



GRAND COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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March 8, 2022

The Honorable Michael Bennet
United States Senator for Colorado
261 Russell Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Joe Neguse
United States Representative for Colorado
1419 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Hickenlooper
United States Senator for Colorado
374 Russell Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Delivered via electronic mail:

john_whitney@bennet.senate.gov
sally_boccella@hickenlooper.senate.gov
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RE: Uinta Basin Railway Mitigation Request

Dear Senator Bennet, Senator Hickenlooper, and Representative Neguse,


The Grand County Board of County Commissioners recently discussed the Surface Transportation Board's approval of the Uinta Basin Railway proposal and its potential "downline" impacts throughout our county. Grand County could see up to 350,000 barrels of oil heading east on ten, two-mile-long trains per day on the Union Pacific mainline, which follows the Colorado and Fraser rivers prior to passing through the Moffat Tunnel.

While the Board does not oppose the Uinta Basin Railway project, we are very concerned with emergency services' capacity to contain a spill of crude or any of the related additional chemicals that this project may bring through Grand County. As you are aware, a derailment of this type of shipment in the headwaters of the Colorado River would be catastrophic. Containment and recovery would be extremely important and potentially very complicated, particularly if it occurred in one of our steeply sloping and rugged canyons. Because these trains employ special couplers that do not detach in order

to minimize puncturing of cars, a derailment could mean that whole trains or large sections of trains would need to be recovered. Grand County requests that comprehensive mitigation response plans be developed and equipment staged in Grand County should the project move forward as planned.

We understand that mitigation has already been proposed for the project, however Grand County urges your office to assist with seeking these additional protections against potential “downline” impacts to protect the Fraser and Colorado rivers, and all of the interests that are dependent on that clean and safe source of water, both here in Grand County and downstream.

Sincerely,



Kristen Manguso
Commissioner Chair



Richard Cimino
Commissioner



Merrit Linke
Commissioner

Cc:

Martin Oberman, Surface Transportation Board Chairman, rcpa@stb.gov

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Torie Jarvis, Northwest Colorado Council of Governments, tjarvis@nwccog.org

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