



Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

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May 22, 2018

Mr. Steven M. Fischer
Bridge Program Coordinator-
U. S. Coast Guard
Thirteenth Coast Guard District
915 2nd Avenue- Room 3510
Seattle, Washington 98174

VIA EMAIL AND SURFACE MAIL PER ABOVE: D13-PF-D13BRIDGES@uscg.mil

RE: Sandpoint Junction Connector Project: Application No. NWW-2007-1303

Dear Mr. Fischer:

I am contacting you today to express the Idaho Farm Bureau Federation's (IFBF) strong support for the proposed Sandpoint Junction Connector Project. IFBF is Idaho's largest agriculture organization, representing over 78,300 member families throughout Idaho. Of these families, approximately 60% are farmers and ranchers.

With the exception of the Port of Lewiston, Idaho is a landlocked state. Idaho exports agricultural products throughout the United States and the world. Our state also imports a great number of commodities, freight and manufactured goods.

The Burlington-Northern and Santa Fe (BNSF) Railway Company's proposed second bridge paralleling the existing railroad bridge across Lake Pend Oreille will allow safe and simultaneous two-way rail traffic across the lake. The new bridge will reduce wait times, rail congestion and help improve air quality because of the two prior factors.

Construction of the second bridge will benefit the regional and Idaho economies by transporting timber, manufactured goods and agriculture commodities from Idaho. It will also improve schedule reliability for the Amtrak Empire Builder, which travels from Portland-Seattle to Chicago along this route.

Thank you for the opportunity to express the Idaho Farm Bureau's support for the Sandpoint Junction Connector Project: Application No. NWW-2007-1303. Please contact Dennis Tanikuni in our Governmental Affairs Office at (208) 342-2688 with any questions.

Sincerely,

Bryan Searle, President
Idaho Farm Bureau Federation