

Submission Number: *UBR-DEIS-00460*

EI-30894

Received: 1/27/2021 7:17:20 PM**Commenter:** James Miska**Organization:****State:** Utah**Agency:** STB**Initiative:** Uinta Basin Railway EIS**Attachments:** No Attachments**Submission Text**

As a small business owner and resident of the State of Utah, I am adamantly opposed to any ongoing progress of Seven County Infrastructure Coalition's proposed railway project. I have read the Board's Statement on the project, and read that: "Based on the analysis in the Draft EIS, OEA concludes that construction and operation of any of the alternatives would result in significant environmental impacts. Major impacts would include temporary and permanent impacts on surface waters and wetlands; impacts on biological resources, including federally listed threatened and endangered species and other protected species; permanent changes to land uses on public and private lands; and noise impacts on residences near the proposed rail line during rail operations" If that weren't enough to give you the idea of how bad this project could be, I would like to make the following comments in addition. The already very poor air quality in the Uinta Basin (exceeding federal standards due to existing fossil fuel extraction) would further get worse. The potential quadruple increase in oil production will contribute irreversibly to greenhouse gas emissions in the region, and further exacerbate our worsening climate catastrophes. Because the current project would run almost the entire length of Indian Canyon Creek, it would affect the entire area with 443 stream crossings. This would have a regular impact on the 61 miles of streams and beyond, to the 26 acres of floodplains. This risk posed to the waterway is unacceptable in this otherwise extremely dry region. The proposed route of the Railway goes through vast roadless areas, truly wild territory. Over 10,000 acres of big game habitat will be affected by the railroad. Some of this area has been designated as crucial big game habitat by the U.S. Forest Service, and it would also negatively impact Greater sage grouse habitat, and areas inhabited by the endangered Barnaby ridge-cress. On top of all this, there are numerous residents of the area that, themselves, do not want the project running through nor near their land; land that for some has been in their families for generations, and in other cases, generations beyond counting, as is the case with indigenous peoples. Exceedingly long trains would create traffic delays and the potential for accidents, spills, and also derailments, and inevitable sparks which could ignite wildfires. This is an unacceptable threat to the health and well-being of this community of people.