

I am a fifth-generation resident of the Uinta Basin and I am opposed to the Uinta Basin Railway for numerous reasons, and these reasons fit into three categories which I will now expound upon.

1. The funding for the initial stages of the project is illegal. The Utah Community Impact Board (CIB) granted almost \$30 million to the Seven County Infrastructure Coalition for the project, using funds that are meant to help communities like mine that are impacted by the oil and gas industry.

At times other residents and I breathe some of the most polluted air in the nation because of ozone produced by oil and gas extraction. I see an oil well when I look out my window to the south, and I see another oil well when I look to the east, and yet another to the north. I hear their sounds, and I worry what they might be doing to the artesian well water my wife and I and our animals drink. To the northwest I see light from the burning of gases at a processing plant, and sometimes the sounds of the burning are audible even inside our house. I worry about pollution from the burning. The road that runs past our house is busy with oil and gas industry traffic.

Community Impact Funds should be used to alleviate the impacts, such as the ones I've mentioned, from the oil and gas industry. Instead they are essentially being returned to the industry through projects like the railway.

In June of 2019 I went to a "community" CIB meeting with the understanding that I would be able to express my concerns about the railway. I was surprised to see a heavy law enforcement presence at the meeting. At the beginning of the meeting a man in the audience stated that the meeting was illegal because the law requires an agenda to be posted and there was no agenda posted, and he was quickly handcuffed and removed from the meeting by officers. I was shocked and offended by what I saw. They didn't let anybody in the office say a word. A woman who tried to comment later in the meeting was told she was out of order and was immediately silenced. I guess they called it a community meeting so they could say they had a community meeting.

Early in the discussion about funding the railway, the state assistant attorney general, Alison Garner, pointed out the possible illegality of what the board was doing. They are now being sued over this and I am convinced that what they have done by choosing to fund the railway is illegal, along with being unethical.

2. Building the railway would impact my recreation opportunities. The railway itself would impact Indian Canyon, a place where I recreate on a regular basis. I recently wrote an article which was published in the Utah Native Plant Society's most recent newsletter (see attached file). The article is about a stand of bristlecone pines I visited last summer in Indian Canyon. I hike in the canyon in the summer and I cross-country ski there in the winter. The railway would adversely impact my opportunities for quiet, peaceful recreation - and it would also negatively affect the wildlife that I go to the area to observe. The proposed railway route cuts through a Forest Service roadless area that has been proposed for wilderness designation by conservation organizations.

Not only would the railway directly impact Indian Canyon - it would also cause more oil and gas activity on other Forest Service and BLM lands that I recreate on in the Uintah Basin.

3. The railway would contribute to climate change. The increased oil and gas activities promoted by the railway would contribute to the burning of fossil fuels and thus add to the greenhouse gases that are causing climate change. Climate change is causing unnaturally large and severe wildfires in the Uinta

Mountains and elsewhere. These fires negatively impact wildlife and also negatively impact recreation opportunities, and they could negatively impact tourism in the Uintah Basin.

Because of the illegal way it is being funded; and the negative impacts it would have on wild lands, wildlife, and recreation opportunities; and the way it would contribute to the existential threat of climate change - this project should not continue forward.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this issue!

Chad Hamblin