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November 10, 2003

Via first class mail and fax (202) 565-9004

ENTERED  
Office of Proceedings

Mr. Vernon A. Williams  
Secretary  
Surface Transportation Board  
1925 K Street, N.W., Room 700  
Washington, DC 20423-0001

NOV 17 2003

Part of  
Public Record

Re: Docket No. AB-303 (Sub-No. 25X) — Wisconsin Central Ltd. —  
Abandonment Exemption — Langlade, Menominee and Shawano  
Counties, Wisconsin — Petition for Extension of Notice of  
Interim Trail Use

Dear Secretary Williams:

Enclosed please find an original and ten copies of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources' and Wisconsin Central Ltd.'s Joint Petition for Extension of Notice of Interim Trail Use. Please date stamp the extra copy of the transmittal letter and return it in the envelope provided.

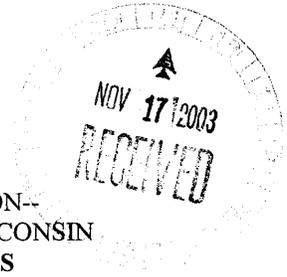
Sincerely,

Michael J. Barron, Jr.  
Counsel for Wisconsin Central Ltd.

Encl.

cc: Mr. Allyn Lepaska, WisDOT

BEFORE THE  
SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD  
AB-303 (SUB-NO. 25X)  
WISCONSIN CENTRAL LTD.-- ABANDONMENT EXEMPTION--  
IN LANGLADE, MENOMINEE AND SHAWANO COUNTIES, WISCONSIN  
WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
AND WISCONSIN CENTRAL LTD., JOINT  
PETITION FOR EXTENSION OF NOTICE OF INTERIM TRAIL USE



**BACKGROUND**

On September 19, 2000, the Wisconsin Central Ltd. (WCL) filed with the Surface Transportation Board (Board) a petition under 49 U.S.C. 10502 for exemption from the provisions of 49 U.S.C. 10903-5<sup>1</sup> to abandon a line of railroad known as the White Lake Shawano Line, between milepost 280 north of White Lake and milepost 314.3 north of Shawano, in Langlade, Menominee and Shawano Counties, WI, a distance of 34.3 miles. The line traverses U.S. Postal Service Zip Codes 54491, 54150, 54128 and 54166 and includes stations at White Lake (milepost 282.8), Neopit (milepost 296.8) and Thornton (milepost 312.0).

On October 12, 2000, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources signed a Statement of Willingness to Accept Financial Responsibility pursuant to 49 C.F.R. § 1152.29. This statement is for the segment of WC railroad line at White Lake Milepost 280.0 to Shawano Milepost 314.3, a distance approximately 34.3 miles in Langlade, Menominee and Shawano Counties, Wisconsin.

The Board issued a NITU under 49 CFR 1152.29, which was served on January 5, 2001, allowing the WisDNR the full 180 days from date of service or until July 4, 2001, to negotiate a rail banking agreement with WCL.

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<sup>1</sup> WCL's petition states that it seeks exemptions from the provisions of 49 U.S.C 10903-5, thus evidently including the exemption from the offer of financial assistance (OFA) requirements of 49 U.S.C. 10905. WCL has not submitted evidence to establish that the proposed exemptions from sections 10904 and 10905 meet the criteria of 49 U.S.C. 10502. The Board indicated in a footnote that WCL's request as to those two provisions will not be considered.

On February 2, 2001, the Board served a partial stay of the January 5, 2001 decision with respect to the trail use/rail banking authorized in Menominee County. The Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin also filed an administrative agency review proceeding of the January 5, 2001 decision in the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit on March 2, 2001. The Case No. is 01-1100. The parties resolved that matter.

On June 29, 2001, WisDNR and WCL jointly filed a motion to extend the NITU negotiating period for an additional 180 days. The Board issued a NITU under 49 CFR 1152.29, which was served on July 3, 2001 allowing the parties until December 31, 2001 to negotiate a trail use agreement on the portion of the line not in Menominee County.

In a decision served on December 28, 2001, the NITU negotiating period and the deadline to exercise abandonment authority was extended until February 28, 2002. By letter filed February 15, 2002, WCL requested that the Board extend all current deadlines in this proceeding, such as those pertaining to the NITU and the abandonment consummation until May 31, 2002. By decision served on February 27, 2002 the Board extended the negotiating period under the NITU until May 31, 2002 recognizing that the stay remains in effect as to the portion of the line in Menominee county.

On May 21, 2002, WisDNR and WCL filed a joint petition for extension of the NITU for 180 days. By decision served on June 7, 2002 the Board extended the negotiating period under the NITU until November 27, 2002 excepting the portion in Menominee County (between mileposts 287 and 299.5).

On November 15, 2002, WisDNR filed a petition for extension of the NITU for 180 days. By decision served on November 26, 2002 the Board extended the negotiating period under the NITU until May 26, 2002 excepting the portion in Menominee County (between mileposts 287

and 299.5). By decision served on December 24, 2002, the Board granted an NITU to the Stockbridge-Munsee Community to negotiate over a portion of the right-of-way approximately from milepost 303 to milepost 306.4 in Shawano County until June 28, 2003.

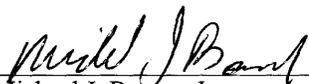
On May 19, 2003, WisDNR and WCL filed a petition for extension of the NITU for 180 days. By decision served on May 23, 2003 the Board extended the negotiating period under the NITU until November 22, 2003 excepting the portion in Menominee County (between mileposts 287 and 299.5). By decision served on December 24, 2003, the Board granted an NITU to the Stockbridge-Munsee Community to negotiate over a portion of the right-of-way approximately from milepost 303 to milepost 306.4 in Shawano County until December 25, 2003.

WisDNR made an initial contact with WCL. Negotiations are continuing. WCL is agreeable to an extension of time to continue negotiations under an NITU condition for milepost 280.00 to milepost 314.3, except for the portion in Menominee County.

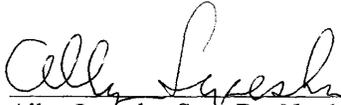
#### MOTION

Therefore, WisDNR moves that the period prescribed to negotiate an interim trail use/rail banking agreement be extended for 180 days from milepost 280.0 to milepost 314.3, except for the portion in Menominee County (between mileposts 287 and 299.5).

Respectfully submitted,

  
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