

NORFOLK SOUTHERN CORP
Form 424B3
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Registration No. 333-151080

PROSPECTUS

Offer to Exchange
\$600,000,000 aggregate principal amount of 5.75% Senior Notes due 2018
(CUSIP Nos. 655844 AY 4 and U65584 AA 9)
for
\$600,000,000 aggregate principal amount of 5.75% Senior Notes due 2018
(CUSIP No. 655844 AZ 1)
that have been registered under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended
The exchange offer will expire at 5:00 p.m.,
New York City time, on July 12, 2008, unless extended.

We hereby offer, upon the terms and subject to the conditions set forth in this prospectus and the accompanying letter of transmittal (which together constitute the exchange offer), to exchange up to \$600,000,000 aggregate principal amount of our 5.75% Senior Notes due 2018 that have been registered under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended (the

Securities Act), which we refer to as the exchange notes, for a like principal amount of our outstanding 5.75% Senior Notes due 2018, which we refer to as the original notes. The terms of the exchange offer are summarized below and are more fully described in this prospectus.

The terms of the exchange notes are substantially identical to the terms of the original notes in all material respects, except that the exchange notes are registered under the Securities Act and the transfer restrictions, registration rights and additional interest provisions applicable to the original notes do not apply to the exchange

notes.

We will accept for exchange any and all original notes validly tendered and not withdrawn prior to 5:00 p.m., New York City time, on July 12, 2008, unless extended.

You may withdraw tenders of original notes at any time prior to the expiration of the exchange offer.

We will not receive any proceeds from the exchange offer.

The exchange of original notes for exchange notes generally will not be a taxable event for U.S. federal income tax purposes.

The notes will not be listed on any securities exchange, quotation system or PORTAL.

See Risk Factors beginning on page 8 to read about important factors you should consider before tendering your original notes.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or determined if this prospectus is truthful or complete. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

The date of this prospectus is June 12, 2008.

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This prospectus contains summaries of the material terms of certain documents and refers you to certain documents that we have filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the "SEC"). See "Where You Can Find More Information." Copies of these documents, except for certain exhibits and schedules, will be made available to you without charge upon written or oral request to:

Investor Relations
 Norfolk Southern Corporation
 Three Commercial Place
 Norfolk, Virginia 23510-2191
 (757) 629-2861

In order to obtain timely delivery of such materials, you must request information from us no later than five business days prior to the expiration of the exchange offer.

No information in this prospectus constitutes legal, business or tax advice, and you should not consider it as such. You should consult your own attorney, business advisor and tax advisor for legal, business and tax advice regarding the exchange offer.

FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

This prospectus contains forward-looking statements that may be identified by the use of words like believe, expect, anticipate and project. Forward-looking statements reflect management's good-faith evaluation of information currently available. However, such statements are dependent on and, therefore, can be influenced by, a number of external variables over which management has little or no control, including: domestic and international economic conditions; interest rates; the business environment in industries that produce and consume rail freight; competition and consolidation within the transportation industry; the operations of carriers with which the company interchanges traffic; acts of terrorism or war; fluctuation in prices or availability of key materials, in particular diesel fuel; labor difficulties, including strikes and work stoppages; legislative and regulatory developments; results of litigation; changes in securities and capital markets; disruptions to the company's technology infrastructure, including computer systems; and natural events such as severe weather, hurricanes and floods. For a discussion of significant risk factors applicable to the company, see Risk Factors on page 8 of this prospectus. Forward-looking statements are not, and should not be relied upon as, a guarantee of future performance or results, nor will they necessarily prove to be accurate indications of the times at or by which any such performance or results will be achieved. As a result, actual outcomes and results may differ materially from those expressed in forward-looking statements. We undertake no obligation to update or revise forward-looking statements.

SUMMARY

The following is a summary of the more detailed information appearing elsewhere in this prospectus. It does not contain all of the information that may be important to you. You should read this prospectus in its entirety and the documents to which we have referred you, especially the risks of participating in the exchange offer discussed under Risk Factors, before participating in the exchange offer. Except as otherwise indicated or unless the context otherwise requires, Norfolk Southern Corporation, Norfolk Southern, NS, we, us, our and our company refer to Norfolk Southern Corporation and its subsidiaries. Unless otherwise indicated, information is presented as of March 31, 2008.

Our Company

We are a Norfolk, Virginia based corporation that controls a major freight railroad, Norfolk Southern Railway Company. Norfolk Southern Railway Company is primarily engaged in the rail transportation of raw materials, intermediate products and finished goods primarily in the Southeast, East and Midwest and, via interchange with other rail carriers, to and from the rest of the United States. We also transport overseas freight through several Atlantic and Gulf Coast ports. We provide comprehensive logistics services and offer the most extensive intermodal network in the eastern half of the United States. Our common stock is listed on the New York Stock Exchange, or NYSE, under the symbol NSC.

We were incorporated on July 23, 1980, under the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia. On June 1, 1982, we acquired control of two major operating railroads, Norfolk and Western Railway Company, or NW, and Southern Railway Company, or Southern, in accordance with an Agreement of Merger and Reorganization dated as of July 31, 1980, and with the approval of the transaction by the Interstate Commerce Commission (now the Surface Transportation Board, or STB). Effective December 31, 1990, we transferred all the common stock of NW to Southern, and Southern's name was changed to Norfolk Southern Railway Company, which we refer to in this prospectus as Norfolk Southern Railway or NSR. Effective September 1, 1998, NW was merged with and into Norfolk Southern Railway. As of March 31, 2008, all the common stock of Norfolk Southern Railway was owned directly by us.

Through a limited liability company, we, along with CSX Corporation, or CSX, jointly own Conrail Inc., or Conrail, whose primary subsidiary is Consolidated Rail Corporation, or CRC. We have a 58% economic and 50% voting interest in the jointly owned entity, and CSX has the remainder of the economic and voting interests. CRC owns and operates certain properties (which we refer to in this prospectus as the Shared Assets Areas) for the joint and exclusive benefit of NSR and CSX Transportation Inc. (see Note 4 to the Consolidated Financial Statements elsewhere in this prospectus).

Our executive offices are located at Three Commercial Place, Norfolk, Virginia 23510-2191, and our telephone number is (757) 629-2600.

Recent Developments

On May 15, 2008, we and Pan Am Railways, or PAR, entered into an agreement pursuant to which the parties intend to create a joint venture to which: (1) PAR will transfer its 155-mile main line track that runs between Mechanicville (Albany), N.Y., and Ayer, Mass., along with 281 miles of secondary and branch lines, including trackage rights, in Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, and Vermont, and (2) we will transfer cash and other property valued at \$140 million, \$87.5 million of which is expected to be invested within a three-year period in capital improvements on the rail system, such as terminal expansions, track and signal upgrades. The transaction is subject to the approval of the STB, which we and PAR will be seeking.

Summary of the Exchange Offer

On April 4, 2008, we completed the private placement of \$600,000,000 aggregate principal amount of 5.75% senior notes due 2018. As part of that offering, we entered into a registration rights agreement with the initial purchasers of the original notes, dated as of April 4, 2008, in which we agreed, among other things, to deliver this prospectus to you and to use all commercially reasonable efforts to complete an exchange offer for the original notes. Below is a summary of the exchange offer.

Securities offered Up to \$600,000,000 aggregate principal amount of new 5.75% senior notes due 2018, that have been registered under the Securities Act. The form and terms of these exchange notes are identical in all material respects to those of the original notes except that the exchange notes are registered under the Securities Act and the transfer restrictions, registration rights and additional interest provisions applicable to the original notes do not apply to the exchange notes.

The exchange offer We are offering to exchange up to \$600,000,000 principal amount of our 5.75% senior notes due 2018 that have been registered under the Securities Act for a like principal amount of the original notes outstanding. You may tender original notes only in denominations of principal amount of \$2,000 and any integral multiple of \$1,000 in excess thereof. We will issue exchange notes as soon as practicable after the expiration of the exchange offer. In order to be exchanged, an original note must be properly tendered and accepted. All original notes that are validly tendered and not withdrawn will be exchanged. As of the date of this prospectus, there is \$600,000,000 aggregate principal amount of original notes outstanding. The \$600,000,000 aggregate principal amount of our original 5.75% senior notes due 2018 were offered under an indenture dated April 4, 2008.

Expiration date; Tenders The exchange offer will expire at 5:00 p.m., New York City time, on July 12, 2008, unless we extend the exchange offer in our sole and absolute discretion. By tendering your original notes, you represent that:

you are neither our affiliate (as defined in Rule 405 under the Securities Act) nor a broker-dealer tendering notes acquired directly from us for our own account;

any exchange notes you receive in the exchange offer are being acquired by you in the ordinary course of business;

at the time of commencement of the exchange offer, neither you nor, to your knowledge, anyone receiving exchange notes from you has any arrangement or understanding with any person to participate in the distribution, as defined in the Securities Act, of the original notes or the exchange notes in violation of the Securities Act;

if you are not a participating broker-dealer, you are not engaged in, and do not intend to engage in, the distribution, as defined in the Securities Act, of the original notes or the exchange notes; and

if you are a broker-dealer, you will receive the exchange notes for your own account in exchange for the original notes that you acquired as a result of your market-making or other trading activities and you will deliver a prospectus in connection with any resale of the exchange notes that you receive. For further information regarding resales of the exchange notes by participating broker-dealers, see the discussion under the caption Plan of Distribution.

Accrued
interest on the
exchange
notes and
original
notes

The exchange notes will bear interest from the most recent date to which interest has been paid on the original notes or, if no such interest has been paid, from April 4, 2008. If your original notes are accepted for exchange, you will receive interest on the exchange notes and not on the original notes. Any original notes not tendered will remain outstanding and continue to accrue interest according to their terms.

Conditions to
the exchange
offer

The exchange offer is subject to customary conditions. We may assert or waive these conditions in our sole discretion. If we materially change the terms of the exchange offer, we will resolicit tenders of the original notes. See The Exchange Offer Conditions to the Exchange Offer for more information regarding conditions to the exchange offer.

Procedures for
tendering
original notes

Except as described in the section titled The Exchange Offer Guaranteed Delivery Procedures, a tendering holder must, on or prior to the expiration date:

transmit a properly completed and duly executed letter of transmittal, including all other documents required by the letter of transmittal, to the exchange agent at the address listed in this prospectus; or

if original notes are tendered in accordance with the book-entry procedures described in this prospectus, the tendering holder must transmit an agent's message to the exchange agent at the address listed in this prospectus. See The Exchange Offer Procedures for Tendering.

Special
procedures for
beneficial
holders

If you are a beneficial holder of original notes that are registered in the name of your broker, dealer, commercial bank, trust company or other nominee, and you wish to tender in the exchange offer, you should promptly contact the person in whose name your original notes are registered and instruct that person to tender on your behalf. See The Exchange Offer Procedures for Tendering.

Guaranteed delivery procedures	If you wish to tender your original notes and you cannot deliver your original notes, the letter of transmittal or any other required documents to the exchange agent before the expiration date, you may tender your original notes by following the guaranteed delivery procedures under the heading <i>The Exchange Offer</i> <i>Guaranteed Delivery Procedures</i> .
Withdrawal rights	Tenders may be withdrawn at any time before 5:00 p.m., New York City time, on the expiration date.
Acceptance of original notes and delivery of exchange notes	Subject to the conditions stated in the section <i>The Exchange Offer</i> <i>Conditions to the Exchange Offer</i> of this prospectus, we will accept for exchange any and all original notes which are properly tendered in the exchange offer before 5:00 p.m., New York City time, on the expiration date. The exchange notes will be delivered as soon as practicable after the expiration date. See <i>The Exchange Offer</i> <i>Terms of the Exchange Offer</i> .
Material U.S. federal tax consequences	Your exchange of original notes for exchange notes pursuant to the exchange offer generally will not be a taxable event for U.S. federal income tax purposes.
Regulatory requirements	Following the effectiveness of the registration statement covering the exchange offer with the SEC, no other material federal regulatory requirement must be complied with in connection with this exchange offer.
Exchange agent	U.S. Bank Trust National Association is serving as exchange agent in connection with the exchange offer. The address and telephone number of the exchange agent are listed under the heading <i>The Exchange Offer</i> <i>Exchange Agent</i> .
Use of proceeds	We will not receive any proceeds from the issuance of exchange notes in the exchange offer. We have agreed to pay all expenses incidental to the exchange offer other than commissions and concessions of any broker or dealer and certain transfer taxes and will indemnify holders of the notes, including any broker- dealers, against certain liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act.
Resales	Based on interpretations by the staff of the SEC as detailed in a series of no-action letters issued to third parties, we believe that the exchange notes issued in the exchange offer may be offered for resale, resold or otherwise transferred by you without compliance with the registration and prospectus delivery requirements of the Securities Act as long as: you are acquiring the exchange notes in the ordinary course of your business; you are not participating, do not intend to participate and have no arrangement or understanding with any person to participate, in a distribution of the exchange notes; and

you are neither an affiliate of ours nor a broker-dealer tendering notes acquired directly from us for your own account.

If you are an affiliate of ours, are engaged in or intend to engage in or have any arrangement or understanding with any person to participate in the distribution of the exchange notes:

you cannot rely on the applicable interpretations of the staff of the SEC; and

you must comply with the registration requirements of the Securities Act in connection with any resale transaction.

Each broker or dealer that receives exchange notes for its own account in exchange for original notes that were acquired as a result of market-making or other trading activities must acknowledge that it will comply with the registration and prospectus delivery requirements of the Securities Act in connection with any offer to resell, resale, or other transfer of the exchange notes issued in the exchange offer, including the delivery of a prospectus that contains information with respect to any selling holder required by the Securities Act in connection with any resale of the exchange notes. Furthermore, any broker-dealer that acquired any original notes directly from us:

may not rely on the applicable interpretation of the staff of the SEC's position contained in *Exxon Capital Holdings Corp.*, SEC no-action letter (April 13, 1988), *Morgan, Stanley & Co. Inc.*, SEC no-action letter (June 5, 1991), and *Shearman & Sterling*, SEC no-action letter (July 2, 1993); and

must also be named as a selling holder in connection with the registration and prospectus delivery requirements of the Securities Act relating to any resale transaction.

As a condition to participation in the exchange offer, each holder will be required to represent that it is not our affiliate or a broker-dealer that acquired the original notes directly from us.

Consequences of
not exchanging
original notes

If you do not exchange your original notes in the exchange offer, you will continue to be subject to the restrictions on transfer described in the legend on your original notes. In general, you may offer or sell your original notes only:

if they are registered under the Securities Act and applicable state securities laws;

if they are offered or sold under an exemption from registration under the Securities Act and applicable state securities laws; or

if they are offered or sold in a transaction not subject to the Securities Act and applicable state securities laws.

Although your original notes will continue to accrue interest, they will retain no rights under the registration rights agreement. We currently do not intend to register the original notes under the Securities Act. Under some circumstances, holders of the original notes, including holders who are not permitted to participate in the exchange offer or who may not freely sell exchange notes received in the exchange offer, however, may require us to file, and to cause to become effective, a shelf registration statement covering resales of the original notes by these holders. For more information regarding the consequences of not tendering your original notes and our obligations to file a shelf registration statement, see The Exchange Offer Consequences of Exchanging or Failing to Exchange the Original Notes and The Exchange Offer Registration Rights Agreement.

Risk factors See Risk Factors and the other information in this prospectus for a discussion of factors you should consider carefully before deciding to participate in the exchange offer.

Summary of the Terms of the Exchange Notes

The following is a summary of the terms of the exchange notes. The form and terms of the exchange notes are identical in all material respects to those of the original notes except that the exchange notes are registered under the Securities Act and the transfer restrictions, registration rights and additional interest provisions applicable to the original notes do not apply to the exchange notes. The exchange notes will evidence the same debt as the original notes and will be governed by the same indenture. When we refer to the terms of note or notes in this prospectus, we are referring to the original notes and the exchange notes. Certain of the terms and conditions described below are subject to important limitations and exceptions. For a more detailed description of the terms and conditions of the exchange notes, see the section of this prospectus entitled Description of Notes.

Issuer	Norfolk Southern Corporation.
Securities offered	\$600,000,000 aggregate principal amount of 5.75% senior notes due 2018.
Maturity	April 1, 2018.
Interest	Interest will accrue on the notes at the rate of 5.75% per annum, and will be payable in cash semi-annually in arrears on April 1 and October 1 of each year, commencing October 1, 2008. Interest on the notes will be computed on the basis of a 360-day year comprised of twelve 30-day months.
Ranking	The notes will be unsecured obligations of Norfolk Southern and will rank on parity with each other and with all of our other unsecured and unsubordinated indebtedness.
Optional Redemption	We may redeem some or all of the notes, in whole or in part, at any time, from time to time, at the redemption prices set forth in the indenture, as summarized in this prospectus. See Description of Notes Optional Redemption.
Change of Control Repurchase Event	Upon the occurrence of a Change of Control Repurchase Event (as defined herein), each holder of notes may require us to repurchase all or a portion of such holder's notes at a purchase price equal to 101% of the aggregate principal amount thereof, plus accrued interest to the repurchase date. See Description of Notes Change of Control Repurchase Event.
Certain covenants	The indenture governing the notes will contain covenants that, among other things, will limit our ability to consolidate, merge or transfer all or substantially all of our assets.

RISK FACTORS

You should carefully consider each of the following risk factors and all of the other information set forth in this prospectus before making any investment decision. The risk factors generally have been separated into three groups: (i) risks relating to our business; (ii) risks relating to the exchange notes; and (iii) risks relating to the exchange offer. Based on the information currently known to us, we believe that the following information identifies the most significant risk factors affecting our company and the exchange offer. However, the risks and uncertainties are not limited to those set forth in the risk factors described below. Additional risks and uncertainties not presently known to us or that we currently believe to be less significant than the following risk factors may also adversely affect our business. In addition, past financial performance may not be a reliable indicator of future performance and historical trends should not be used to anticipate results or trends in future periods.

Risks Relating to Our Business

We are subject to significant governmental regulation and legislation over commercial, environmental and operating matters.

Railroads are subject to commercial regulation by the Surface Transportation Board, or STB, which has jurisdiction over some routes, fuel surcharges, conditions of service and the extension or abandonment of rail lines. The STB also has jurisdiction over the consolidation, merger or acquisition of control of and by rail common carriers. In addition, Congress could enact re-regulation legislation. Economic re-regulation of the rail industry by Congress could have a significant negative impact on our ability to determine prices for rail services, reduce capital spending on our rail network, and result in a material adverse effect in the future on our financial position, results of operations or liquidity in a particular year or quarter.

Railroads are subject to safety and security regulation by the U.S. Department of Transportation, or DOT, and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, or DHS, which regulate most aspects of our operations. Proposed amendments to federal rail safety statutes, if enacted, could add significantly to operating costs and increase the number of employees we and other railroads employ. In addition, our failure to comply with applicable laws and regulations could have a material adverse effect on us.

Our operations are subject to extensive federal, state, and local environmental laws and regulations concerning, among other things, emissions to the air; discharges to water ways or ground water supplies; handling, storage, transportation, and disposal of waste and other materials; and the cleanup of hazardous material or petroleum releases. The risk of incurring environmental liability for acts and omissions, past, present and future is inherent in the railroad business. Several of our subsidiaries own, or have owned, land used as operating property or held for sale, or which is leased or may have been leased and operated by others. Environmental problems that are latent or undisclosed may exist on these properties, and we could incur environmental liabilities or costs, the amount and materiality of which cannot be estimated reliably at this time, with respect to one or more of these properties. Moreover, lawsuits and claims involving other unidentified environmental sites and matters are likely to arise from time to time, and the resulting liabilities could have a significant effect on financial position, results of operations or liquidity in a particular year or quarter.

As a common carrier by rail, we must offer to transport hazardous materials, regardless of risk.

Transportation of certain hazardous materials could create catastrophic losses in terms of personal injury and property damage costs, and compromise critical parts of our rail network. Legislation introduced in Congress would give federal regulators increased authority to conduct investigations and levy substantial fines and penalties in connection with railroad accidents. Under provisions enacted in August 2007, federal regulators are required to prescribe new regulations governing railroads transportation of hazardous materials, including annual routing analyses, security risk assessments and employee security training. Regulations proposed in late 2006 by DHS

mandating chain of custody and security measures will likely cause service degradation and higher costs for the transportation of toxic inhalation hazard materials. Further, certain local governments have sought to enact ordinances banning hazardous materials moving by rail within their borders. Some legislators have contemplated pre-notification requirements for hazardous materials shipments. If promulgated, such ordinances could require the re-routing of hazardous materials shipments, with the potential for significant additional costs and network inefficiencies.

We may be affected by terrorism or war.

Any terrorist attack, or other similar event, any government response thereto, and war or risk of war could cause significant business interruption and may adversely affect our results of operations, financial position or liquidity in a particular year or quarter. Because we play a critical role in the nation's transportation system, we could become the target of such an attack or have a significant role in the government's preemptive approach or response to an attack or war. Although we currently maintain insurance coverage for third-party liability arising out of war and acts of terrorism, we maintain only limited insurance coverage for first-party property damage and damage to property in our care, custody or control caused by certain acts of terrorism. In addition, premiums for some or all of our current insurance programs covering these losses could increase dramatically, or insurance coverage for certain losses may not be available to us in the future.

We may be affected by general economic conditions.

Prolonged negative changes in domestic and global economic conditions affecting the producers and consumers of the commodities we carry may have an adverse effect on our results of operations, financial position or liquidity. Economic conditions resulting in bankruptcies of one or more large customers could have a significant impact on our financial position, results of operations or liquidity in a particular year or quarter.

We face competition from other transportation providers.

We are subject to competition from motor carriers, other railroads, and to a lesser extent, ships, barges and pipelines, on the basis of transit time, pricing and the quality and reliability of service. While we have used primarily internal resources to build or acquire and maintain our rail system, trucks and barges have been able to use public rights-of-way maintained by public entities. Any future improvements or expenditures materially increasing the quality or reducing the cost of alternative modes of transportation in the regions in which we operate, or legislation granting materially greater latitude for motor carriers with respect to size or weight limitations, could have a material adverse effect on our results of operations, financial position or liquidity in a particular year or quarter.

The operations of carriers with which we interchange may adversely affect our operations.

Our ability to provide rail service to customers in the U.S. and Canada depends in large part upon our ability to maintain cooperative relationships with connecting carriers with respect to, among other matters, freight rates, revenue divisions, car supply and locomotive availability, data exchange and communications, reciprocal switching, interchange and trackage rights. Deterioration in the operations of, or service provided by connecting carriers, or in our relationship with those connecting carriers, could result in our inability to meet our customers' demands or require us to use alternate train routes, which could result in significant additional costs and network inefficiencies.

We rely on technology and technology improvements in our business operations.

If we experience significant disruption or failure of one or more of our information technology systems, including computer hardware, software, and communications equipment, we could experience a service interruption, security breach, or other operational difficulties, which could have a material adverse impact on our results of operations, financial position or liquidity in a particular year or quarter. Additionally, if we do not have sufficient capital to acquire new technology or if we

are unable to implement new technology, we may suffer a competitive disadvantage within the rail industry and with companies providing other modes of transportation service, which could have a material adverse effect on our results of operations, financial position or liquidity in a particular year or quarter.

The vast majority of our employees belong to labor unions, and labor agreements, strikes, or work stoppages could adversely affect our operations.

Approximately 26,000, or about 85%, of our railroad employees are covered by collective bargaining agreements with various labor unions. If unionized workers were to engage in a strike, work stoppage, or other slowdown, we could experience a significant disruption of our operations. Additionally, future national labor agreements, or renegotiation of labor agreements or provisions of labor agreements, could significantly increase our costs for healthcare, wages and other benefits. Any of these factors could have a material adverse impact on our results of operations, financial position or liquidity in a particular year or quarter.

We may be subject to various claims and lawsuits that could result in significant expenditures.

The nature of our business exposes us to the potential for various claims and litigation related to labor and employment, personal injury, commercial disputes, freight loss and other property damage, and other matters. Job-related personal injury and occupational claims are subject to the Federal Employers' Liability Act, or FELA, which is applicable only to railroads. FELA's fault-based tort system produces results that are unpredictable and inconsistent as compared with a no-fault worker's compensation system. The variability inherent in this system could result in actual costs being very different from the liability recorded.

Any material changes to current litigation trends or a catastrophic rail accident involving any or all of freight loss or property damage, personal injury, and environmental liability could have a material adverse effect on our operating results, financial position or liquidity to the extent not covered by insurance. We have obtained insurance for potential losses for third-party liability and first-party property damages. Specified levels of risk are retained on a self-insurance basis (currently up to \$25 million and above \$1 billion per occurrence for bodily injury and property damage to third parties and \$25 million and above \$175 million per occurrence for property owned by us or in our care, custody or control). Insurance is available from a limited number of insurers and may not continue to be available or, if available, may not be obtainable on terms acceptable to us.

Severe weather could result in significant business interruptions and expenditures.

Severe weather conditions and other natural phenomena, including hurricanes and floods, may cause significant business interruptions and result in increased costs, increased liabilities, and decreased revenues, which could have an adverse effect on our results of operations, financial position or liquidity in a particular year or quarter.

Unpredictability of demand for rail services resulting in the unavailability of qualified personnel could adversely affect our operational efficiency and ability to meet demand.

Workforce demographics, training requirements, and the availability of qualified personnel, particularly engineers and trainmen, could each have a negative impact on our ability to meet demand for rail service. Unpredictable increases in demand for rail services may exacerbate such risks, which could have a negative impact on our operational efficiency and otherwise have a material adverse effect on our results of operations, financial position or liquidity in a particular year or quarter.

We may be affected by supply constraints resulting from disruptions in the fuel markets or the nature of some of our supplier markets.

We consume about 500 million gallons of diesel fuel each year. Fuel availability could be affected by any limitation in the fuel supply or by any imposition of mandatory allocation or rationing regulations. If a severe fuel supply shortage arose from production curtailments, disruption of oil imports, disruption of domestic refinery production, damage to refinery or pipeline infrastructure, political unrest, war or otherwise, our results of operations, financial position or liquidity in a particular year or quarter could be adversely affected. Also, such an event would impact us as well as our customers and other transportation companies.

Due to the capital intensive nature and industry-specific requirements of the rail industry, there are high barriers of entry for potential new suppliers of core railroad items, such as locomotives and rolling stock equipment. Additionally, we compete with other industries for available capacity and raw materials used in the production of certain track materials, such as rail and ties. Changes in the competitive landscapes of these limited-supplier markets could result in increased prices or material shortages that could materially affect our results of operations, financial position or liquidity in a particular year or quarter.

Risks Relating to the Exchange Notes

There is no current public market for the exchange notes and a market may not develop.

The exchange notes are a new issue of securities for which there is currently no public trading market. We cannot guarantee:

the
liquidity
of any
market
that may
develop
for the
exchange
notes;

your
ability to
sell the
exchange
notes; or

the price
at which
you might
be able to
sell the
exchange
notes.

Liquidity of any market for the exchange notes and future trading prices of the exchange notes will depend on many factors, including:

prevailing
interest
rates;

our
operating
results;
and

the market
for similar
securities.

The initial purchasers have advised us that they currently intend to make a market in the exchange notes, but they are not obligated to do so and may cease any market-making at any time without notice. We do not intend to apply for listing of any of the exchange notes on any securities exchange or for inclusion of any of the exchange notes in any automated quotation system. As a result, it may be difficult for you to find a buyer for the exchange notes at the time you want to sell them and, even if you find a buyer, you might not receive the price you want.

Risks Relating to the Exchange Offer

You may have difficulty selling the original notes that you do not exchange.

If you do not exchange your original notes for exchange notes pursuant to the exchange offer, the original notes you hold will continue to be subject to the existing transfer restrictions. The original notes may not be offered, sold or otherwise transferred, except in compliance with the registration requirements of the Securities Act, pursuant to an exemption from registration under the Securities Act or in a transaction not subject to the registration requirements of the Securities Act, and in compliance with applicable state securities laws. We do not anticipate that we will register the original notes under the Securities Act. After the exchange offer is consummated, the trading market for the remaining untendered original notes may be small and inactive. Consequently, you may find it difficult to sell any original notes you continue to hold because there will be fewer original notes of such series outstanding.

Some noteholders may be required to comply with the registration and prospectus delivery requirements of the Securities Act.

If you exchange your original notes in the exchange offer for the purpose of participating in a distribution of the exchange notes, you may be deemed to have received restricted securities and, if so, you will be required to comply with the registration and prospectus delivery requirements of the Securities Act in connection with any resale transaction.

In addition, a broker-dealer that purchased original notes for its own account as part of market-making or trading activities must deliver a prospectus when it sells the exchange notes it received in the exchange offer. Our obligation to make this prospectus available to broker-dealers is limited. We cannot guarantee that a proper prospectus will be available to broker-dealers wishing to resell their exchange notes.

Late deliveries of original notes or any other failure to comply with the exchange offer procedures could prevent a holder from exchanging its original notes.

Noteholders are responsible for complying with all exchange offer procedures. The issuance of exchange notes in exchange for original notes will only occur upon proper completion of the procedures described in this prospectus under The Exchange Offer. Therefore, holders of original notes who wish to exchange them for exchange notes should allow sufficient time for timely completion of the exchange procedure. Neither we nor the exchange agent are obligated to extend the exchange offer or notify you of any failure to follow the proper procedure.

THE EXCHANGE OFFER

Purpose of the Exchange Offer

When we completed the sale of the original notes on April 4, 2008, we entered into a registration rights agreement with the initial purchasers of the original notes. Under the registration rights agreement, we agreed to file a registration statement with the SEC relating to the exchange offer within 180 days of the issue date of the original notes. We also agreed to use our reasonable best efforts to cause the registration statement to become effective with the SEC within 270 days of the issue date of the original notes and to consummate this exchange offer within 30 days after the registration statement is declared effective. The registration rights agreement provides that we will be required to pay additional interest to the holders of the original notes if we fail to comply with such filing effectiveness and offer consummation requirements. See [Registration Rights Agreement](#) below for more information on the additional interest we will owe if we do not complete the exchange offer within a specified timeline.

The exchange offer is not being made to holders of original notes in any jurisdiction where the exchange would not comply with the securities or blue sky laws of such jurisdiction. A copy of the registration rights agreement has been filed as an exhibit to the Current Report on Form 8-K we filed with the SEC on April 9, 2008 and is available from us upon request. See [Where You Can Find More Information](#).

Terms of the Exchange Offer

Upon the terms and conditions described in this prospectus and in the accompanying letter of transmittal, which together constitute the exchange offer, we will accept for exchange original notes that are properly tendered on or before the expiration date and not withdrawn as permitted below. As used in this prospectus, the term [expiration date](#) means 5:00 p.m., New York City time, on July 12, 2008. However, if we, in our sole discretion, have extended the period of time for which the exchange offer is open, the term [expiration date](#) means the latest time and date to which we extend the exchange offer.

As of the date of this prospectus, \$600,000,000 aggregate principal amount of the original notes is outstanding. The original notes were offered under an indenture dated April 4, 2008. This prospectus, together with the letter of transmittal, is first being sent on or about June 12, 2008 to all holders of original notes known to us. Our obligation to accept original notes for exchange in the exchange offer is subject to the conditions described below under [Conditions to the Exchange Offer](#). We reserve the right to extend the period of time during which the exchange offer is open. In the event of any such extension, we would delay acceptance for exchange of any original notes by giving oral or written notice of the extension to the holders of original notes as described below. During any extension period, all original notes previously tendered will remain subject to the exchange offer and may be accepted for exchange by us. Any original notes not accepted for exchange will be returned to the tendering holder after the expiration or termination of the exchange offer.

Original notes tendered in the exchange offer must be in denominations of principal amount of \$2,000 and any integral multiple of \$1,000.

We reserve the right to amend or terminate the exchange offer, and not to accept for exchange any original notes not previously accepted for exchange, upon the occurrence of any of the conditions of the exchange offer specified below under [Conditions to the Exchange Offer](#). We will give oral or written notice of any extension, amendment, non-acceptance or termination to the holders of the original notes as promptly as practicable. Such notice, in the case of any extension, will be issued by means of a press release or other public announcement no later than 9:00 a.m., New York City time, on the next business day after the previously scheduled expiration date.

Our acceptance of the tender of original notes by a tendering holder will form a binding agreement upon the terms and subject to the conditions provided in this prospectus and the accompanying letter of transmittal.

Procedures for Tendering

Except as described below, a tendering holder must, on or prior to the expiration date:

transmit a properly completed and duly executed letter of transmittal, including all other documents required by the letter of transmittal, to U.S. Bank Trust National Association, as the exchange agent, at the address listed below under the heading Exchange Agent; or

if original notes are tendered in accordance with the book-entry procedures listed below, the tendering holder must transmit an agent's message to the exchange agent at the address listed below under the heading

Exchange
Agent.
In addition:

the exchange
agent must
receive, on or
before the
expiration
date,
certificates
for the
original
notes, if any;

the exchange
agent must
receive a
timely
confirmation
of book-entry
transfer of
the original
notes into the
exchange
agent's
account at
The
Depository
Trust
Company, or
DTC, the
book-entry
transfer
facility,
along with
the letter of
transmittal or
an agent's
message; or

the holder
must comply
with the
guaranteed
delivery
procedures
described
below.

The term "agent's message" means a message, transmitted to DTC and received by the exchange agent and forming a part of a book-entry transfer, that states that DTC has received an express acknowledgment that the tendering holder agrees to be bound by the letter of transmittal and that we may enforce the letter of transmittal against this holder.

The method of delivery of original notes, letters of transmittal and all other required documents is at your election and risk. If the delivery is by mail, we recommend that you use registered mail, properly insured, with return receipt requested. In all cases, you should allow sufficient time to assure timely delivery. You should not send letters of transmittal or original notes to us.

If you are a beneficial owner whose original notes are registered in the name of a broker, dealer, commercial bank, trust company or other nominee, and wish to tender, you should promptly instruct the registered holder to tender on your behalf. Any registered holder that is a participant in DTC's book-entry transfer facility system may make book-entry delivery of the original notes by causing DTC to transfer the original notes into the exchange agent's account.

Signatures on a letter of transmittal or a notice of withdrawal must be guaranteed unless the original notes surrendered for exchange are tendered:

by a
registered
holder of
the original
notes who
has not
completed
the box
entitled
Special
Issuance
Instructions
or Special
Delivery
Instructions
on the letter
of
transmittal;
or

for the
account of
an eligible
institution.

If signatures on a letter of transmittal or a notice of withdrawal are required to be guaranteed, the guarantees must be by an eligible institution. An eligible institution is a financial institution, including most banks, savings and loan associations and brokerage houses, that is a participant in the Securities Transfer Agents Medallion Program, the New York Stock Exchange Medallion Signature Program or the Stock Exchanges Medallion Program.

We will determine in our sole discretion all questions as to the validity, form and eligibility of original notes tendered for exchange. This discretion extends to the determination of all questions concerning the timing of receipts and acceptance of tenders. These determinations will be final and binding.

We reserve the right to reject any particular original note not properly tendered, or any acceptance that might, in our judgment or our counsel's judgment, be unlawful. We also reserve the right to waive any conditions of the exchange offer as applicable to all original notes prior to the expiration date. We also reserve the right to waive any defects or irregularities or conditions of the exchange offer as to any particular original note prior to the expiration date. Our interpretation of the terms and conditions of the exchange offer as to any particular original note either before or after the expiration date, including the letter of transmittal and the instructions to the letter of transmittal, shall be final and binding on all parties. Unless waived, any defects or irregularities in

connection with tenders of original notes must be cured within a reasonable period of time. Neither we, the exchange agent nor any other person will be under any duty to give notification of any defect or irregularity in any tender of original notes. Nor will we, the exchange agent or any other person incur any liability for failing to give notification of any defect or irregularity.

If the letter of transmittal is signed by a person other than the registered holder of original notes, the letter of transmittal must be accompanied by a written instrument of transfer or exchange in satisfactory form duly executed by the registered holder with the signature guaranteed by an eligible institution. The original notes must be endorsed or accompanied by appropriate powers of attorney. In either case, the original notes must be signed exactly as the name of any registered holder appears on the original notes.

If the letter of transmittal or any original notes or powers of attorney are signed by trustees, executors, administrators, guardians, attorneys-in-fact, officers of corporations or others acting in a fiduciary or representative capacity, these persons should so indicate when signing. Unless waived by us, proper evidence satisfactory to us of their authority to so act must be submitted.

By tendering, each holder will represent to us that, among other things:

the holder is
not an affiliate
of ours (as
defined in
Rule 405
under the
Securities Act)
or a
broker-dealer
tendering
notes acquired
directly from
us for its own
account;

the exchange
notes are
being acquired
in the ordinary
course of
business of the
person
receiving the
exchange
notes, whether
or not that
person is the
holder; and

neither the
holder nor the
other person

has any
arrangement
or
understanding
with any
person to
participate in
the
distribution
(within the
meaning of the
Securities Act)
of the
exchange
notes.

In the case of a holder that is not a broker-dealer, that holder, by tendering, will also represent to us that the holder is not engaged in, and does not intend to engage in, a distribution of the exchange notes.

However, any purchaser of original notes who is our affiliate (within the meaning of the Securities Act) who intends to participate in the exchange offer for the purpose of distributing the exchange notes or a broker-dealer (within the meaning of the Securities Act) that acquired original notes in a transaction other than as part of its trading or market-making activities and who has arranged or has an understanding with any person to participate in the distribution of the exchange notes: (1) will not be able to rely on the interpretation by the staff of the SEC set forth in the applicable no-action letters; (2) will not be able to tender its original notes in the exchange offer; and (3) must comply with the registration and prospectus delivery requirements of the Securities Act in connection with any sale or transfer of the notes unless such sale or transfer is made pursuant to an exemption from such requirements.

Each broker or dealer that receives exchange notes for its own account in exchange for original notes, where the original notes were acquired by it as a result of market-making activities or other trading activities, must acknowledge that it will deliver a prospectus that meets the requirements of the Securities Act in connection with any resale of the exchange notes. The letter of transmittal states that by so acknowledging and by delivering a prospectus, a broker-dealer will not be deemed to admit that it is an underwriter within the meaning of the Securities Act. However, a broker-dealer may be a statutory underwriter. See Plan of Distribution.

Acceptance of Original Notes for Exchange; Delivery of Exchange Notes

Upon satisfaction or waiver of all of the conditions to the exchange offer, we will accept, promptly after the expiration date, all original notes properly tendered, unless we terminate the exchange offer because of the non-satisfaction of conditions. We will issue the exchange notes as soon as practicable after acceptance of the original notes. See

Conditions to the Exchange Offer below. For purposes of the exchange offer, we will be deemed to have accepted properly tendered original notes for exchange when, as and if we have given oral or written notice to the exchange agent, with prompt written confirmation of any oral notice.

For each original note accepted for exchange, the holder of the original note will receive an exchange note having a principal amount equal to that of the surrendered original note. The exchange notes will bear interest from the most recent date to which interest has been paid on the original notes. Accordingly, registered holders of exchange notes on the relevant record date for the first interest payment date following the completion of the exchange offer will receive interest accruing from the most recent date to which interest has been paid. Original notes accepted for exchange will cease to accrue interest from and after the date of completion of the exchange offer. Holders of original notes whose original notes are accepted for exchange will not receive any payment for accrued interest on the original notes otherwise payable on any interest payment date, the record date for which occurs on or after completion of the exchange offer and will be deemed to have waived their rights to receive the accrued interest on the original notes.

In all cases, issuance of exchange notes for original notes will be made only after timely receipt by the exchange agent of:

certificates
for the
original
notes, or a
timely
book-entry
confirmation
of the
original notes
into the
exchange
agent's
account at
the
book-entry
transfer
facility;

a properly
completed
and duly
executed
letter of
transmittal;
and

all other
required
documents.

Unaccepted or non-exchanged original notes will be returned without expense to the tendering holder of the original notes. In the case of original notes tendered by book-entry transfer in accordance with the book-entry procedures described below, the non-exchanged original notes will be returned or recredited promptly.

Book-Entry Transfer

The exchange agent will make a request to establish an account for the original notes at DTC for purposes of the exchange offer within two business days after the date of this prospectus. Any financial institution that is a participant

in DTC's systems must make book-entry delivery of original notes by causing DTC to transfer those original notes into the exchange agent's account at DTC in accordance with DTC's procedure for transfer. This participant should transmit its acceptance to DTC on or prior to the expiration date or comply with the guaranteed delivery procedures described below. DTC will verify this acceptance, execute a book-entry transfer of the tendered original notes into the exchange agent's account at DTC and then send to the exchange agent confirmation of this book-entry transfer. The confirmation of this book-entry transfer will include an agent's message confirming that DTC has received an express acknowledgment from this participant that this participant has received and agrees to be bound by the letter of transmittal and that we may enforce the letter of transmittal against this participant. Delivery of exchange notes issued in the exchange offer may be effected through book-entry transfer at DTC. However, the letter of transmittal or facsimile of it or an agent's message, with any required signature guarantees and any other required documents, must:

be
transmitted
to and
received by
the
exchange
agent at the
address
listed
below
under
Exchange
Agent on or
prior to the
expiration
date; or

comply
with the
guaranteed
delivery
procedures
described
below.

Exchanging Book-Entry Notes

The exchange agent and the book-entry transfer facility have confirmed that any financial institution that is a participant in the book-entry transfer facility may utilize the book-entry transfer facility Automated Tender Offer Program, or ATOP, procedures to tender original notes. Any participant in the book-entry transfer facility may make book-entry delivery of original notes by causing the book-entry transfer facility to transfer such original notes into the exchange agent's account in accordance with the book-entry transfer facility's ATOP procedures for transfer. However, the exchange for the original notes so tendered will only be made after a book-entry confirmation of the book-entry transfer of original notes into the exchange agent's account, and

timely receipt by the exchange agent of an agent's message and any other documents required by the letter of transmittal. The term "agent's message" means a message, transmitted by the book-entry transfer facility and received by the exchange agent and forming part of a book-entry confirmation, which states that the book-entry transfer facility has received an express acknowledgment from a participant tendering original notes that are the subject of such book-entry confirmation that such participant has received and agrees to be bound by the terms of the letter of transmittal, and that we may enforce such agreement against such participant.

Guaranteed Delivery Procedures

If a registered holder of original notes desires to tender the original notes, and the original notes are not immediately available, or time will not permit the holder's original notes or other required documents to reach the exchange agent before the expiration date, or the procedure for book-entry transfer described above cannot be completed on a timely basis, a tender may nonetheless be made if: