



Duchesne County Library

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EI-30564

February 9, 2021

To the Surface Transportation Board's Office of Environmental Analysis,

I am Daniel Mauchley, the Duchesne County Library System Director. Though I have made oral comments in support of the Uinta Basin Railway as a resident, I hope you'll allow me to also express support on behalf of Duchesne County Library. Our library has two branches and staff that visit outlying communities weekly to provide local library services. We also provide online resources that are used by our residents scattered some 50 miles apart. Before COVID our libraries received 90,000 visits, computers were used 11,000 times, and our WiFi was utilized 22,000 times.

The library's many services and programs are of course funded by property tax. The library's financial stability depends on our residents having stable work and residing in our area. The railway will be an important foundation towards that goal, particularly helping improve the cost of supply transportation into the Uintah Basin. It is difficult for businesses to expand to, or for local businesses to start up in, our area when supplies are limited and pricy. This has hampered economic diversification. In just the last six years, a few waves of residents have left the area due to unemployment. Without residents in homes, and businesses open, the library's revenues drop usually during times when more citizens need our services as things get tough.

Though that impact is indirect, we are also embarking on the long awaited construction of a new replacement library in Roosevelt City. We feel the burden of the extra cost of transportation and supply keenly as economical means to transport the needed materials are very limited, requiring us to allocate extra tax dollars and reduce some of the project to remain within budget constraints.

These few examples demonstrate how the railroad would benefit even the library and the community building influence it has. It isn't just about supply and transport; it's also about the trickle down effects that will build the community overall, including the provision of essential services. We realize the railroad will have impacts on some of our residents and particularly our secondary home owners. We acknowledge they should be appropriately compensated for their losses; however, the impacts on the primary residents and their communities aggregate into a necessary positive step for their daily progress and stability. Thank you for your consideration and hard work to create the least impactful route compromise possible!

Sincerely,

Daniel Mauchley
Duchesne County Library Director
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