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Great Lakes Forests Log Car Fleet Work Plan

Objectives: Establish a publicly owned fleet for the Great Lakes Forests (“GLF”) Region, 250-400 new log cars, 2016-2017. Over time replace all railroad-owned log cars, 1,200-1,500 (with improved capacity, number equivalent to current capacity), plus cars sufficient to satisfy increasing demand. Establish foundation for new rail car manufacturing in the GLF Region.

Critical Components and Obstacles:

- WI FRPP request for 40 log cars with 10 car, 20%, match (due 2/1/2015); minimum 50 car, 20%, match, for TIGER application (early 2015?) for 200, total 250 log cars.
- FRPP/TIGER, detail foundation for manufacture of new rail cars in GLF Region.
- WI Freight Rail Preservation Program (“FRPP”) extended to rail cars, legal opinion and/or WI legislation confirming use of bonding.
- Outline/checklist, NRTC log car ownership/governance and rail carrier operating agreement.
- Communicate, invite guidance, build consensus among NRTC & other stakeholders.

Considerations and Observations:

- Identify relationships to Duluth-Superior, L'Anse-Baraga, other CN/WCGroup and WCGroup work plans, *e.g.*, virtual single line rail service for GLF log cars?
- Project basis, build consensus, for long term publicly owned log car fleet, *e.g.*, 3rd Biennial Great Lakes Forestry Policy Conference (2/2015?), presentations & participation?
- Identify/quantify increased value impact of GLF rail access:
 - On logs and other benefits to Great Lakes Forests (increased harvest % of allowable cut) owners – private, county, state, tribal and national forests;
 - Profile/quantify increased asset utilization & productivity of loggers and log truckers?
- MI and MN state participation?
- WI FRPP, separate, complementary application (2/1/2015?), Ladysmith-Prentice restoration of service supported by overhead traffic – logs, manufactured forest products & other freight.