

Grand Junction Workshop/ Open House Meeting Notes – August 25, 2011

Please provide us with your comments by October 14, 2011. Comments received at the Open Houses and Workshops, and via email and letters will be considered and used to help refine goals, objectives and priorities. CDOT does not intend to address each comment individually but all comments will be considered, included in the appendix of the report with a response provided as to how information was considered in the course of the study.

Questions:

- How would a community add additional rail-served industrial parks?
- What would it take to re-instate rail passenger service from Grand Junction to Aspen and Pueblo?
- Are there any good examples of community transloading facilities in Colorado?

Comments:

- The Grand Junction area needs additional opportunities for rail-served industry. There are only six parcels available where rail access is available. Five of those 6 parcels are in an existing industrial park within the town of Fruita.
- Team tracks could be a solution in the Grand Junction area. A team track is where several customers jointly utilize the same loading/unloading facility. This greatly reduces capital expenses associated with putting in the rail infrastructure as well as ongoing track maintenance costs.
- The town of Rifle has 142 acres available for a rail-served industrial park that is adjacent to the UP's Denver to Grand Junction mainline. The town would like a rail spur line to provide rail service to the park.
- The UP could use additional double tracks or passing sidings.
- Because of a lack of capacity on the UP's Denver to Grand Junction line, Amtrak is usually very much behind schedule.
- The at-grade rail crossing (near Loma, CO) serving the McClane Canyon coal mine is dangerous and needs to be improved.
- An existing crossing west of Rifle (serving the water treatment plant) that is currently protected by active warning devices would need to be grade separated if rail volumes increase greatly in the future due to the development of the Energy Innovation Park.
- The population of Rifle is expected to surpass Glenwood Springs in the near future.
- Both Grand Junction and Rifle would support high speed rail service connecting to Denver.
- Shell continues to have an operating oil shale research facility and its employees live in the Rifle area. If oil shale again becomes a viable energy source, Rifle will boom.
- The climate in Rifle is ideal for growing switch grass. There is currently a switch grass research facility in Rifle and this could become a key location for future switch grass ethanol technology.
- Halliburton has located three silos for varying types of "frac" sand near Cameo (east of Grand Junction).
- Major commodities moved by UP in Western Colorado are coal, "frac" sand, drilling pipe, and magnesium (mag) chloride.
- The Cameo electricity generating station is being de-commissioned but may become the site for another rail-served industry in the future.
- UP's goal for serving the North Fork of the Gunnison River coal mines in Gunnison and Delta counties is 120 trains per month (approximately 4 loaded trains per day).

- The quality of the infrastructure of the UP and other Class I railroads at this time is probably at an all time high.
- UP employs 43,000 people nationally and has many individuals very near retirement age. This means there will be good employment opportunities with the UP in the state.
- Additional freight capacity in the US would benefit the ailing economy.
- The Swan Ranch, a new industrial park being developed south of Cheyenne, Wyoming, will be served by both BNSF and UP, and is a good example to be modeled.
- The crossing on Grand Avenue in the vicinity of I-70B represents a safety issue that needs to be improved.
- Continuation of the rail system was identified as one of the most important outcomes of the State Freight and Passenger Rail Plan.
- The UP representatives expressed a desire for better communication among all parties interested in rail.