

# **WisDOT Northwoods Rail Transit Commission:**

## **Market Study and Survey Results**

Toni Rice, and Kathleen Spencer

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# Study Overview

- ▶ Northwoods Rail Transit Commission (NRTC)
- ▶ Why study freight rail in northern Wisconsin?
- ▶ Counties in the study area

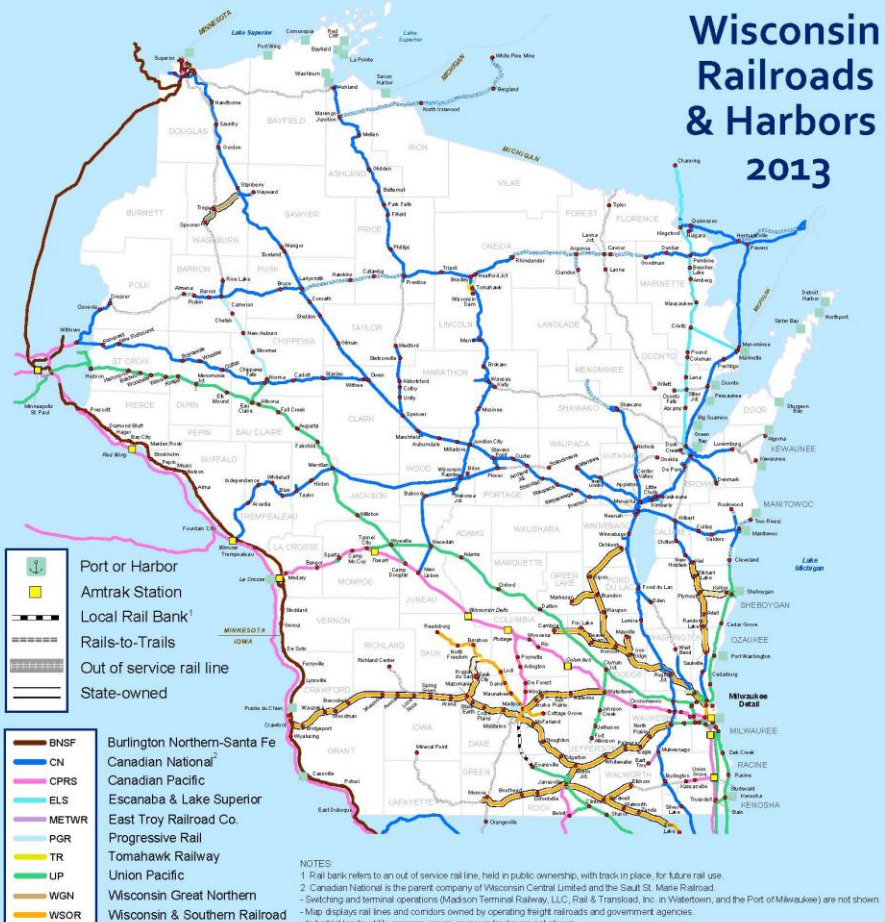


Photo: Wisconsin State Historical Society



Photo: Wisconsin State Historical Society

# Wisconsin Railroads & Harbors 2013



## State-owned lines



### Superior



### Fox River Valley

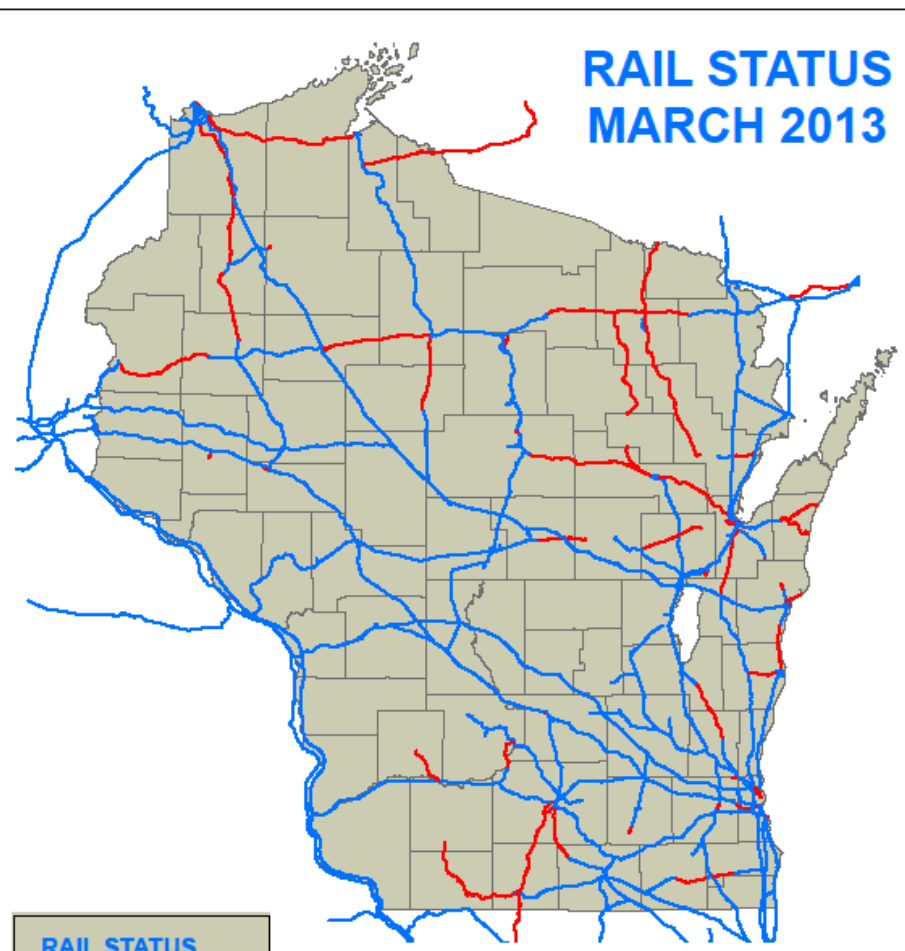


### Milwaukee



Wisconsin Department of Transportation - March 2013

# RAIL STATUS MARCH 2013



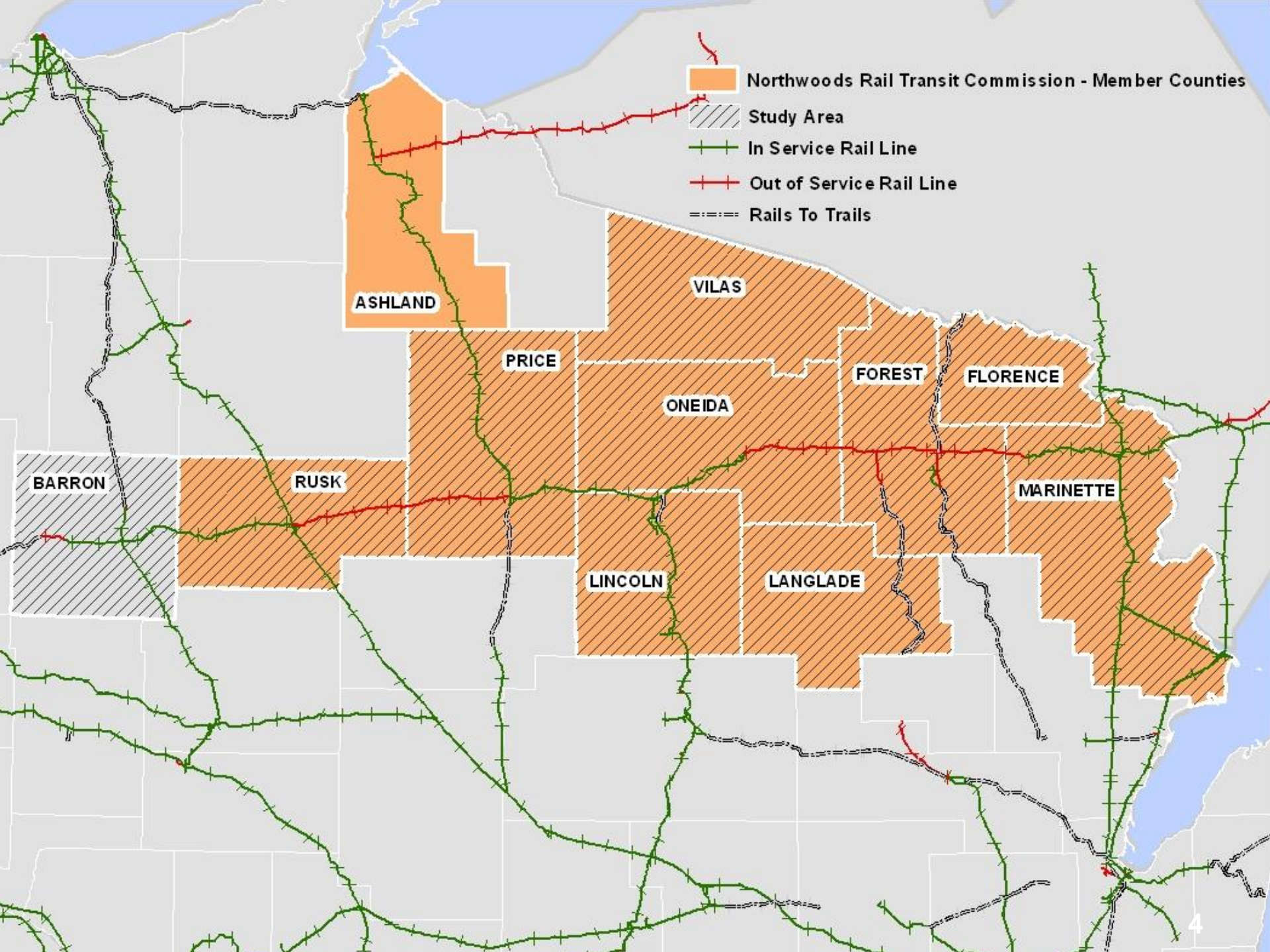
Source: WisDOT

**1,000 miles (28%) Out-of-Service\***



**3,600 miles of railroad tracks**





# Major Originating Commodities, 2007

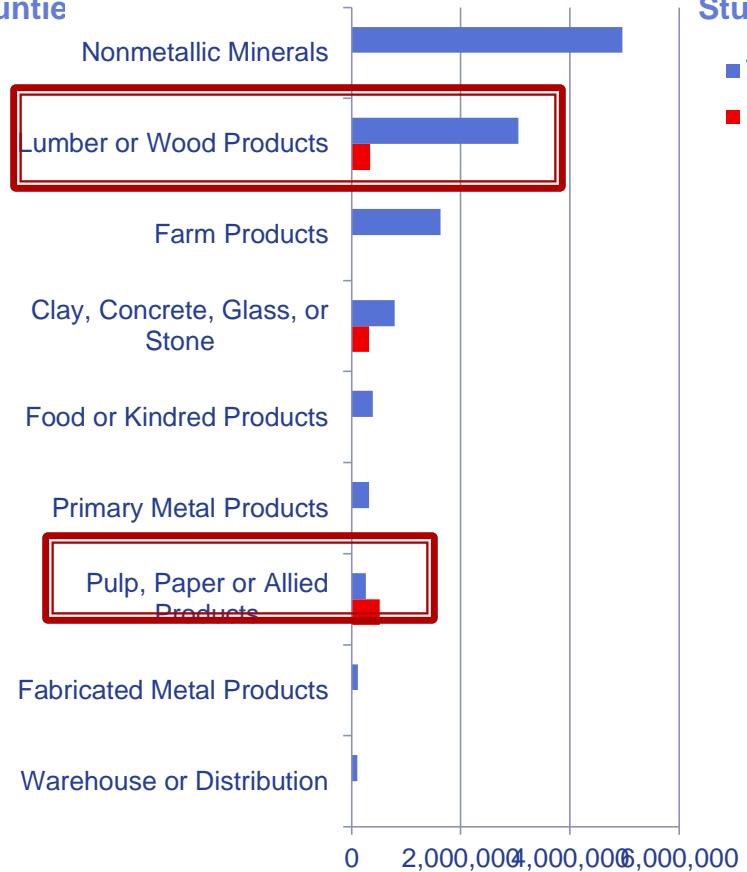
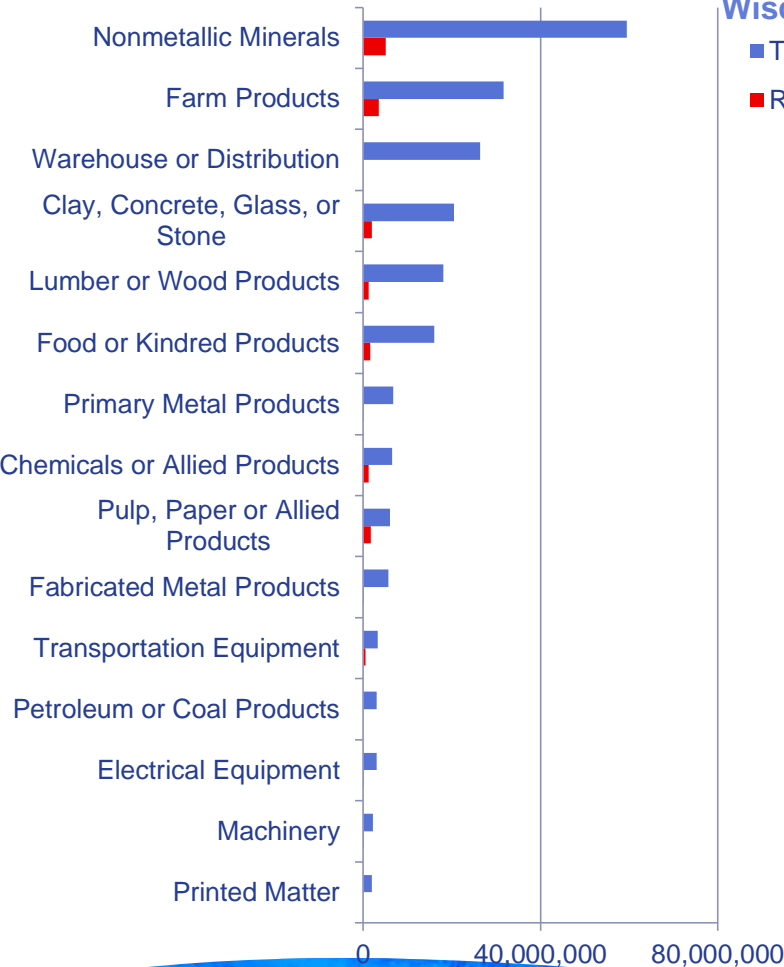
## Wisconsin and NRTC Study Area

Wisconsin Countie

■ Truck Tons  
■ Rail Tons

Study Area

■ Truck Tons  
■ Rail Tons



Data: Transearch 2007





# Originating Forestry-Related Commodities, Wisconsin and NRTC Study Area

## Forest, Lumber, Paper

|                    | Tonnage    | % of Total |
|--------------------|------------|------------|
| WI Outbound Tons   | 15,148,735 | 78.3%      |
| NRTC Outbound Tons | 4,186,131  | 21.7%      |
|                    | 19,334,866 |            |



## Pulp/Paper Products Transport

WI: 78% truck, 22% rail

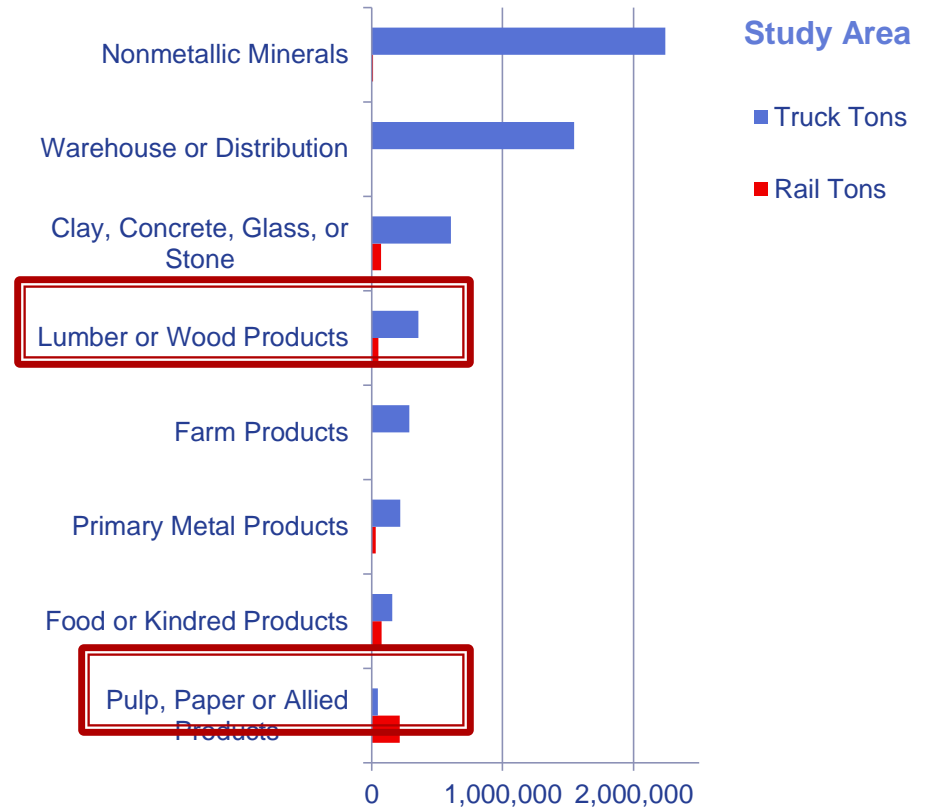
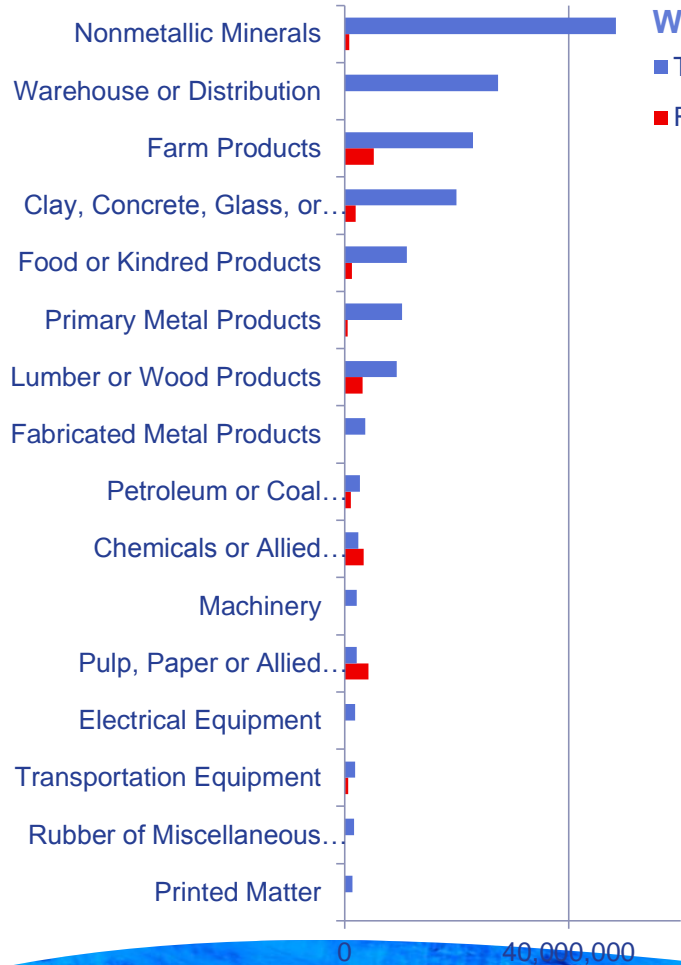
NRTC: 34% truck, 66% rail

Photo: Wisconsin State Historical Society



# Major Terminating Commodities, 2007

## Wisconsin and NRTC Study Area



Data: Transearch 2007



# Terminating Forestry-Related Commodities, Wisconsin and NRTC Study Area

## Forest, Lumber, Paper

|                   | Tonnage    | % of Total |
|-------------------|------------|------------|
| WI Inbound Tons   | 18,275,148 | 96.3%      |
| NRTC Inbound Tons | 703,554    | 3.7%       |
|                   | 18,978,702 |            |

## Pulp/Paper Products Transport

WI: 34% truck, 66% rail

NRTC: 17% truck, 74% rail, 10% water





# Freight Rail Survey

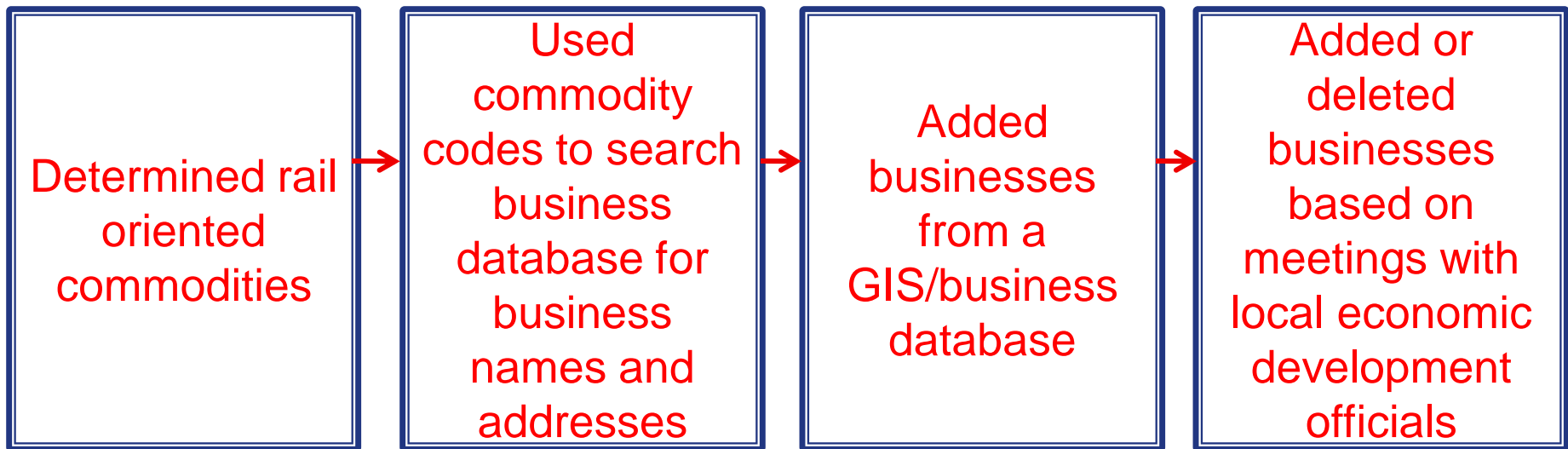
- ▶ Business selection process
- ▶ Survey results



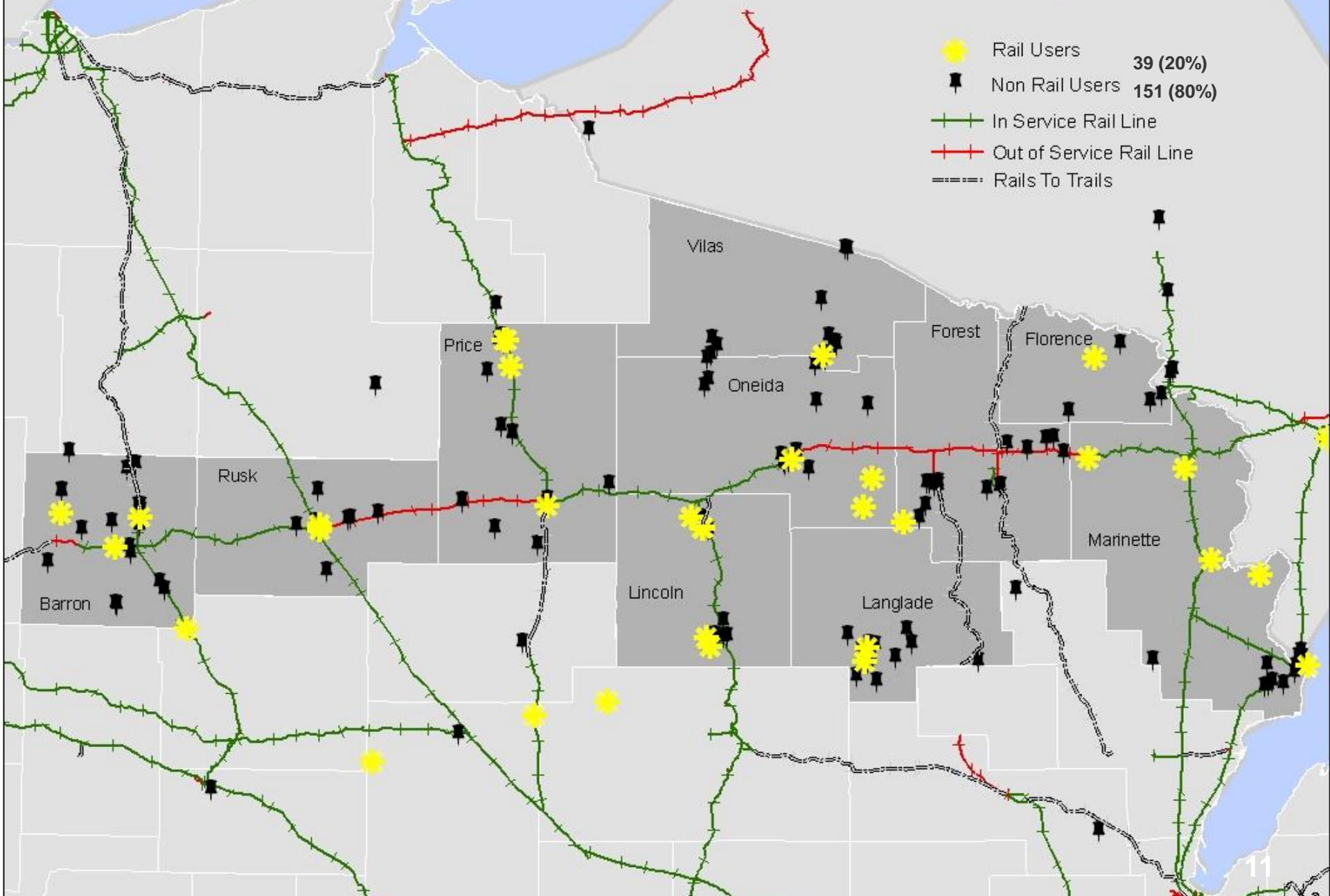
Photo: Wisconsin State Historical Society



# Business Selection Process

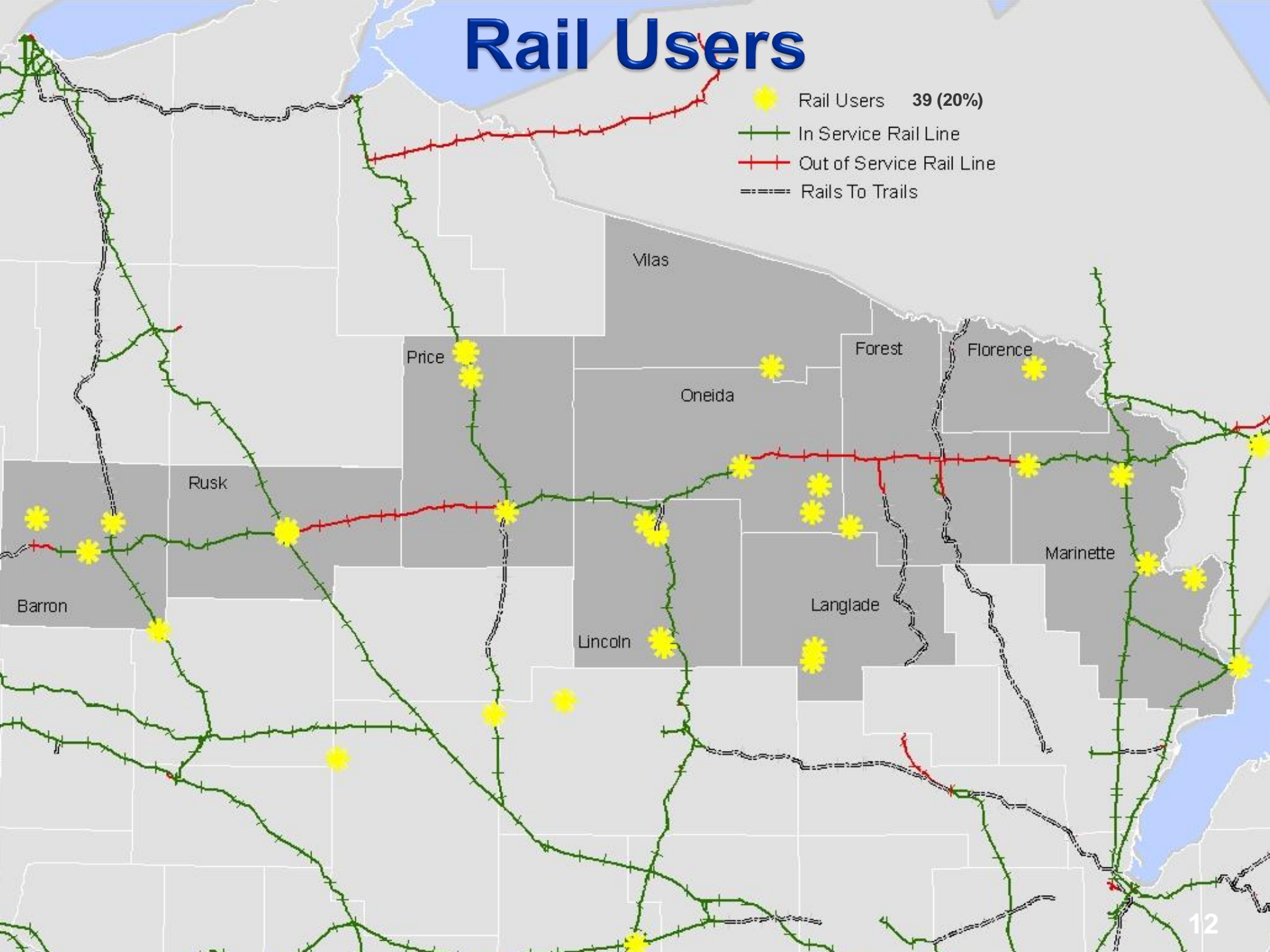


# Rail and Non Rail Users

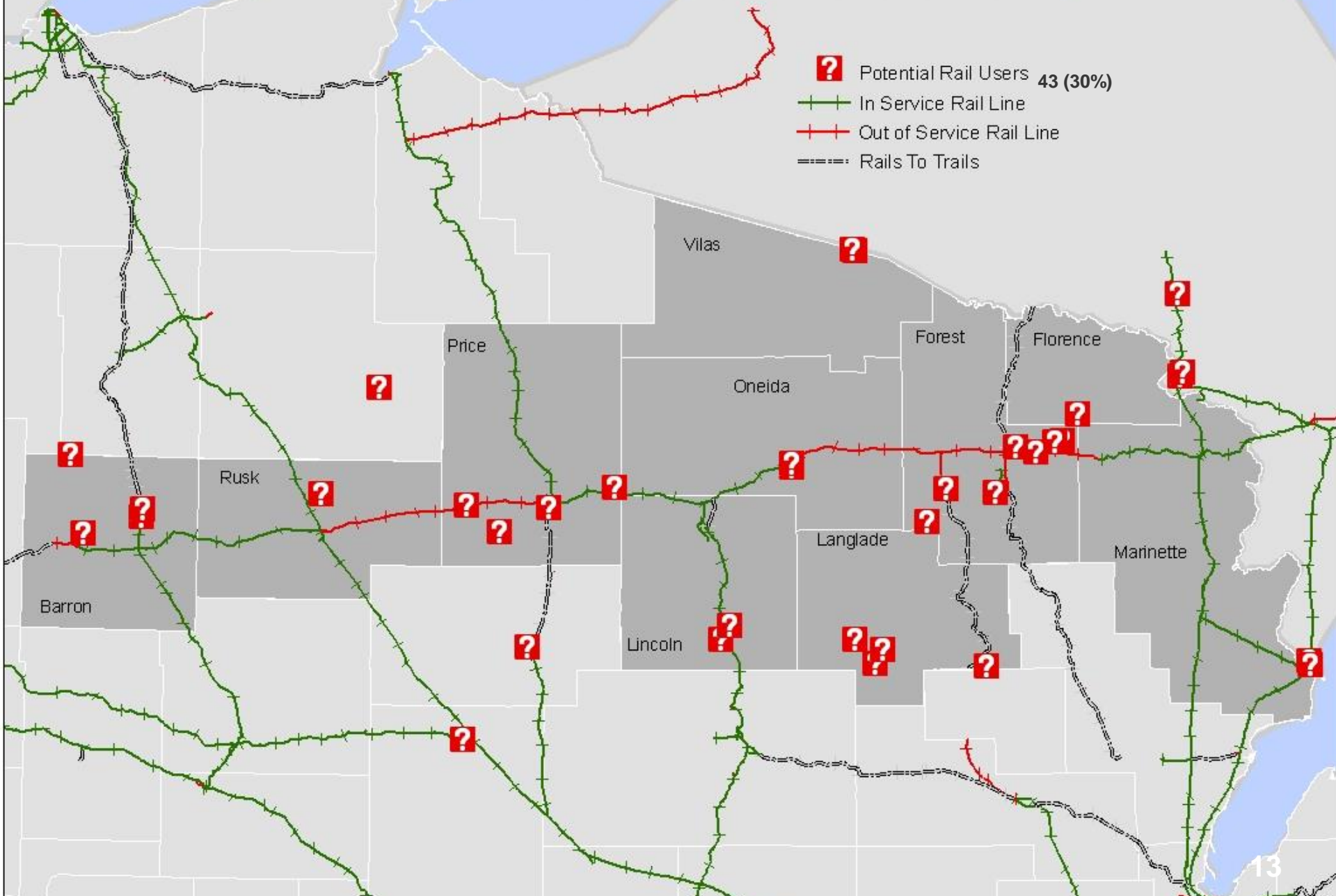




# Rail Users



# Potential Rail Users



# Survey Launch

- ▶ Survey mailed out November 2012
- ▶ Open to any business in the 10-county study area
- ▶ Several businesses outside the study area, including some in four U.P. Michigan counties, also participated
- ▶ County economic development leaders and others actively promoted the survey





# Survey Results

- ▶ Summarized by rail user and non-rail user responses
- ▶ Summarized by inbound and outbound freight types



- ▶ Freight commodities and shipping volumes of all businesses were grouped together into “best fit” categories for inbound freight and outbound freight
- ▶ Unique commodities – those reported by only one respondent – were assigned to a broader category, to help maintain the confidentiality of the business’s volume numbers



- ▶ Leading inbound freight, by tonnage:
  - ▶ Pulpwood
  - ▶ Miscellaneous (assorted commodities too dissimilar to group into one category)
  - ▶ Parts, components and raw materials
  - ▶ Construction materials
- ▶ Other leading inbound freight, by board feet:
  - ▶ Lumber
  - ▶ Logs





- ▶ Leading outbound freight, by tonnage:
  - ▶ Raw forest products
  - ▶ Construction materials
  - ▶ Paper products, including lignin and pulp
  - ▶ Pulpwood
- ▶ Other leading outbound freight, by board feet:
  - ▶ Lumber
  - ▶ Logs
  - ▶ Wood products





- ▶ Truck, rail, water, air – what's the modal split?
- ▶ Why do businesses use rail? Why don't they?
- ▶ If an out-of-service rail line was reactivated, would businesses use it?



- ▶ Some rail users might ship more freight by rail if certain changes were made to their service or the rail lines.

How much more might they ship?





- ▶ Other topics the survey covered:
  - ▶ Freight origins and destinations
  - ▶ Effect on non-rail users if they would use rail
  - ▶ Effect on rail users if they lost rail
  - ▶ Interest in intermodal facilities
  - ▶ Suggestions for infrastructure improvements
  - ▶ Opinions and perceptions



# Final Report (June/July)

- ▶ Rail service in Wisconsin
- ▶ County freight profiles (2007, 2011 figures)
- ▶ Study area freight profile
- ▶ Survey results and comments
- ▶ WisDOT and NRTC recommendations
- ▶ Resources
- ▶ <http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/>



# Contacts

- ▶ Liat Bonneville, [liat.bonneville@dot.wi.gov](mailto:liat.bonneville@dot.wi.gov)
- ▶ Toni Rice, [tonia.rice@dot.wi.gov](mailto:tonia.rice@dot.wi.gov)
- ▶ Kathleen Spencer, [kathleen.spencer@dot.wi.gov](mailto:kathleen.spencer@dot.wi.gov)
- ▶ Dennis Leong, [dennis.leong@dot.wi.gov](mailto:dennis.leong@dot.wi.gov)



Photo: Wisconsin State Historical Society



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