

# CITY OF RANIER, MINNESOTA

January 26, 2021

Representative Pete Stauber  
5094 Miller Trunk Hwy  
Hermantown, MN 55811

Representative Stauber:

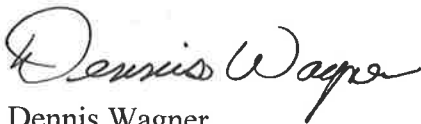
Following discussions with Craig McKenzie, representative of RLPOA, I am forwarding his letter along with my concerns regarding the proposed new CN bridge project. I have identified the following interested parties involved in the project as CN, the City of Ranier, the City of Fort Frances, ONT, U.S. Customs and Immigration, RLPOA, and the Koochiching Band of Ojibwa in Fort Frances, ONT. Regarding my concerns as Mayor of Ranier, a date to host a meeting with all affected parties is requested.

Included with the items listed in Mr. McKenzie's letter, are the following concerns involving the City of Ranier:

1. How increased noise and lighting will be handled
2. Safety warning system in case of hazardous spills or leaks
3. Pedestrian crossing as volume of trains increase
4. Parking and traffic congestion

Because I do not have a list of the potential concerns of the other parties involved, a meeting would be appropriate to discuss all issues. It is critical to hear from the parties affected to ensure these concerns be engineered into the design, eliminating costly changes. Early planning and collaboration are the best way to discover possible issues and doing so will ensure congruence and ease in a project that will have a lasting effect on all involved. If you have any plans to visit the area, we can schedule a time to meet that coincides with your travels. Please contact me with any questions or ideas.

Sincerely,



Dennis Wagner  
218-244-5876  
Mayor – City of Ranier

Cc: Senator Amy Klobuchar

City of Ranier

P.O. Box 186, Ranier, MN 56668

(P) 218-286-3311 cityofranier@frontiernet.net

# CITY OF RANIER, MINNESOTA

January 26, 2021

Senator Amy Klobuchar  
Olcott Plaza, Room 105  
820 9<sup>th</sup> Street North  
Virginia, MN 55792

Senator Klobuchar:

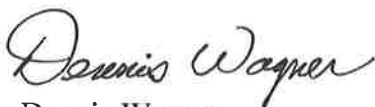
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Dennis Wagner  
218-244-5876  
Mayor – City of Ranier

Cc: Representative Pete Stauber

City of Ranier

P.O. Box 186, Ranier, MN 56668

(P) 218-286-3311 cityofranier@frontiernet.net



SENT VIA EMAIL & USPS

January 25, 2021

Ricardo Rodriguez  
Supervisor of Movable Bridge for the U.S.  
Canadian National Railway  
Attn: Bridge Department  
1141 Maple Road  
Joliet, Illinois 60432

Dear Mr. Rodriguez,

I would like to begin by thanking you for the generous amount of time you have spent with me discussing the Ranier Bridge Project (the "Project") in the town of Ranier, Minnesota. As you are already aware, I am writing on behalf of the Rainy Lake Property Owners Association (RLPOA) where I am a board member. The RLPOA exists to discharge the following actions as an informed advocacy group representing the resident and business Members surrounding Rainy Lake in both the US and Canada:

- a) Monitor, advise and make recommendations related to water levels and water quality and other characteristics in the Membership Region of Rainy Lake;
- b) Communicate and collaborate with other organizations, private entities and governmental agencies to solicit support and coordinate our efforts;
- c) Disseminate information to the Members and educate the public on issues related to the mission of the Association;
- d) Represent the Members of the association in various forums and to other organizations, private entities and governmental agencies which might affect the level and quality of Rainy Lake.

We believe your Project falls within our purview and are engaging you accordingly.

In the course of our discussions, I also introduced Mr. Dennis Wagner, a resident, business owner, and mayor of Ranier, Minnesota. In his capacity, Mr. Wagner represents the residents of the Ranier who co-exist with the railroad and local border-crossing operations of the CN. Given the town's interests regarding the bridge crossing are aligned



with those of the RLPOA, Mr. Wagner has agreed to coordinate his efforts with us. As such, I will be consulting him and his board counsel for input in our future communications with the CN.

Even though your project is five or so years out, the RLPOA believes it is important to engage you now to ensure our views are understood while there is time to influence your process. I offer the following comments and observations as our position on the Project:

1. In the construction of the existing Ranier Railroad Bridge in 1908, the rubble and discarded rock resulting from the construction blasting raised the lake bottom through the narrow and, as a result, caused a weir to form that backs up water flow. In calm lake conditions, the weir contributes to the current and eddies that impact boat traffic. At times when flooding is occurring, the weir contributes to water backing up and spreading laterally along the Fort Francis jetty. In the Project, we would like to understand what remedial actions, if any, to clear the bottom and remove the rubble are anticipated to be incorporated in the scope.
2. Following the historic flood of 1950, the CN bolstered the Ranier Railroad Bridge by adding six feet of remedial support to each of the eleven or so pillars. That work resulted in further restrictions of the waterflow through the narrow, which creates more current and navigational challenges for boat traffic. In the Project, we understand engineering studies are considering a free-span or overpass design that could eliminate or reduce the number of pillars, and thus eliminating the possible introduction of more restrictions that impact the water current. We would appreciate hearing more details in due course. Moreover, we would like to understand if the new design consideration could ultimately eliminate the existing issues by removing all or certain of the existing pillars.
3. Regarding the design of the new bridge, we would like to understand the air gap between the lowest part of the bridge and the water surface at flood conditions. Some general observations made at the time of the 2014 flood where the water crested at 1,111.35 ft (as compared to 1,112.96 ft in 1950) were that an air gap of at least 10 feet was needed for emergency response vessels passing through the narrow at the bridge site. Incorporating a minimum elevation of 1,124 ft would be logical consideration in our view.
4. The new bridge design is understood to be include two railroad tracks. How this design impacts, if at all, the shoreline at the bridge site is a matter of interest that we would like to better understand.



On behalf of the RLPOA, I appreciate your attention to our concerns and observations. Should you have any immediate feedback, please free to contact me anytime at 218.324.2001 or [cmckenzie@voyageurcapitalgroup.com](mailto:cmckenzie@voyageurcapitalgroup.com). Otherwise, we look forward to your response in due course.

Sincerely,

Craig McKenzie

Board Member on behalf of the RLPOA

Copy to: RLPOA Board  
Dennis Wagner, Mayor of Ranier, MN