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Via First Class Mail and Fax (202) 565-9004

February 5, 2003

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

Re: Docket No. AB-303 (Sub No. 23X), Wisconsin Central Ltd. - Abandonment
Exemption - Forest and Langlade Counties, Wisconsin - Petition for Extension
of Notice of Interim Trail Use

Dear Secretary Williams:

Enclosed please find an original and ten copies of the Joint Motion of Wisconsin Central Ltd. and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to extend the Notice of Interim Trail Use negotiating period deadline currently in place (March 1, 2003) for the above-referenced abandonment by an additional 180 days.

Very truly yours,


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

Attachments

cc: Allyn Lepaska

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AB-303 (SUB-NO. 23X)

**WISCONSIN CENTRAL LTD. – ABANDONMENT EXEMPTION –
IN FOREST & LANGLADE COUNTIES, WISCONSIN**

**WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
AND WISCONSIN CENTRAL LTD JOINT MOTION FOR
AN EXTENSION OF TIME TO REACH AGREEMENT
FOR AN INTERIM TRAIL USE/RAIL BANKING AGREEMENT**

BACKGROUND

On May 25, 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 to abandon a line of railroad known as the Crandon-White Lake Line, extending between milepost 254 south of Crandon and milepost 280 near White Lake, in Forest & Langlade Counties, WI, a distance of 26 miles. The line traverses U.S. Postal Service Zip Codes 54520 and 54491 and includes stations at Woodlawn (milepost 259.9) and Lily (milepost 269.0).

On July 10, 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 WCL railroad line at White Lake Milepost 280 to Crandon Milepost 254, a distance of approximately 26 miles in Langlade and Forest Counties, Wisconsin.

On July 15, 2000, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation on behalf of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources filed a request for a notice of interim trail use/rail banking (NITU) under 16 U.S.C. 1247(d) and 49 CFR 1152.29. WCL indicated its willingness to negotiate with WisDNR for interim trail use. The Board issued a NITU under 49 CFR 1152.29, which was served on September 12, 2000, allowing the WisDNR the full 180 days from the date of service to negotiate a rail banking agreement with WCL. The 180 day period was scheduled to expire on March 11, 2001.

On February 27, 2001, WisDNR and WCL jointly filed with the Board a petition for an extension of the negotiating period for 180 days. On March 9, 2001, the Board granted the request and extended the NITU negotiating period to September 7, 2001.

On August 28, 2001, WisDNR and WCL jointly filed with the Board a petition for an extension of the negotiating period for 180 days. On September 6, 2001, the Board served the decision granting the request and extending the NITU negotiating period to March 6, 2002.

On February 19, 2002, WisDNR and WCL jointly filed with the Board a petition for an extension of the negotiating period for 180 days. On March 5, 2002, the Board served the decision granting the request and extending the NITU negotiating period to September 2, 2002.

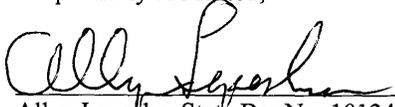
On August 12, 2003, WisDNR and WCL jointly filed with the Board a petition for an extension of the negotiating period for 180 days. On August 27, 2002, the Board served the decision granting the request and extending the NITU negotiating period to March 1, 2003.

WisDNR made an initial timely offer to WCL. Negotiations are currently continuing in good faith between WisDNR and WCL. However, more time is needed to finalize negotiations. WCL is agreeable to extend the time to continue negotiations.

MOTION

Therefore, WisDNR and WCL move that the period prescribed to negotiate an interim trail use/rail banking agreement be extended for 180 days.

Respectfully submitted,


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January 31, 2003