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EI - 020448/4

Ms. Victoria Rutson
Director
Office of Environmental Analysis
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street SW
Washington, DC 20423

RE: Docket No. FD 30186, Tongue River Railroad Company, Inc.; Information Request #4

Dear Ms. Victoria Rutson:

We understand that the Tongue River Railroad Company (TRRC) received a request for information from the Surface Transportation Board (STB) dated March 13, 2014 regarding the Environmental Impact Statement being prepared for the Tongue River Railroad Project (Docket No. FD 30186). Although upgrades to existing BNSF track are not part of the TRRC Application for Construction and Operation, we offer the following responses based on engineering at a conceptual level as information only:

- *STB Request #12: Identify the number of set-out tracks and passing sidings that would be constructed for each alternative and variation. Provide the anticipated length and locations of set-out tracks and sidings. If available, provide GIS files for these features. **Provide GIS files for the Colstrip Subdivision upgrade work that was described in the May 3, 2013 information request response. Include the locations where the 5 1/2-inch rail base would be relayed to a 6-inch base, where existing ties would be replaced, where the new 500-foot set-out track would be located, where the seven timber bridges would be repaired or replaced, and other signal and communication upgrade locations, if known at this time.***

BNSF Response: Sections of the Colstrip Subdivision consisting of track constructed with rail having a 5½-inch rail base and weighing 112 to 115 pounds per yard that are planned to be relayed with rail having a 6-inch base and weighing 136 pounds per yard are shown on the attached GIS file, as well as anticipated bridges to be upgraded and the proposed set-out track. After a recent inspection, it is expected that bridge upgrades would include relatively minor repairs to the timber structures. Existing ties will be replaced at a rate of approximately 1,500 ties per mile for the entire length so that improvement was not shown on the GIS file since it is continuous. No further information is available on locations of potential signal and communication upgrades.

- *STB Request #13: Provide the anticipated duration of the work required to upgrade the Colstrip Subdivision. Indicate if this work would occur when the Colstrip Alternative would be under construction.*

BNSF Response: The schedule for completing the Colstrip Subdivision upgrades is unknown at this time. The Colstrip Subdivision is capable of supporting reintroduction of train traffic for some period of time in its existing condition. Routine inspections of the track and structures after reintroduction of train traffic will determine the need for implementation of proposed upgrades, which could be incremental and may or may not be concurrent with construction of the Colstrip Alternative should that Alternative be chosen by the STB.

- *STB Request #14: Confirm that the cost of the Colstrip Alternative provided in the Supplement to Alternatives Screening Analysis - Evaluation of Additional Rail Alternatives under Consideration for Detailed Study dated April 30, 2013 includes upgrades to the Colstrip Subdivision. If not, provide the anticipated cost of the upgrades.*

BNSF Response: The cost of potential upgrades to the Colstrip Subdivision was not included in the estimated cost of the Colstrip Alternative. The cost of these improvements is proprietary to BNSF.

Very Truly Yours,



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cc: Mr. Ken Blodgett, OEA
Mr. Alan Summerville, ICF