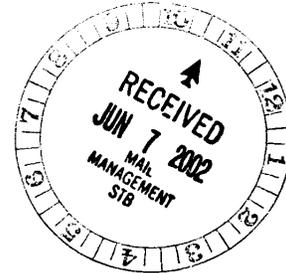




Area Chamber of Commerce

205566

May 28, 2002



Surface Transportation Board
Office of the Secretary
Case Control Unit
1925 K Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20423

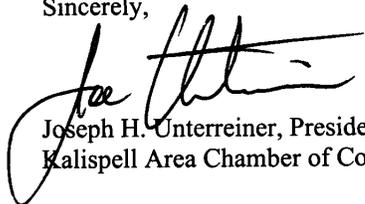
Subject: STB Docket No. AB-6 (Sub-No. 392X)

The March 21, 2002 Federal Register included a notice of exemption from the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway Company (BNSF) for the rail line from Kalispell to Ball's Crossing south of Kalispell. I was pleased to learn that there were no protests to the notice and the exemption became effective on April 20.

Although this line once provided service to several shippers, these shippers are no longer active and BNSF has not used the line for many years. The line is now of much greater importance as part of the route of the long-planned US 93 Kalispell Bypass. The Kalispell Area Chamber of Commerce therefore supports the request by the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) for a public use condition that will provide the time necessary for MDT and BNSF to negotiate the purchase of the right-of-way for use as part of the bypass.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and I look forward to following the progress of this important process.

Sincerely,


Joseph H. Unterreiner, President
Kalispell Area Chamber of Commerce

CC: David Galt, Director MDT
Patrick Keim, BNSF
Jerry Johnson, BNSF

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