

## Chapter 5

# Agency Coordination and Public Outreach

This chapter describes the public and agency coordination efforts for the scoping period, the Draft EIS, and the Supplemental Draft EIS.

The Draft EIS process was initiated on September 30, 2003, when a Notice of Intent was published in the Federal Register formally announcing that the Board was preparing an EIS for the proposed project. The notice included a brief description of the proposed project.

### 5.1 Agency Coordination

#### 5.1.1 Scoping

Prior to the beginning of the public scoping period for this EIS, the Board began inviting agencies with interests in the corridor to participate in the environmental review process. Their comments helped the Board determine what level of study was required for the proposed rail line. The agencies were asked to help identify environmental concerns and issues in the project area. An agency scoping meeting was held on May 21, 2003, to solicit additional agency comments regarding the project.

Letters notifying the agencies and stakeholders of the scoping meeting held on May 21, 2003, were mailed on April 1, 2003, to about 44 agencies and stakeholders representing various interests. These letters invited the agencies and stakeholders to attend the agency scoping meeting and provide comments on the project. Project representatives made follow-up phone calls to the invitees on April 24, 2003, through April 25, 2003, and again on May 15, 2003, to ensure that the agencies had received notice of the meetings. Copies of these letters and the initial project mailing list are included in Appendix B, Agency Coordination, of the Agency and Public Scoping Summary Report, which is included as Appendix A of the Draft EIS. There were 29 attendees at this meeting representing 19 agencies.

These agencies were invited to submit further comments during the public scoping period. A letter with project information, a request for agency comments, and an invitation to the public scoping meetings was mailed to agencies on October 14, 2003.

A total of 37 agency comments were received before and during the public scoping period. Many of the comments identified several potential issues. The comments received are summarized in Section A.6, Agency and Native American Comments, of the Agency and Public Scoping Summary Report, which is included as Appendix A of the Draft EIS. Copies of the original agency comments are included in Appendix D, Copies of Comments, of the Agency and Public Scoping Summary Report, which is Appendix A of the Draft EIS.

### **5.1.2 Draft EIS**

In 2006–2007, OEA provided copies of Administrative Draft EIS documents to the cooperating agencies for their review and comment. A Notice of Availability of the Draft EIS was published June 29, 2007. OEA distributed the Draft EIS to all parties of record, including key governmental agencies and other appropriate entities. The entities are listed in Chapter 11, Distribution, of the Draft EIS. Comments were required to be received no later than August 22, 2007.

### **5.1.3 Supplemental Draft EIS**

Shortly before the end of the public comment period on the Draft EIS, and based on agency comments received, OEA determined that additional information on alternatives and wetlands was warranted to ensure that those reviewing the document had all the information they would need to comment effectively on the environmental analysis.

A notice was issued on August 21, 2007, effectively extending the Draft EIS comment period. OEA then initiated discussion with the Applicant and cooperating agencies regarding what supplemental information was needed. Meetings were held with the Applicant, USACE, BLM, USFWS, and EPA on October 1, 2008, and a field visit was conducted on October 2, 2008.

After receiving additional information from the Applicant on alternatives and wetlands, OEA prepared and then distributed the Supplemental Draft EIS to all parties of record, including key governmental agencies and other appropriate entities. The parties are listed in Chapter 5, Distribution, of the Supplemental Draft EIS. OEA also made the Supplemental Draft EIS available for review at the Richfield Public Library (83 E. Center Street), the Salina Public Library (90 W. Main Street), the Nephi Public Library (21 East 100 North), and the Gunnison Civic Library (38 W. Center Street). The entire document is also available on the Board's website at [www.stb.dot.gov](http://www.stb.dot.gov) and on the project website at [www.sixcountyutahrail.com](http://www.sixcountyutahrail.com).

EPA published a notice in the Federal Register on May 9, 2014, announcing the availability of the Supplemental Draft EIS. Comments on the Supplemental Draft EIS were required to be received no later than June 23, 2014.

The Board received four agency comment letters on the Supplemental Draft EIS. Comments on the Draft EIS and Supplemental Draft EIS are available in Appendix B, Comment Letters, of this Final EIS.

## **5.2 Public Involvement**

### **5.2.1 Scoping**

This section summarizes the Board's public scoping process including preparation, notification, open-house activities, and public comments received during the scoping activities for the proposed project.

#### ***5.2.1.1 Public Scoping Meeting Notification***

To initiate the EIS process, the Board released a Notice of Intent (NOI) in the Federal Register on September 30, 2003, announcing the start of the scoping process. The NOI

included the dates and times of the public meetings (see Appendix A, Notice of Intent, of the Agency and Public Scoping Summary Report, which is included as Appendix A of the Draft EIS). Additional methods used to notify the public of the scoping meetings in the project area are listed below.

1. OEA placed paid legal advertisements in the following newspapers:
  - *The Salt Lake Tribune* and *Deseret Morning News* (statewide circulation) on October 16, 2003
  - *Sanpete Messenger* (Manti) on October 16, 2003
  - *The Pyramid* (Mount Pleasant) on October 16, 2003
  - *The Richfield Reaper* (Richfield) on October 15, 2003
  - *Salina Sun* and *Gunnison Valley News* (Gunnison) on October 15, 2003
  - *The Times-News* (Nephi) on October 15, 2003
2. A media release was prepared by the Board and sent out to the media on October 20, 2003.
3. About 70 newsletters were distributed to individuals on the project mailing list on October 14, 2003.
4. Several media outlets ran stories about the project before and after the public meetings. The dates and publications of those articles are listed below.
  - October 8, 2003, *The Richfield Reaper* (Richfield)
  - October 8, 2003, *Salina Sun* and *Gunnison Valley News* (Gunnison)
  - October 8, 2003, *The Times-News* (Nephi)
  - October 29, 2003, *Salina Sun* and *Gunnison Valley News* (Gunnison)
  - October 29, 2003, *The Richfield Reaper* (Richfield)
  - November 5, 2003, *The Richfield Reaper* (Richfield)

The above materials are provided in Appendix E, Public Scoping Materials, of the Agency and Public Scoping Summary Report, which is included as Appendix A of the Draft EIS.

#### **5.2.1.2 Public Scoping Open Houses**

In October 2003, the Board held two open-house-format public scoping meetings. Below are the dates and locations of the public scoping open houses:

Wednesday, October 22, 2003  
North Sevier High School  
Salina, Utah

Thursday, October 23, 2003  
Gunnison City Hall  
Gunnison, Utah

A total of 107 signatures were provided on the attendance sheets for the two meetings. Thirty-six individual comments were received. Those comments are included in Appendix D, Copies of Comments, of the Agency and Public Scoping Summary Report, which is included as Appendix A of the Draft EIS.

The first open house was held on Wednesday, October 22, 2003, at the North Sevier High School in Salina from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM. A total of 74 people signed the register and 19 submitted comments.

The second open house was held on Thursday, October 23, 2003, at the Gunnison City Hall in Gunnison from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM. A total of 33 individuals signed the register and 7 submitted comments.

Following the meetings, an additional 50 comments were received from individuals who had interests in the project, for a total of 76 individual public comments.

### **5.2.2 Draft EIS**

In response to the Draft EIS, OEA received about 40 written comment letters from individuals, organizations, tribes, and local, state, and Federal agencies. After carefully reviewing all comments received as well as updated information about the project proposal provided by the Applicant, OEA decided to prepare the Supplemental Draft EIS to further address some of the environmental resource areas (that is, alternatives and wetlands) discussed in the Draft EIS.

### **5.2.3 Supplemental Draft EIS**

EPA published a notice in the Federal Register on May 9, 2014, announcing the availability of the Supplemental Draft EIS. Comments on the Supplemental Draft EIS were required to be received no later than June 23, 2014.

The Board received no non-agency comments and four agency comments on the Supplemental Draft EIS. Comments on the Draft EIS and Supplemental Draft EIS are available in Appendix B, Comment Letters, of this Final EIS.

There was no public meeting for the Supplemental Draft EIS.

### **5.2.4 Final EIS**

Issuance of this Final EIS completes the Board's environmental review process. The Board will now make a Final Decision on the Proposed Action. In making its final decision, the Board will consider the entire record on the transportation merits as well as the entire environmental record, including all public comments; the Draft, Supplemental, and Final EISs; and OEA's final recommended mitigation measures.

OEA has distributed the Final EIS to all parties of record, including key governmental agencies and other appropriate entities. OEA will also make the Final EIS available for review at the Richfield Public Library (83 E. Center Street), the Salina Public Library (90 W. Main Street), the Nephi Public Library (21 East 100 North), and the Gunnison Civic Library (38 W. Center Street). The entire document is also available on the Board's website at [www.stb.dot.gov](http://www.stb.dot.gov), under the links "Environmental Matters" and then "Key Cases," and on the project website at [www.sixcountyutahrail.com](http://www.sixcountyutahrail.com).

OEA anticipates that EPA will publish the notice of availability of the Final EIS in the Federal Register on May 29, 2015.