

Risk Factors Comparison 2024-02-09 to 2023-02-10 Form: 10-K

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The following discussion addresses significant factors, events, and uncertainties that make an investment in our securities risky and provides important information for the understanding of our “ forward- looking statements, ” which are discussed immediately preceding Item 7A of this Form 10- K and elsewhere. The risk factors set forth in this Item 1A should be read in conjunction with the rest of the information included in this report, including Management’ s Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations, Item 7, and Financial Statements and Supplementary Data, Item 8. We urge you to consider carefully the factors described below and the risks that they present for our operations as well as the risks addressed in other reports and materials that we file with the SEC and the other information included or incorporated by reference in this Form 10- K. When the factors, events, and contingencies described below or elsewhere in this Form 10- K materialize, our business, reputation, financial condition, results of operations, cash flows, or prospects can be materially adversely affected. In such case, the trading price of our common stock could decline and you could lose part or all of your investment. Additional risks and uncertainties not currently known to us or that we currently deem immaterial may also materially adversely affect our business, reputation, financial condition, results of operations, cash flows, and prospects. Strategic and Operational Risks We Must Manage Fluctuating Demand for Our Services and Network Capacity – Significant reductions in demand for rail services with respect to one or more commodities or changes in consumer preferences that affect the businesses of our customers can lead to increased costs associated with resizing our operations, including higher unit operating costs and costs for the storage of locomotives, rail cars, and other equipment; workforce adjustments; and other related activities, which could have a material adverse effect on our results of operations, financial condition, and liquidity. If there is significant demand for our services that exceeds the designed capacity of our network or shifts in traffic flow that are contrary to the designed capacity of our network, we may experience network difficulties, including congestion and reduced velocity, that could compromise the level of service we provide to our customers. This level of demand **also** may ~~also~~ compound the impact of weather and weather- related events on our operations and velocity. Although we continue to work to improve our transportation plan, add capacity, improve operations at our yards and other facilities, and improve our ability to address surges in demand for any reason ~~with adequate~~ **by carrying a resource- resource buffer**, we cannot be sure that these measures will fully or adequately address any service shortcomings resulting from demand exceeding our planned capacity. We may experience other operational or service difficulties related to network capacity, dramatic and unplanned fluctuations in our customers’ demand for rail service with respect to one or more commodities or operating regions, or other events that could negatively impact our operational efficiency, which could all have a material adverse effect on our results of operations, financial condition, and liquidity. We Transport Hazardous Materials – We transport certain hazardous materials and other materials, including crude oil, ethanol, and toxic inhalation hazard (TIH) materials, such as chlorine, that pose certain risks in the event of a release or combustion. Additionally, U. S. laws impose common carrier obligations on railroads that require us to transport certain hazardous materials regardless of risk or potential exposure to loss. A rail accident or other incident or accident on our network, at our facilities, or at the facilities of our customers involving the release or combustion of hazardous materials could involve significant costs and claims for personal injury, property damage, and environmental penalties and remediation in excess of our insurance coverage for these risks, which could have a material adverse effect on our results of operations, financial condition, and liquidity. We Rely on Technology and Technology Improvements in Our Business Operations – We rely on information technology in all aspects of our business, including technology systems operated by us or under control of third- parties. If we do not have sufficient capital or do not deploy sufficient capital in a timely manner to acquire, develop, or implement new technology or maintain or upgrade current systems, such as Positive Train Control (PTC) or the latest version of our transportation control systems, we may suffer a rail service outage or 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 condition, and liquidity. We Are Subject to Cybersecurity Risks – We rely on information technology in all aspects of our business, including technology systems operated by us (whether created by us or purchased), under control of third- parties, and open- source software. Although we devote significant resources to protect our technology systems and proprietary data, we have experienced and will likely continue to experience varying degrees of cyber incidents in the normal course of business. There can be no assurance that the systems we have designed to identify, prevent, or limit the effects of cyber incidents ~~or attacks~~ will be sufficient to prevent or detect such incidents ~~or attacks~~, or to avoid a material adverse impact on our systems after such incidents ~~or attacks~~ do occur. Furthermore, due to the rising numbers and increasing sophistication of cyber- attacks, an increasingly complex information technology supply chain, and the nature of zero- day exploits, we may be unable to anticipate or implement adequate ~~preventative~~ measures to prevent a security breach, including by ransomware ~~;~~ **or as a result of** human error ~~;~~ or other cyber- attack methods, from materially ~~disrupting~~ **affecting** our systems or the systems of third- parties upon which we rely. A ~~successful~~ cyber **incident** ~~– attack~~ that results in significant service interruption; safety failure; other operational difficulties; unauthorized access to (or the loss of access to) competitively sensitive, confidential, or other critical data or systems; loss of customers; financial losses; regulatory fines; ~~and~~ **reputational harm; or** misuse or corruption of critical data and proprietary information, could have a material adverse impact on our results of operations, financial condition, and liquidity. We may experience security breaches that could remain undetected for an extended period and, therefore, have a greater impact on ~~us the services we offer~~ **us the**. Additionally, we may be exposed to increased cybersecurity risk because we are a component of the critical U. S. infrastructure. Severe Weather Could Result in Significant Business Interruptions and Expenditures – As a railroad with a

vast network, we are exposed to severe weather conditions and other natural phenomena, including earthquakes, hurricanes, fires, floods, mudslides or landslides, extreme temperatures, avalanches, and significant precipitation, and climate change may cause or contribute to the severity or frequency of such weather conditions. Line outages and other interruptions caused by these conditions **has in the past and can in the future** adversely affect **parts or all of** our entire rail network, potentially negatively affecting revenues, costs, and liabilities, despite efforts we undertake to plan for these events. Our revenues can also be adversely affected by severe weather that causes damage and disruptions to our customers. These impacts caused by severe weather could have a material adverse effect on our results of operations, financial condition, and liquidity. A Significant Portion of Our Revenues Involves Transportation of Commodities to and from International Markets – Although revenues from our operations are attributable to transportation services provided in the U. S., a significant portion of our revenues involves the transportation of commodities to and from international markets, including Mexico, Canada, and Southeast Asia, by various carriers and, at times, various modes of transportation. Significant and sustained interruptions of trade with Mexico, Canada, or countries in Southeast Asia, including China, could adversely affect customers and other entities that, directly or indirectly, purchase or rely on rail transportation services in the U. S. as part of their operations, and any such interruptions, **including international armed conflicts such as the Russia- Ukraine and Israel- Hamas wars,** could have a material adverse effect on our results of operations, financial condition, and liquidity. Any one or more of the following could cause a significant and sustained interruption of trade with Mexico, Canada, or countries in Southeast Asia: (a) a deterioration of security for international trade and businesses; (b) the adverse impact of new laws, rules, and regulations or the interpretation of laws, rules, and regulations by government entities, courts, or regulatory bodies, including the United States- Mexico- Canada Agreement (USMCA) **or other international and a “Phase One” trade agreement agreements with China;** (c) actions of taxing authorities that affect our customers doing business in foreign countries; (d) any significant adverse economic developments, such as extended periods of high inflation, material disruptions in the banking sector or in the capital markets of these foreign countries, and significant changes in the valuation of the currencies of these foreign countries that could materially affect the cost or value of imports or exports; (e) shifts in patterns of international trade that adversely affect import and export markets; (f) a material reduction in foreign direct investment in these countries; and (g) public health crises, including the outbreak of pandemic or contagious disease, such as the coronavirus and its variant strains (COVID). We Are Dependent on Certain Key Suppliers of Locomotives and Rail – Due to the capital- intensive nature and sophistication of locomotive equipment, parts, and maintenance, potential new suppliers face high barriers to entry. Therefore, if one of the domestic suppliers of locomotives discontinues manufacturing locomotives, supplying parts, or providing maintenance for any reason, including bankruptcy or insolvency or the inability to manufacture locomotives that meet efficiency or regulatory emissions standards, we could experience significant cost increases and reduced availability of the locomotives that are necessary for our operations. Additionally, we utilize a limited number of steel producers that meet our specifications. Rail is critical to our operations for rail replacement programs, maintenance, and for adding additional network capacity, new rail and storage yards, and expansions of existing facilities. This industry similarly has high barriers to entry, and if one of these suppliers discontinues operations for any reason, including bankruptcy or insolvency, we could experience both significant cost increases for rail purchases and difficulty obtaining sufficient rail for maintenance and other projects. Changes to trade agreements or policies that result in increased tariffs on goods imported into the United States could also result in significant cost increases for rail purchases and difficulty obtaining sufficient rail. Workforce Risks Strikes or Work Stoppages Could Adversely Affect Our Operations – The U. S. Class I railroads are party to collective bargaining agreements with various labor unions. The majority of our employees belong to labor unions and are subject to these agreements. Disputes over the terms of these agreements or our potential inability to negotiate acceptable contracts with these unions can lead to, among other things, strikes, work stoppages, slowdowns, or lockouts, which could cause a significant disruption of our operations and have a material adverse effect on our results of operations, financial condition, and liquidity. Additionally, future national labor agreements, or renegotiation of labor agreements or provisions of labor agreements, could compromise our service reliability or significantly increase our costs for health care, wages, and other benefits, which could have a material adverse impact on our results of operations, financial condition, and liquidity. Labor disputes, work stoppages, slowdowns, or lockouts at loading / unloading facilities, ports, or other transport access points could compromise our service reliability and have a material adverse impact on our results of operations, financial condition, and liquidity. Labor disputes, work stoppages, slowdowns, or lockouts by employees of our customers or our suppliers could compromise our service reliability and have a material adverse impact on our results of operations, financial condition, and liquidity. The Availability of Qualified Personnel Could Adversely Affect Our Operations – Changes in demographics, training requirements, and pandemic illnesses or restrictions could negatively affect the availability of qualified personnel for us, our customers, and throughout the supply chain. Our ability to quickly react to other factors that affect our ability to attract and retain employees may be restricted due to limited flexibility to make unilateral changes to collective bargaining agreements, which cover the majority of our workforce. Unpredictable increases in demand for rail services and a lack of network fluidity may exacerbate our risks, which could have a negative impact on our operational efficiency and otherwise have a material adverse effect on our results of operations, financial condition, and liquidity. Legal and Regulatory Risks We Are Subject to Significant Governmental Regulation – We are subject to governmental regulation by a significant number of federal, state, and local authorities covering a variety of health, safety, labor, environmental, economic (as discussed below), tax, and other matters. Many laws and regulations require us to obtain and maintain various licenses, permits, and other authorizations, and we cannot guarantee that we will continue to be able to do so. Our failure to comply with applicable laws and regulations could have a material adverse effect on us. Governments or regulators may change the legislative or regulatory frameworks that we operate in without providing us any recourse to address any adverse effects on our business, including, without limitation, regulatory determinations or rules regarding dispute resolution, increasing the amount of our traffic subject to common carrier regulation, business relationships with other railroads, use of embargoes, calculation of our cost of capital or

other inputs relevant to computing our revenue adequacy, the prices we charge, changes in tax rates, enactment of new tax laws, and revision in tax regulations. Significant legislative activity in Congress or regulatory activity by the STB could expand regulation of railroad operations and pricing for rail services, which could reduce capital spending on our rail network, facilities, and equipment, and have a material adverse effect on our results of operations, financial condition, and liquidity. We May Be Subject to Various Claims and Lawsuits That Could Result in Significant Expenditures – As a railroad with operations in densely populated urban areas and a vast rail network, we are exposed to the potential for various claims and litigation related to labor and employment, personal injury, property damage, environmental liability, and other matters. Any material changes to litigation trends or a catastrophic rail accident or series of accidents involving any or all of property damage, personal injury, and environmental liability that exceed our insurance coverage for such risks could have a material adverse effect on our results of operations, financial condition, and liquidity. **In addition, some of these matters could impact the cost of obtaining, or availability in general, of insurance coverage meant to cover these types of risks.** We Are Subject to Significant Environmental Laws and Regulations – Due to the nature of the railroad business, our operations are subject to extensive federal, state, and local environmental laws and regulations concerning, among other things, emissions to the air; discharges to waters; handling, storage, transportation, and disposal of waste and other materials; and hazardous material or petroleum releases. We generate and transport hazardous and non-hazardous waste in our operations. Environmental liability can extend to previously owned or operated properties, leased properties, properties owned by third-parties, as well as properties we currently own. Environmental liabilities have arisen and may also arise from claims asserted by adjacent landowners or other third-parties in toxic tort litigation. We have been and may be subject to allegations or findings that we have violated, or are strictly liable under, these laws or regulations. We currently have certain obligations at existing sites for investigation, remediation, and monitoring, and we likely will have obligations at other sites in the future. We maintain adequate reserves for liabilities for these obligations, but fluctuations of potential costs affect our estimates based on our experience and, as necessary, the advice and assistance of our consultants. However, actual costs may vary from our estimates due to any or all of several factors, including changes to environmental laws or interpretations of such laws, technological changes affecting investigations and remediation, the participation and financial viability of other parties responsible for any such liability, and the corrective action or change to corrective actions required to remediate any existing or future sites. We could incur significant costs as a result of any of the foregoing, and we may be required to incur significant expenses to investigate and remediate known, unknown, or future environmental contamination, which could have a material adverse effect on our results of operations, financial condition, and liquidity. Macroeconomic and Industry Risks We Face Competition from Other Railroads and Other Transportation Providers – We face competition from other railroads, motor carriers, ships, barges, and pipelines. Our main railroad competitor is Burlington Northern Santa Fe LLC. Its primary subsidiary, BNSF Railway Company (BNSF), operates parallel routes in many of our main traffic corridors. In addition, we operate in corridors served by other railroads and motor carriers. Motor carrier competition exists in all three of our commodity groups. Because of the proximity of our routes to major inland and Gulf Coast waterways, barges can be particularly competitive, especially for grain and bulk commodities in certain areas where we operate. In addition to price competition, we face competition with respect to transit times, quality, and reliability of service from motor carriers and other railroads. Motor carriers in particular can have an advantage over railroads with respect to transit times and timeliness of service. However, railroads are much more fuel-efficient than trucks, which reduces the impact of transporting goods on the environment and public infrastructure, and we have been making efforts to convert truck traffic to rail. Additionally, we must build or acquire and maintain our rail system, while trucks, barges, and maritime operators are able to use public rights-of-way maintained by public entities. Any of the following could also affect the competitiveness of our transportation services for some or all of our commodities, which could have a material adverse effect on our results of operations, financial condition, and liquidity: (a) improvements or expenditures materially increasing the quality or reducing the costs of these alternative modes of transportation, such as autonomous or more fuel efficient trucks, (b) legislation that eliminates or significantly increases the size or weight limitations applied to motor carriers, or (c) legislation or regulatory changes that impose operating restrictions on railroads or that adversely affect the profitability of some or all railroad traffic. Many movements face product or geographic competition where our customers can use different products (e. g., natural gas instead of coal, sorghum instead of corn) or commodities from different locations (e. g., grain from states or countries that we do not serve, crude oil from different regions). Sourcing different commodities or different locations allows shippers to substitute different carriers and such competition may reduce our volume or constrain prices. Additionally, any future consolidation of the rail industry could materially affect our competitive environment. We May Be Affected by Climate Change and Market or Regulatory Responses to Climate Change – Climate change, including the impact of global warming and transition risks involving policy, legal risks, and market risks, could have a material adverse effect on our results of operations, financial condition, and liquidity over both a long-term and near-term basis. Restrictions, caps, taxes, or other controls on emissions of GHGs, including diesel exhaust, could significantly increase our operating costs. Restrictions on emissions could also affect our customers that (a) use commodities that we carry to produce energy, (b) use significant amounts of energy in producing or delivering the commodities we carry, or (c) manufacture or produce goods that consume significant amounts of energy or burn fossil fuels, including chemical producers, farmers and food producers, and automakers and other manufacturers. Significant cost increases, government regulation, or changes of consumer preferences for goods or services relating to alternative sources of energy, emissions reductions, and GHG emissions could materially affect the markets for the commodities we carry and demand for our services, which in turn could have a material adverse effect on our results of operations, financial condition, and liquidity. Government incentives encouraging the use of alternative sources of energy also could affect certain of our customers and the markets for certain of the commodities we carry in an unpredictable manner that could alter our traffic patterns, including, for example, increasing royalties charged to producers of PRB coal by the U. S. Department of Interior and the impacts of ethanol incentives on farming and ethanol producers. We could face increased costs related to defending and

resolving legal claims and other litigation **or complying with laws or regulations** related to climate change and the alleged impact of our operations on climate change. Violent weather caused by climate change, including hurricanes, fires, floods, extreme temperatures, avalanches, and significant precipitation **has in the past and** could **in the future** cause line outages and other interruptions to our infrastructure. Any of these factors, individually or in operation with one or more of the other factors, or other unpredictable impacts of climate change could reduce the amount of traffic we handle and have a material adverse effect on our results of operations, financial condition, and liquidity. **Our** ~~While we work to implement our Climate Action Plan,~~ **our** ~~efforts to achieve emission reduction targets could significantly increase our operational costs and capital expenditures.~~ **In addition, stakeholder expectations regarding some of these matters may be evolving and there may be differing views among stakeholders, which could harm our reputation or increase our costs.** Our Business, Financial Condition, and Results of Operations have been Adversely Affected, and in the Future, Could be Materially Adversely Affected by Pandemics or Other Public Health Crises – Pandemics, epidemics, and other outbreaks of disease can have significant and widespread impacts. As we saw during the peaks of the COVID pandemic, outbreaks of disease can cause a global slowdown of economic activity (including the decrease in demand for a broad variety of goods), disruptions in global supply chains, and significant volatility and disruption of financial markets, resulting further in adverse effects on workforces, customers, and regional and local economies. The impact of pandemics or public health crises on our results of operations and financial condition may depend on numerous evolving factors, including, but not limited to: governmental, business, and individuals’ actions that have been and continue to be taken in response to a global pandemic or other public health crises (including restrictions on travel and transport, workforce pressures, social distancing, and shelter- in- place orders); the effect of a pandemic or other public health crises on economic activity and actions taken in response; the effect on our customers and their demand for our services; the effect of a pandemic or other public health crises on the credit- worthiness of our customers; national or global supply chain challenges or disruption; facility closures; commodity cost volatility; general macroeconomic uncertainty in key global markets and financial market volatility; global economic conditions and levels of economic growth; and the pace of recovery as the pandemic subsides as well as response to a potential reoccurrence. Further, a pandemic or other public health crises, and the volatile regional and global economic conditions stemming from such an event, could also precipitate and aggravate the other risk factors that we identify, which could materially adversely affect our business, financial condition, results of operations (including revenues and profitability), and / or stock price. Additionally, a pandemic or other public health crises also may affect our operating and financial results in a manner that is not presently known to us or that we currently do not consider to present significant risks to our operations. Financial Risks We Are Affected By Fluctuating Fuel Prices – Fuel costs constitute a significant portion of our transportation expenses. Diesel fuel prices can be subject to dramatic fluctuations, and significant price increases could have a material adverse effect on our operating results. Although we currently are able to recover a significant amount of our fuel expenses from our customers through revenues from fuel surcharges, we cannot be certain that we will always be able to mitigate rising or elevated fuel costs through our fuel surcharges. Additionally, future market conditions or legislative or regulatory activities could adversely affect our ability to apply fuel surcharges or adequately recover increased fuel costs through fuel surcharges. As fuel prices fluctuate, our fuel surcharge programs trail such fluctuations in fuel **price-prices** by approximately two months, and may be a significant source of quarter- over- quarter and year- over- year volatility, particularly in periods of rapidly changing prices. International, political, and economic factors, events and conditions, including **international armed conflicts such as** ~~the start of the Russian-~~ **Russia** - Ukraine ~~conflict in late February 2022-~~ **and Israel-Hamas wars**, affect the volatility of fuel prices and supplies. Weather can also affect fuel supplies and limit domestic refining capacity. A severe shortage of, or disruption to, domestic fuel supplies could have a material adverse effect on our results of operations, financial condition, and liquidity. Alternatively, lower fuel prices could have a positive impact on the economy by increasing consumer discretionary spending that potentially could increase demand for various consumer products we transport. However, lower fuel prices could have a negative impact on other commodities we transport, such as coal and domestic drilling-related shipments, which could have a material adverse effect on our results of operations, financial condition, and liquidity. We Rely on Capital Markets – Due to the significant capital expenditures required to operate and maintain a safe and efficient railroad, we rely on the capital markets to provide some of our capital requirements. We utilize long- term debt instruments, bank financing, and commercial paper, and we pledge certain amount of our receivables as collateral for credit. Significant instability or disruptions of the capital markets, including, among other things, **elevated** ~~current rising~~ interest rates in the credit markets **and / or changes in interest rates**, or deterioration of our financial condition due to internal or external factors could restrict or prohibit our access to, and significantly increase the cost of, commercial paper and other financing sources, including bank credit facilities and the issuance of long- term debt, including corporate bonds. A significant deterioration of our financial condition could result in a reduction of our credit rating to below investment grade, which could restrict us from utilizing our current receivables securitization facility (Receivables Facility). This may also limit our access to external sources of capital and significantly increase the costs of short and long- term debt financing. General Risk Factors We Are Affected by General Economic Conditions – Prolonged, severe adverse domestic and global macroeconomic conditions or disruptions of financial and credit markets, including, for example, the recessionary fears, **and high inflation-inflationary pressures, and elevated interest rates** we are seeing in the current economic environment, may affect the producers and consumers of the commodities we carry and may have a material adverse effect on our access to liquidity, results of operations, and financial condition. We May Be Affected by Acts of Terrorism, War, or Risk of War – Our rail lines, facilities, and equipment, including rail cars carrying hazardous materials, could be direct targets or indirect casualties of terrorist attacks. Terrorist attacks, or other similar events, any government response thereto, and war or risk of war may adversely affect our results of operations, financial condition, and liquidity. In addition, insurance premiums for some or all of our current coverages could increase dramatically, or certain coverages may not be available to us in the future.