

DATE: June 8, 2004
TO: Surface Transportation Board
Case Control Unit
FROM: Curtis Peterson
SUBJECT: Construction and Operation Exemption Rail Line
Between Juab and Salina, Utah



Each year thousands of acres of agriculture land are taken out of production for various reasons such as housing developments or rail lines.

Our future existence will depend on the availability of agriculture land and our ability to grow food on that land. To propose building a rail line through this agricultural land when a less impacted route is available will be a terrible waste of natural resources.

The less impacted route spoken of here would be .5 to 1.0 mile West of alternative B1.

I am also concerned about potential environmental issues and impacts as follows:

1. Blowing coal and coal dust from the loaded train cars passing through our rural community on the proposed B or B1 routes.
2. The possible devastating effect of ground transferred vibration on the aquifer and our culinary water wells.
3. Most of the youngsters in our rural community have never been exposed to trains or train tracks; their natural curiosity would draw them to this danger.
4. One huge impact would be on families that have owned and operated this agricultural land for generations being forced to sell their family heirlooms.
5. In this area most agricultural irrigation is accomplished by flood irrigation. If the proposed route cuts a farmers 40 acres in half, the farmer would have to use twice as much gated pipe or other method of irrigation to irrigate the same amount of ground (less the 100' right-of-way).
6. In order to leave the farmer with easy access to his property, additional steps would have to be taken to insure safe roadways over the tracks to facilitate that access.

CONCLUSION: I strongly support Alternative C, which would follow the same Alignment as Alternatives B and B1 until a point about 4.5 miles north of the County line between Sanpete and Sevier Counties. Alternative C would diverge from the other alignments and run south on the west side of the Piute Canal about 0.5 to 1.0 mile west of Alternative B1.

Thanks:

Curtis Peterson

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Curtis Peterson'.