

CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAY CO
Form F-9
October 31, 2011

As filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on October 31, 2011

Registration No. 333-

U.S. SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20549

FORM F-9
REGISTRATION STATEMENT UNDER
THE SECURITIES ACT OF 1933

Canadian National Railway Company
(Exact Name of Registrant as Specified in Its Charter)

Canada
(Province or other jurisdiction of
incorporation or organization)

98-0018609
(I.R.S. Employer Identification No.)

4011
(Primary Standard Industrial Classification Code Number)

935 de La Gauchetière Street West
Montreal, Québec, Canada H3B 2M9
(514) 399-5430
(Address and telephone number of Registrant's principal executive offices)

C T Corporation System
111 Eighth Avenue
New York, NY 10011
(212) 894-8940
(Name, address (including zip code) and telephone number (including area code)
of agent for service in the United States

Copies to:

Sean Finn
Canadian National Railway Company
935 de la Gauchetière Street West
Montreal, Québec, Canada H3B 2M9
(514) 399-7091

Alan Dean
Davis Polk & Wardwell LLP
450 Lexington Avenue
New York, NY 10017
(212) 450-4000

Approximate date of commencement of proposed sale to the public:
At such time or times on or after the effective date of this Registration Statement as the Registrant shall determine.

Province of Québec, Canada
(Principal jurisdiction regulating this offering)

It is proposed that this filing shall become effective (check appropriate box):

A. upon filing with the Commission pursuant to Rule 467(a) (if in connection with an offering being made contemporaneously in the United States and Canada).

B. at some future date (check the appropriate box below):

1. pursuant to Rule 467(b) on (date) at (time) (designate a time not sooner than 7 calendar days after filing).
2. pursuant to Rule 467(b) on (date) at (time) (designate a time not sooner than 7 calendar days or sooner after filing) because the securities regulatory authority in the review jurisdiction has issued a receipt or notification of clearance (date).
3. pursuant to Rule 467(b) as soon as practicable after notification of the Commission by the Registrant or the Canadian securities regulatory authority of the review jurisdiction that a receipt or notification of clearance has been issued with respect thereto.
4. after the filing of the next amendment to this Form (if preliminary material is being filed).

If any of the securities being registered on this Form are to be offered on a delayed or continuous basis pursuant to the home jurisdiction's shelf prospectus offering procedures, check the following box.

CALCULATION OF REGISTRATION FEE

Title of each class of securities to be registered	Amount to be registered(1)	Proposed maximum aggregate price per unit(2)	Proposed maximum aggregate offering price(2)	Amount of registration fee(3)
Debt Securities(4)	\$2,522,000,000	100%	\$2,522,000,000	\$289,021

- (1) Such amount in U.S. dollars or the equivalent thereof in foreign currencies as shall result in an aggregate initial public offering price for all securities of \$2,522,000,000 and, if any debt securities are issued at original issue discount, such greater amount as shall result in net proceeds of \$2,522,000,000 to the Registrant. Such amount represents the U.S. dollar value of CAD\$2,500,000,000 based on an exchange rate of US\$1.00 = CAD\$0.9913, the Bank of Canada closing exchange rate on October 27, 2011.
- (2) Estimated solely for the purpose of computing the registration fee.
- (3) An aggregate of U.S.\$39,910 of the amount of the registration fee was previously paid in connection with U.S.\$1,300,000,000 of unissued debt securities registered under the Registrant's F-9 shelf registration statement on Form F-9 (File No. 333-147725) initially filed on November 29, 2007 and declared effective on December 26, 2007, which unsold debt securities are hereby deregistered. Accordingly, pursuant to Rule 457(p) of the General Rules and Regulations under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, U.S.\$39,910 is being offset against the total registration fee due for this Registration Statement.
- (4) Also includes such indeterminate amount of debt securities as may be issued upon conversion of or in exchange for any other debt securities that provide for conversion or exchange into other debt securities.

The Registrant hereby amends this Registration Statement on such date or dates as may be necessary to delay its effective date until the Registration Statement shall become effective as provided in Rule 467 under the Securities Act of 1933 or on such date as the Commission, acting pursuant to Section 8(a) of such Act, may determine.

PART I

INFORMATION REQUIRED TO BE
DELIVERED TO OFFEREES OR PURCHASERS

Information contained herein is subject to completion or amendment. A registration statement relating to these securities has been filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission. These securities may not be sold nor may offers to buy be accepted prior to the time the registration statement becomes effective. This prospectus shall not constitute an offer to sell or the solicitation of an offer to buy nor shall there be any sale of these securities in any state in which such offer, solicitation or sale would be unlawful prior to registration or qualification under the securities laws of any such state.

PRELIMINARY SHORT FORM BASE SHELF PROSPECTUS

New Issue

October 31, 2011

CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAY COMPANY

CAD\$2,500,000,000

Debt Securities

Canadian National Railway Company (the “Company”) may offer and issue from time to time unsecured debt securities (the “Securities”) in one or more series in an aggregate principal amount not to exceed CAD\$2,500,000,000, or the equivalent, based on the applicable exchange rate at the time of offering, in U.S. dollars or such other currencies or units based on or relating to such other currencies, as shall be designated by the Company at the time of offering.

The specific terms of any offering of Securities will be set forth in a prospectus supplement (a “prospectus supplement”) including, where applicable, the title of the Securities, any limit on the aggregate principal amount of the Securities, the maturity date of the Securities, whether payment on the Securities will be senior or subordinated to the Company’s other liabilities and obligations, whether the Securities will bear interest, the interest rate or method of determining the interest rate, whether any conversion or exchange rights attach to the Securities, whether the Company may redeem the Securities at its option and any other specific terms. The Company reserves the right to include in a prospectus supplement specific variable terms pertaining to the Securities that are not within the descriptions set forth in this prospectus.

All shelf information permitted under applicable laws to be omitted from this prospectus will be contained in one or more prospectus supplements that will be delivered to purchasers together with this prospectus. Each prospectus supplement will be incorporated by reference into this prospectus for the purposes of securities legislation as of the date of the prospectus supplement and only for the purposes of the distribution of the Securities to which the prospectus supplement pertains.

The Company may offer and sell the Securities to or through underwriters or dealers purchasing as principals or through agents. The applicable prospectus supplement will identify each underwriter, dealer or agent engaged by the Company in connection with the offering and sale of the Securities and will set forth the terms of the offering of such Securities and the method of distribution, including, to the extent applicable, the proceeds to the Company from the sale of the Securities, any public offering price, any fees, discounts, commissions or any other compensation payable

to underwriters, dealers or agents and any other material terms of the plan of distribution. See “Plan of Distribution”.

In this prospectus, unless the context otherwise indicates, the “Company” refers to Canadian National Railway Company and its subsidiaries.

All dollar amounts referred to in this prospectus are in Canadian dollars unless otherwise specifically expressed.

The Company is a Canadian issuer that is permitted, under a multijurisdictional disclosure system adopted by the United States, to prepare this prospectus in accordance with the disclosure requirements of all the provinces and territories of Canada. Prospective investors in the United States should be aware that such requirements are different from those of the United States.

Prospective investors should be aware that the acquisition of the Securities may have tax consequences both in the United States and in Canada. Such consequences for investors who are resident in, or citizens of, the United States may not be fully described herein or in any applicable prospectus supplement.

The enforcement by investors of civil liabilities under United States federal securities laws may be affected adversely by the fact that the Company is a Canadian corporation, that some of its officers and directors are residents of Canada, that some of the underwriters or experts named in the registration statement are residents of Canada and that a substantial portion of the assets of the Company and said persons may be located outside the United States.

These securities have not been approved or disapproved by the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (the “SEC”) or any U.S. state securities regulator nor has the SEC or any U.S. state securities regulator passed upon the accuracy or adequacy of this prospectus or any applicable prospectus supplement. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

DOCUMENTS INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE

Information has been incorporated by reference into this prospectus from documents filed with securities commissions or similar authorities in Canada. The following documents, filed with the securities commission or other similar authority in each of the provinces and territories of Canada, are incorporated by reference into, and form an integral part of, this prospectus:

- (1) the Annual Information Form of the Company dated February 9, 2011 for the year ended December 31, 2010 (the “AIF”);
- (2) the audited consolidated financial statements of the Company for the years ended December 31, 2010 and 2009 and notes related thereto, together with the Report of Independent Registered Public Accounting Firm thereon and on the effectiveness of the Company’s internal control over financing reporting;
- (3) the Company’s Management’s Discussion and Analysis related to the year ended December 31, 2010 (the “2010 MD&A”);
- (4) the Company’s Management Information Circular dated March 8, 2011 prepared in connection with the Company’s annual meeting of shareholders held on April 27, 2011;
- (5) the unaudited interim consolidated financial statements of the Company for the three months and nine months ended September 30, 2011 and notes related thereto; and
- (6) the Company’s Management’s Discussion and Analysis related to the three months and nine months ended September 30, 2011 (the “Q3 MD&A”).

Any document of the type referred to in the preceding paragraph and all material change reports (excluding confidential material change reports) filed by the Company with securities commissions or similar authorities in the provinces and territories of Canada subsequent to the date of this prospectus and prior to the completion or withdrawal of any offering under any prospectus supplement shall be deemed to be incorporated by reference into this prospectus.

Any statement contained herein or in a document incorporated or deemed to be incorporated by reference herein shall be deemed to be modified or superseded, for purposes of this prospectus, to the extent that a statement contained herein or in any other subsequently filed document which also is, or is deemed to be, incorporated by reference herein modifies or supersedes such statement. The modifying or superseding statement need not state that it has modified or superseded a prior statement or include any other information set forth in the document that it modifies or supersedes. The making of a modifying or superseding statement shall not be deemed an admission for any purposes that the modified or superseded statement, when made, constituted a misrepresentation, an untrue statement of a material fact or an omission to state a material fact that is required to be stated or that is necessary to make a statement not misleading in light of the circumstances in which it was made. Any statement so modified or superseded shall not be deemed, except as so modified or superseded, to constitute a part of this prospectus.

Upon a new annual information form and the related annual financial statements being filed by the Company with, and, where required, accepted by, the applicable securities regulatory authorities during the currency of this prospectus, the previous annual information form, the previous annual financial statements and all interim financial statements, annual and interim management’s discussions and analyses, material change reports and annual filings or information circulars filed prior to the commencement of the Company’s fiscal year with respect to which the new annual information form is filed shall be deemed no longer to be incorporated by reference into this prospectus for purposes of future offers and sales of Securities hereunder.

A prospectus supplement containing the specific terms in respect of any Securities, updated disclosure of earnings coverage ratios, if applicable, and other information in relation to the Securities will be delivered to purchasers of such Securities together with this prospectus and will be deemed to be incorporated into this prospectus as of the date of such prospectus supplement, but only for purposes of the offering of such Securities covered by that prospectus supplement.

Copies of the documents incorporated herein by reference may be obtained on request without charge from the Corporate Secretary, Canadian National Railway Company, 935 de La Gauchetière Street West, Montreal, Québec, H3B 2M9 (telephone: (514) 399-7091), and are also available electronically at www.sedar.com.

AVAILABLE INFORMATION

In addition to its continuous disclosure obligations under the securities laws of the provinces of Canada, the Company is subject to the information requirements of the United States Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the “Exchange Act”), and in accordance therewith files reports and other information with the SEC. Under the multijurisdictional disclosure system adopted by the United States, such reports and other information may be prepared in accordance with the disclosure requirements of Canada, which requirements are different from those of the United States. Such reports and other information, when filed by the Company in accordance with such requirements, can be inspected and copied at the Public Reference Room maintained by the SEC at 100 F Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20549. The public may obtain information on the operations of the Public Reference Room by calling the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330. The SEC maintains an Internet site that contains reports and other information regarding issuers that file electronically with the SEC. The address of that site is <http://www.sec.gov>.

The Company has filed with the SEC a Registration Statement on Form F-9 (the “Registration Statement”) under the United States Securities Act of 1933, as amended (the “Securities Act”), with respect to the Securities and of which this prospectus is a part. This prospectus does not contain all of the information set forth in the Registration Statement, certain parts of which are omitted in accordance with the rules and regulations of the SEC. Reference is made to the Registration Statement and the exhibits thereto for further information with respect to the Company and the Securities.

STATEMENT REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING INFORMATION

Certain information included in this prospectus and the documents incorporated by reference herein are “forward-looking statements” within the meaning of the United States Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995 and under Canadian securities laws. The Company cautions that, by their nature, forward-looking statements involve risks, uncertainties and assumptions. The Company cautions that its assumptions may not materialize and that current economic conditions render such assumptions, although reasonable at the time they were made, subject to greater uncertainty. These forward-looking statements include, but are not limited to, statements with respect to growth opportunities; statements that the Company will benefit from positive North American and global economic conditions; the anticipation that cash flow from operations and from various sources of financing will be sufficient to meet debt repayments and future obligations in the foreseeable future; statements regarding future payments, including income taxes and pension contributions; as well as the projected capital spending program. Forward-looking statements could further be identified by the use of terminology such as the Company “believes”, “expects”, “anticipates” or other similar words. Such forward-looking statements are not guarantees of future performance and involve known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other factors which may cause the actual results or performance of the Company or the rail industry to be materially different from the outlook or any future results or performance implied by such statements.

Important risk factors that could affect the forward-looking statements include, but are not limited to, the effects of general economic and business conditions; industry competition; inflation, currency and interest rate fluctuations; changes in fuel prices; legislative and/or regulatory developments; compliance with environmental laws and regulations; actions by regulators; various events which could disrupt operations, including natural events such as severe weather, droughts, floods and earthquakes; labor negotiations and disruptions; environmental claims; uncertainties of investigations, proceedings or other types of claims and litigation; risks and liabilities arising from derailments; and other risks detailed from time to time in reports filed by the Company with securities regulators in Canada and the United States. See the section of this prospectus entitled “Risk Factors”.

The Company assumes no obligation to update or revise forward-looking statements to reflect future events, changes in circumstances, or changes in beliefs, unless required by applicable Canadian securities laws. In the event the Company does update any forward-looking statement, no inference should be made that the Company will make

additional updates with respect to that statement, related matters, or any other forward-looking statement.

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THE COMPANY

Overview

The Company, together with its wholly owned subsidiaries, is engaged in the rail and related transportation business. The Company spans Canada and mid-America, from the Atlantic and Pacific oceans to the Gulf of Mexico, serving the ports of Vancouver, Prince Rupert, B.C., Montreal, Halifax, New Orleans and Mobile, Alabama, and the key cities of Toronto, Buffalo, Chicago, Detroit, Duluth, Minnesota/Superior, Wisconsin, Green Bay, Wisconsin, Minneapolis/St. Paul, Memphis, St. Louis, and Jackson, Mississippi, with connections to all points in North America. The Company's freight revenues are derived from the movement of a diversified and balanced portfolio of goods, including petroleum and chemicals, grain and fertilizers, coal, metals and minerals, forest products, intermodal and automotive.

Additional information about the Company's business is included in the documents incorporated by reference into this prospectus.

The Company's registered and head office is located at 935 de La Gauchetière Street West, Montreal, Québec, H3B 2M9, and its telephone number is 1-888-888-5909. The Company's common shares are listed for trading on the Toronto Stock Exchange under the symbol "CNR" and the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol "CNI".

USE OF PROCEEDS

Except as may otherwise be set forth in a prospectus supplement, the net proceeds from the sale of Securities will be used for general corporate purposes, including the redemption and refinancing of outstanding indebtedness, share repurchases, acquisitions and other business opportunities.

CONSOLIDATED CAPITALIZATION

The following table sets forth the consolidated capitalization of the Company as at December 31, 2010 and September 30, 2011 based on U.S. generally accepted accounting principles ("U.S. GAAP"). The consolidated capitalization of the Company does not give effect to the issuance of Securities that may be issued pursuant to this prospectus and any prospectus supplement, since the aggregate principal amounts and terms of such Securities are not presently known.

The data in the table below is derived from, and should be read in conjunction with, the audited consolidated financial statements and the unaudited interim consolidated financial statements of the Company and related notes thereto, respectively, incorporated by reference in this prospectus.

	As at December 31, 2010	As at September 30, 2011
Current portion of long-term debt and short-term debt	\$ 540	\$ 525
Long-term debt	5,531	5,878
Total debt	6,071	6,403
Shareholders' equity		
Common shares	4,252	4,149
Accumulated other comprehensive loss	(1,709)	(1,647)
Retained earnings	8,741	9,154
Total shareholders' equity	11,284	11,656
Total capitalization	\$ 17,355	\$ 18,059

On October 12, 2011, holders of 76% of the Company's US\$400,000,000 6.375% Notes due 2011 tendered their notes pursuant to the tender offer and consent solicitation commenced by its wholly-owned subsidiary, CNLX Canada Inc., on September 13, 2011 (the "Tender Offer"). Also on October 12, 2011, CNLX Canada Inc. accepted and paid for the tendered notes. Notes not tendered and purchased pursuant to the Tender Offer were paid by the Company on the stated maturity date of October 15, 2011. The above transactions are referred to as the "Tender Offer Transactions" and are not reflected in the above table.

EARNINGS COVERAGE RATIOS

The following earnings coverage ratios are calculated for the twelve-month periods ended December 31, 2010 and September 30, 2011 and give effect to (i) the issuance of all long-term debt of the Company and repayment or redemption thereof since the beginning of such twelve month periods, and (ii) the Tender Offer Transactions, as if such transactions had occurred on the first day of such twelve-month periods, respectively. These earnings coverage ratios do not give effect to the issuance of any Securities that may be issued pursuant to this prospectus and any prospectus supplement, since the aggregate principal amounts and the terms of such Securities are not presently known.

	Twelve months ended	Twelve months ended September
	December 31, 2010	30, 2011
Earnings coverage (U.S. GAAP)	9.66 times	11.36 times

Earnings coverage is equal to net income before interest and income taxes divided by interest expense on all debt.

Based on U.S. GAAP, the Company's interest expense requirements would have amounted to \$335 million and \$319 million for the twelve-month periods ended December 31, 2010 and September 30, 2011, respectively. Also based on U.S. GAAP, the Company's earnings before interest expense and income taxes for the twelve-month periods ended December 31, 2010 and September 30, 2011 were \$3,236 million and \$3,623 million, respectively, which is 9.66 times and 11.36 times the Company's interest expense requirements for these periods.

If the Company offers Securities having a term to maturity in excess of one year under this prospectus and a prospectus supplement, the prospectus supplement will include earnings coverage ratios giving effect to the issuance of such Securities.

DESCRIPTION OF SECURITIES

The following description sets forth certain general terms and provisions of the Securities. The Company may issue Securities either separately, or together with or upon the conversion of or in exchange for other securities. The particular terms and provisions of each series of Securities the Company may offer will be described in greater detail in the related prospectus supplement which may provide information that is different from this prospectus. The Company reserves the right to include in a prospectus supplement specific variable terms pertaining to the Securities that are not within the descriptions set forth in this prospectus. Senior Securities of the Company may be issued under a senior indenture dated as of May 1, 1998, as amended and restated by an Amended and Restated Trust Indenture dated as of June 1, 1998, between the Company and BNY Trust Company of Canada (formerly The Trust Company of Bank of Montreal), as trustee (the "Canadian Senior Indenture"), or under a senior indenture dated as of June 1, 1998 between the Company and The Bank of New York Mellon (formerly The Bank of New York), as trustee (the "U.S. Senior Indenture" and together with the Canadian Senior Indenture, the "Senior Indentures"). Senior Securities issued under the Canadian Senior Indenture will not be offered or sold to persons in the United States. Subordinated Securities may be issued under a subordinated indenture, dated as of June 23, 1999, as amended and supplemented, between the Company and BNY Trust Company of Canada (formerly The Trust Company of Bank of Montreal), as trustee (the "Subordinated Indenture"). Securities may also be issued under new indentures between the Company and a trustee or trustees as will be described in a prospectus supplement for such Securities. The Senior Indentures and the

Subordinated Indenture are sometimes referred to collectively as the “indentures”, and the trustees under the indentures are sometimes referred to collectively as the “trustees”.

The following summary of certain provisions of the indentures and the Securities is not meant to be complete and is subject to and qualified in its entirety by the detailed provisions of the indentures. For more information, you should refer to the full text of the indentures and the Securities, including the definitions of certain terms not defined herein, and the related prospectus supplement. Prospective investors should rely on information in the prospectus supplement if it is different from the following information.

Unless otherwise indicated, references to the “Company” in this description of Securities are to Canadian National Railway Company but not to any of its subsidiaries.

General

The indentures do not limit the aggregate principal amount of Securities the Company may issue and do not limit the amount of other indebtedness the Company or any of its subsidiaries may incur. The Company may issue Securities from time to time in separate series. Securities may also be issued pursuant to a medium-term note program. Unless otherwise specified in a prospectus supplement,

- Securities will be unsecured obligations of the Company;
- senior Securities will rank equally with all other unsecured and unsubordinated indebtedness of the Company; and
- subordinated Securities will be subordinate, in right of payment, to all senior indebtedness (as defined in the Subordinated Indenture).

A prospectus supplement will describe the following terms of any series of Securities the Company may offer and may include the following:

- the title of the Securities;
- any limit on the aggregate principal amount of Securities that may be issued;
- the date(s) of maturity;
- the rate(s) of interest, if any, or the method of calculation, the date(s) interest will begin to accrue, the date(s) interest will be payable and the regular record date(s) for interest payments or the method for determining such date(s);
- the covenants applicable to the Securities;
- any mandatory or optional sinking fund or analogous provisions;
- the date(s), if, any, and the price(s) at which the Company is obligated, pursuant to any mandatory sinking fund provisions or otherwise, to redeem, or at a holder's option to purchase, such series of Securities and other related terms and provisions;
 - the index used to determine any payments to be made on the Securities;
 - the currency or currencies of any payments to be made on the Securities;
 - whether or not the Securities will be issued in global form, their terms and the depositary;
 - the terms upon which a global note may be exchanged in whole or in part for other Securities;
- the terms, if any, under which the Securities are convertible into common shares or any other security of the Company; and
 - any other terms of the series of Securities.

In addition to new issues of Securities, this prospectus may be used in connection with the remarketing of outstanding Securities, in which case the terms of the remarketing and of the remarketed Securities will be set forth in the

prospectus supplement.

Conversion or Exchange of Securities

If applicable, the prospectus supplement will set forth the terms on which a series of Securities may be converted into or exchanged for other securities of the Company. These terms will include whether conversion or exchange is mandatory, or is at the option of the holder or of the Company. The Company will also describe in the prospectus supplement how it will calculate the number of securities that holders of Securities would receive if they convert or exchange their Securities.

Events of Default

Under the indentures, an “event of default” with respect to any series of Securities includes any of the following:

- failure to pay any principal or premium, when due;

- failure to pay any interest when due, and this failure continues for 30 days;
 - failure to pay any sinking fund installment when due;
- failure to perform any covenant or agreement relating to the Securities or in the applicable indenture, and the failure continues for 60 days after written notice by the trustee or by holders of at least 25% in aggregate principal amount outstanding;
 - failure to pay principal when due, or acceleration, of any indebtedness of the Company in an aggregate principal amount exceeding \$75 million, and such acceleration is not rescinded or annulled within 30 days after written notice by the trustee or holders of at least 25% in aggregate principal amount outstanding (this provision applies to the Senior Indentures only);
 - certain events of bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization; and
 - anyother event of default provided for that series of Securities.

If an even