

*****TEMPLATE FOR LETTER TO FEDERAL OFFICIALS*****

*****Available in electronic format at www.crystalmn.gov*****

[date]

To: [see list of federal officials on back of the sheet]

From: [your name & address]

Subject: Proposed Connector Track in Crystal MN and CP Use of BNSF

Dear _____,

The Burlington Northern Santa Fe's Monticello Subdivision extends from downtown Minneapolis to Monticello, Minnesota. It is a dead-end line with little freight traffic. The Canadian Pacific has a heavily-used freight line that crosses BNSF's Monticello Subdivision in the city of Crystal, an inner-ring suburb of Minneapolis. BNSF is proposing to purchase and demolish all or parts of three business properties and build a track that would connect the CP to the BNSF.

Shifting CP mainline traffic onto the BNSF would put a volume and type of freight on this line that it has never seen. Going from a handful of short trains per week to a dozen (or more) 1-2 mile long freight trains per day, some carrying highly volatile Bakken oil, would be a radical change on the BNSF. We are very concerned about the impacts this would have on our community.

For example, Crystal has been able to live with delays at the CP crossings at Douglas Drive and West Broadway because we've always had the Corvallis Avenue escape route across the BNSF to the Bottineau Blvd overpass. With those trains turning south onto the BNSF, we won't have that option any more. This is really bad for us and our fellow residents and businesses. For our first responders, especially police and fire, it would go far beyond mere inconvenience.

We understand that freight movement is important. But railroads don't exist in a vacuum. Public safety and quality of life are also important. We ask that you do not allow the railroads to build this connection and make these changes until after a thorough Environmental Impact Statement is completed. An EIS is necessary to fully understand the impacts of the project, consider the alternatives, and evaluate possible mitigation measures.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

[your signature]

Federal contact addresses:

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