

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Watco Acquires Property, Files with STB to Lease Chicago Area Rail Line**

**PITTSBURG, Kansas (September 28, 2020)** — Watco Companies, LLC, (Watco) under a newly formed subsidiary Elwood Joliet & Southern Railroad (EJSR), LLC, has acquired a former Railway & Industrial Services, Inc. (RIS) property in Crest Hill, Illinois, near Joliet, Illinois, and leased an adjoining rail line that serves RIS and several other local customers from Wisconsin Central Ltd. (CN). Watco plans to repurpose the property, formerly a mechanical repair shop, into a storage and transit (SIT) yard and provide switching services to the new facility and the adjacent customers.

Watco will be investing in infrastructure upgrades to the property, which will be an important asset to area companies, primarily in the plastic and chemical industries. The 39-acre yard near Joliet will serve customers needing forward storage of crucial plastic, chemical, and other bulk inventory and effective access to the extensive Chicago rail network.

Stefan Loeb, Watco Executive Vice President and Chief Commercial Officer said, “Watco is excited to provide a new service solution that will benefit both industries and consumers in the Midwest. Construction will soon start on the SIT yard, and we look forward to providing important storage capacity to the market soon. Watco is also very excited to earn the right to serve and create mutual value with the important customers and Wisconsin Central Ltd. (CN) on the rail line.”

On September 24, 2020, Watco Transportation Services, LLC filed a petition with the Surface Transportation Board (STB) to lease and operate a Wisconsin Central Ltd. (CN), rail line known as the Phoenix Line. The line will be known as the Elwood Joliet & Southern Railroad, LLC (EJSR). The railroad will serve current customers along the line and the new customers who will be utilizing the SIT yard. Operations will begin on the line pending STB approval.

Doug Conway, Vice President of Sales, said, “The addition of the SIT yard and the EJSR railroad will provide our current, and new customers access to additional rail capacity as well as enhanced services to improve their overall supply chains. Adding services like SIT and transloading in a large market such as Chicago provides significant value to our customers, and we are excited to be able to offer these services with our great partner.”

### **About Watco**

Watco is a transportation service company that owns and operates a diverse network of short line railroads, terminals, ports, and mechanical shops across North America and Australia. With nearly 4,500 team members, Watco has been growing with customers since 1983. For more information, visit [watcocompanies.com](http://watcocompanies.com).