshot of 11 the board's sponsored project website and it's at 12 www.uintabasinrailwayeis.com. You will notice that the 13 tab along the left-hand side allows you to access 14 additional information about the project. 15 So, for example, this slide shows what would 16 come up if you were to click on the "submit comment" tab 17 from the project website. This is another place where 18 you can submit your comments. You will notice that you 19 have the option to include location information in your 20 comment and that field will be populated automatically if 21 you click on the interactive map on the right-hand side 22 of the screen. 23 Another way to submit comments is here at the 24 meeting today and I do want to leave plenty of time to 25 hear from everybody who would like to speak. So thank</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 10</p> <p>1 you all for your -- again, for your participation in the 2 board's environmental review process. I look forward to 3 hearing from you all. 4 I'm going to show you just one more slide 5 that I will leave up while we begin the oral comment 6 phase and this shows the various ways that you can 7 comment on the proposal. There are also handouts that 8 you may have gotten up there at the front desk that show 9 this slide, in case you want to take those home with you. 10 And with that, I will turn it back over to 11 Laura for the oral comments. 12 LAURA ZIEMKE: Great. 13 DR. JOSHUA WAYLAND: Thank you. 14 LAURA ZIEMKE: Thank you, Josh. All right. 15 We've now reached the third part of our evening, which 16 gives you the opportunity, those of you who would like to 17 provide oral comments, to come forward and give those 18 oral comments. We do have a court reporter here this 19 evening and she will be capturing everything that is said 20 during this meeting. 21 Throughout the process this evening, I would 22 ask that you keep in mind that this is not an arena for 23 debate and it's also not a question and answer period 24 when you come forward to give you oral comments. 25 However, after this portion of the meeting is over, OEA</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 12</p> <p>1 comment, and then if you hit five minutes, I will hold up 2 this red card to let you know that it's time to stop. 3 All right. 4 Please speak slowly and clearly when you are 5 giving your comment and state your full name and spell it 6 for the court reporter so that she can capture everything 7 correctly. 8 If you're representing someone else or a 9 group, please make sure to include that information up 10 front. We need this information to make sure the court 11 reporter captures everything accurately. 12 Please do not provide any personal 13 information that you do not want shared publicly because 14 this will become part of the public EIS, these comments 15 today. 16 Let's see, all right. So with that, I would 17 like to go ahead and pull up our first individual, 18 Melissa Peck. Oh, I will turn on this speaker here. 19 If you can come right up here, Melissa. 20 MELISSA PECK: My name is Melissa Peck, and 21 I'm a property owner in Indian Canyon in Argyle Canyon, 22 and I'm also a member of the Argyle Wilderness 23 Preservation Alliance. 24 I want it on record that I actually oppose 25 the whole project, the whole Uinta Basin Railway, but</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 11</p> <p>1 will be back out on the floor with the board and you will 2 be more than welcome to ask any questions that you might 3 have at that time. 4 But this is your opportunity to just gather 5 your concerns and your issues and share those with OEA 6 here. So in order to move through the oral comment 7 process in an orderly fashion, I'd ask that you follow 8 the following rules -- well, actually, do we have any 9 elected officials who wanted to speak this evening? No? 10 Okay. Then I will go ahead and move on beyond that. 11 So what I will be doing here is, I will be 12 calling people up, one person at a time. As you checked 13 in today, those of you who wanted to speak, you marked 14 the box that you wanted to give an oral comment. So I 15 will call you up as you enter the building here, she has 16 given me the cards. 17 Is there anyone else, before we get started, 18 who didn't mark the box and you wanted to give an oral 19 comment? If you did, if you can raise your hand, we can 20 hand you a card. No? All right. 21 The way the process works is, as I said, I 22 will call you up individually. We will give you five 23 minutes to give your oral comment. When you get to four 24 and a half minutes, I will hold up this yellow card, just 25 to let you know that you have 30 seconds left for your</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 13</p> <p>1 especially the Indian Canyon and Wells Draw route because 2 they -- I don't know if you have ever been near the 3 train. They have done four studies on the Indian Canyon 4 route, as far as the train goes, already in the last 5 17-18 years and they have all been declined for too 6 steepness, too rugged, and too costly. 7 The last one was done a few years ago by UDOT 8 and supposedly was supposed to be \$5-something billion, 9 and I don't see how they can make this project at 1.2 10 billion. I don't see that happening. I think the price 11 tag will definitely go up. 12 Another thing I'm confused about, is when the 13 SCIC started this project, three of their board members 14 also sat on the CIB board and now there's two. To me, 15 that's a conflict of interest because it's like us -- the 16 left-hand asking the right hand for money to fund this 17 study and the right hand saying okay here you go. So I 18 don't know if that is legal or not but it doesn't sound 19 ethical in my book. 20 They have given them almost \$30 million just 21 for this study, when there's already been four others and 22 this is the fifth study now. So I'm a little upset about 23 that, that they can use public money for things like 24 this. 25 I know that the SCIC has -- I don't know,</p>

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1 they said they have a financial backer that can handle
 2 trillions of dollars if they're financed. Financial
 3 backer is Drexel Hamilton and they don't -- as far as I
 4 know, according to CIB meeting, they don't have a
 5 contract with them, and they would like the railroad to
 6 be federally funded and I don't see how that's possible
 7 either, that it can be federally funded, yet privately
 8 owned as well.

9 To me, that seems like I want the federal
 10 government to come and pay to build my house, but I want
 11 to still own it and run it and maintain it. And if
 12 that's the case, then yeah, hook me up.

13 So anyway, we've owned our property since
 14 1996, and we have been there for three generations. We
 15 have raised four girls there, and now we have four
 16 grandsons. They rock my world, but they love it up there
 17 and it's the best thing for them, to keep them out of
 18 trouble, to keep them out of -- you know, getting hooked
 19 on video games and anything else. We need this place up
 20 here.

21 The railroad is trying to go through it, and
 22 it was going to go right through our property and now
 23 it's going, like -- like, 100 yards away but that's still
 24 too much. We live near a train in Lehi, and my windows
 25 rattle, my mirrors rattle and sometimes they'll park a

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1 train there all night long, and we have the vibrations
 2 and we go up there to get away from that and so does
 3 everybody.

4 Anyway, we started a petition, a couple
 5 months ago, and we have over 3,500 names opposing this
 6 railroad on this petition. This means a lot to a lot of
 7 people up there and not just up there, like, we have
 8 people from Utah and out of Utah saying this isn't right.

9 So another thing is, I think we need to
 10 protect our canyon lands. This canyon in particular,
 11 because this canyon -- it's pines and quakies and it's
 12 beautiful and quiet and it's full of wildlife. We have
 13 ground up there. We have lions and bears and bobcats and
 14 deer and elk and we coexist with them. We're off the
 15 grid. We are an off-the-grid community.

16 And we bring our own water. We bring our
 17 own -- everything. A few of us are lucky enough to have
 18 a spring, and I'm worried that the vibration from the
 19 train will ruin the spring. In a desert-y area like the
 20 Basin and Carbon County and stuff, this is a -- I don't
 21 want to see it ruined, our canyon lands. They are slowly
 22 fading away, and we don't want to lose this.

23 One other thing, I know I'm just about out of
 24 time, but today is my husband's 50th birthday, and it's a
 25 milestone birthday and this is not what we had planned to

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1 do today. I don't know if any of you would want to be
 2 doing an STB meeting on your 50th birthday, but this is
 3 how important this is to us.

4 We don't want to lose this place. We plan to
 5 retire here. We plan to have fourth and fifth generation
 6 of kids. We don't want this, and I'm worried about what
 7 the train will bring. It hasn't done a lot for Price and
 8 Helper. Their farmers aren't hauling their goods on
 9 train. It's cheaper to truck.

10 I worry about what it's going to do all the
 11 way around. I feel like it's a doom effect and I really,
 12 really want you to reconsider not doing this.

13 Thank you.

14 LAURA ZIEMKE: All right. Thank you,
 15 Melissa.

16 Darrell Fordham? And, Darrell, can you stand
 17 a little bit closer to the speaker?

18 DARRELL FORDHAM: Sure.

19 LAURA ZIEMKE: Thanks.

20 DARRELL FORDHAM: All right. So my name is
 21 Darrell Fordham, D-A-R-R-E-L-L F-O-R-D-H-A-M, and I
 22 represent the Argyle Wilderness Preservation Alliance.

23 So in my past career, I spent 15 years as a
 24 commercial construction manager. I worked for several
 25 government agencies, in both Utah and Wyoming on public

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1 projects, including local county and state government
 2 entities on multimillion dollar construction projects.

3 I assisted with public meetings and public
 4 interactions and I have seen the difference it makes when
 5 a government entity understands who they work for and
 6 that their role is to be the people's business and when
 7 they truly care about informing the public and being open
 8 and honest and transparent.

9 Those experiences stand in extreme contrast
 10 to our experience thus far with the Uinta Basin Railway
 11 project and the project proponent, the Seven County
 12 Infrastructure Coalition.

13 After nearly three months of requests for
 14 financial feasibility information regarding the project,
 15 just a few days ago, I received a response from legal
 16 counsel of SCIC. The documents presented have virtually
 17 all financial feasibility information and amounts
 18 redacted, such that the documentation is virtually
 19 useless in providing the public an opportunity to review
 20 and evaluate their financial feasibility of this project.

21 SCIC continually tells us the railway is a
 22 public project and will be commentary railway. Why then
 23 is all pertinent information regarding the specifics of
 24 the railway pro forma being withheld from the public?
 25 SCIC consultants railway feasibility and

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 18</p> <p>1 preselection process resulted in selection of Indian 2 Canyon, Wells Draw and Craig routes, principally based 3 upon their consultant's own estimation of construction 4 costs for each route. No measurable or verifiable data 5 regarding these discussions or exercises have been made 6 available to the public, nor have their estimates been 7 verified by any independent third-party entity. 8 The public is just expected to take their 9 word for it, even though the alleged cost differences 10 between the preferred Indian Canyon route and proposed 11 Craig route are within 15 percent of each other. I can 12 guarantee you, after -- done all these construction 13 projects that, you know, costs can vary on a project of 14 this magnitude by a much greater than that percentage. 15 You know, and if the railway is truly a 16 financially viable project and if it will truly benefit 17 the communities and the economies that they claim it 18 will, then we feel that it should be built on a 19 practical, feasible, sensible route, rather than through 20 a mountain. 21 I don't know whether Colorado and the local 22 residents of this area are for or against this project, 23 but I feel the Craig route and the Mack and Rifle routes 24 that were originally proposed, are much more sensible, 25 much more safe and much more feasible.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 20</p> <p>1 project, and the SCIC's own documents tout of the 2 production in the Uinta Basin camp and is likely to 3 increase the current production levels from 80,000 4 barrels per day to 350,000 barrels per day and up to as 5 much as 500,000 barrels per day. 6 You know, from what we've seen the reason for 7 the change is the concerns about increased pollution, 8 increased local truck traffic and strain on the Uinta 9 Basin local infrastructures. Thank you. 10 LAURA ZIEMKE: Thank you, Darrell. 11 All right. Next we do have a county 12 commissioner here. We would like to call up Ray Beck. 13 RAY BECK: Thank you. I apologize for being 14 late. I had other meetings I needed to attend but I 15 appreciate you being here. 16 Again, my name is Ray Beck. I'm the county 17 commissioner. I'm here tonight to speak about some of 18 the concerns that we have with the railroad project. So 19 let me just start out by saying this could be an 20 opportunity for Moffat County, in terms of the 21 possibility of an increase tax base and long-term tax 22 base. But with that being said, we have concerns as 23 well. 24 Just to address a couple of them, the 25 differences between the agency, the BLM and the State</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 19</p> <p>1 You know, from what I have been able to 2 gather based on the limited information available, the 3 routes to Colorado have been dismissed and excluded and 4 unfairly treated base on concerns with Colorado 5 permitting and proceed potential opposition from the 6 environmental groups. 7 Along with the secrecy and the questions that 8 we have asked, are at what volume is the railway 9 profitable and financially viable? At what oil price 10 will Uinta Basin producers stop pumping and stop shipping 11 oil out of the basin? And if and when that happens, who 12 will pay the loan payments for the railway? If the 13 economy slows, then the production of oil drops, what 14 will be the fate of the railway at that point? 15 We've also asked who is actually going to 16 fund the construction of the railway? There's just been 17 a lot of back and forth, and we hear one thing at one 18 meeting and then the next month, we hear something 19 totally different. 20 In the July 3rd SCIC meeting, Director McKee 21 explicitly backed away from the insinuation that 22 construction of the railway would result in an increase 23 in oil production in the basin. So you would have to ask 24 yourself why? 25 Mr. McKee, and others associated with the</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 21</p> <p>1 Transportation Board, and seeing how those philosophies 2 line up, because sometimes and, oftentimes, they don't, 3 and it can complicate the process, slow down the process 4 through the NEPA process, and those things that we have 5 traditionally, as county commissioners over the years, 6 dealt with. 7 So we would like to know what that looks like 8 and it would be very helpful if those two entities could 9 work together in the important stuff of the project. 10 And then the other thing that we are 11 concerned about is, obviously, our land use. So we have 12 what we call a land use board that's been in existence 13 for a lot of years. We have about a ten members to 14 twelve members that consistently participate in the land 15 use board. 16 Our natural resource director, Jeff Comstock, 17 is the one that actually sets up the agenda, takes the 18 minutes and pulls people together in that. So myself and 19 Commissioner Tom Cook attend that on a regular basis but 20 they are very knowledgeable. They have a lot of 21 background on public lands and water issues and things 22 like this. Conservation easement is an example -- and 23 oil and gas. 24 So we take a lot of -- some of the decisions 25 that we make as county commissioners based on the input</p>

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1 that we get from our land use board.
 2 So that would be something that we would be
 3 concerned about because we know as this rail line,
 4 whatever option it is and the Craig line is picked, that
 5 you are going to be dealing with landowners and what that
 6 might look like for short-term and long-term compensation
 7 for right-of-ways and those types of things.
 8 The other thing that -- we had a conversation
 9 with Josh, and that's that we are requesting that we be
 10 cooperating agency status. And there's reasons for that.
 11 Reasons mean that we know our county, probably as good or
 12 better than an outside organization, such as the state
 13 land board. It will benefit us representing our county
 14 and also benefit the state transportation board because
 15 we can provide information that they may not be privy to.
 16 We would like to be labeled and at least have
 17 that status that has a little bit more clout, if you
 18 will, as opposed to being a consultant. You can consult
 19 anybody, but at the end of the day, we have a number of
 20 corporate agencies that we also do at the state level.
 21 So that's important. And then the logistics,
 22 from what happens from here, past Moffat County line, in
 23 terms of what would that look like going forward through
 24 tunnels, hazardous waste and -- not necessarily waste but
 25 fluids, and what would that look like if the train was

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1 going to use that as a means of transportation to export,
 2 if you will, those types of things.
 3 So those are some of our major concerns. We
 4 have had conversations with Josh, and we met with him
 5 and, I think, Daniel up there in Washington, D.C., and
 6 had these conversation as well. So, again, if we can get
 7 some of those questions answered as we move forward, that
 8 would be very helpful.
 9 Thank you for your time, appreciate you being
 10 here.
 11 LAURA ZIEMKE: Thank you, Commissioner Beck.
 12 All right. Our next individual is Roger
 13 Peck. And, Roger, could you please state your name and
 14 spell it, please?
 15 ROGER PECK: My name is Roger Peck, R-O-G-E-R
 16 P-E-C-K. I'm a landowner in Indian Canyon, Argyle Canyon
 17 area, as well as a member of the Argyle Wilderness
 18 Preservation Alliance.
 19 I oppose this project for multiple reasons,
 20 particularly the Wells Draw and Indian Canyon routes.
 21 I'm a contractor licensed in the state of Utah as an
 22 engineer and in earthwork. We do mining and excavation
 23 and reclamation services. That is what we do for a
 24 living.
 25 I know the terrain well in Indian Canyon and

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1 Argyle Canyon, and there's just too many challenges. I
 2 know the project can be built but not at the estimated
 3 figure they're saying. From my experience, that would be
 4 impossible. As other routes have provided information,
 5 that those numbers will come in much higher.
 6 I know there's just too many geographical and
 7 geological challenges and concerns in that area. There's
 8 a bunch more viable routes. I feel like either in Craig,
 9 Colorado, or there are some I haven't seen listed such as
 10 crossing across the Nine Mile Canyon and into Wellington,
 11 Utah, where there is already a rail hub set up there. To
 12 me, that would be a much shorter route and a lot fewer
 13 challenges and more cost efficient.
 14 Also, I would like to make a comment that I
 15 used to be a firefighter, not only for our local
 16 municipality but a wildland firefighter for the U.S.
 17 Forest Service. I have been on many fires and including
 18 many fires started by train.
 19 We had one through Lehi that went through
 20 miles of section because of a bad bearing on a wheel,
 21 started multiple fires all the way through town. That
 22 was in a low fuel area. Somewhere like our forest, heavy
 23 wooded area, would be a disaster. It could be -- it
 24 could pin people in their places, limited access, they
 25 couldn't get out. People could die because of a fire

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1 like that. So I'm very concerned about fire situation.
 2 Those are my biggest concerns that I would
 3 like to express. Thank you.
 4 LAURA ZIEMKE: Thank you, Roger.
 5 All right. Our next individual is Rebecca
 6 Fordham.
 7 REBECCA FORDHAM: Becca Fordham, B-E-C-C-A
 8 F-O-R-D-H-A-M. I'm a part of the Argyle Wilderness
 9 Alliance. I have no doubt that the railroad can be
 10 built, but I worry at what cost.
 11 In 2014, UDOT did a study and came back. The
 12 cost would be anywhere from 3.5 billion to 5 billion to
 13 do the railroad, and they said that was just too cost
 14 high, too much. And that there's no way the railroad
 15 would be able to pay back at that amount.
 16 So then here comes the SCIC and Jones
 17 Engineering saying they can do it for 1.2 billion. How?
 18 How do they magically cut the number in half with the
 19 same route through Indian Canyon? I call BS. I just
 20 think there is no way they can do that.
 21 So my concern is, they get into it, they
 22 start building it and the cost keeps going up and up and
 23 up. Who's going to pay for it? They have their backer,
 24 so they say, of Drexel Hamilton -- I always want to say
 25 Heritage, but they haven't even signed a contract with

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1 them. They're so confident about this railroad and its
2 viability but they don't even have a signed contract with
3 this backer.
4 So who is going to be on the hook? Us?
5 Taxpayers? These small rural counties? We can't afford
6 that. My taxes are already outrageous in Duchesne. So
7 that's one of my biggest concerns.
8 My other one is, what about the environmental
9 impact? Not just on our mountain, on our animals, our
10 springs but what about the air quality of these small
11 towns? Do they realize what these wells put out in
12 pollution? From what I heard from the research, each
13 well puts out 23 times more than all of these trucks.
14 Have they looked into these small towns and
15 looked into the kind of environmental impact it will put
16 on their air quality. That is a big concern.
17 The other thing you need to understand is, I
18 understand that we have recreational property but a lot
19 of us bought these cabins, bought our property and built
20 these small cabins. They're not glorified, wonderful
21 beautiful homes. They're little, small, glorified sheds.
22 We bring in our own water. We bring in a generator when
23 we want power. We haul in, we haul out.
24 It's just camping for us, but it's where we
25 plan to retire. Our community is no different than

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1 people that buy second homes in St. George or second
2 homes in Arizona and go down there for the wintertime.
3 We go up to our cabin for summertime and
4 that's where we plan to retire. We've saved and we
5 scrimped. We've never gone on vacation. That is what we
6 do and that is what we have done with our children. We
7 built this cabin. We've built it over ten years. It's
8 still not finished. We still have a ton of work to do
9 but that is what we do and that's what we love and that
10 is where we plan to retire.
11 I just feel like -- I want you to understand
12 that this is our dream and that's -- you wouldn't go just
13 build a train right through subdivisions in the middle of
14 St. George, any more than you would through a canyon up
15 there just because it's the mountains.
16 The other thing I would like you to
17 understand, is SCIC claims that this railroad is going to
18 bring a lot of commerce and business to the Uinta Basin,
19 yet they cannot provide a single name or contract from
20 any business or any company that is interested in coming
21 to the basin.
22 So if it is so viable, why can't they produce
23 anything that shows that anybody wants to come to the
24 basin if there's a railroad?
25 I also don't know of any farmers that ship

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1 their hay or their grain or any of their product by train
2 because it is simply too expensive.
3 My husband has -- we own a monument company.
4 He orders granite from Georgia five times a year. He has
5 looked into having it shipped by railway. It's too
6 expensive. It is cheaper by truck. Trucking is simply
7 cheaper.
8 In fact, you need to look into Mike McKee.
9 He changes what he says many times, at every meeting. At
10 first, the first meeting we went to in March, 300,000
11 barrels is what they will produce every day. Now it is
12 down to 80,000. Last meeting, he said, "I don't know
13 where they got that number from."
14 Well, it came from Mike McKee. He also
15 stated in an interview back in October of 2018 on the
16 radio, that it's clearly cheaper to truck oil by truck,
17 not rail. Mike McKee talks out of both ends. He also
18 has stated that the Ute Tribe is 100 percent on board.
19 They are not. He doesn't speak for the Ute Tribe
20 anymore. Thank you.
21 LAURA ZIEMKE: Thank you, Rebecca.
22 All right. Our next individual is Ron
23 Kruczek. If you could state your name and spell it for
24 the court reporter, please.
25 DR. RON KRUCZEK: I'm Dr. Ron Kruczek,

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1 spelled K-R-U-C-Z-E-K.
2 When I first heard about this project, I
3 thought, great, you know, maybe it's extending profits.
4 Maybe it will increase our chance of getting passenger
5 train service in Craig, but it looks like that's not
6 going to happen. It looks like only the Craig
7 alternative is going to have any impact on Colorado at
8 all. So I will confine my comments to addressing the
9 Craig alternative.
10 I think I have mixed feelings about it. I
11 think there would be some economic benefits to our area.
12 But my main concern is environmental. And, you know,
13 really, the jewel of Moffat County is the Yampa River.
14 So I'm concerned about the parts of the rail that go near
15 the Yampa River flood plain.
16 Two or three weeks ago, we had a spill of
17 about four or five rail cars dumped all -- when they went
18 off the tracks. Coal can be shoveled up and doesn't have
19 any long-term environmental impact. If a tank full of
20 oil dumped and got into the Yampa flood plain, that could
21 be an environmental disaster.
22 It doesn't look like very much of the route
23 that's proposed goes anywhere near the Yampa part of
24 it -- up around the Axial area, looks to me like there
25 could be impacts. But the other thing is, we're talking,


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1 what? Seven trains a day? And presumably, once they tie
 2 into our rail system here, they are going down from here
 3 through Steam Boat, Oak Creek, Yampa. I see a potential
 4 for environmental problems if any of those should spill
 5 into the Yampa floodplain.
 6 That's my main concern here. I think that's
 7 about my only comment.
 8 LAURA ZIEMKE: Great. Thank you, Ron.
 9 All right. Next we have Greg Miles.
 10 If you could state your name and spell it,
 11 please?
 12 GREG MILES: Greg miles, G-R-E-G M-I-L-E-S.
 13 I appreciate the opportunity to be able to
 14 speak tonight at this process. I appreciate it.
 15 For many years oil production has been
 16 stifled in the Uinta Basin because of transportation
 17 concerns. Oil is our No. 1 economic driver in Duchesne
 18 County, and we don't have a pipeline to put it in.
 19 Pipelines are full. We don't have a rail and we don't
 20 have a freeway to get it out. So a rail would bring some
 21 safety to reduce traffic congestion to our county.
 22 It would also spur economic diversity in our
 23 county and give the possibility for shipping of other
 24 goods in and out of the basin.
 25 I think that's a lot more efficient way and

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1 it can be a safe, reliable way to move goods and services
 2 and we respect the other side of this and that's all I
 3 will say. Thank you.
 4 LAURA ZIEMKE: Thank you Greg.
 5 All right. That was our last individual for
 6 oral comments tonight. Is there anyone that we missed
 7 who wanted to give an oral comment?
 8 Okay. All right. Well, we do have about 45
 9 minutes left in the meeting. We would encourage everyone
 10 to stay but Josh and Dave from the Surface Transportation
 11 Board are here, if you have questions for them, please
 12 feel free to reach out to them and talk to them.
 13 The OEA will accept comments up until August
 14 5th. So please, before you leave tonight, make sure to
 15 grab a comment form and we look forward to receiving your
 16 comments.
 17 Thank you.
 18 (The conclusion of the scoping meeting.)
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1 REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE
 2
 3 State of Utah)
)
 4 County of Salt Lake)
 5
 6 I hereby certify that the said meeting
 7 was taken at the time and place herein named;
 8 That the testimony of said speakers
 9 were reported by me in stenotype and thereafter
 10 transcribed into typewritten form.
 11 I further certify that I am not of kin
 12 or otherwise associated with any of the parties of said
 13 cause of action and that I am not interested in the
 14 events thereof.
 15 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I set my hand this
 16 20th day of July, 2019.
 17
 18 
 19
 20 Kellie Peterson, RPR
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