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16590
December 09, 2019

Michael Schaefer
BNSF Railway Company
201 North Seventh Street
Lincoln, Nebraska 68508

Subject: Proposed BNSF Bismarck Railway Bridge Project

Dear Mr. Schaefer,

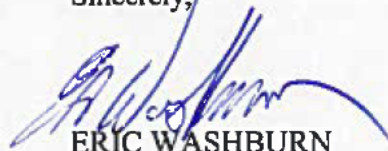
The U.S. Coast Guard acknowledges that the BNSF Railway Company proposes to build a new bridge across the Missouri River in Bismarck, Burleigh County, North Dakota. A Coast Guard bridge permit authorizing the location and plans for the proposed bridge, which would cross a navigable waterway of the United States, is required before construction can begin. The Coast Guard shall act as the lead federal agency under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) due to the issuance of the Coast Guard bridge permit.

It has been determined by the Coast Guard that the proper level of environmental documentation for the proposed project shall be an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Under NEPA, 40 CFR 1506.5(c) requires that any EIS must be prepared pursuant to the requirements of NEPA directly by or by a contractor selected by the lead agency.

The Coast Guard understands that BNSF has been utilizing Jacobs Engineering Group as their contractor to acquire all necessary permits and prepare the required environmental documentation for this project. Jacobs began work on this project in March of 2017 and has been integral to both the Section 106 and NEPA compliance efforts. They have participated in all aspects of this project from the initial public meeting, the preparation and facilitation of each of the 11 consulting parties meetings, the preparation and distribution of numerous materials and correspondence, as well as the drafting of the cultural resources portion of the draft EA and the initial Draft Section 106 Programmatic Agreement. They also recently compiled and distributed a binder of all consulting parties meeting materials. To reduce processing time and duplication of previous efforts, the Coast Guard hereby authorizes BNSF to utilize Jacobs Engineering Group to prepare the environmental impact statement for the proposed BNSF Bismarck Railroad Bridge.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at [REDACTED]

Sincerely,



ERIC WASHBURN
Bridge Administrator

By direction of the District Commander