

## **READING & NORTHERN RAILROAD AWARDED \$10 MILLION GRANT FOR NEW RAILROAD BRIDGE IN CARBON COUNTY**

**Port Clinton, PA, August 18, 2014** - The Reading & Northern Railroad has been awarded a \$10 million State Capital budget grant to build a new railroad bridge over the Lehigh River near Nesquehoning in Carbon County. The project cost is in excess of \$14 million with Reading & Northern investing the balance.

The new bridge will provide Reading & Northern with an efficient and safe north/south route connecting the Philadelphia region to New England and eastern Canada. Reading & Northern will offer the use of this route to both Norfolk Southern and Canadian Pacific railroads; both of whom already use part of the Reading & Northern's mainline track today.

According to Andrew Muller, Jr., owner and CEO of the railroad, this Bridge will enable Reading & Northern to provide improved service to dozens of its existing customers. It will be the fastest and most economical route into the Marcellus Shale territory in northeast Pennsylvania, and it will assist in the development of the Port of Philadelphia allowing unit trains of double-stack intermodal containers to flow in and out of the Port of Philadelphia to points in the northeastern United States and Canada.

Muller said other public benefits would result from this project by keeping heavy trucks off Pennsylvania roads, improving highway safety, congestion mitigation and air quality, while reducing highway wear and tear and fuel usage. He noted that rail is three times more fuel-efficient than trucks.

Under the terms of the August 15 grant, the State funds will be made available over two fiscal years; 2014 and 2015; \$5,000,000 will be released each year.

Muller noted that over \$6 million of domestically manufactured materials would be produced for this bridge. During the 18-month construction period 140 direct jobs will be created plus numerous indirect jobs created by the producers of purchased materials.

Mr. Muller said, "This grant would not have happened without the support of Governor Tom Corbett, Transportation Secretary Barry Schoch, and dozens of state and federal elected officials. I want to publicly thank Senators Joseph Scarnati, David Argall, John Yudichak, Pat Browne and John Rafferty; State Representatives Mike Carroll, Doyle Heffley, Jerry Knowles and Mike Tobash; Congressmen Lou Barletta and Charlie Dent, and all of the County Commissioners in Carbon and Berks Counties."

"I have been working for almost two decades to bring this bridge and resulting new route to fruition. This bridge will enable us to better serve our customers and it will bring economic development and jobs to northeastern Pennsylvania. We are proud to work with PennDOT and our elected officials in bringing this important project to fruition."

Reading & Northern is the largest privately owned railroad in the Commonwealth. It operates a 320-mile regional rail system in nine counties in eastern Pennsylvania and employs over 180 employees at the

railroad and related businesses. In 2013 over 85,000 carloads moved over Reading & Northern railroad lines.