



Gilpin County Colorado

Commissioners

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Linda Isenhardt, District 2
Sandy Hollingsworth,
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July 19, 2022

Brenda Mallory, Chair
Council on Environmental Quality
730 Jackson Place, NW
Washington, D.C. 20503

RE: Uinta Basin Railway Project – Letter of Opposition

Honorable Chair Mallory,


On behalf of Gilpin County and the Board of County Commissioners, we are formally expressing opposition to and requesting additional review of the Uinta Basic Railway Project, prior to approval.


As the Denver metropolitan headwater and first county located east of the continental divide, which includes a portion of the critical transportation and communications chokepoint, the Moffat Tunnel, we write to you to express our desire that the project's local and national safety concerns be addressed, along with the local and regional environmental impacts. These concerns should not be dismissed by the potential ease of transportation proposed as part of this project.

The introduction of up to 350,000 barrels of heated, waxy, crude oil a day transported through Gilpin County and Colorado along high alpine sensitive environmental areas, critical water supplies and through a nationally important transportation infrastructure has not been properly vetted. Specifically, if an oil spill were to occur and flow into the adjacent South Boulder Creek, it would have a catastrophic effect on the environment, both public and private, the state's water supplies and wildlife habitat. South Boulder Creek provides water for approximately 1.5 million residents downstream. Given the historic drought the western United States is and has been facing, any impact to this water system could have dire implications, far beyond the confines of Gilpin County.

We respectfully join with other Colorado counties in expressing opposition to the current planned route, with special consideration to downline impacts to the residents of Gilpin County and Colorado. This decision will have long-lasting, negative impacts on our communities, forests, waterways, and wildlife, and a more thorough environmental review, including local involvement is a necessity.

Sincerely,


Sandy Hollingsworth
Chair


Linda Isenhardt
Commissioner

Cc: United States Senator Hickenlooper
United States Senator Bennet
United States Congressman Neguse
Colorado Senator Story
Colorado Representative Amabile
Eagle County Board of County Commissioners
Reading File