WisDOT Div of Transportation Investment Management
Bureau of Transit, Local Roads, Railroads & Harbors
4822 Madison Yards Way, 6th Floor South
P.O. Box 7913
Madison, WI 53707-7313

Governor Tony Evers
Secretary Craig Thompson
wisconsindot.gov

Dear Northwoods Freight Shipper/Receiver:

Enclosed is a brief questionnaire. [NOTE – link to website.] Please respond no later than May 8th.

WisDOT is exploring options to improve freight service to/from your Northwoods community. The focus is improving freight rail service.

WisDOT's objective is improving transportation efficiencies for all commercial freight and, in particular, for forest resource industries and manufacturers – for example, to reduce costs and impacts of moving logs from log landings to mills and, thus, expanding opportunities for access to rail for all commercial freight.

To provide this assessment, WisDOT has engaged three independent experts who have extensive rail industry experience, including experience in shortline and regional railroading. For their background information, see the reverse side of this letter.

For questions or additional information, contact Rich Kedzior at Richard.Kedzior@dot.wi.gov, or call at 608-266-7094.

Your response to the questionnaire will inform discussions with CN and other potential railroad operators. **Please respond no later than May 8th.**

State of Wisconsin
Department of Transportation

Dave Simon
Director, Bureau of Transit, Local Roads, Railroads and Harbors

Wisconsin Central Group
Lake States Shippers Association

John Duncan Varda
Counsel

Wisconsin Central Group
An ad hoc Rail Freight Stakeholders Coalition
www.centralcorridors.com/wcg/

Lake States Shippers Association
A Classic Co-op Shippers Association
www.centralcorridors.com/lssa/

2 E. Mifflin Street, Suite 600, Madison, WI 53703
608-212-1103, jdvarda@dewittllp.com

WisDOT Northwoods Freight Rail Assessment Project
Independent Experts – Background Information

Tim Eklund – Tim entered the shortline railroad business in the mid-1990's after an 11-year career in the investment, investment management and investment banking industry. Through the mid-2000's, Tim was VP – Corporate Development for Progressive Rail, Inc. ("PGR"), Lakeville MN, in charge of strategic growth and business development initiatives. On Tim's watch, revenue grew from $2.5 million to $20 million in 4 ½ years through a combination of transloads platform and system growth from 11 to 150 miles and locating new customers to industrial parks. During his time, PGR started the Wisconsin Northern Railroad. He led PGR's investment and start-up of Marquette Rail in western Michigan. Since 2006, The Eklund Companies have and continue to provide strategic acquisition, investment and other services in the rail sector and investors in the rail sector.

Ed Robinson – Ed has 54 years serving the railroad industry. After graduating from Michigan Tech in 1966 BA-business (marketing and accounting), Ed joined Haskins & Sells (became Deloitte) with clients including Seaboard Airline Railroad (later CSX) and Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad (later BN). Following, combat engineer service in Vietnam repairing roads and rail lines, Ed returned to the accounting firm in 1969, transferring from Chicago to St. Paul to help with the merger that became Burlington Northern and with financing BN's coal line expansion and the Allouez Ore facility in Superior, WI. With Deloitte until the early 1990s, Ed worked with Soo Line's acquisition of the Milwaukee Road and the sale which created Wisconsin Central. He did projects for the Interstate Commerce Commission and the Federal Railroad Administration in restructuring the Northeast US railroads. Departing Deloitte in 1990, from then to 2018, Ed worked with a team of entrepreneurs to purchase and finance the Red River Valley & Western Railroad (500 miles) and later the Twin Cities & Western Railroad (250 miles), developing and running those highly successful lines as Chief Financial Officer. Ed retired as CFO in 2018 but continues as an advisor to the boards of directors.

David Stuebner – For over 47 years, David has successfully developed and maintained Class I and short line railroad relationships. With the Milwaukee Road from 1969 for 16 years, he worked in a broad variety of areas including operations management, freight shipment routing issues, asset and equipment acquisition, allocation and use and, ultimately, integration of Milwaukee Road into Soo Line. He then joined Wisconsin Central at its inception in 1987 as Director, Marketing Administration, including responsibility for analyses of traffic impacts of actual and potential acquisitions of other rail carriers by WC and other carriers. In 2001, following CN's acquisition of WC, he joined CN working on marketing integration before assuming a position as Manager, Network Strategies. At CN, David developed and implemented protocols for the efficient routing and interchange of interline freight traffic. As part of CN's Corporate Development team, he performed analyses and made recommendations to Senior management on various projects including operational, marketing, supply chain, intermodal and rail line sales and acquisitions. He developed an intermodal strategy resulting in increases in CN's intermodal portfolio, creating smaller intermodal ramps and extending CN's market reach through shortline partnerships and transloads.