

## CN to re-equip, refurbish Sault Ste. Marie tour train

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CN and the Sault Ste. Marie Economic Development Corp. (SSMEDC) recently reached an agreement to acquire locomotives and passenger cars for the Agawa Canyon Tour Train that runs north of Sault Ste. Marie into Canadian Shield country.

CN, which operates the tour train, is acquiring three Electro-Motive Diesel F-40 locomotives, eight coaches, two café/lounge cars, three club cars and a presentation coach from Anasco Investment Co. The Class I plans to refurbish the Anasco cars, as well as two existing passenger dome cars. The upgrades will enable the train to accommodate more than 900 people.

The fleet renewal project is being funded by CN and the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corp., an Ontario government agency. The re-equipped tour train will be ready to enter service when the tour season begins in mid-June, and refurbishments will be completed during the coming season.

Under the agreement, CN will own the revitalized fleet, as well as take ownership of 26 obsolete passenger cars it currently leases for the tour train service. The Class I plans to sell the cars and use proceeds for marketing and/or enhancements to the tour facilities and services. The SSMEDC will manage concessions on the tour train and use revenue to enhance onboard customer service.

The Agawa Canyon Tour Train is the chief tourism draw for the Sault Ste. Marie area, generating an estimated \$30 million annually in economic activity for the city and region, according to CN. The train provides passengers a one-day wilderness excursion 114 miles north of Sault Ste. Marie through a region of northern lakes and rivers, granite rock formations and mixed forest.