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Group organizes against railroad plan

Concerned citizens in Eastern Colorado met at the Genoa-Hugo Auditorium on July 30 to officially organize a coalition against the proposed railroad relocation of tracks from the Front Range, according to a news release from the group.

The goals and purpose of Citizens Against Railroad Relocation are to be committed to informing its membership and the general public about the proposed railroad relocation through Eastern Colorado, the release said. The goal is to preserve the quality of communities, natural resources, wildlife, land and way of life for future generations by protecting private property rights.

The Colorado Department of Transportation has conducted, and is continuing, studies to determine the feasibility of moving the railroad freight lines from the Front Range to Eastern Colorado to allow for commuter trains to use the Front Range tracks, reduce congestion and improve air quality, according to the group.

CARR is against this relocation for numerous reasons. Among the concerns are the taking of private property by eminent domain, loss of access to farm ground and pastures, the dividing of farm ground and pastures, devaluation of land, numerous safety concerns and the lack of economic benefit to Eastern Colorado.

With the official organization of this coalition, CARR is looking for support through memberships and associate memberships. For more information about CARR or to join, visit the Web site at www.cocarr.homestead.com, or contact any of the newly elected board members.

The July 30 meeting began with presentations on the Interim board members' activities since the June meeting. Mike Reystead discussed the resolution by the Kiowa County Commissioners opposing the rail relocation in Kiowa County. The Haswell town board also created a resolution opposing the relocation, according to CARR. Scott Ravenkamp reported that the Limon town board is having a letter drafted stating its concerns with the project. Kenny Yoder reported that the Lincoln County Commissioners passed a resolution at their last meeting to oppose the rail relocation. Becky Thompson said she had made a presentation to the Limon Chamber of Commerce concerning the rail relocation and that the chamber is staying neutral at this time.

The bylaws that were created by the interim board were discussed, amended and then unanimously voted on to be adopted by those present. A permanent board of directors was elected by nomination from the floor.

Those directors are: Travis Taylor of Karval, chairman; Scott Ravenkamp of Hugo, vice chairman; Kenny Yoder of Karval, treasurer; Becky Thompson of Limon, secretary; Mike Reystead of Haswell, Ryan Britten of Haswell, Ruth McMillen of Matheson, Gerald Schreiber of Woodrow and Michael Zimmerman of Haswell.