

# Northwoods Rail Transit Commission

Members: Ashland, Douglas, Florence, Forest, Iron, Lincoln, Marathon, Marinette, Oconto, Oneida, Price, and Rusk Counties of WI & Baraga, Delta, Dickinson, Gogebic, Houghton, Marquette, Menominee and Ontonagon Counties of MI.  
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May 22, 2024

The Honorable Amit Bose, Administrator  
Federal Railroad Administration  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Re: **Watco's 2023/2024 CRISI Grant Program Application: "Strategic Bridge Improvement and Sustainability Project"**

Dear Administrator Bose;

I want to extend my full support for the proposed project "**Strategic Bridge Improvement and Sustainability Project**". This project proposes to complete at least 30% preliminary engineering and design work, including all environmental work, for 116 strategic railroad bridges that traverse waterways and roadways across the entire Watco network, including 22 railroad bridges in Northern Wisconsin. These bridges are critical to safe and efficient railroad service to communities throughout our state. If these bridges ever fail, rail service could be impacted for an indefinite period of time and there will be widespread consequences to our transportation, agricultural and forest products industries.

I absolutely support modernized infrastructure that helps our economy grow and our communities prosper. Safe and efficient flow of commerce, surface and maritime, is essential to the growth and prosperity of our region and state. Forming partnerships with our public and private sector partners with the goal of increased investment in transportation infrastructure is vital to the future of our region, our residents and our businesses.

Thank you for your consideration and I strongly support this great initiative proposed by Watco and is supporting Customers and Communities.

Respectfully,



Kelly Klein, Chairman  
Northwoods Rail Transit Commission