



July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2019

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao  
Secretary of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave., S.E.  
Washington D.C., 20590

RE: City-County of Butte-Silver Bow and Port of Montana 2019 BUILD Grant Application

Dear Secretary Chao,

I am writing on behalf of Ponderosa Petroleum to express our strong support for the City-County of Butte-Silver Bow and the Port of Montana's 2019 BUILD transportation grant application to secure funding for vital rail and road expansion.


Ponderosa Petroleum has partnered with the Port of Montana for the last 4 years to service local industry through our transloading services, allow them options for shipping and growth by debottlenecking their logistics. In this time we have transloaded and shipped in excess of 4000 rail cars. The Port of Montana's current track limitations have stopped us from growing beyond our current 5 cars/day limit. If approved this funding would support growth in our business as well as the industries we serve.

A \$7.7 Million investment of BUILD funds will help leverage \$1.4 Million of local match dollars. These funds will compliment an additional \$7.2 Million of local investment in transloading, storage, lead and spur tracks planned in the next 3-6 months. With the help of BUILD funds, the final development phase for the area will be able to break ground in early 2020, having significant impact on commerce and transportation options throughout Montana and the region.

Located at the intersection of two interstate highways and two Class I railroads, the Port of Montana and Montana Connections Business Development Park are ideally located for manufacturing and transportation. Current rail capacity is limiting activities at the Port of Montana and forcing them to turn down new business opportunities. Additionally, the lack of rail served industrial sites within the Montana Connections Park has restricted what types of companies and operations they are able to attract. Completing this project will alleviate both restrictions and allow both entities to reach their full potential.

We strongly urge your approval of this grant application. Additional infrastructure will assist current Montana shippers and encourage business investment resulting in new job creation and economic benefits for the region.

Sincerely,

  
Brian Marler  
VP Operations  
Ponderosa Petroleum