



SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
Washington, DC 20423

Section of Environmental Analysis

June 29, 2007

Dear Reader:

The Surface Transportation Board's (Board) Section of Environmental Analysis (SEA) is pleased to provide you with the enclosed Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Six County Association of Governments proposed 43 - mile rail line in Sanpete, Sevier, and Juab Counties, Utah. The proposed project, also known as the Central Utah Rail Project, would begin at the connection with the Union Pacific Railroad mainline track located near Juab, Utah, about 16 miles south of Nephi, and would terminate about 0.5 mile southwest of Salina, Utah.

This Draft EIS was prepared by SEA in cooperation with the U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Under the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act, the Board is the lead agency for preparing the Draft EIS and BLM is a cooperating agency. The proposed project considered in the Draft EIS involves decisions by the Board and BLM. The Board is the agency responsible for granting authority for the construction and operation of the proposed rail line. BLM is responsible for administering right-of-way grants across public lands.

The Draft EIS discusses the potential environmental impacts that could result from the construction and operation of the proposed rail line and includes SEA's preliminary recommendations for mitigating possible environmental effects. The Draft EIS reflects SEA's independent analysis and considers the views of the public, as well as Federal, state, and local agencies.

Availability of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement

SEA has distributed the Draft EIS to all parties of record, including key governmental agencies and other appropriate entities. SEA has made the Draft EIS available for review in the Richfield Public Library (83 E. Center Street), Salina Public Library (90 W. Main Street), Nephi Public Library (21 E. 100 N.), and the Gunnison Civic Library (38 W. Center Street). The entire document is also available on the Board's website at www.stb.dot.gov.

Public Comment and Review of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency will publish a notice in the Federal Register announcing the availability of the Draft EIS. This notice starts the public comment period, which will last for 45 days. The notice should appear on July 6, 2007, and all comments must be postmarked no later than August 22, 2007.

The public and any interested parties are encouraged to make written comments on all aspects of the Draft EIS. SEA will consider all comments in preparing the Final EIS, which will include SEA's final conclusions and SEA's final recommendations, including mitigation. The Board will then make its final decision regarding this project and any environmental conditions it might impose. When considering whether to grant final approval of the proposed action, the Board will consider the potential environmental effects and any environmental mitigation it might impose on the project.

When submitting comments on the Draft EIS and the recommended environmental mitigation, please be as specific as possible. If you wish to submit written comments regarding this Draft EIS, please send **an original and two copies** to the following address:

Surface Transportation Board
Case Control Unit
395 E Street, SW
Washington, DC 20423
Attn: Phillis Johnson-Ball
STB Docket No. FD 34075

Written comments may also be filed electronically on the Board's web site, www.stb.dot.gov, by clicking on the "E-FILING" link. Comments are due by August 22, 2007.

Thank you for your interest and participation in the environmental review process. If you would like additional information about the environmental review process, please contact SEA's Project Manager for this project, Phillis Johnson-Ball, at (202) 245-0304.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Victoria Rutson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "V".

Victoria Rutson
Chief
Section of Environmental Analysis