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## **A GREAT LAKES FORESTS LOG CAR FLEET Eligibility To Compete for Wisconsin Freight Railroad Loans and Grants**

**Amend** Wis. Stat. § 85.01(3) to read as follows;

“Rail property” means all fixed property, real or personal, used in operating a railroad-, and rail cars and other non-fixed rail transportation equipment operated by, leased from, or governed by an operating agreement with, a transit commission organized under s. 66.0301 or its agent.<sup>1</sup>

**Public Purposes**, a publicly owned or controlled Great Lakes Forests (“GLF”) log car fleet will:

- Provide public benefits exceeding its cost by at least 400% from increased highway safety and reduced road and bridge maintenance, repair and replacement;
- Increase the value of wood from private, county, state, tribal and national forests in the GLF Region by affording highest and best prices in distant markets which can only be accessed through use of competitive rail service;
- Increase the percentage of the allowable cut, under sustainable forestry practices, that is actually harvested, thus, improving the health of the Great Lakes Forests by reducing disease and fire risks;
- Increase productivity and asset utilization for loggers and log truckers by mitigating reliance on over-the-road trucking of raw forest products;
- Enhance rail service asset utilization and efficiency, generally, and facilitating virtual single line service for log cars throughout the GLF Region;
- Through more competitive access to markets, afforded by a competitive and sustainable rail service, increase the number and value of local jobs and the utilization and value of private and public assets in the GLF Region; and
- Be composed of rail cars built in, and supplied with parts provided by vendors located in, Wisconsin and Upper Michigan, in a new production facility that will avoid the extensive backlog of rail car orders, increase the number and value of local jobs and, potentially, provide a foundation for a new rail car production industry in Wisconsin.<sup>2</sup>

The “Great Lakes Forests Region” is an integrated market for raw forest products defined by the concentration of forest, water and other resources, forest products producers and the system of rail lines serving central and northern Wisconsin, the GLF Region's core, and northern Minnesota, the Upper Peninsula of Michigan and adjacent Districts of Ontario.

<sup>1</sup> Deletion, strikeout; addition, underscore.

<sup>2</sup> Requirements of the Wisconsin Constitution Article VIII, Section 7, bonding for public purposes, and Section 10(2)(e), internal improvements, are satisfied.