

MICHELE BACHMANN  
6TH DISTRICT, MINNESOTA

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March 18, 2010

The Honorable Ken Salazar  
Secretary of the Interior  
United States Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary Salazar,

As you know, United States Federal District Court Judge Michael Davis recently vacated a 2005 National Park Service (NPS) Section 7 evaluation regarding the proposed construction of a bridge over the St. Croix River. Specifically, Judge Davis's ruling in favor of the Sierra Club effectively prevents construction of this much needed bridge.

To be sure, local officials and the citizens of the St. Croix River Valley are fully aware of the need for a new St. Croix River bridge. They know firsthand the NPS was correct in its 2005 finding that the new bridge would not adversely affect the Lower St. Croix's scenic and recreational values. In fact, the proposed bridge incorporated measures to minimize its visual impact. Regrettably, the Sierra Club's "stop new growth" lawsuit contributes to otherwise unnecessary St. Croix River Valley air pollution from continued traffic congestion.

Importantly, the proposed St. Croix River bridge project will stimulate our regional economy. It is estimated the bridge project could create up to 2,800 jobs. Additionally, the construction of the bridge will lower intermodal transportation costs and facilitate improved interstate commerce. With our state's high unemployment rate, it is imperative we move forward with bridge construction and not empower the environmental lobby to hold Minnesota jobs hostage.

Moreover, I am very concerned about the structural integrity of the current Stillwater Lift Bridge. Given the 2007 catastrophic collapse of the I-35W Mississippi River Bridge, it is important we find an alternative to the 1931 Stillwater Lift Bridge. In 2008, the Minnesota Department of Transportation found the Stillwater Lift Bridge structurally deficient. Minnesotans are concerned the Sierra Club lawsuit and the subsequent United States Federal District Court ruling unnecessarily endanger the lives of St. Croix River Valley residents. The proposed bridge over the St. Croix River would provide a safe alternative for Minnesota and Wisconsin commuters.

Consequently, I request you immediately commence efforts to appeal Judge Davis's decision and defend the 2005 NPS evaluation to allow this critical project to move forward. Furthermore, I kindly invite you to meet with me to discuss the need to appeal this decision. Moreover, I would extend an offer to travel to Minnesota with me to see firsthand the dangerous situation created by the Sierra Club's lawsuit.

Mr. Secretary, thank you for your service to our country. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of assistance to you or your office on this matter.

Sincerely,



Michele Bachmann  
Member of Congress

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OFFICE OF THE

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THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR  
WASHINGTON

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The Honorable Michele Bachmann  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Bachmann:

Thank you for your letter of March 18, 2010, stating your support for construction of the proposed St. Croix River Crossing Project and the U.S. District Court ruling regarding the 2005 NPS §7(a) Evaluation of the project.

The National Park Service does not make the final determination on appealing a court decision; that decision rests with the Department of Justice.

Thank you for informing me of your concerns regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ken Salazar".

Ken Salazar