

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL RAILROAD ADMINISTRATION
FY2025-26 CONSOLIDATED RAIL INFRASTRUCTURE AND SAFETY
IMPROVEMENTS “CRISI”
GRANT APPLICATION**

**Northern Aroostook Rail Gateway Modernization and
Safety Project**

Maine Department of Transportation

**APPENDIX B:
Letters of Support**



June 15, 2026

The Honorable David Fink, Administrator
Federal Railroad Administration
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE
Washington, DC 20590

RE: **Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT)** application to fund the *Northern Aroostook Rail Gateway Modernization and Safety* (Project) under the **FY25/26 Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI)** Grant Opportunity

Dear Administrator Fink,

Please accept this letter of strong support for MaineDOT's application for a CRISI Grant. The *Northern Aroostook Rail Gateway Modernization and Safety* (Project) will significantly improve more than 90 miles of railroad line on the Maine Northern Railway's Madawaska Subdivision and the Eastern Maine Railway's Van Buren Subdivision. Project components include replacing old and worn-out rail, crossties, and ballast as well as rehabilitating a railroad bridge — all resulting in better, faster rail service to support a stronger regional economy. The rail lines in Aroostook County, Maine, provide the only rail connection linking northern Maine's extensive forest and agricultural regions to the broader North American rail network. The tracks in service today have not been rehabilitated for decades.

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- Creating and preserving family-wage jobs in rural communities
- Decreasing truck traffic and the potential for crashes on rural roads
- Improving Maine and U.S. competitiveness in the global marketplace

The Project will help rural communities connect to, and compete in, today's global economy. Considering these objectives, we respectfully request the Office of the Federal Railroad Administrator give favorable consideration to *Northern Aroostook Rail Gateway Modernization and Safety*.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Bushey".

Ryan Bushey
Human Resources Manager
Huber Engineered Woods

Huber Engineered Woods LLC
333 Station Road
Easton, ME 04740
207-488-2051
207-488-6823 fax
www.huberwood.com



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Sincerely,

Jerome Pelletier
Divisional Vice-President



June 15, 2026

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Sincerely,

Jason Limongelli
Divisional Vice-President



1610 West End Ave., Suite 200
Nashville, TN 37203
615.986.5600
LPCorp.com

June 16th, 2026

The Honorable David Fink, Administrator
Federal Railroad Administration
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE
Washington, DC 20590

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The continued maintenance, upgrades, expansion, and fortified safety of these rail lines are crucial to LP's long-term success. The preference is heavy to rail vs. truck in terms of shipping finished products, as well as receiving logs and other raw materials for our process.

The Project will help rural communities connect to, and compete in, today's global economy. Considering these objectives, we respectfully request the Office of the Federal Railroad



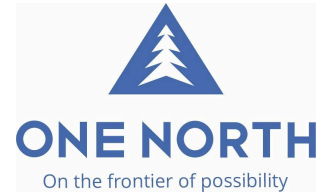
1610 West End Ave., Suite 200
Nashville, TN 37203
615.986.5600
LPCorp.com

Administrator give favorable consideration to *Northern Aroostook Rail Gateway Modernization and Safety*.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Andrew Savage", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Andrew Savage
Plant Manager
LP Houlton
Andrew.Savage@lpcorp.com
207-267-5463



1 Katahdin Avenue | Millinocket, ME 04462 | www.onenorth.net

June 16, 2026

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Dear Administrator Fink,

On behalf of Our Katahdin (OK) and the One North bio-industrial park in Millinocket, Maine, I write to express strong support for MaineDOT's application for a CRISI Grant. The *Northern Aroostook Rail Gateway Modernization and Safety* Project will modernize more than 90 miles of railroad line on the Maine Northern Railway's Madawaska Subdivision and the Eastern Maine Railway's Van Buren Subdivision — upgrades that are directly consequential to the economic revitalization underway in the Katahdin region.

Our Katahdin is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit redeveloping the former Great Northern Paper mill site in Millinocket into One North, a multi-tenant bio-industrial park. The site encompasses approximately 1,400 acres of former industrial land at the heart of Maine's North Woods. Our mission is to create sustainable, good-paying jobs in one of Maine's most economically challenged rural communities by attracting advanced manufacturing and clean energy tenants anchored to the region's abundant forest and natural resource base.

One North's tenant pipeline reflects exactly the kind of industrial activity that depends on reliable, high-capacity freight rail. Our current and prospective tenants include a community solar facility, an advanced biofuels producer targeting the sustainable aviation fuel market, and a land-based Atlantic salmon aquaculture operation — all of which involve the movement of bulk inputs and finished products at a scale that makes rail access essential to long-term competitiveness. As One North grows and additional bio-industrial tenants are recruited, reliable freight rail will be a foundational requirement for site selection decisions. The ability to offer prospective tenants a direct, dependable rail connection to the broader North American network is among the most important infrastructure advantages we can present.

The rail lines that would be improved by this Project represent the only rail connection linking northern Maine's forest and agricultural regions to North American markets. The tracks have not been rehabilitated for decades. Deferred maintenance translates directly into speed restrictions, weight limitations, and service unreliability — all of which increase freight costs and diminish the attractiveness of rail-dependent industrial sites like One North. The CRISI investment will address these constraints by replacing worn rail, crossties, and ballast and rehabilitating a railroad bridge, enabling faster and heavier service that benefits current and future users alike.

Beyond One North's direct operational interests, we recognize that healthy freight rail infrastructure is foundational to the broader economic ecosystem of the Katahdin region. Maine's forest products sector — an \$8.3 billion industry — depends on rail to move timber, wood products, and pulp to domestic and international markets. Agriculture in Aroostook County, one of the most productive farming regions in New England, similarly relies on rail to manage transportation costs and remain competitive. Improved rail service reduces truck traffic on rural roads, lowering infrastructure maintenance costs for Maine communities and improving safety for all road users.

The Project benefits include:

- Increased reliability of freight connections to global markets for northern Maine industries
- Strengthened support for Maine's \$8.3 billion forest products sector and its continued growth
- Enhanced competitiveness for bio-industrial development at sites like One North in Millinocket
- Creation and preservation of family-wage jobs in rural, economically distressed communities
- Reduced truck traffic and improved safety on rural roads throughout northern Maine

The Northern Aroostook Rail Gateway Modernization and Safety Project is a high-priority investment in the infrastructure backbone of rural Maine. It will strengthen the conditions that allow communities like Millinocket to attract and retain the kind of industrial activity that creates lasting economic opportunity. Our Katahdin respectfully and enthusiastically urges the Federal Railroad Administration to give this application its most favorable consideration.

Sincerely,

Steve Sanders

Director of Mill Site Redevelopment

Our Katahdin / One North

1 Katahdin Avenue | Millinocket, ME 04462

steve@onenorth.net | (207) 447-1788



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Federal Railroad Administration
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE
Washington, DC 20590

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82 Bridge Avenue
Madawaska, ME 04756
Tel 207-728-3321
Fax 207-728-8701
twinriverspaper.com



The Project will help rural communities connect to, and compete in, today's global economy. Considering these objectives, we respectfully request the Office of the Federal Railroad Administrator give favorable consideration to *Northern Aroostook Rail Gateway Modernization and Safety*.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Albert Smith". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Albert" and last name "Smith" clearly distinguishable.

Albert Smith
VP Customer Supply Chain & Procurement
Twin Rivers Paper Company



June 22, 2026

The Honorable David Fink, Administrator
Federal Railroad Administration
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE
Washington, DC 20590

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Sincerely,

Levi M. Ross
Director of Supply Chain & Logistics
Dead River Company



Jun 22, 2026

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Federal Railroad Administration
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The rail system in Northern Maine continues to provide essential access to the national and global trading partners both shipping out and receiving vital products for economic growth in Maine. This would be a great commitment to our surrounding communities and assist with the continued growth of the region.

The Project will help rural communities connect to, and compete in, today's global economy. Considering these objectives, we respectfully request the Office of the Federal Railroad Administrator give favorable consideration to *Northern Aroostook Rail Gateway Modernization and Safety*.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jay G. LaJoie", written over a horizontal line.

Jay G. LaJoie
President – LaJoie Growers LLC
121 Ferry St. Van Buren, ME 04785