



www.scic-utah.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 24, 2024

MEDIA CONTACT:

Keith Heaton
Seven County Infrastructure Coalition
Executive Director
kheaton@7county.utah.gov

Uinta Basin Railway Project Reaches Milestone with Supreme Court Review

Uinta Basin, UT – The Uinta Basin Railway project has achieved a significant milestone as the United States Supreme Court has agreed to hear the case concerning the project's environmental reviews. This decision represents a critical juncture for the future of transportation infrastructure in the Uinta Basin region and the entire country.

Background on the Uinta Basin Railway Project

The Uinta Basin Railway is a proposed 85-mile rail line that will provide a vital transportation link for the Uinta Basin in eastern Utah. This region is rich in natural resources, including oil, gas, and minerals, but has long been hampered by limited transportation options. The railway project promises to facilitate the efficient movement of these resources to broader markets, thereby boosting the local economy and creating jobs.

Legal Challenges and Environmental Concerns

The project has faced legal obstacles primarily related to environmental concerns, with opponents arguing that the railway could impact communities far beyond the region. These concerns have led to a series of lawsuits aimed at halting the project.

Supreme Court Review

The Supreme Court's decision to review the case offers a chance to resolve a critical legal question regarding the scope of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review. Proponents of the railway assert that the Surface Transportation Board (STB) has thoroughly and properly considered all proximate environmental impacts of the project.

Impact on Infrastructure Development

This Supreme Court review has the potential to set a precedent for how large-scale infrastructure projects are evaluated and approved, impacting future projects nationwide.

Economic and Community Impact

By providing a reliable transportation route, the railway is expected to lower shipping costs, attract new

businesses, and create numerous jobs in construction and ongoing operations. Local leaders and business owners have expressed strong support for the project, citing the long-term economic uplift it could bring to the region. Improved transportation infrastructure is critical for the long-term economic resilience of the Uinta Basin.

Statements from Key Stakeholders

“We are optimistic about the Supreme Court's review and confident in the thorough environmental assessments conducted by the STB,” said Keith Heaton, Director of the Seven County Infrastructure Coalition. “This project is vital for the economic growth and connectivity of the Uinta Basin region, and we are committed to seeing it through.”

“The project team’s hope is that the high court reverses the DC Circuit Court ruling for the sake of future infrastructure projects across the country,” said Casey Hopes, Chair of the Seven County Infrastructure Coalition. “The NEPA process needs to be clarified and solidified.”

About the Seven County Infrastructure Coalition:

The Seven County Infrastructure Coalition is a public interlocal entity, allowing its members to build essential regional infrastructure elements that span across county lines. The Coalition’s main roles are to identify revenue-producing infrastructure projects that will benefit the region. Its mission is to evaluate the needs, plan the new infrastructure, procure funding, permit, design, secure rights-of-way and even own such facilities.

Note to Editors:

For further information and updates on the Uinta Basin Railway project, please visit the [Uinta Basin Railway Official Website](#). For more detailed background on the environmental assessments related to the Uinta Basin Railway, please visit <http://www.uintabasinrailwayeis.com/>.

###