



Northern Lines

2024

Message from Quentin Schulte



News for Customers, Employees & Friends of the Northern Lines Railway



After more than a year as NLR's president, I continue to be impressed by the ability of a short line railroad to do big things.

In this issue you'll learn about the significant work we are starting on our Cold Spring line—the result of a successful application for a \$318,000 Minnesota Rail Service Improvement Program grant. Plus, our ongoing investment in grade crossings and track maintenance programs continues.

Along our 25-mile railroad we serve approximately 20 customers, each of which has unique and critical shipping needs. Some have had a very long relationship with this railroad and its predecessor owners, including Maiers Transport & Warehousing which has been connecting area businesses with the national rail network for more than 100 years!

No matter the size, every railroad must put safety first and NLR is no exception. We are proud to have once again been named a recipient of the American Short Line & Regional Railroad Association's prestigious Jake Award with Distinction.

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Bulk shipments are among those moved by rail to and from the Maiers warehouse for a variety of customers in the St. Cloud area.

Maiers + NLR = Reliable, Efficient Rail Service

For more than a century Maiers Transport & Warehousing (MTW) has been connecting St. Cloud shippers with the North American rail network.

Initially hauling pulp from river paper mills as Maiers Transit Line, the trucking company helped area business grow and thrive. Today, in partnership with NLR, goods are cross docked and/or stored for a variety of customers.

The founder's great grandson, John Maiers, keeps the family tradition of service thriving as its president.

"Though we aren't the largest customer NLR has," Maiers says, "they provide us with great service and are always available."

That's important to him because MTW customers rely on the company to deliver reliable service for shipments that move across North America on a number of Class I and short line railroads.

On its website the company explains how shippers benefit from long-haul rail service:

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Not by coincidence we marked 1000 days of injury-free operations this year.

As part of a great community, we also strive to be a good neighbor by supporting local service organizations, including the Fisher House Foundation, which helps veterans and their families.

Our NLR team is small but mighty, and I'm proud to be a part of it.

Quentin Schulte
President
Northern Lines Railway

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Maiers + NLR

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"If your inbound movements are high-volume and recurrent, rail savings over long distances can be very attractive. Many commodities such as bundled forest products, bulk industrial (in super sacks), palletized industrial goods, and palletized consumer goods (canned goods) can all move by rail car."

NLR works closely with MTW to make sure all these shippers are satisfied, no matter how unique. From major projects such as the delivery of some 27,000 crane stabilization mats transloaded from rail to 1,500 truckload movements in 2020, to steady lower-volume aluminum billets delivered to a nearby extruder, trucker and railroad cooperate to keep things moving safely and efficiently.

"With NLR's local focus and expertise, it makes it much easier for a smaller



Aluminum billets are shipped by economical, green, safe rail for the long-haul; delivered to the Maiers warehouse by NLR; and the "last-mile" delivery is made by truck to a nearby extruding facility.

company such as ours to connect our customers with the big railroads," Maiers says. "NLR's people are all great to work with, and we see them as partners in our success." ♦

Anacostia On the Move

by Eric Jakubowski

Vice President & Chief Commercial Officer, Anacostia Rail Holdings

Growth and the STB



Anacostia's railroads enjoy steadily growing traffic. Their success is built around flexibility and reliability—two traits highly valued by shippers.

Because our industry sometimes loses new carload opportunities, we are participating in upcoming "Growth in the Freight Rail Industry" hearings at the Surface Transportation Board (STB). Our goal is to provide positive ideas that will help the railroad industry—and the national economy—prosper.

We focus on services that meet specific customer needs, and we build our operating model around this as much as possible.

As an industry, we all need to be more customer friendly and receptive to the needs of entrepreneurial startups. We will provide the STB with testimony that demonstrates how the Anacostia approach has nurtured some difficult business lines—and sustained them over time.

Our efficient and environmentally friendly industry is poised for growth if we just listen and respond to our customers. ♦



Our work crew renewed track in August as part of the Minnesota Rail Service Improvement grant.

Rail Modernization Project Highlights 2024 Investments

Track, switches, and a concrete grade crossing on our lines have been upgraded this summer thanks, in part, to a \$381,000 grant from the Minnesota Rail Service Improvement (MRSI) Program.

NLR successfully competed for the funds, which were awarded last year for use in 2024. MRSI grants are provided for freight rail service improvements that support economic development. To qualify, NLR demonstrated that the grant would have a positive impact on rail service and the environment, and that it would produce a return on investment for the state's economy.

We also have provided support to the City of St. Cloud for a crossing upgrade at Saukview Drive to improve pedestrian safety near the Lake Wobegon Trail.

Additional program roadbed projects include installation of 1,700 ties on the St. Joseph Sub and new ties and rail on yard tracks 14 and 15, as well as the Engine Track.

President Quentin Schulte says, "2024 will be remembered as a year of significant investments that will support safe operations and great customer service on NLR." ♦

Schulte Helping State Create Rail Plan

When looking for expert advice from the rail and short line industry, Minnesota Department of Transportation's Transportation Planning Coordinator Robert Clarkson said, "Quentin Schulte's wealth of knowledge made us feel we couldn't have a better person to help us in that sector."

As a result, NLR President Schulte is serving on the Technical Advisory Committee for the development of this year's State Rail Plan. The Committee's purpose is to:

- provide technical expertise through the process;
- seek participation from railroad subject matter experts; and
- review project document deliverables for feasibility of recommendations.



This year's plan will be the state's third, in a process first implemented in 2010.

The state's short line railroads were surveyed earlier this year to provide planners with an understanding of each individual operation. This data will be combined with information gathered about Minnesota's freight and passenger rail network that will explore the relationship between both types of rail services.

Clarkson says the state is very interested in finding opportunities for increased collaboration between the public and private sectors that will help reduce carbon emissions from passenger and freight services.

"Freight rail is at the top of the freight transportation hierarchy to compete in global markets and for sustainability," he says. ♦

Safe and Ready: NLR Earns Recognition

There are some things worth repeating, such as winning top safety awards from the American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association. In the past 10 years, NLR has been awarded ASLRRRA safety awards nine times, and this year we were honored with the prestigious Jake Award with Distinction, given for member railroads with no FRA reportable injuries or fatalities during the previous year.

"This is an achievement that literally didn't happen by 'accident,'" says NLR President Schulte. "Safety is always our number one priority because nothing is more important than seeing everyone return to their homes and families after



each shift, and that our community stays safe."

One great result of our efforts is that we exceeded 1000 days without a reportable injury earlier this year.

To make sure our first responders can take prompt, effective action in the event of a rail-related event, NLR has worked with the Short Line Safety Institute to bring a safety train into St. Cloud this year. It will be the basis for training on proper incident notification, hands-on tank car and valve familiarization, and handling the propane and butane products we deliver. ♦



Here are a few notes about what's new with our railroad over the past year.



NLR President Quentin Schulte (center, yellow hard hat) answers questions about our railroad at this summer's Family Fun Fest.

Connecting with our Community

This summer's Waite Park Family Fun Fest in St. Cloud included opportunities for area residents to get to know some of their business neighbors.

NLR partnered with Operation Lifesaver, Inc. (OLI) and our valued customer, Martin Marietta, to showcase their busy quarry operations and to emphasize safe practices around the railroad.

The weather cooperated and we enjoyed meeting our neighbors in the tent we staffed along with OLI. Many attendees

visited us to learn about rail safety, and for the fun and informative give-away items.

Throughout the event, Martin Marietta provided bus tours of their impressive St. Cloud facility, which has produced aggregate materials for nearly 80 years. The quarry is a significant NLR customer, originating loaded trains almost every day that are interchanged with BNSF for delivery across much of the United States. ♦

NLR in the Community

NLR is a helping hand in our community. We want to give back to areas in which so many of our employees live.

We enjoy supporting Fisher House Foundation, which provides services for veterans and their families and look forward to being a part of the Greater St. Cloud Public Safety Foundation supporting First Responders. ♦



Our Employees Matter

Our team at NLR is reliable, conscientious and great at what they do. We hold monthly safety lunches to review rules and potential hazards. These lunches grow trust, build camaraderie and help to make our team successful. Thank you to all of our employees! ♦

Milestones

The small and powerful workforce at NLR provides great service to our customers, protects our communities, and supports advancements in the freight rail industry.

NLR employees celebrated the following milestones through August 2024. We thank you for your service.

Employee Anniversaries

Brian Butkowski
18 Years
Engineer

Mark Muraski
13 Years
Operations & Compliance

Joe Kedrowski
9 Years
Engineering Manager

Stuart Johnson
3 years
Engineer

Jordan Przybilla
1 year
Engineer

Promotions
Joe Kedrowski
Engineering Manager
Mark Muraski
Operations & Compliance

Thanks to our employees for all you do! ♦