



## Board of County Commissioners

August 11, 2022

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

Dear Chair Mallory:

We write to share our continuing concerns about the risks to Colorado and Boulder County from the pending Uinta Basin Railway Project. As the agency responsible for ensuring that environmental reviews for infrastructure projects are thorough, we request that you carefully review the analyses conducted by federal agencies thus far to determine whether the effects of this project on Colorado's communities, watersheds, and forests have been fully considered. Until such a coordinated and robust review is complete, we urge you not to allow this project to move forward.

Boulder County shares the concerns expressed by numerous Colorado local governments and stakeholder organizations. The risk associated with sending as many as ten, two-mile-long heated oil tanker trains per day along the Colorado River and ultimately through the Moffat Tunnel to Denver and beyond is nearly impossible to fathom. Every community along the rail corridor will be forced to face the risks of derailments, spills, and fires associated with this railway traffic. The consequences of any of these disasters would be severe and forced upon communities still working to recover from recent disasters, including catastrophic fire and the subsequent mudslides that paralyzed the state's single most important east-west transportation corridor, I-70.

Equally as risky is the enormous increase in the volume of fossil fuels extracted from the Uinta Basin that this railway will enable. Given the impacts our communities are already suffering from climate change, any proposal that would dramatically increase GHG emissions should be viewed with considerable skepticism and caution. Climate change will continue to result in more extreme weather events and climate changed-fueled natural disasters, a reality that every community in Colorado is already grappling with. Our communities should not also have to face the risks tied to an unnecessary project that will only further exacerbate climate change.

**Matt Jones** *County Commissioner*   **Claire Levy** *County Commissioner*   **Marta Loachamin** *County Commissioner*

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We join with numerous Colorado counties and other key stakeholders, including Senator Bennet and Congressman Neguse, in respectfully expressing opposition to the Uinta Basin Railway Project, with special consideration to downline impacts to the residents of Boulder County and the South Boulder Creek watershed. If allowed to move forward, this project will have long-lasting, negative impacts on our communities, forests, waterways, and wildlife. A more thorough environmental review that includes local involvement is, at the very least, a necessity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Marta', enclosed within a hand-drawn oval.

Marta Loachamin  
Chair  
Boulder County Board of County Commissioners

cc: Sen. Michael Bennet  
Sen. John Hickenlooper  
Rep. Joe Neguse  
Gov. Jared Polis