

File

KEN BOSHCOFF M.P.  
THUNDER BAY-RAINY RIVER  
ROOM 349, CONFEDERATION BLDG  
OTTAWA, ON K1A 0A6  
TEL: 613-992-3061 FAX: 613-995-3515

November 28, 2005

Clerk's Office  
Town of Fort Frances  
320 Portage Avenue  
Fort Frances, ON P9A 3M5



Dear Mayor & Council:

**LEGISLATIVE ANALYSIS: INTERNATIONAL BRIDGE**

Further to our earlier discussions, I have had a study done to facilitate the work of any community group that may be struck to investigate the possible acquisition of the International Bridge.

I am offering the continued services of myself and my office staff who will remain on duty during the election period as part of their constituent service obligations. Understanding the magnitude of a decision such as may be made and its potential impacts, I will make myself available on a priority basis, notwithstanding the writ period.

Please feel free to use the information attached in your deliberations.

Trusting that you will find this of value.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ken Boshcoff".

Ken Boshcoff M.P.  
/cr

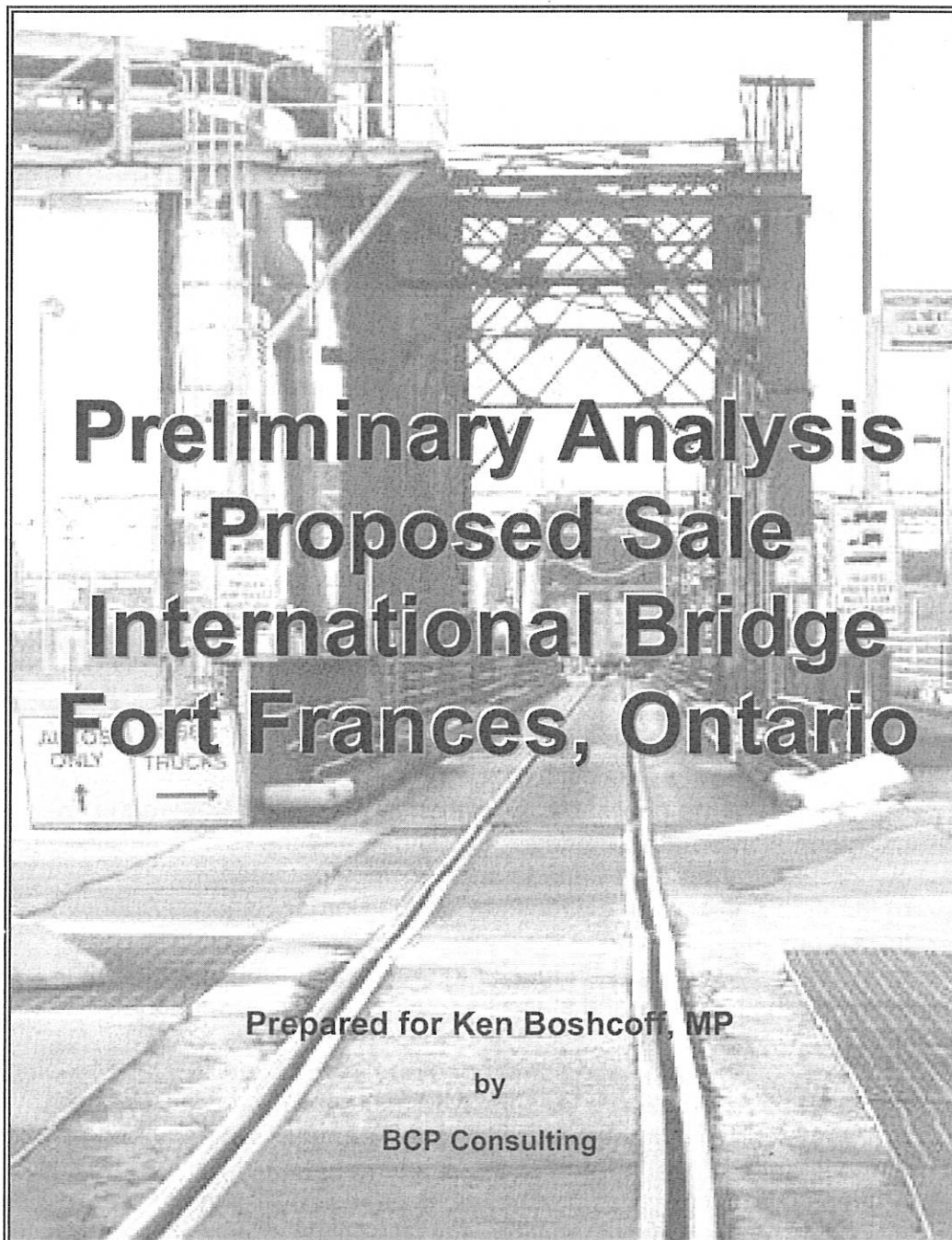
Enclosure

**COUNCIL**

DEC 12 2005

**ACTION**

*Ken Boshcoff*  
*presented to Council*



# **Preliminary Analysis - Proposed Sale International Bridge Fort Frances, Ontario**

**Prepared for Ken Boshcoff, MP**

**by**

**BCP Consulting**

## Introduction

In a November 3<sup>rd</sup> press release The International Bridge and Terminal Company and the Minnesota Dakota and Western Railway (joint owners), and their parent companies, Abitibi-Consolidated and Boise Cascade, announced that the international bridge connecting Fort Frances ON with International Falls MN was going to be placed on the market for sale. The sale, it was reported, would be subject to any necessary government approvals. Terms of the sale were not immediately available, but it was indicated the bridge would be sold to 'the highest bidder'.

The Mayors and other representatives from the communities on both sides of the bridge met (November 10<sup>th</sup>) to discuss common issues surrounding the sale of the link between their communities. Following the meeting the assembly, which refers to itself as 'The Border Communities Organization', passed a motion to work with the province and state to develop a financial analysis of the purchase of the bridge. The Mayors wish to give serious consideration to purchasing the bridge, but have indicated they need assistance from senior levels of government on both sides of the border to do so.

Member of Parliament (Thunder Bay – Rainy River), Ken Boshcoff has been called upon for advice regarding this matter. Because of the complexities of the issue and the involvement of three levels of government on the Canadian side of the border, including a number of different stakeholders at the Federal Department or Federal Agency level, BCP Consulting was requested to review and summarize the issues surrounding the sale.

Specific deliverables are:

- a) Summary of the applicable legislation or acts which govern the operation of international bridges in Canada and the responsibilities of owners, Government of Canada and Province of Ontario;
- b) Identification of issues affecting Canada Border Services Agency and the proposed sale;
- c) A summary of vehicle bridges or tunnels connecting Ontario to the USA including their owners and statistics related to toll charges, annual crossings, etc.;
- d) History of operation and summary of the assets, liabilities and binding agreements being offered for sale by Minnesota Dakota and Western Railway and the International Bridge and Terminal Company - co-owners of the bridges between Fort Frances and International Falls;
- e) Identification of bylaws or resolutions passed by Town of Fort Frances in relation to the bridge connecting Fort Frances to International Falls.

The review was completed based upon an internet based search of legislation and other relevant documents, telephone interviews with government officials, interviews with local officials and company representatives.

The report is not intended to be an all-inclusive reference which defines the practicality of purchasing the structure, but merely a guide to be used to identify the issues and legislation which must be observed for the purchase and operation of the bridge.

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# **Chapter 1**

## **Summary of Legislation and Acts and Responsibilities of Owners, Ontario and Canada**

**1.1** The joint owners of the International Bridge, The International Bridge and Terminal Company and the Minnesota Dakota and Western Railway, are responsible for adhering to defined all legislation, acts and laws for the operation of the structure(s).

**1.2** Federal Acts. There are three main Acts which have been found under Federal jurisdiction: The *Canada Transportation Act*, the *Bridges Act*, the *Customs Act*, and the *Navigable Waters Protection Act*. Sections of the Acts which are relevant to the purchase or operation of the International Bridge are repeated below:

### Canada Transportation Act 1996, c. 10

*An Act to continue the National Transportation Agency as the Canadian Transportation Agency, to consolidate and revise the National Transportation Act, 1987 and the Railway Act and to amend or repeal other Acts as a consequence*

90. (1) *No person shall construct or operate a railway without a certificate of fitness.*

95. (1) *Subject to the provisions of this Part and any other Act of Parliament, a railway company may exercise the following powers for the purpose of constructing or operating its railway:*

*(a) make or construct tunnels, embankments, aqueducts, bridges, roads, conduits, drains, piers, arches, cuttings and fences across or along a railway, watercourse, canal or road that adjoins or intersects the railway;*

*(b) divert or alter the course of a watercourse or road, or raise or lower it, in order to carry it more conveniently across or along the railway;*

*(c) make drains or conduits into, through or under land adjoining the railway for the purpose of conveying water from or to the railway;*

*(d) divert or alter the position of a water pipe, gas pipe, sewer or drain, or telegraph, telephone or electric line, wire or pole across or along the railway; and*

*(e) do anything else necessary for the construction or operation of the railway.*

*96. (1) Where a railway company took possession of, used or occupied land under section 134 of the Railway Act before the coming into force of section 185, the railway company may not alienate the land except to transfer it to a railway company for the purpose of continuing railway operations or to the Crown.*

*Alienation to other persons*

*(2) The land may be transferred to any other person for the purpose of continuing railway operations if*

*(b) in the case of land in any other province, the transfer does not involve a transfer of the fee simple in the land.*

*Continuing application to subsequent transfers*

*(3) If land is transferred under subsection (1) or (2) to any person other than the Crown in right of Canada, subsequent transfers of the land are subject to the same limitations as those contained in this section*

Bridges Act Chapter B-8

*2. In this Act, "bridge" means every bridge to which this Act applies; "company" means any company incorporated under the authority or within the jurisdiction of Parliament, not being a railway company or otherwise subject to the control of the Minister, "Minister" means the Minister of Public Works and Government Services*

*3. This Act applies to every bridge and the approaches thereto, and the appliances or works appurtenant thereto, built or constructed by any company*

*7. The Minister may direct any engineer attached to or employed by the Department of Public Works and Government Services to examine, inspect and report to the Minister on any bridge, whenever he receives information to the effect that the bridge, through want of repair, insufficiency or erroneous construction, or from any other cause, is dangerous to the public using the bridge, or whenever circumstances arise*



*that, in the opinion of the Minister, render an examination or inspection expedient*

*12. When in his opinion a bridge is dangerous, the inspecting engineer may.... forbid, until alterations, substitutions or repairs are made therein,*

*(a) the running of any railway or tramway train or car over the bridge when the bridge is intended for, and, in his opinion, dangerous to the passage of any train or car;*

*(b) the passage of any vehicle over the bridge when the bridge is intended for, and, in his opinion, dangerous to the passage of any vehicle; or*

*(c) the passage of any passenger over the bridge when the bridge is intended for, and, in his opinion, dangerous to passengers*

*16. Every company shall, as soon as possible and within at least forty-eight hours after the occurrence on any bridge belonging to the company of any accident attended with serious personal injury to any person using the bridge, or as a result of which the bridge has been broken or so damaged as to render it impassable or unsafe or unfit for immediate use, give notice thereof to the Minister*

<http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/B-8/8589.html>

Customs Act R.S., 1985, c. 1 (2nd Supp.)

*Short title*

- 1. This Act may be cited as the Customs Act.*
- 2. (1) In this Act, "Agency" means the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency*
- 5. The Minister may designate customs offices inside or outside Canada for a specified purpose or generally for business relating to customs and may at any time amend, cancel or reinstate any such designation*
- 6. (1) The owner or operator of*
  - (a) any international bridge or tunnel, for the use of which a toll or other charge is payable,*
  - (b) any railway operating internationally, or*



*shall provide, equip and maintain free of charge to Her Majesty at or near the bridge, tunnel, railway, airport, wharf or dock adequate buildings, accommodation or other facilities for the proper detention and examination of imported goods or for the proper search of persons by customs officers*

<http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/c-52.6/text.html>

## Navigable Waters Protection Act Chapter N-22

2. *In this Act,*

*"Minister" means the Minister of Transport;*

*"navigable water" includes a canal and any other body of water created or altered as a result of the construction of any work*

5. (1) *No work shall be built or placed in, on, over, under, through or across any navigable water unless*

*(a) the work and the site and plans thereof have been approved by the Minister, on such terms and conditions as the Minister deems fit, prior to commencement of construction;*

22. *No person shall throw or deposit or cause, suffer or permit to be thrown or deposited any stone, gravel, earth, cinders, ashes or other material or rubbish that is liable to sink to the bottom in any water, any part of which is navigable or that flows into any navigable water, where there are not at least twenty fathoms of water at all times, but nothing in this section shall be construed so as to permit the throwing or depositing of any substance in any part of a navigable water where that throwing or depositing is prohibited by or under any other Act.*

<http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/n-22/87530.html>

1.3 Provincial Acts and Regulations Two main pieces of legislation have been found under which the Province of Ontario outlines the operation or control of bridges. Relevant abstracts are repeated below:

### Ontario Bridges Act / B.12 1996, c. 33, s. 18-20

#### *Toll Bridges Act*

1. *In this Act,*

*"Minister" means the Minister of Transportation or such other member of the Executive Council to whom the administration of this Act is assigned by the Lieutenant Governor in Council;*

*"toll bridge" means a bridge designated under section 2;*

*"vehicle" means a motor vehicle, motorcycle, trailer, traction-engine, farm tractor or road-building machine and includes any other vehicle drawn, propelled or driven by other than muscular power. R.S.O. 1990, c. T.11*

#### *Designation as toll bridge*

*2. The Lieutenant Governor in Council may designate the Skyway over the Burlington Canal, the Fort Frances Causeway, and the bridge over or tunnel under the Welland Canal or any international bridge or tunnel as a toll bridge. R.S.O. 1990, c. T.11, s. 2.*

#### *User of toll bridge to pay tolls*

*4. The Lieutenant Governor in Council may make regulations,*

- (a) prescribing classes of vehicles for the purposes of this Act;*
- (b) exempting any class of vehicles from this Act;*
- (c) prescribing the toll to be paid for any vehicle or class of vehicle taken or operated upon any toll bridge or different tolls for different toll bridges;*
- (d) providing for the collection of tolls and the disposition thereof;*
- (e) establishing authorities to manage toll bridges either alone or in conjunction with any Canadian or foreign authority;*
- (f) respecting any matter necessary or advisable to carry out effectively the intent and purpose of this Act. R.S.O. 1990, c. T.11, s. 4.*

#### *Agreements re international bridges and tunnels*

*5. The Minister may on behalf of Her Majesty in right of Ontario enter into agreements with any Canadian or foreign authority for the joint financing, construction or operation of any international bridge or tunnel and for any matter incidental thereto. R.S.O. 1990, c. T.11, s. 5.*

[http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/DBLaws/Statutes/English/90t11\\_e.htm](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/DBLaws/Statutes/English/90t11_e.htm)

Public Transportation and Highway Improvement Act RSO Chapter P.50

*Procedure for acquiring a highway*

8. (1) *Where the Minister desires to acquire an existing highway, he or she shall register in the proper land registry office,*

*Assumption Plan*

*(a) a plan of the highway to be known as and marked "Assumption Plan/Plan d'appropriation"; or*

*Notice of Assumption*

*(b) a notice to be known as and marked "Notice of Assumption/Avis d'appropriation" referring to a plan of the highway registered in the proper land registry office,*

*and thereupon the highway vests in the Crown and the Minister forthwith shall give notice in writing of such vesting to any municipality concerned.*

75. (1) *The Minister may enter into agreements with the Government of Canada or the council of a band for the construction and maintenance of any road under the control of the Government of Canada or of any road on a reserve, and the Minister may direct payment to the Government of Canada or to the council of the band out of the money appropriated therefore by the Legislature*

116. (1) *The Minister may enter into agreements for the purposes of this Act, including agreements,*

*(a) related to the planning, design, construction, maintenance, management and operation of highways and bridges and related structures and works;*

117. *The Minister may make regulations establishing standards for,*

*(a) the planning, design, construction, maintenance, management and operation of highways and bridges and related structures and works*

[http://192.75.156.68/DBLaws/Statutes/English/90p50\\_e.htm#P213\\_10473](http://192.75.156.68/DBLaws/Statutes/English/90p50_e.htm#P213_10473)

## Chapter 2

### Issues Affecting Canada Border Services Agency

2.1 The Canada Customs Act (1986) identifies in part:

6. (1) *The owner or operator of*

*(a) any international bridge or tunnel, for the use of which a toll or other charge is payable,*

*(b) any railway operating internationally, or*

*shall provide, equip and maintain free of charge to Her Majesty at or near the bridge, tunnel, railway, airport, wharf or dock adequate buildings, accommodation or other facilities for the proper detention and examination of imported goods or for the proper search of persons by customs officers.*

<http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/C-52.6/46591.html>

2.2 Under the above authority, the owner of the Canadian section of the bridge connecting Fort Frances to International Falls is obliged to maintain the facilities and grounds of the Canada Border Services Agency at Fort Frances.

2.3 Not all privately owned international bridges are held to the conditions outlined in Section 6 of the Act. Chris Kealey – Communications Officer CBSA indicates that each case is unique and subject to negotiations between the bridge authority and CBSA. The Rainy River – Baudette Bridge, for example is privately owned but does not support the CBSA facility at Rainy River.

2.4 The CBSA facility in Fort Frances was constructed in 2000 and from casual outside appearances seems to be in good condition and meeting the needs of existing traffic flows.

## Chapter 3

### Summary of Vehicle Bridges/Tunnels between Ontario and the USA

3.1 There are a total of 14 Ontario/U.S. land border crossings including:

- Seaway International Bridge, Cornwall;
- Ogdensburg-Prescott Bridge, Prescott;
- Thousand Islands Bridge, Gananoque;
- Queenston-Lewiston Bridge, Queenston;
- Whirlpool Rapids Bridge, Niagara Falls;
- Rainbow Bridge, Niagara Falls;
- Peace Bridge, Fort Erie;
- Ambassador Bridge, Windsor;
- Detroit-Windsor Tunnel, Windsor;
- Blue Water Bridge, Sarnia;
- Sault Ste. Marie International Bridge, Sault Ste. Marie;
- Pigeon River Bridge, Pigeon River;
- Fort Frances - International Falls International Bridge, Fort Frances; and
- Baudette-Rainy River International Bridge, Rainy River

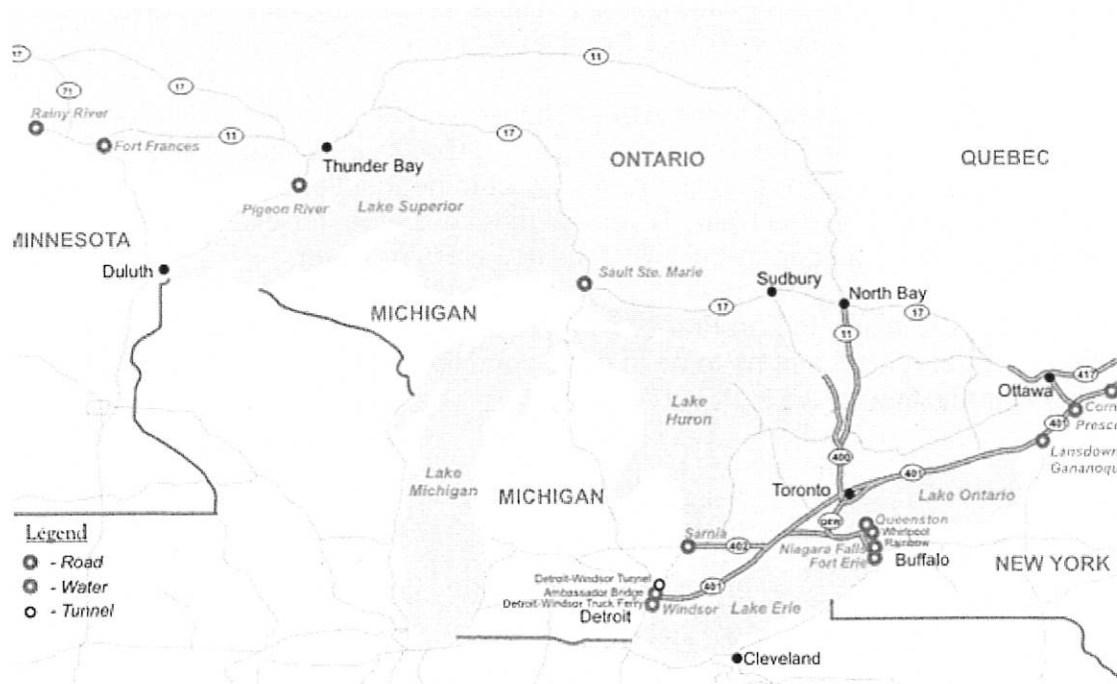


Figure 1 (Map and abstracts courtesy [www.intelligentborder.ca](http://www.intelligentborder.ca))

### 3.2 Details for each crossing:

The Seaway International Bridge is composed of two parts, the North Channel Span that connects Cornwall to Cornwall Island in Ontario, and the South Channel Span that connects Cornwall Island to Rooseveltown, New York. This bridge provides a connection between Hwy 401 in Ontario to New York State's highway network and serves approximately 2.4 million passenger cars and 157,000 trucks and buses annually.

The Ogdensburg-Prescott Bridge connects Prescott, Ontario to Ogdensburg, New York, with direct connections to Highway 401 and Highway 416 in Canada. It serves approximately 411,000 passenger cars and 93,000 trucks and buses annually.

The Thousand Islands Bridge is located between Ivy Lea near Gananoque, Ontario and Collins Landing near Alexandria Bay, New York. It provides a direct connection between Highway 401 in Canada and Interstate Route 81 in the U.S. This bridge is one of the most widely used crossings in the region and serves approximately 1.6 million passenger cars and 0.5 million trucks and buses annually.

The Queenston-Lewiston Bridge connects the Queen Elizabeth Way through Highway 405 in Queenston, Ontario to I-190 in Lewiston, New York. Every year this bridge provides service to approximately 3 million passenger cars and over 1 million trucks and buses.

The Whirlpool Rapids Bridge connects Niagara Falls, Ontario to Niagara Falls, New York and has recently been converted to a NEXUS only crossing. Prior to the NEXUS only conversion, this crossing accommodated approximately 400,000 passenger vehicles annually.

The Rainbow Bridge connects Queen Elizabeth Way and Highway 420 via Niagara Falls, Ontario to the I-190 via Niagara Falls, New York. This crossing serves approximately 3.5 million passenger cars and 42,000 buses annually. The Peace Bridge connects the Queen Elizabeth Way in Fort Erie, Ontario to I-190 in Buffalo, New York. The Peace Bridge serves approximately 6 million passenger cars and 1.3 million trucks and buses annually.

The Ambassador Bridge connects Highways 3 and 401 at Windsor, Ontario to I-75 and I-96 via Detroit, Michigan. It is the busiest international border crossing in North America with more than 22.3% of all trade between Canada and the U.S crossing the bridge. Over 6.3 million passenger cars and over 3.2 million trucks and buses use this crossing annually.

The Detroit-Windsor Tunnel spans the Detroit River and carries international traffic between downtown Windsor, Ontario and Detroit, Michigan. This tunnel

links Highway 401 in Ontario with I-75 north and south; I-94 east and west; and the Lodge Freeway in the U.S. Approximately 6.3 million passenger cars and 233,000 trucks and buses pass through the tunnel on an annual basis.

The Detroit-Windsor Truck Ferry crosses the Detroit River between Windsor, Ontario and Detroit, Michigan and serves primarily trucks carrying dangerous goods or overweight or oversized loads.

The Blue Water Bridge is located between Point Edward, near Sarnia, Ontario and Port Huron, Michigan. It provides service to over 3.7 million passenger cars and over 1.7 million trucks and buses annually. The twin bridges directly link Highway 402 in Canada with I-96 in Michigan.

The Sault Ste. Marie International Bridge connects Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario to Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan. It provides service to approximately 1.7 million passenger cars and 170,000 trucks and buses annually.

The Pigeon River Bridge provides a link between Thunder Bay, Ontario (located 50 km to the north) and Duluth, Minnesota (located 240 km to the southwest) via Highway 61. The Pigeon River Bridge provides service to approximately 360,000 passenger cars and 97,000 trucks and buses annually.

The Fort Frances - International Falls International Bridge provides a link across the Rainy River between Fort Frances, Ontario and International Falls, Minnesota connecting Highway 11 in Ontario to Highway 53 in Minnesota. The International Bridge provides service to approximately 770,000 passenger cars and 36,000 trucks annually.

The Baudette-Rainy River International Bridge connects Highway 11 in Rainy River, Ontario to Highways 11 and 2 via Baudette, Minnesota. The Baudette-Rainy River International Bridge provides service to approximately 388,000 passenger cars and 24,000 trucks annually.



### 3.3 Summary of Ontario-USA Bridges and Tunnels

Crossing	Owner	Annual Traffic (000,000)	Toll \$CA*
Seaway International	Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corp. <sup>1</sup>	2.6	\$3.25
Ogdensburg-Prescott	Ogdensburg Bridge & Port Authority	0.4	\$3.00
Thousand Islands	Federal Bridge Corp Ltd <sup>1</sup>	2.1	\$2.80
Queenston-Lewiston	Niagara Falls Bridge Commission	4.0	\$3.50
Whirlpool Rapids	Niagara Falls Bridge Commission	0.4	\$3.50
Rainbow Bridge	Niagara Falls Bridge Commission	3.5	\$3.50
Peace Bridge	Buffalo and Fort Erie Public Bridge Authority	7.3	\$3.50
Ambassador Bridge	The Canadian Transit Company	9.5	\$4.00
Detroit-Windsor Tunnel	City of Windsor	6.5	\$3.50
Detroit-Windsor Truck Ferry	CMT Canadian Maritime Transport, Ltd	n/a	\$30.00
Blue Water Bridge	The Blue Water Bridge Authority	6.4	\$2.50
Sault Ste. Marie	St. Mary's River Bridge Corp <sup>1</sup>	1.9	\$1.75
Pigeon River	Province of Ontario	0.5	nil
Fort Frances - International Falls	International Bridge and Terminal Company	0.8	\$8.00**
Baudette-Rainy River	Baudette and Rainy River Municipal Bridge Company	0.4	nil

\* Amount charged at the crossing for a single passage of a privately owned automobile. Prices may be lower for bulk purchases or advance sales.

\*\* Toll is collected on north-bound (Canadian destined) vehicles only and represents a return trip across the bridge.

<sup>1</sup>. Federal Bridge Corporation is a Crown Corporation and is the parent company managing several assets in Quebec and Ontario. FBCL directly controls three subsidiary companies including the Seaway International Bridge Corp and The St. Mary's River Bridge Corp. In addition FBCL is also accountable for the oversight and management of the Thousand Islands Bridge.

## **Chapter 4**

### **History of Operation and Summary of Assets and Liabilities**

4.1 The original steel bridge was constructed in 1908 by the Backus Company paper mill. Backus went into bankruptcy in the 1930's and was then restarted as the Minnesota and Ontario Pulp and Paper Company (MANDO). MANDO is the direct ancestor of the current Boise and Abitibi mills. The mills have expanded and been sold several times with consequent name changes over the years.

4.2 Early in 2000 a heavily laden pulp truck, using the vehicle lane on the steel bridge, caused this lane (which is cantilevered to the rail section of the bridge), to sink approximately six inches. Since that time this lane has been closed to vehicle traffic because of safety concerns.

4.3 The steel bridge doubled for both train and vehicular traffic for approximately 70 years. In 1979 a two lane concrete bridge, with a span of 949 feet, was opened to accommodate vehicular traffic. The bridge was constructed by the mill owner, Boise Cascade Corporation.

4.4 The international bridge has always been privately-owned, and tolls have been collected throughout its history. The bridge is operated 24 hours a day, and includes U.S. and Canadian Customs and Immigration offices since it is an international border crossing. The international bridge averages more than 800,000 vehicle crossings annually. It also serves utilities by supporting telephone, cable television, and natural gas lines.

4.5 The bridge has undergone structural inspections annually, and every five years underwater inspections are conducted.

4.6 The assets being contemplated for sale by the International Bridge and Terminal Company and the Minnesota Dakota and Western Railway, wholly owned by Boise Cascade Company and Abitibi Consolidated Corp:

- Steel bridge constructed in 1908 with one lane as a railway right of way and the other as a vehicle road (now not in use) 860 feet in length
- Concrete bridge of two lanes for vehicular traffic constructed in 1979, 949 feet in length
- Canada Border Security Agency inspection station on Canadian land
- Various pipelines for natural gas, mill products mill waste, electricity

4.7 The two mills require that the railway right of way and that the existing pipeline's use be maintained, presumably on a lease basis, with the new owner

4.8 The current owners are currently commissioning an engineering report on the bridges to demonstrate their condition and projected longevity. Financial and

engineering information will be released only to parties “seriously interested” in purchasing the assets. The owners are in the process of engaging a marketing firm to handle the sale of the asset

## Chapter 5

### Relationship with the Town of Fort Frances

5.1 The Town of Fort Frances has only one formal agreement in place with bridge interests. In 1990 a license was granted to Boise Cascade Canada which allows access to air space over the bridge. Snow removal and road maintenance is assumed by bridge owners at the property boundary.

5.2 Traffic to and from the bridge intersects with roads in Fort Frances, some of which carry provincial road designations. This relationship is shown in figure 2 below.



Figure 2 (map courtesy Google Maps)

## **Addendum**

### **Miscellaneous Information**

#### **Strategic Highway Infrastructure Program (SHIP)**

In April 2001, Transport Canada announced the \$600 million Strategic Highway Infrastructure Program (SHIP). The program has two components: a \$500 million highway construction component and a \$100 million national system integration component. In April 2001, Transport Canada announced the Strategic Highway Infrastructure Program (SHIP).

SHIP will also provide \$100 million to fund strategic initiatives that better integrate the transportation system. These include the deployment of Intelligent Transportation Systems across Canada, improvements to border crossings and better transportation planning. Improving links between Canada and our most important trading partner - the United States - is another key element of SHIP. Approximately \$65 million will be used for improvements at and near land border crossings. This means widening highways, constructing dedicated lanes for low-risk passengers and cargo, more secure traffic flows and new technologies at key border locations.

For more information: <http://www.tc.gc.ca/programs/surface/acgd/SHIP.htm>

#### **Border Infrastructure Fund**

Border infrastructure is critical to our growing economic and trade relationship with the United States. The \$600-million Border Infrastructure Fund (BIF) will support the initiatives in the Smart Borders Action Plan by reducing border congestion and expanding infrastructure capacity over the medium term.

The Plan is based on four pillars: (i) the secure flow of people, (ii) the secure flow of goods, (iii) secure infrastructure, and (iv) information-sharing and co-ordination in the enforcement of these objectives.

The recently announced Free and Secure Trade (FAST) program will revolutionise the way commercial shipments move across the Canada-U.S. border and will result in a streamlined clearance process and greater efficiency in the shipment of goods.

Similarly, the Canada-US border-wide "fast-lane" program called NEXUS aims at speeding the flow of pre-screened low-risk travellers.

The \$600 million Border Infrastructure Fund will ensure that the necessary investments are made to support and amplify the benefits of NEXUS and FAST.

As some 70 per cent of Canada-U.S. cross-border truck traffic goes through just six crossing points, Canada needs to improve the efficiency at these border points. Hence, most of the funding available through the Border Infrastructure Fund will be invested in Windsor, Sarnia, Niagara Falls and Fort Erie, in Ontario; in Douglas, British Columbia; and in Lacolle, Quebec. Funding will also be available to address capacity and congestion problems at some of the busiest crossings.

For more information: [http://www.infrastructure.gc.ca/index\\_e.shtml](http://www.infrastructure.gc.ca/index_e.shtml)