



***SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD***  
***Washington, DC 20423***

*Office of Environmental Analysis*

November 8, 2019

Kathryn Floyd, Esq.  
Venable, LLP  
600 Massachusetts Avenue, NW  
Washington, District of Columbia 20001

Re: Docket No. FD 36284, Seven County Infrastructure Coalition–Construction & Operation Exemption–in Utah, Carbon, Duchesne, and Uinta Counties, Utah; Information Request #4

Dear Ms. Floyd:

Consistent with 40 C.F.R. § 1506.5(a), the Surface Transportation Board’s Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA) requests the information listed below, which is necessary for the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that will be prepared for the above referenced proceeding. Please provide this information by **November 19, 2019**.

1. The Evaluation of Potential Route Alternatives report that the Coalition provided to OEA on March 13, 2019 and the revision to that report that the Coalition provided to OEA on May 31, 2019 state that the Coalition evaluated the feasibility of potential routes by applying specific design criteria from the Operational Basis of Design. The Operational Basis of Design, which the Coalition has not provided to OEA, establishes parameters for the operations of trains on the proposed railway. Please provide the specific engineering standards from the Operational Basis of Design that the Coalition used to evaluate the feasibility of alternatives, including the maximum acceptable ruling grade for the safe and efficient operation of the proposed rail line.
2. Please provide additional information requested below regarding the Avintaquin Canyon Route that was evaluated in the Evaluation of Potential Route Alternatives report.

- a. Please confirm that the Avintaquin Canyon Route would not be economically feasible due to the construction costs required to meet engineering standards established in the Operational Basis of Design.
  - b. Please provide a total cost estimate for the construction of the Avintaquin Canyon Route.
  - c. Please provide any additional information (such as ruling grade, curve radius, cut-and-fill volumes, or tunnel design details) that the Coalition considered in evaluating the feasibility of the Avintaquin Canyon Route.
3. Please confirm that the following alternatives discussed in the Evaluation of Potential Route Alternatives report would not be economically feasible due to construction costs that would be significantly higher than the Avintaquin Canyon Route and the routes that were recommended as alternatives in the Board's EIS:
  - East Rifle Route;
  - West Rifle Route;
  - Mack Route; and
  - Westwater Route.
4. The Indian Canyon, Wells Draw, and Whitmore Park Route would all pass through the Emma Park, Utah area in order to connect to an existing Union Pacific Railroad (UP) rail line near Kyune, Utah. This area contains Bureau of Land Management (BLM) land that is designated as Priority Habitat Management Area (PHMA) for Greater Sage Grouse. Please provide the information below regarding the Emma Park area:
  - a. Please indicate whether the engineering standards established in the Operating Basis of Design would permit a rail alignment through or around the Emma Park area that would avoid BLM-managed lands and provide relevant engineering details (ruling grade, curvature, etc.).
  - b. Please indicate whether the engineering standards established in the Operating Basis of Design would permit an alignment through or around the Emma Park area that would avoid PHMA for Greater Sage Grouse and provide relevant engineering details (ruling grade, curvature, etc.).
  - c. Please indicate whether the engineering standards established in the Operating Basis of Design would permit an alignment that would avoid

the Emma Park area by following Route 191 south to a connection with the UP rail line near Helper, Utah and provide relevant engineering details (ruling grade, curvature, etc.).

Thank you for your assistance in responding to the above requests as completely as possible. We look forward to receiving the information from you at your earliest convenience, but no later than the date specified above. In addition to Joshua Wayland of my staff, please provide a copy of your response to Debi Rogers of ICF, our independent third-party contractor at 9300 Lee Highway, Fairfax, Virginia, 22031. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Joshua Wayland at 202-245-0330.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Victoria Rutson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "V" and "R".

Victoria Rutson  
Director  
Office of Environmental Analysis