

Scoping Summary Report

North Pole Road/Rail Crossing Reduction Project

May 2011



DOWL HKM

SCOPING SUMMARY REPORT

NORTH POLE ROAD/RAIL CROSSING REDUCTION PROJECT

NORTH POLE, ALASKA

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ADF&G	Alaska Department of Fish and Game
ARRC	Alaska Railroad Corporation
DA	Department of the Army
EA	Environmental Assessment
FRA	Federal Railroad Administration
FSNB	Fairbanks North Star Borough
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
U.S.	United States
USACE	United States Army Corps of Engineers
USAG FWA	United States Army Garrison, Fort Wainwright, Alaska
UXO	unexploded ordnance

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 General

The Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC) in cooperation with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) is proposing a road/rail crossing reduction project in North Pole, Alaska (Figure 1).

The project proposes to reduce the number of at-grade (same level) road/rail crossings on an eight-mile section of the Eielson Branch track (from Richardson Highway Milepost 9 to the Chena River Floodway) that currently runs through North Pole. Crossing reduction options may include realigning this section of track on or along the Tanana River Levee (Figure 2). The existing at-grade crossing of the Richardson Highway may also be removed and a new grade-separated crossing installed. The proposed project represents Phase One of a larger proposed realignment project (Fairbanks Area Rail Line Relocation). This phase has independent utility and would provide immediate safety benefits.

Because this project involves federal funds, the ARRC is preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) on behalf of the FRA in order to meet the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). As part of the EA preparation, public and agency scoping is being conducted to provide the public and agencies with project information and afford them the opportunity to comment. The EA will address relevant public and agency comments received during project scoping.

The ARRC conducted agency and public scoping meetings in the City of North Pole on January 26, 2011. Issues discussed during these meetings included the project purpose and need, alternatives under consideration, and potential issues and concerns that need to be addressed during the environmental review and design phase. This report summarizes the public and agency scoping process, documents the scoping methods used, identifies issues and concerns, and lists comments received to date along with their sources. Comments were received from a variety of stakeholders (or interested parties), including local residents, railroad users, local government officials, and resource agency representatives.

1.2 Project Team

ARRC Project Team

- Greg Lotakis, Project Manager
- Barbara Hotchkin, NEPA Manager
- Stephenie Wheeler, Corporate Communications Officer
- Jeanette Holt, Environmental Analyst
- Brian Lindamood, Special Projects
- Blake Adolfae, Scheduling and Logistics Manager
- Mark Peterburs, Director of Projects
- Tom Brooks, Chief Engineer

FRA

- John Winkle, FRA

TranSystems

- Jon Marshall, Program Manager

DOWL HKM

- Kristen Hansen, Environmental Manager
- Heather Campfield, Senior Environmental Specialist
- Alicia Smith, Environmental Specialist

1.3 Public and Agency Outreach Methods

The following public and agency outreach methods were used to inform the public and local, state, and federal resource agencies about the project:

- Development of a public mailing list
- Development of a project e-mail distribution list
- Development of a project website with project information, project schedule, notice of public scoping meetings, and electronic comment form
- Preparation of a presentation and other meeting materials, including display boards, comment sheets, fact sheets, newspaper advertisements, informational flyers, and a general press release

- Conducting separate public and agency scoping meetings in North Pole on Wednesday, January 26, 2011

1.3.1 Mailing List of Potentially Affected Interests

Three mailing lists have been developed for the project (Appendix A). They include a general public mailing list, a mailing list for state representatives currently holding a position in public office, and an agency e-mail and mailing distribution list.

The general public mailing list includes all residents who own property within the project corridor and others who, through the course of advertisements and scoping, showed an interest in this project or had expressed an interest in previous projects in the project corridor vicinity. The general public mailing list contains approximately 14,750 addresses. Figure 3 shows a map of the general public mailing list boundary.

The agency e-mail and mailing distribution lists include local, state, and federal resource agencies and officials who might have an interest or concern, environmental or otherwise, in the project. The agency list contains 33 contacts.

The mailing list of local government officials includes 34 contacts.

1.3.2 Informational Flyer/Meeting Announcement

Approximately 14,750 informational flyers were mailed to the general public distribution list on Wednesday, January 12, 2011, to announce the public scoping meeting. The flyer contained a project description and meeting overview along with a map of the project area and contact information. A copy of the flyer is included in Appendix B.

1.3.3 Advertisements

An advertisement for the public scoping meeting appeared in the *Fairbanks Daily News Miner* on Sunday, January 23, and Wednesday, January 26, 2011. A copy of this advertisement is included in Appendix B. A public announcement also ran on media statewide including radio, television, print, as well as a few national railroad industry magazines on Monday, January 17, 2011. The text of the public announcement along with a list of the statewide media that hosted the message is included in Appendix B.

1.3.4 Project Website

The ARRC included the project on its website at www.alaskarailroad.com/CapitalProjects/FairbanksInteriorProjects/tabid/485/Default.aspx, which provides specific information regarding the proposed project, its objectives, schedule, and project documents. The project website also provides a mechanism for interested parties to submit comments.

1.3.5 Project E-Mail Address

An Alaska Railroad e-mail address, public_comment@akrr.com, was available to allow interested parties to send comments via e-mail. This address was included in the public scoping meeting flyer, the newspaper announcement, and the comment form distributed at meetings.

1.3.6 Comment Forms

A project comment form was developed and distributed at the public scoping meeting. The form included an area to add contact information for those who wanted to be added to the project mailing and e-mail lists. A copy of the comment form is included in Appendix B.

2.0 PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING

The public scoping meeting was held on Wednesday, January 26, 2011, from 3:30 to 6:30 p.m. at the North Pole City Hall, 125 Snowman Lane, North Pole, Alaska. Presentations were given at 4 and 5:30 p.m. Each presentation lasted approximately half an hour. The event provided the opportunity for project staff to solicit input from the community and gave community members a chance to meet with project staff one-on-one to discuss individual issues and concerns. The PowerPoint presentation that was presented to those in attendance is included in Appendix C.

The following topics were included in the presentation:

- Project Background
- Role of Previous Studies
- Project Purpose and Need
- Existing Road/Rail Crossings
- Project Description
- Richardson Highway Rail Crossing Area
- Issues Raised by Agencies During Previous Study
- Public Comments Heard During Previous Study
- EA Process and Schedule

At the conclusion of the presentation, the meeting was opened up for the public to ask questions of the project team. At the end of the question and answer period, the one-on-one discussion with individuals resumed. The public meeting ended at 6:45 p.m. Approximately 39 private citizens, not including project team members, attended the meeting.

3.0 AGENCY SCOPING MEETING

A letter announcing the agency scoping meeting was mailed to those on the agency distribution list on Tuesday, December 21, 2011. The letter provided information on the proposed project, background information, the purpose of the project, and the goals and objectives of the meeting. In addition, a reminder email was distributed to agency representatives on the distribution list on Monday, January 24, 2011. Follow-up phone calls were made to the agencies to find out if they planned on attending the scoping meeting on Wednesday, January 5, 2011, and again on Tuesday, January 22, 2011, to remind them that the comment period was coming to a close.

A total of 27 local, state, and federal agency representatives attended the agency scoping meeting (24 in person, and 3 via teleconference) held on Wednesday, January 26, 2011, at the Hotel North Pole, 449 North Santa Claus Lane, in North Pole, Alaska.

The meeting included time to review presentation boards displaying project information and to examine a large-scale aerial photo/map of the project area. A presentation by ARRC detailing the project scope and purpose and need was followed by a question and answer period. The PowerPoint presentation that was presented to those in attendance is included in Appendix C. The agency scoping letter, agenda, and sign-in sheets are included in Appendix D.

4.0 SUMMARY OF COMMENTS RECEIVED

Public and agency comments provide valuable insight into the issues to be resolved during this project. All public and agency comments received as of Monday, February 28, 2011, the conclusion of the formal scoping period, have been reviewed and are summarized in this document.

Public Scoping Comments

Verbal comments, comments submitted via e-mail, and completed comment forms received during the scoping process were analyzed for issues, concerns, and feedback on alignment

alternatives to be addressed in the environmental document. The list below summarizes the comments heard from the public, which have been grouped according to common issues and topics:

- Overall general support for the project.
- Consider the 100-Mile Loop Trail in project planning.
- Consider noise impacts on homes at 10 Mile, 11 Mile, and 12 Mile Village.
- Constructing the project and removal of the tracks will allow access and use of Gange Road or allow for direct access to the Old Richardson Highway.
- Change 3 Mile Crossing also.
- Property owners should be able to repossess what was taken when the railroad was first constructed during World War II.

Agency Scoping Comments

The agency scoping meeting, comments submitted via e-mail, and written letters were analyzed for issues, concerns, and feedback on alignment alternatives to be addressed in the environmental document. Comments received from the agencies are summarized below:

Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, Division of Water

- A Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan will be required for the project. Greg Drzewiecki, in Anchorage, will review the plan.

Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G)

- ADF&G has few fish or wildlife concerns with the proposed project.
- We recommend that no activity take place riverward of the toe of the existing levee.
- There are no identified fish bearing water bodies that would be crossed by the project as currently proposed. The Tanana River has been specified important for the spawning, rearing, or migration of anadromous fishes.
- A number of historic sloughs and channels in the project area were altered during the construction of the Moose Creek Dam flood control project and associated Tanana River

Levee. Several seepage channels were also constructed that connect to the cataloged waters of the Chena River.

- The potential for alteration of moose habitat and increased moose-train collisions along the realigned railroad alignment is of some concern to ADF&G, particularly if the track speed limit is significantly increased.
- ADF&G has a strong interest in both maintaining viable fish and wildlife populations and assuring the ability of the public to access those resources for both consumptive and non-consumptive purposes.
- The project area lies within the Fairbanks Nonsubsistence Use Area as designated by the Joint Board of Fisheries and Game.
- We encourage consultation with Tanana Chiefs Conference, Inc., during preparation of the NEPA documents.
- There are no legislatively-designated special areas managed by ADF&G (refuges, critical habitat area, or sanctuaries) within or abutting the project area.
- A wide range of wildlife species use the project area at least seasonally.
- With Alternative D, or some other riverward alternative, there would be a higher risk of the project affecting or interacting with migratory or daily movements of wildlife along the floodplain and riparian corridor of the Tanana River.
- Any work that might occur within the limits of the ordinary high water on the riverward side of the levee would likely require a Fish Habitat (Title 16) Permit from ADF&G.

Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB)

- Requested the ARRC make a presentation to the Borough before the comment period deadline. Tom Hancock is the contact for Parks and Recreation.
- Regarding ownership/responsibility of the Tanana River Levee:
 - FNSB is both the owner/operator of the Tanana River Levee and the municipal government tasked with certain police power responsibilities associated with zoning and platting.

- The Department of Community Planning is responsible for planning efforts and zoning enforcement.
- The Department of Parks and Recreation is responsible for implementing and overseeing established FNSB trails and recreational facilities.
- The Department of Public Works operates and maintains the levee structure, drainage channels, and groins.
- The Land Management Department is responsible for protecting the land title interests associated with the levee facility.
- FNSB Regional Comprehensive Plan - A policy document adopted by the FNSB Assembly in September 2005. The Plan is supportive of this type of project.
- North Pole Land Use Plan - A land use plan for the City of North Pole that was adopted by the FNSB Assembly in January 2010. The Plan is supportive of the project under “Implementation Strategies”:
- Comprehensive Recreational Trails Plan
 - The Flood Control Levee Trail is located within the proposed ARRC project area, and is an established portion of the proposed 100-Mile Loop Trail with substantial year-round public use.
 - The trail must remain within the levee corridor and public access across the proposed railroad should be provided for the continued recreational use by city residents and the general public.
 - Recommends a grade-separated crossing for the Flood Control Levee Trail at the Richardson Highway 9 Mile Crossing. At a minimum, an at-grade crossing should be provided for the trail as part of the proposed railroad realignment.
- Title 15, FNSB Floodplain Ordinance
 - There are several areas along the proposed railroad realignment that are located within the Special Flood Hazard area according to the Flood Insurance Rate Maps. A Floodplain Permit will be required.

- The ordinance states, *“No person may excavate or remove any material from lands within 250 feet of the centerline of the Tanana River Levee structure; except, that excavation and removal for the purpose of constructing foundations for buildings or other structures upon the excavation is permitted. Such excavation shall be backfilled to original ground elevation within 90 days from the date extraction began.”*
- Tanana River Levee Structure
 - Major Modification
 - Construction of rail lines on the levee embankment, the drainage blanket or immediately adjacent to any part of the levee structure will likely qualify as a “major modification” to the system. All major modifications must be reviewed by the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) through the office of the Chief of Engineers.
 - Modifications, major or minor, made to the levee without consent by the USACE may jeopardize recent levee certification, required by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.
 - Structural Integrity
 - The levee was not designed nor has FNSB or the USACE analyzed it to see if it can support live train loads.
 - FNSB recommends that ARRC obtain appropriate construction method material data including the recent analysis conducted for certification and use the information to complete a structural analysis.
 - Access Points
 - Without complete open access to the top, sides, and toe of the levee embankment, the drainage blanket on the landward side of the levee, and the first 15 feet of silt blanket on the riverward side of the levee, FNSB cannot fully meet its obligation to the USACE to properly inspect and maintain the structure.

- The five access points proposed by ARRC may or may not be suitable for all required levee operations. Public Works needs to review access needs in more detail as the final project alternative is designed.
- Ownership Interests
 - In addition to the levee and drainage channel right-of-ways and groins, FNSB owns a considerable amount of land on the riverward side of the levee for which we have management responsibility.
 - Parks and Recreation manages the Tanana Lakes Facility.
 - Public Works manages the Landfill Gravel Extraction Project.
 - The five access points proposed by ARRC have to be evaluated for their relevance for these facilities and obligations.
 - A limited access easement, similar to the one granted by the federal government, crossing points and use of the existing maintenance road become very important.
 - Develop accurate ownership maps so that property acquisition can be taken into project planning considerations.
- Survey and Topographic Data
 - The USACE hired DOWL HKM to complete a centerline and cross section of the levee and drainage channels.

USACE

- The Tanana River is a navigable water of the United States (U.S.). Descriptions of the current proposed alternatives do not indicate any impacts to that water.
- The proposed project area contains waters of the U.S., including wetlands, under the USACE's regulatory jurisdiction.
- Based on the description of the proposed alternatives:
 - Alternative A would not require additional fill and would therefore not require a permit.

- Department of the Army (DA) authorization would be required for other proposed alternatives because they require the placement of dredged and/or fill material into waters of the U.S., including wetlands.
- Section 404 of the Clean Water Act requires that a DA permit be obtained for the placement or discharge of dredged and/or fill material into waters of the U.S., including jurisdictional wetlands.
- Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 requires that a DA permit be obtained for structures or work in or affecting navigable waters of the U.S.

USAG FWA

- A portion of the Tanana River Levee bisects a portion of the DA-owned Dyke Range Impact Area.
- The proposed action and alternatives should specifically identify the width of area required to accommodate the rail realignment and specifically identify the physical features (i.e., levee, trail, transmission line, etc.) and land ownership within the area considered for future acquisition. Impacts of these features and land owners should be discussed within the environmental document.
- The proposed action and alternatives should identify how the ARRC/FRA intends to acquire the land necessary for rail realignment.
- The Dyke Range Impact Area has not been used for training in over 10 years, but is still classified as an active Army military training range. Past use of the Dyke Range Impact Area has included training associated with anti-aircraft artillery firing point, mortars, recoilless rifles, and other explosive munitions. The past use has resulted in the likely presence of unexploded ordnance (UXO). Any work in this area will require a complete survey and investigation by certified UXO technicians.
- If the proposed action were to result in a real estate activity requiring approval by U.S. Army Garrison, Fort Wainwright, Alaska (USAG FWA), the Army would be required to conduct its own NEPA review. In order to facilitate this review, USAG FWA would prefer to adopt the ARRC/FRA NEPA documentation associated with this action. USAG FWA would like to request additional coordination with ARRC/FRA on preliminary

versions of the environmental document prior to release of the draft document to the public.

- Fair market value must be paid to the Army for any timber resources taken within the DA-owned land.
- The proposed action should take into consideration wildlife populations and habitat within the region of influence and any Clean Water Act Section 404 requirements.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)

- The USFWS agrees that there are no Threatened or Endangered Species within the project area.
- The USFWS agrees that there are no National Wildlife Refuges in or adjacent to the project area.
- USFWS is not able to quantify temporary, indirect, and permanent impacts to wetlands, fish, wildlife and other habitat at this stage of the planning process, however, USFWS offers the following ways to avoid and minimize potential adverse impacts.
- The National Wetlands Inventory indicates that there are wetlands located in the project area and that ARRC plans to identify those wetlands.
- USFWS policy regarding impacts to fish and wildlife habitat includes first avoiding, then minimizing, and finally compensating for the remaining unavoidable impacts. If there are unavoidable impacts for this project then the service recommends compensatory mitigation for the unavoidable impacts for this project than the USFWS recommends compensatory mitigation by restoring or permanently protecting equal or high-value wetlands nearby.
 - Fish: The Tanana River is important fish habitat that may be affected by the proposed activities. The Tanana River is an anadromous stream.
 - Eagles: The USFWS has information that bald eagle nests have been located in the vicinity of the project area (USFWS unpublished data, see enclosed map). A survey may need to be conducted to determine location of active nests prior to construction

activities. USFWS recommends conducting nest surveys in the spring when nests are active and easier to identify.

- Permits: Since the proposed construction activities may disturb nesting eagles, USFWS recommends reviewing our eagle permit website (<http://alaska.fws.gov//eaglepermit/index.htm>).

City of North Pole

- The City of North Pole endorses the proposed Alaska Railroad North Pole Crossing Reduction/Road-Rail Relocation Project.
- The City Council on several occasions has passed resolutions endorsing the Project, including Resolution 08-02 (January 7, 2008) and Resolution 09-31 (October 19, 2009).
- Both resolutions have requested appropriations.
- The City of North Pole believes that the project should be given independent utility status in that it can be accomplished irrespective of the realignment of any other section of railroad track. This will contribute to the reduction of at-grade crossings in North Pole.
- Removing the physical track from the heart of the city to past 10 Mile, to ensure that dangerous intersections can be regulated.
- The project will enhance the operations of the railroad
- The project will build a new grade-separated crossing, replacing the dangerous “Peridot” crossing, vastly improving the safety of vehicular traffic and the railroad.

5.0 SUMMARY

The above public and agency comments provide valuable insight into the issues to be resolved during the project. All comments will be reviewed and addressed, as appropriate, during preparation of the environmental document.

FIGURES

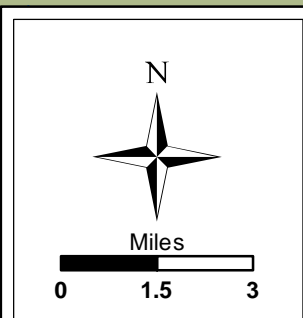
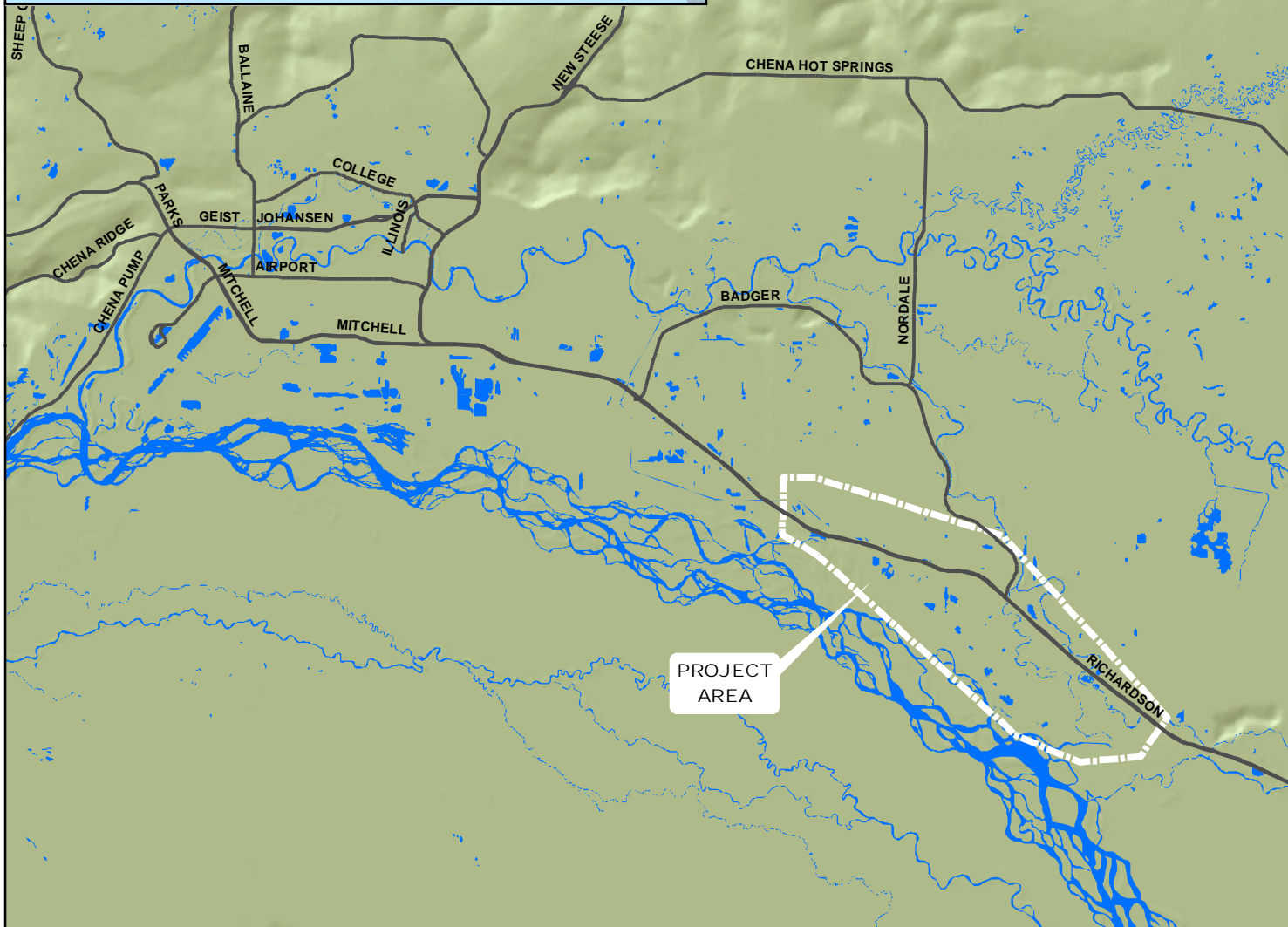
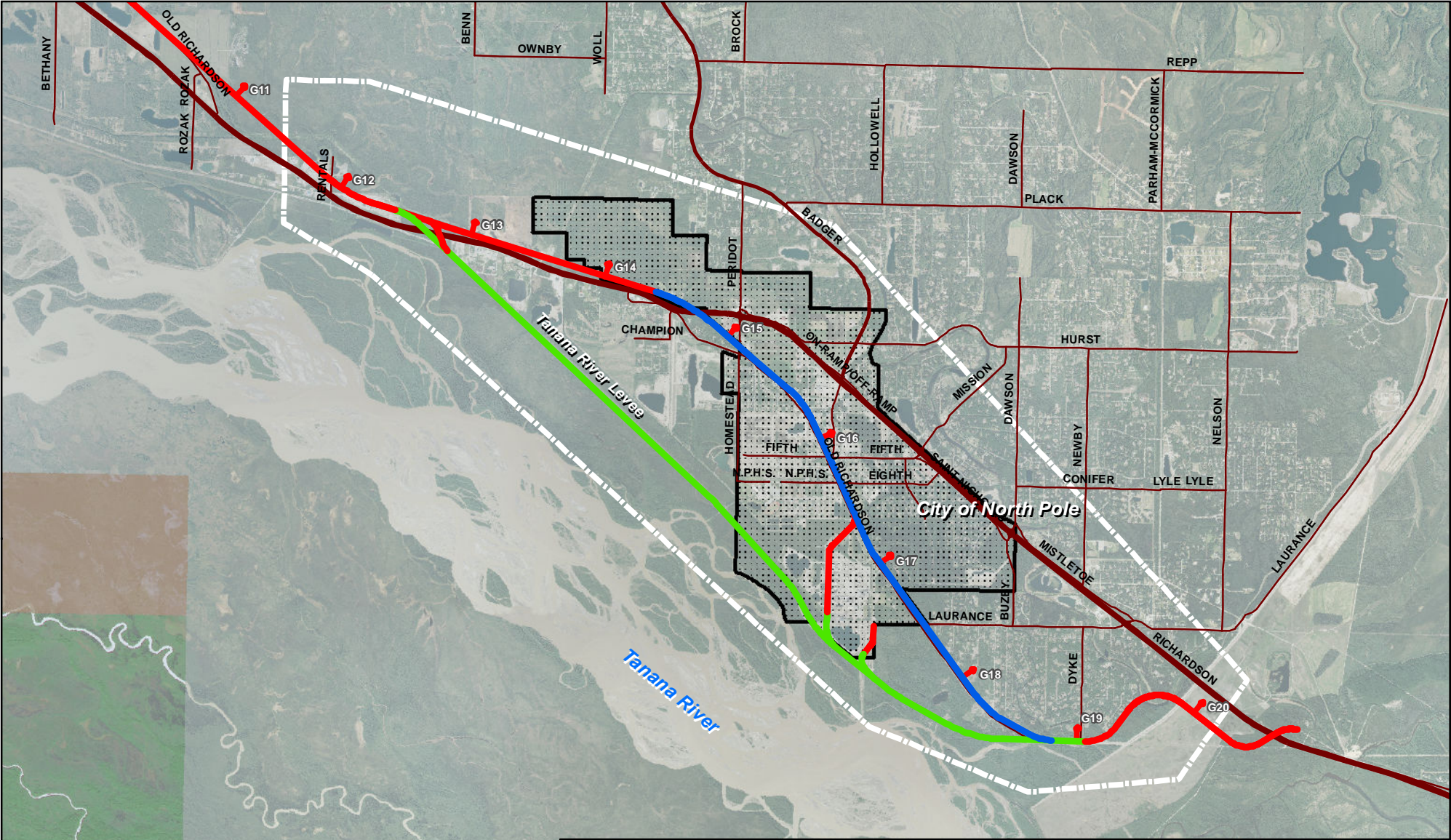


Figure 1
Vicinity Map

ALASKA RAILROAD CORPORATION

North Pole Road/Rail
Crossing Reduction Project

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MAP FEATURES

- EXISTING RAIL
- PROPOSED RAIL
- TRACK TO BE REMOVED

FNSB ROADWAY CLASSIFICATION

- ARTERIAL
- MAJOR
- PROPOSED STUDY AREA
- CITY BOUNDARIES

N

Miles

0 0.5 1




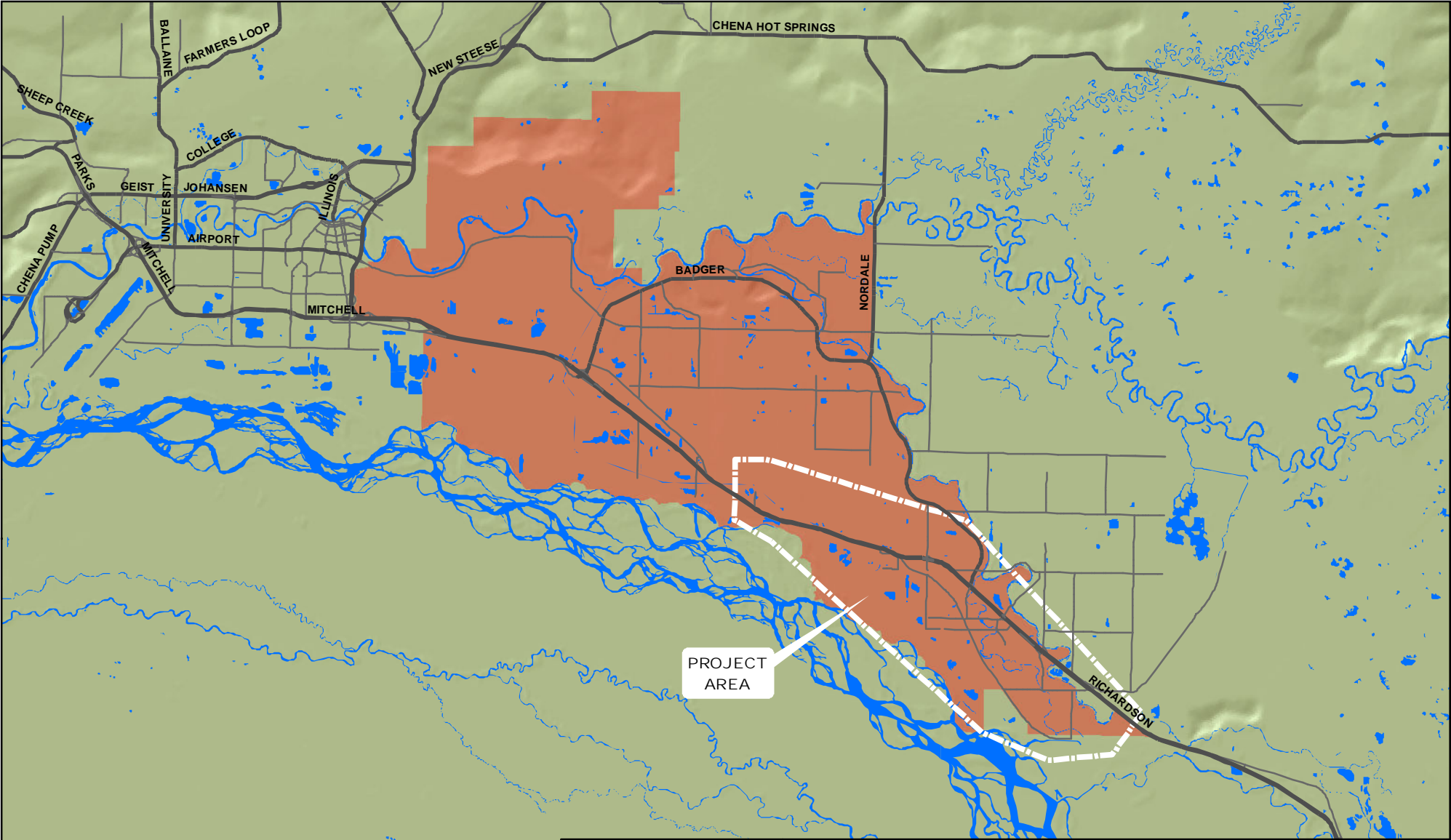
Figure 2
Proposed Project Area

ALASKA RAILROAD CORPORATION

North Pole Road/Rail
Crossing Reduction Project

March 04, 2011

WO: D60432



MAP FEATURES

NSB ROADWAY CLASSIFICATION

- ARTERIAL
- MAJOR
- PROPOSED PROJECT AREA
- MAILING LIST BOUNDARY

N

Miles

0 1 2




Figure 3
Mailing List Boundary

ALASKA RAILROAD CORPORATION

North Pole Road/Rail
Crossing Reduction Project

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APPENDIX A

Project Mailing Lists

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Representatives from Public Offices Mailing List.....	1
Agency Scoping Mailing List	3

ARRC North Pole Road/Rail Crossing Reduction Project
Public Representatives Mailing List

FIRST	LAST	AGENCY	DIVISION	TITLE	ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP	PHONE	<u>E-MAIL</u>
Fairbanks										
Tom	Marsh	Fairbanks North Star Borough	Planning Commission	Chair	1648 Cushman St. Suite 200	Fairbanks	AK	99701	(907) 459-1260	planning@co.fairbanks.ak.us
Matt	Want	Fairbanks North Star Borough		Assembly Member	PO Box 71267 / Attn: Clerks Office	Fairbanks	AK	99707	N/A	mwant@co.fairbanks.ak.us
Diane	Hutchinson	Fairbanks North Star Borough		Assembly Member	PO Box 71267 / Attn: Clerks Office	Fairbanks	AK	99707	N/A	dhutchinson@co.fairbanks.ak.us
Natalie	Howard	Fairbanks North Star Borough		Assembly Member	PO Box 71267 / Attn: Clerks Office	Fairbanks	AK	99707	N/A	nhoward@co.fairbanks.ak.us
Michael	Dukes	Fairbanks North Star Borough		Assembly Member	PO Box 71267 / Attn: Clerks Office	Fairbanks	AK	99707	N/A	mdukes@co.fairbanks.ak.us
Tim	Beck	Fairbanks North Star Borough		Assembly Member	PO Box 71267 / Attn: Clerks Office	Fairbanks	AK	99707	N/A	tbeck@co.fairbanks.ak.us
Nadine	Winters	Fairbanks North Star Borough		Assembly Member	PO Box 71267 / Attn: Clerks Office	Fairbanks	AK	99707	N/A	nwinters@co.fairbanks.ak.us
Mike	Musick	Fairbanks North Star Borough		Assembly Member	PO Box 71267 / Attn: Clerks Office	Fairbanks	AK	99707	N/A	mmusick@co.fairbanks.ak.us
Joseph	Blanchard III	Fairbanks North Star Borough		Assembly Member	PO Box 71267 / Attn: Clerks Office	Fairbanks	AK	99707	N/A	jblanchard@co.fairbanks.ak.us
Karl	Kassel	Fairbanks North Star Borough		Assembly Member	PO Box 71267 / Attn: Clerks Office	Fairbanks	AK	99707	N/A	kkassel@co.fairbanks.ak.us
Emily	Bratcher	City of Fairbanks		City Council Member	800 Cushman St.	Fairbanks	AK	99709	(907) 460-1658	eebratcher@ci.fairbanks.ak.us
John	Eberhart	City of Fairbanks		City Council Member	PO Box 73600	Fairbanks	AK	99707	(907) 452-8251	jseberhart@ci.fairbanks.ak.us
Jim	Matherly	City of Fairbanks		City Council Member	714 3rd Ave.	Fairbanks	AK	99701	(907) 456-6626	jmatherly@ci.fairbanks.ak.us
Bernard	Gatewood	City of Fairbanks		City Council Member	PO Box 61358	Fairbanks	AK	99706	(907) 978-4723	bwgatewood@ci.fairbanks.ak.us
Chad	Roberts	City of Fairbanks		City Council Member	PO Box 71819	Fairbanks	AK	99709	(907) 452-2435	croberts@ci.fairbanks.ak.us
Vivian	Stiver	City of Fairbanks		City Council Member	523 2nd Ave.	Fairbanks	AK	99701	(907) 347-2102	vstiver@ci.fairbanks.ak.us
North Pole										
Bonnie	Arnold	City of North Pole		City Council Member	2762 Parkway	North Pole	AK	99705	N/A	N/A
Thomas	McGhee	City of North Pole		City Council Member	1152 North Star Drive	North Pole	AK	99705	(907) 455-0010	cherokeeidemc@acsalaska.com
Ronald	Jones	City of North Pole		City Council Member	246 San Augustine	North Pole	AK	99705	(907) 377-5019	ronaldjones@gci.net

ARRC North Pole Road/Rail Crossing Reduction Project
Public Representatives Mailing List

Sharron	Hunter	City of North Pole		City Council Member	322 Crossway	North Pole	AK	99705	(907) 488-3761	shunter@northpolealaska.com
Richard	Holm	City of North Pole		City Council Member	PO Box 75189	Fairbanks	AK	99707	N/A	N/A
Government Officials										
Lisa	Murkowski	Alaska State Legislature		Senator	101 12th Ave. Room 216	Fairbanks	AK	99701	(907) 456-0233	N/A
Lisa	Murkowski	Alaska State Legislature		Senator	709 Hart Senate Building	Washington	D.C.	20510	(202) 224-6665	N/A
Mark	Begich	Alaska State Legislature		Senator	101 12th Ave.	Fairbanks	AK	99701	(907) 456-0261	N/A
Mark	Begich	Alaska State Legislature		Senator	144 Russell Senate Office Building	Washington	D.C.	20510-0001	(202) 224-3004	N/A
Don	Young	Alaska State Legislature		Congressman	101 12th Avenue, Box 10	Fairbanks	AK	99701	(907) 456-0210	N/A
Don	Young	Alaska State Legislature		Congressman	2111 Rayburn House Office Building	Washington	D.C.	20515	(202) 225-5765	N/A
John	Coghill	Alaska State Legislature		Representative	1292 Sadler Way	Fairbanks	AK	99705	(907) 488-1546	Senator_John_Coghill@legis.state.ak
David	Guttenberg	Alaska State Legislature		Representative	1292 Sadler Way Suite 308	Fairbanks	AK	99701	(907)456-8172	Representative_David_Guttenberg@legis.state.ak.us
Joe	Thomas	Alaska State Legislature		Representative	1292 Sadler Way Suite 308	Fairbanks	AK	99701	(907) 456-8161	Senator_Joe_Thomas@legis.state.ak.us
Jay	Ramras	Alaska State Legislature		Representative	1292 Sadler Way Suite 324	Fairbanks	AK	99701	(907) 452-1088	Representative_Jay_Ramras@legis.state.ak.us
Joe	Paskvan	Alaska State Legislature		Representative	1292 Sadler Way Suite 308	Fairbanks	AK	99701	(907) 451-4347	Senator_Joe_Paskvan@legis.state.ak.us
Michael	Kelly	Alaska State Legislature		Representative	1292 Sadler Way Suite 308	Fairbanks	AK	99701	(907) 452-6084	Representative_Mike_Kelly@legis.state.ak.us
Miscellaneous										
Michelle	Luedke	Alaska Railroad Corportation	Real Estate Services	Technician	327 West Ship Creek Avenue	Anchorage	AK	99501	(907) 265-2465	N/A
Greg	Wyman	Golden Valley Electric Association	Construction Services	Manager	758 Illinois Street; P.O. Box 71249	Fairbanks	AK	99707-1249	(907) 451-5629	N/A
Mark	Reischke	Petro Star North Pole Refinery	Refinery	Manager	1200 H & H Lane	North Pole	AK	99705	(907) 490-0555	mreischke@petrostar.com
John	Winkle	Federal Railroad Administration		Project Manager	400 7th Street, SW., MS 20	Washington	D.C.	20590	(202) 493-6067	John.Winkle@dot.gov

ARRC North Pole Road/Rail Crossing Reduction Project
Agency Scoping List

FIRST	LAST	AGENCY	DIVISION	TITLE	ADDRESS	CITY	ST	ZIP	PHONE	E-MAIL
Janice	Wiegers	Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation	Contaminated Sites	Environmental Spec. III	610 University Ave	Fairbanks	AK	99709	(907) 451-2127	Janice.Wiegers@alaska.gov
Joan	Hardesty	Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation	Department of Air Quality	Environmental Spec. III	610 University Ave	Fairbanks	AK	99709	(907) 451-2167	joan.hardesty@alaska.gov
Cindy	Heil	Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation	Department of Air Quality	Environmental Program Manager II	619 E Ship Creek Ave, Ste 249	Anchorage	AK	99501	(907) 269-7579	cindy.heil@alaska.gov
Robert	McLean	ADF&G	Division of Habitat	Regional Supervisor	1300 College Rd	Fairbanks	AK	99701	(907) 459-7281	mac.mclean@alaska.gov
Dianna	Leinberger	Alaska Department of Natural Resources	Division of Mining, Land and Water	Natural Resources Spec. III	3700 Airport Way	Fairbanks	AK	99709	(907) 451-3014	dianna.leinberger@alaska.gov
Judith	Bittner	Alaska Department of Natural Resources	State Historic Preservation Office	Chief Officer	550 West 7th Ave, Ste 1310	Anchorage	AK	99501	(907) 269-8715	judy.bittner@alaska.gov
Ethan	Birkholz	Alaska DOT&PF	Planning	Transportation Planner	2301 Peger Rd	Fairbanks	AK	99709	(907) 451-2252	margaret.carpenter@alaska.gov
Barry	Hooper	Alaska DOT&PF	Engineering & Design	Engineer/Architect IV	2301 Peger Rd, MS-2550	Fairbanks	AK	99709	(907) 451-2218	barry.hooper@alaska.gov
Robert	Effinger	Alaska DOT&PF	Engineering & Design	Environmental Impact Analyst III	2301 Peger Rd, MS-2550	Fairbanks	AK	99709	(907) 451-5294	bob.effinger@alaska.gov
Bruce	Campbell	Alaska DOT&PF	Engineering & Design	Environmental Impact Analysis Mgr I	2301 Peger Rd, MS-2550	Fairbanks	AK	99709	(907) 451-2238	bruce.campbell@alaska.gov
Gary	Foreman	Bureau of Land Management		Planning and Environmental Coordinator	1150 University Ave	Fairbanks	AK	99709-3899	(907) 474-2339	Gary_Foreman@blm.gov
Jackson	Fox	City of Fairbanks	Public Works	Environmental	800 Cushman St	Fairbanks	AK	99701	(907) 459-6758	jcfox@ci.fairbanks.ak.us
Jerry	Cleworth	City of Fairbanks		Mayor	800 Cushman St	Fairbanks	AK	99701	(907) 459-6793	jcleworth@ci.fairbanks.ak.us
Donna J.	Gardino	City of Fairbanks		MPO Coordinator	800 Cushman St	Fairbanks	AK	99701	(907) 459-6786	digardino@ci.fairbanks.ak.us
Douglas	Isaacson	City of North Pole		Mayor	125 Snowman Ln	North Pole	AK	99705	(907) 488-8584	mayor@northpolealaska.com
Bill	Butler	City of North Pole	Public Works	Director	125 Snowman Ln	North Pole	AK	99705	(907) 488-8593	bill@northpolealaska.com
Jennifer	Curtis	Environmental Protection Agency	NEPA Review Staff	Alaska Region	222 West 7th Ave, #19	Anchorage	AK	99501	(907) 271-6324	curtis.jennifer@epa.gov
Luke	Hopkins	FNSB		Mayor	PO Box 71267	Fairbanks	AK	99707-1267	(907) 459-1300	mayor@co.fairbanks.ak.us
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ARRC North Pole Road/Rail Crossing Reduction Project
Agency Scoping List (cont)

FIRST	LAST	AGENCY	DIVISION	TITLE	ADDRESS	CITY	ST	ZIP	PHONE	E-MAIL
Bernardo	Hernandez	FNSB	Community Planning	Director	PO Box 71267	Fairbanks	AK	99707-1267	(907) 459-1212	planning@co.fairbanks.ak.us
Scott	Johnson	FNSB	Public Works	Director	PO Box 71267	Fairbanks	AK	99707-1267	(907) 459-1345	SCJohnson@co.fairbanks.ak.us
Jim	Conner	FNSB	Air Quality		PO Box 71267	Fairbanks	AK	99707-1267	(907) 459-1005	airquality@co.fairbanks.ak.us
Michael	Cox	FNSB	Parks and Recreation	Director	PO Box 71267	Fairbanks	AK	99707	(907) 459-1070	parks@co.fairbanks.ak.us
Tom	Hancock	FNSB	Parks and Recreation	Trails Coordinator	PO Box 71267	Fairbanks	AK	99707	(907) 459-7401	thancock@co.fairbanks.ak.us
Peter	Forsling	FHWA, Alaska Division	Engineering Operations Team	Structural Engineer/Northern Region	PO Box 21648	Juneau	AK	99802	(907) 586-7427	peter.forsling@dot.gov
Tim	Haugh	FHWA, Alaska Division	Statewide Programs Team	Environment/Right-of-Way Program Manager	PO Box 21648	Juneau	AK	99802	(907) 586-7430	tim.haugh@dot.gov
Doug	Limpinsel	National Marine Fisheries Service	Western AK Field Office	Biologist	222 West 7th Ave	Anchorage	AK	99501	(907) 271-6379	doug.limpinsel@noaa.gov
Jim	Helfinstine	US Coast Guard	Bridge Administration	Administrator	Comander (oan) 17th Coast Guard PO Box 25517	Juneau	AK	99802-5517	(907) 463-2268	jhelfinstine@cgalaska.uscg.mil
Mike	Meeks	US Army Alaska-Ft Wainwright	Public Works	Director	1053 Gaffney Rd #6500	Ft Wainwright	AK	99703-6500	(907) 361-7287	michael.meeks@us.army.mil
Christy	Everett	USACE		Field Office Manager	2175 University Ave, Ste 201E	Fairbanks	AK	99709	(907) 474-2166	christy.a.everett@usace.army.mil
David	Williams	USACE	Public Works	Project Manager	PO Box 6898	Elmendorf AFB	AK	99506-6898	(907) 753-5621	david.p.williams@usace.army.mil
Colonel Reinhardt	Koenig	USACE		District Commander	PO Box 6898	Elmendorf AFB	AK	99506-6898	(907) 753-2504	reinhard.w.koenig@usace.army.mil
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Bob	Henszey	US Fish and Wildlife Service	Biologist		101 12th Ave, Rm 110	Fairbanks	AK	99701	(907) 456-0323	bob_henszey@fws.gov
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Ski	Marcinkowski	US Army Alaska G-3/5/7	Ops Office						(907) 353-7808	robert.marcinkowski@us.army.mil
Bill	Gryder	FNSB Public Works	Chief Civil Engineer		PO Box 71267	Fairbanks	AK	99707-1267	(907) 459-1360	bgryder@fnsb.us
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Todd	Boyce	FNSB Community Planning	Trans. Planner		PO Box 71267	Fairbanks	AK	99707	(907) 459-1260	tboyce@fnsb.us
Jim	Durst	ADF&G	Habitat Biologist		1300 College Rd	Fairbanks	AK	99701	(907) 459-7254	james.durst@alaska.gov
Thomas	Hancock	FNSB							(907) 459-7401	thancock@co.fairbanks.ak.us

ARRC North Pole Road/Rail Crossing Reduction Project
Agency Scoping List (cont)

FIRST	LAST	AGENCY	DIVISION	TITLE	ADDRESS	CITY	ST	ZIP	PHONE	E-MAIL
Carrie	McEnteer	Ft Wainwright Army Garrison	NEPA Branch Chief						(907) 361-9507	carrie.mcenteer@us.army.mil
John	Schaake	USACE Chena Flood Project	Project Manager						(907) 488-2748	john.c.schaake@usace.army.mil
Tim	Feavel	USACE Chena Flood Project	Ranger						(907) 488-2748	tim.a.feavel@usace.army.mil
James	Houpt	Installation Range Office Ft Wainwright	Range Planner						(907) 384-7516	doug.houpt@us.army.mil
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Jeanette	Holt	ARRC	Environmental Permits Analyst		327 W. Ship Creek Ave	Anchorage	AK	99501	(907) 265-2440	holtj@akrr.com
Greg	Lotakis	ARRC	Projects		327 W. Ship Creek Ave	Anchorage	AK	99501	(907) 265-2217	lotakisg@akrr.com
John	Winkle	FRA							(202) 493-6067	john.winkle@dot.gov
Kristen	Hansen	DOWL HKM	Environmental Services Manager		4041 B St	Anchorage	AK	99501	(907) 562-2000	khansen@dowlhkm.com
Heather	Campfield	DOWL HKM	Environmental Specialist		4041 B St	Anchorage	AK	99501	(907) 562-2000	hcampfield@dowlhkm.com

APPENDIX B

Public Scoping Materials

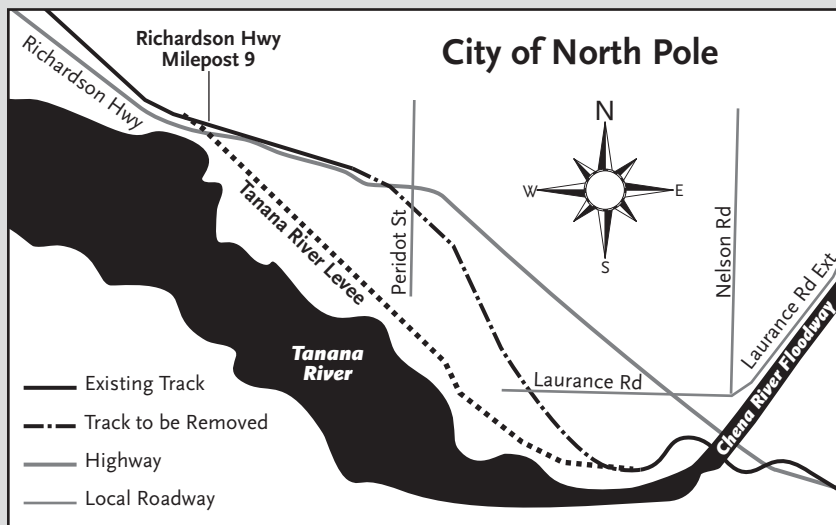
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PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING ON NORTH POLE CROSSING REDUCTION PROJECT



The Alaska Railroad (ARRC) invites the public to a scoping meeting to solicit input into a proposed project to reduce at-grade (same level) road/rail crossings along an 8-mile section of the Eielson Branch track (from Richardson Highway Milepost 9 to the Chena River Floodway) that runs through North Pole. The purpose is to enhance public safety in downtown North Pole and improve railroad operating efficiency, while ensuring continued rail access to existing and future customers along this portion of track.

In cooperation with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), ARRC is initiating an environmental assessment (EA) and preliminary engineering to analyze the options, which may include realigning this section of track on or along the Tanana River Levee. The existing at-grade crossing of the Richardson Highway may also be removed and a new grade-separated crossing (overpass) installed. The proposed project represents Phase 1 of a larger proposed realignment project (Fairbanks Area Rail Line Relocation). This phase has independent utility and would provide immediate safety benefits.



PROJECT PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING

3:30-6:30pm, Wednesday, January 26, 2011

North Pole City Hall: 125 Snowman Lane, North Pole

Project Presentations are scheduled for 4:00 and 5:30 p.m.

Public comment is welcome and encouraged.

For more information, visit AlaskaRailroad.com or call (907) 265-2671.

The meeting facility is accessible to people with disabilities. If you need assistance (including language) to participate, contact the ARRC Legal Dept at 265-2461 or zappasj@akrr.com. For hearing impaired, call via Alaska Relay Service: inside Alaska dial 711; outside Alaska dial TTY 1-800-770-8973 or voice 1-800-770-8255. Printed materials can be made available in alternate formats upon request. ARRC is an Equal Opportunity corporation.



Alaska Railroad Corporation *News Release*

DATE: January 14, 2011
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:
Stephanie Wheeler, 265-2671

Alaska Railroad schedules open house in Fairbanks to discuss proposed capital project plans for 2011

Additional open house events in Anchorage, Wasilla and Seward

ANCHORAGE, Alaska – The Alaska Railroad (ARRC) invites the public to an open house 4:00-6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, January 25, at the Alaska Railroad Depot, 1745 Johansen Expressway in Fairbanks. The venue provides an opportunity to review and comment on a proposed Program of Projects (POP) for 2011.

The open house will showcase continuing and proposed capital improvement projects that are in various stages – from conceptual planning to engineering and construction. Project managers will be on-hand to explain projects that are located all along the railroad system from Seward to Fairbanks, with an emphasis on projects located in and around Fairbanks, Interior Alaska and system-wide, including:

- Northern Rail Extension (North Pole to Delta Junction – Phase One: Tanana River Crossing)
- Fairbanks Depot Second Track
- Fairbanks Freight Intermodal Improvements
- Fairbanks Area Rail Line Relocation (FARLR)
- North Pole Road/Rail Crossing Reduction (FARLR Phase 1)
- Nenana Rail Line Relocation
- Bridge / Culvert repair and replacement program
- Healy Canyon Safety and Reliability Improvements (Stabilization)
- Positive Train Control
- Track Rehabilitation and Embankment Protection

The Fairbanks event is the third in a series of POP Open House events. The open house in Anchorage took place last Tuesday, January 11, and the open house in Wasilla took place last Wednesday, January 12. The final open house is scheduled as follows:

- **Seward** – 10:00a.m. to 1:30 p.m., Friday, February 4 – Breeze Inn, 303 N. Harbor Street. Emphasis will be on projects located in and around Seward and Southcentral Alaska.

-more-

327 W. Ship Creek Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

MAILING ADDRESS
P.O. Box 107500, Anchorage, Alaska 99510-7500

TEL 907.265.2300 FAX 907.265.2416
AlaskaRailroad.com



Alaska Railroad Corporation *News Release*

Project Open House in Fairbanks – January 14, 2011

Page 2 of 2

The Alaska Railroad has budgeted approximately \$55.9 million in new spending for capital improvements in 2011. About \$13.8 million will come from Federal Transit Administration (FTA) grants. This amount includes a required 9% matching contribution from the Alaska Railroad. Other federal funding includes \$2.93 million in Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)-administered grants and \$1.38 million in “Stimulus” (American Recovery & Reinvestment Act of 2009) funding. ARRC will spend another \$23.7 million toward internally-funded capital projects using revenues generated from passenger, freight and real estate activity. Finally, the railroad will spend about \$14.1 million of funds generated from the sale of revenue bonds that were sold in 2006 and 2007. Bonds are repaid with FTA formula fund appropriations.

People unable to attend the open house events may visit www.AlaskaRailroad.com for project information. Questions about the projects or open houses may also be directed to Corporate Communications Officer Stephenie Wheeler at 265-2671. Written comments may be e-mailed to public_comment@akrr.com or mailed to Alaska Railroad Capital Projects, P.O. Box 107500, Anchorage, AK 99510-7500.

- end

The ARRC is an Equal Opportunity Corporation. If you need special assistance in order to participate in any ARRC service, program, or activity, please contact the Alaska Railroad Corporation; P.O. Box 107500; Anchorage, AK 99510; Attention: Legal Department, zappasj@akrr.com, (907) 265-2461; via Alaska Relay Service for hearing impaired – dial 7 11 anywhere inside Alaska, OR dial toll-free from anywhere outside the state 1-800-770-8255 (voice); 1-800 770-8973 (TTY). Upon request, printed materials can be made available in alternate formats. The POP meets public participation requirements of Section 5307 of the Urbanized Area Formula Program (49 U.S.C. 5307).



Alaska Railroad Corporation News Release

DATE: January 14, 2011
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

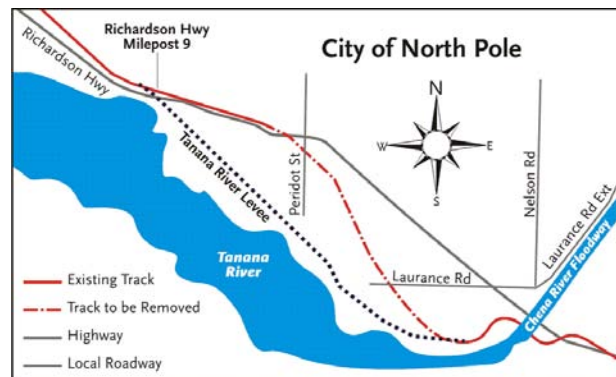
CONTACT:
Stephanie Wheeler, 265-2671

Alaska Railroad schedules scoping meeting on North Pole Road/Rail Crossing Reduction Project

*Project team on-hand to answer questions and listen to public input
Presentations at 4:00 and 5:30 p.m.*

ANCHORAGE, Alaska – The Alaska Railroad (ARRC) invites the public to a public scoping meeting from 3:30 to 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, January 26, at the North Pole City Hall, 125 Snowman Lane. Presentations are scheduled for 4:00 and 5:30 p.m. The venue provides an opportunity to solicit input into a proposed project to reduce at-grade (same level) road/rail crossings along an 8-mile section of the Eielson Branch track (from Richardson Highway Milepost 9 to the Chena River Floodway) that runs through North Pole. The purpose is to enhance public safety in downtown North Pole and improve railroad operating efficiency, while ensuring continued rail access to existing and future customers along this portion of the track.

In cooperation with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), ARRC is initiating an environmental assessment (EA) and associated preliminary engineering to analyze the options, which may include realigning this section of track on or along the Tanana River Levee. The existing at-grade crossing of the Richardson Highway may also be removed and a new grade-separated crossing (overpass) installed. The proposed project represents Phase 1 of a larger proposed realignment project (Fairbanks Area Rail Line Relocation). This phase has independent utility and would provide immediate safety benefits. In particular, the project team is seeking public input on current use of the Tanana River Levee and the locations of key access points to the levee. **The deadline for public comment is Monday, February 28, 2011.** Written comments may be e-mailed to public_comment@akrr.com or mailed to Alaska Railroad Capital Projects, P.O. Box 107500, Anchorage, AK 99510-7500.



People unable to attend the open house events may visit www.AlaskaRailroad.com for project information. Questions about the projects or open houses may also be directed to Corporate Communications Officer Stephanie Wheeler at 265-2671.

-end-

The ARRC is an Equal Opportunity Corporation. If you need special assistance in order to participate in any ARRC service, program, or activity, please contact the Alaska Railroad Corporation; P.O. Box 107500; Anchorage, AK 99510; Attention: Legal Department, zappasj@akrr.com, (907) 265-2461; via Alaska Relay Service for hearing impaired – dial 7 11 anywhere inside Alaska, OR dial toll-free from anywhere outside the state 1-800-770-8255 (voice); 1-800 770-8973 (TTY). Upon request, printed materials can be made available in alternate formats

327 W. Ship Creek Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

MAILING ADDRESS
P.O. Box 107500, Anchorage, Alaska 99510-7500

TEL 907.265.2300 FAX 907.265.2416
AlaskaRailroad.com

List of Statewide Media for Project Advertisement

Alaska Business Monthly
Alaska Journal of Commerce
Alaska Newspapers
Alaska Post/Public Affairs Office
IMPC-FW_PAO
Alaska Star
Anchorage Daily News
Anchorage Press
APRN
Associated Press
Channel 11 - KTVA
Channel 11 - KTVF
Channel 13 - KIMO
Channel 2 - KTUU
KXD-TV
Fairbanks Daily News-Miner
Frontiersman
KBYR - 700 AM
Clear Channel - Anchorage Radio Stations
Clear Channel - Fairbanks Radio Stations
New Northwest Broadcasters - Fairbanks Radio
New Northwest Broadcasters - Anchorage Radio
Anchorage Media Group
KMBQ - 97.7 FM
KSKA - 91.1 FM
KTNA - 88.9 FM
KUAC - 89.9
Peninsula Clarion
Alaska Dispatch
Alaska Dispatch
Seward Phoenix Log
Talkeetna Times
Turnagain Times
Seward City News
Dept of Transportation & Public Facilities
Progressive Railroading
RailwayAge
Rail News / TrainWeb LLC
Rail News
American Short Line & Regional Railroad Association

Association of American Railroads
Railway Track & Structures



North Pole Road/Rail Crossing Reduction

Project Scope

The Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC), in cooperation with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), is initiating an environmental assessment (EA) and associated preliminary engineering for the proposed North Pole Road/Rail Crossing Reduction Project (North Pole Rail Project).

ARRC proposes to reduce the number of at-grade (same level) road/rail crossings on an 8-mile section of the Eielson Branch track (from Richardson Hwy Milepost 9 to the Chena River Floodway) that currently runs through North Pole. Crossing reduction options may include realigning this section of track on or along the Tanana River Levee. The existing at-grade crossing of the Richardson Hwy may also be removed and a new grade-separated crossing (overpass) installed.

The proposed project represents Phase One of a larger proposed realignment project (Fairbanks Area Rail Line Relocation). This phase has independent utility and would provide immediate safety benefits.

Purpose and Need

Current train movements through the City of North Pole and across the Richardson Highway pose a safety risk to the public and to rail operations. The project purpose is to enhance public safety in downtown North Pole, improve railroad operating efficiency, and to maintain rail access to existing and future customers along this portion of the track.

Benefits

- Eliminates multiple at-grade crossings, thereby reducing inherent risks of train derailment and train/vehicle collision.
- Eliminates North Pole traffic delays caused by railroad operations through downtown.

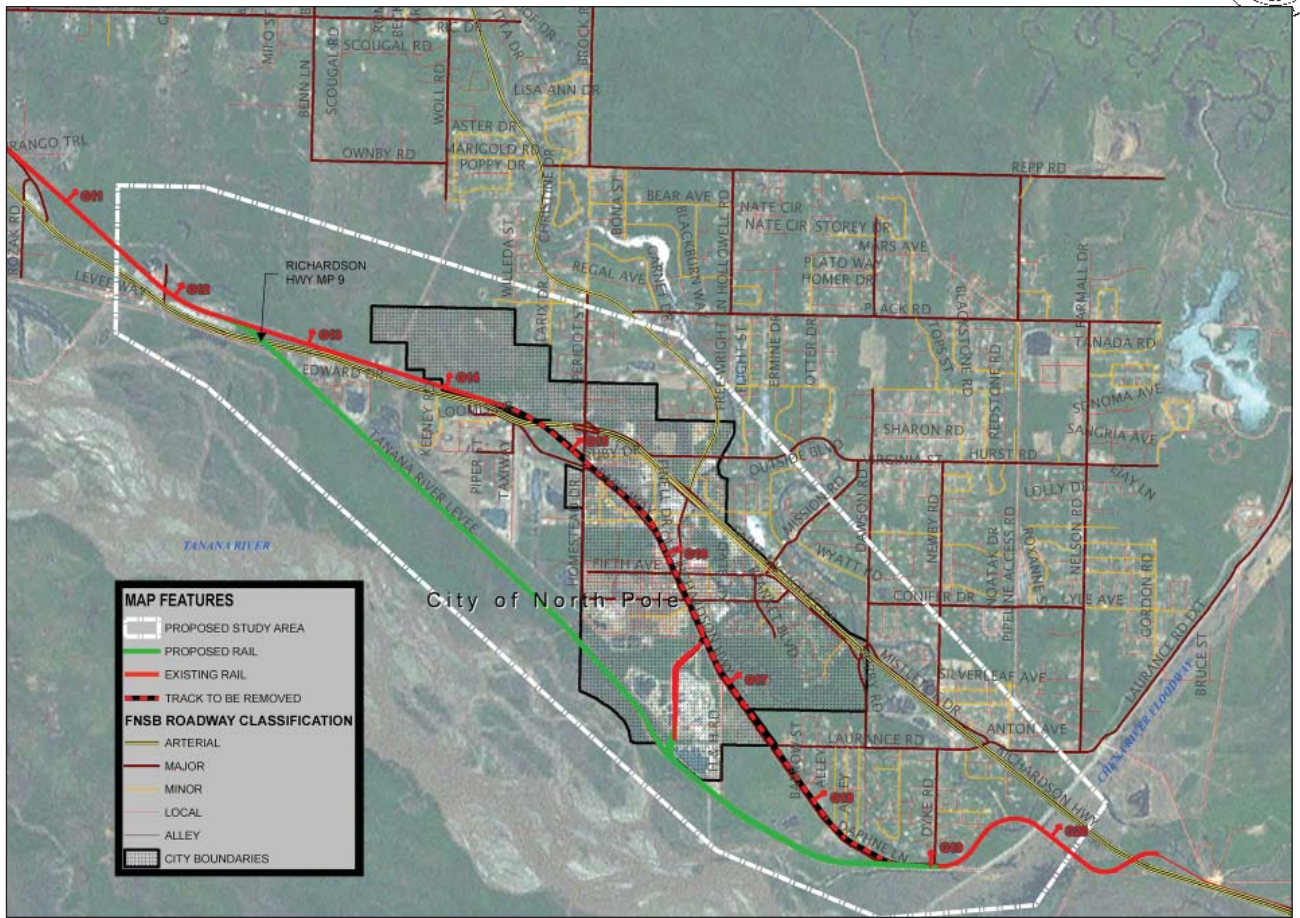
- Improves operational efficiency by allowing for increased track speeds.

Status

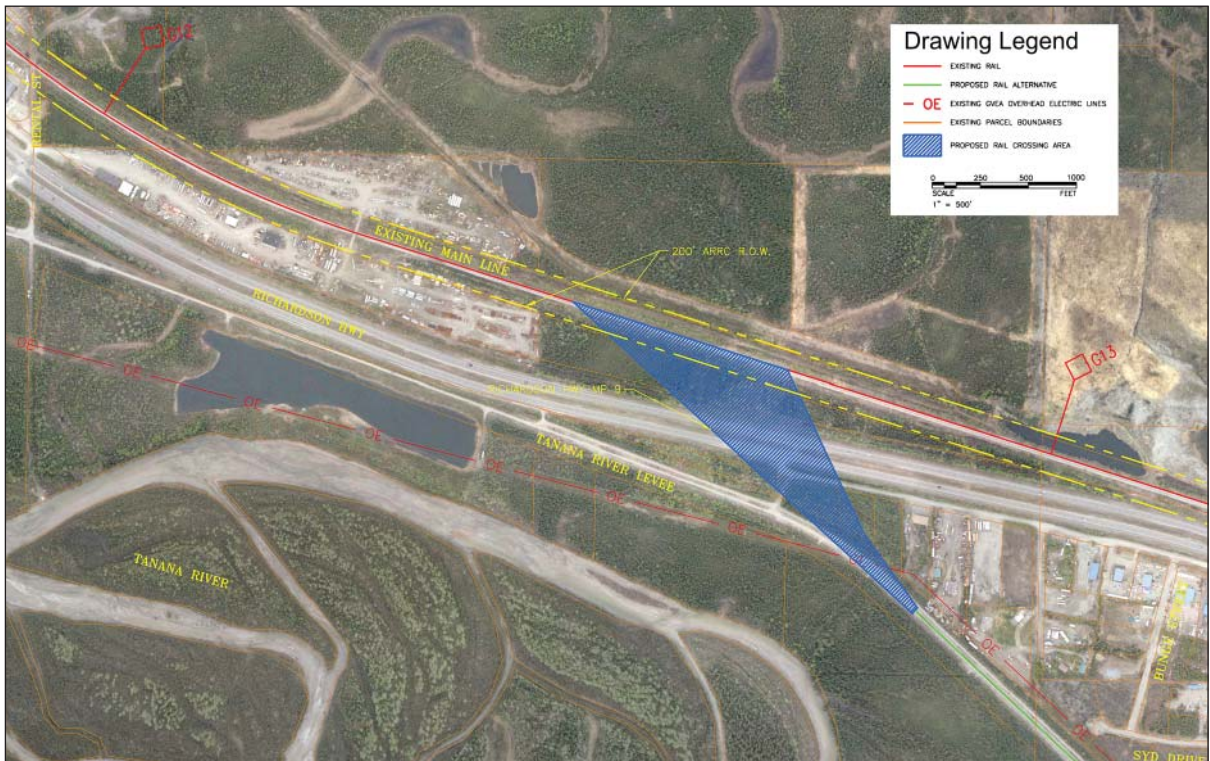
- With new funding available, an environmental assessment is initiated in mid-2010.
- DOWL and TransSystems are hired as consultants to assist with EA planning and activities.
- Scoping activities, to include initial agency and public meetings, begin January 2011.
- Technical studies will be performed through summer 2011.
- Draft EA review and comment periods are anticipated in fall 2011.
- A completed EA is expected to be submitted to the FRA by the end of 2011.

Project Costs & Funding

- The North Pole Rail Project EA and associated activities are financed by reallocated Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Surface Transportation Program (STP) funding. In FY 2010, the FHWA STP allocated funds to the Fairbanks Metropolitan Area Transportation System (FMATS), and several FMATS STP projects were completed under budget. The FMATS and Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT/PF) reprogrammed funds at the local level, transferring these FHWA funds to the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) for use on road/rail crossing reductions. The FMATS reallocated \$1 million (Federal \$909,700; non-Federal match \$90,300) to pursue the North Pole Rail Project.
- The cost for final design and construction of this phase will be refined through the EA process. Funding is not yet identified.



The project corridor stretches from Mile 9 of the Richardson Highway to the Chena River Floodway.



The EA will consider replacing the existing at-grade crossing over the Richardson Highway with a grade-separated crossing.



North Pole Road/Rail Crossing Reduction Project

Your input is important to the Alaska Railroad as we pursue an environmental assesment of options to reduce road/rail at-grade crossings along the rail through North Pole. Please write legibly (printing is appreciated). Attach additional sheets if necessary.

COMMENT DEADLINE: February 28, 2011

COMMENT FORM

Name

Phone

Address

Email

Your Comments:

Large empty area for writing comments.

The Alaska Railroad welcomes your input. Please send your written comments:



Capital Projects - Public Comment
Alaska Railroad Corporation
P.O. Box 107500
Anchorage, AK 99510-7500



ARRC's TTY/TTD 265-2620
or voice 265-2494
Alaska Relay TTY 800-770-8973 or
voice 1-800-770-8255



public_comment@akrr.com



Fax (907) 265-2365



Alaska Railroad Corporation

North Pole Road/Rail Crossing Reduction Project

Public Scoping Meeting

January 26, 2011 • North Pole City Hall • North Pole

* **RACE/GENDER** – Strictly voluntary. The purpose is to ensure as a recipient of Federal DOT funding we are fulfilling our Title VI responsibilities by ensuring fair and equitable representation by the public. **Race Categories are:** White (W); American Indian (AI); Alaska Native (AN); Black (B); Hispanic (H); Asian/Pacific Islander (AP); Other (O) Category not listed (please self identify and specify).

Name (First and Last, Please Print)	Do you want to receive project mailings?	Organization (if applicable)	Mailing Address – Optional: Please provide if you want information on this project in the future. May be subject to public disclosure.	* Gender <u>Strictly Voluntary</u>	* Race <u>Strictly Voluntary</u>
Syd SWENSON	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, put me on mailing list	LAND OWNER	1673 Volleyball Ct N.P. AK 99705	F	
Kellen Spillman	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, put me on mailing list	FMATS	800 Cushman St. Fairbanks AK 99701	M	W
TODD BOYCE	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, put me on mailing list	FMSTB	P.O. Box 71267 Fairbanks AK 99707	M	W
Ken Doyel	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, put me on mailing list		1771 Jessica Ln N.P. AK 99705	M	W
Arthur St Martin	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, put me on mailing list	Sen. Murkowski			
Sue Finsrud	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, put me on mailing list		215 E 8 th Ave N. Pole		
Wina Cassidy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, put me on mailing list		P.O. Box 55234 North Pole, AK 99705	F	W
Travis Cline	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, put me on mailing list	EXCLUSIVE Paving			
Buzz Otis	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, put me on mailing list	NPEDC	P.O. Box 55068 North Pole AK 99705		

Name (First and Last, Please Print)	Do you want to receive railroad project mailings?	Organization (if applicable)	Mailing Address – Optional: Please provide if you want information on ARRC projects in the future. This information may be subject to public disclosure.	* Gender <u>Strictly</u> <u>Voluntary</u>	* Race <u>Strictly</u> <u>Voluntary</u>
Charles Beaudreault	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, put me on mailing list				
Jack L. Howson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, put me on mailing list		P.O. Box 55263 North Pole AK-99705		
Bonnie Parkes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, put me on mailing list	I think we are	PO		
Bernie Koo	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, put me on mailing list	on the list			
Mike Storking	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, put me on mailing list	FBKs Trails Commission	3601 River bend RD. N. Pole, AK 99705		
Don Callahan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, put me on mailing list	RS and D Group	606 Barrington Dr 99709	M	C/W
VNERIE MATTHEW	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, put me on mailing list		(12 MI VILLAGE) 2457 Loomis Dr. North Pole		
RINI THORRIHULT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, put me on mailing list		Box 70604 FBKS AK 99707		
FRANK BARTOS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, put me on mailing list	RSD+R	3514 HOONAH NORTH POLE AK 99705		
Bonnie Woldstad	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, put me on mailing list	self	box 56702 NP	F	AI
	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, put me on mailing list				
	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, put me on mailing list				
	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, put me on mailing list				



Alaska Railroad Corporation

North Pole Road/Rail Crossing Reduction Project

Public Scoping Meeting

January 26, 2011 • North Pole City Hall • North Pole

* **RACE/GENDER** – Strictly voluntary. The purpose is to ensure as a recipient of Federal DOT funding we are fulfilling our Title VI responsibilities by ensuring fair and equitable representation by the public. **Race Categories are:** White (W); American Indian (AI); Alaska Native (AN); Black (B); Hispanic (H); Asian/Pacific Islander (AP); Other (O) Category not listed (please self identify and specify).

Name (First and Last, Please Print)	Do you want to receive project mailings?	Organization (if applicable)	Mailing Address – Optional: Please provide if you want information on this project in the future. May be subject to public disclosure.	* Gender <u>Strictly Voluntary</u>	* Race <u>Strictly Voluntary</u>
WILLIAM ALEXANDER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, put me on mailing list		P.O. Box 56215 North Pole, AK 99705		
JIM RASMUSSEN	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, put me on mailing list		3350 Thomas St #6-3 Fairbanks 99709	M	W
Jeannette Theriault	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, put me on mailing list		2473 Old High Hwy N.P. 99705		
DONNA GARDINO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, put me on mailing list	FMATS	800 CUSHMAN ST FAIRBANKS AK 99701	F	W
Linda McGinnis	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, put me on mailing list		3144 Laurance Rd N.P. AK 99705	F	C
Otis W. Rowland	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, put me on mailing list		2091 Edgewood Dr North Pole Ak 99705	M	W
Pat Hanna	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, put me on mailing list		PO Box 56562 North Pole, AK 99705	M	W
Jerry Koerner	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, put me on mailing list		PO Box 56137 North Pole, AK 99705	M	W
KERRY BARNES	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, put me on mailing list	FNSB			

Name (First and Last, Please Print)	Do you want to receive railroad project mailings?	Organization (if applicable)	Mailing Address – Optional: Please provide if you want information on ARRC projects in the future. This information may be subject to public disclosure.	* Gender <u>Strictly</u> Voluntary	* Race <u>Strictly</u> Voluntary
Mike Perry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, put me on mailing list		1233 RANGVIEW N.P., AK 99705		
Bill Holland	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, put me on mailing list				
JOHN MADLEY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, put me on mailing list		P.O. Box 58297 FBK 5 99711		
BILL HOOPFE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, put me on mailing list		P.O. Box 80655 FBK 5 99708		
Lora Adeline Gaudreau	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, put me on mailing list		P.O. Box 55726 N.P. AK 99705		
JACK L. HOWARD	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, put me on mailing list		P.O. Box 55294 N.P. 99705		
Mark Sanford	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, put me on mailing list		P.O. Box 55878 North Pole, AK 99705		
Gloria Beebe	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, put me on mailing list		P.O. Box 55523 North Pole AK 99705		
JOHN THOMAS	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, put me on mailing list		2235 STATE CT NORTH POLE AK 99705		
Eric Olson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, put me on mailing list		1666 Aspen ST FBK 5 AK 99709		
Leslie McFarlane	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, put me on mailing list		1130 Glenn St. North Pole, AK 99705		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, put me on mailing list				
	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, put me on mailing list				

APPENDIX C

Public Comments Received



North Pole Road/Rail Crossing Reduction Project

Your input is important to the Alaska Railroad as we pursue an environmental assesment of options to reduce road/rail at-grade crossings along the rail through North Pole. Please write legibly (printing is appreciated). Attach additional sheets if necessary.

COMMENT DEADLINE: February 28, 2011

Name

Phone

Address

Email

Your Comments:

Please, give the Fairbanks North Star Borough Trails Commission a presentation before the comment period deadline.

Contact them Tom Howard, parks & rec dept., trails coordinator.

Thanks Mike Stedrup

COMMENT

The Alaska Railroad welcomes your input. Please send your written comments:



Capital Projects - Public Comment
Alaska Railroad Corporation
P.O. Box 107500
Anchorage, AK 99510-7500



ARRC's TTY/TTD 265-2620
or voice 265-2494
Alaska Relay TTY 800-770-8973 or
voice 1-800-770-8255



public_comment@akrr.com



Fax (907) 265-2365



January 31, 2011

Kellen Spillman
Fairbanks Metropolitan Area Transportation System
800 Cushman Street
Fairbanks, AK 99701

CORPORATE AFFAIRS

TEL 907.265.2671

FAX 907.265.2365

Dear Mr. Spillman:

Thank you for taking time to attend the North Pole Road/Rail Crossing Reduction Project public scoping meeting on January 26, 2011, at the North Pole City Hall. As noted at the meeting, an Environmental Assessment (EA) will be prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Public input early in the process is very helpful to project team members who will be analyzing alternatives from environmental, engineering, social and economic perspectives.

This letter acknowledges receipt of your written comments, which were hand-delivered by you at the scoping meeting on January 26, 2011. Your comments will be incorporated into the EA process.

Thank you for your interest in this project and the Alaska Railroad.

Sincerely,

Stephenie Wheeler, Corporate Communications Officer
(907) 265-2671, wheelers@akrr.com



North Pole Road/Rail Crossing Reduction Project

Your input is important to the Alaska Railroad as we pursue an environmental assessment of options to reduce road/rail at-grade crossings along the rail through North Pole. Please write legibly (printing is appreciated). Attach additional sheets if necessary.

COMMENT DEADLINE: February 28, 2011

**FOR
COMMENT**

Name
Kellen Spillman

Phone

Address
900 Cushman Fairbanks 99701

Email
~~kdspillman~~ kdspillman@ci.fairbanks.ak.us

Your Comments:

I feel this is a beneficial project, but I am concerned about the funding required to do so. The figure that was thrown around was \$50 million and it seems that there is a better use of the funding. I would support the use of federal Railroad funds, but FTA funding could be better used around the Fairbanks area. I also have cost concerns about building railroad line on or near the levee. In terms of transportation planning it seems \$50 million could be better used in an area with so many needs. I would ask the ARR to consider cost cutting ~~opt~~ options such as requiring less ROW.

The Alaska Railroad welcomes your input. Please send your written comments:



Capital Projects - Public Comment
Alaska Railroad Corporation
P.O. Box 107500
Anchorage, AK 99510-7500



ARRC's TTY/TTD 265-2620
or voice 265-2494
Alaska Relay TTY 800-770-8973 or
voice 1-800-770-8255



public_comment@akrr.com



Fax (907) 265-2365



January 31, 2011

Jerry Koerner, Trustee
David H. Ainley Trust
P.O. Box 56137
North Pole, AK 99705

CORPORATE AFFAIRS

TEL 907.265.2671

FAX 907.265.2365

Dear Mr. Koerner:

Thank you for taking time to attend the North Pole Road/Rail Crossing Reduction Project public scoping meeting on January 26, 2011, at the North Pole City Hall. As noted at the meeting, an Environmental Assessment (EA) will be prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Public input early in the process is very helpful to project team members who will be analyzing alternatives from environmental, engineering, social and economic perspectives.

This letter acknowledges receipt of your written comments on January 27, 2011, via fax transmission. Your comments will be incorporated into the EA process.

Thank you for your interest in this project and the Alaska Railroad.

Sincerely,

Stephenie Wheeler, Corporate Communications Officer
(907) 265-2671, wheelers@akrr.com



North Pole Road/Rail Crossing Reduction Project

Your input is important to the Alaska Railroad as we pursue an environmental assessment of options to reduce road/rail at-grade crossings along the rail through North Pole. Please write legibly (printing is appreciated). Attach additional sheets if necessary.

COMMENT DEADLINE: February 28, 2011

COMMENT FORM

Name

Phone

Address

Email

Your Comments:

I appreciated the meeting at NP City Hall yesterday. I oversee the David H. Ainley Trust that owes a + 200 parcel of land adjacent the Old Richardson Hwy known as TL 1515 and TL1502. It parallels the tracks, is adjacent to the GVEA pipeline and controls. For years we assessed our cabins from the Grange road by the NP Middle School. The cabin burned then shortly after the AKRR put up a gate which stopped access to our 200 acres at that location. At times we've had the gate unlocked so we could get convenient access again to our gravel pits there. We have a section of the property zoned Light Industrial but with the tracks there it has bared development.

We are strongly in favor of the removal of the tracks so we can reinstate use of the Grange Road or get direct access to the Old Richardson Hwy. If you have any questions feel free to contact me.

The Alaska Railroad welcomes your input. Please send your written comments:



Capital Projects - Public Comment
Alaska Railroad Corporation
P.O. Box 107500
Anchorage, AK 99510-7500



ARRC's TTY/TTD 265-2620
or voice 265-2494
Alaska Relay TTY 800-770-8973 or
voice 1-800-770-8255



public_comment@akrr.com



Fax (907) 265-2365



January 31, 2011

Bonnie Woldstad
P.O. Box 56702
North Pole, AK 99705

CORPORATE AFFAIRS

TEL 907.265.2671

FAX 907.265.2365

Dear Ms. Woldstad:

Thank you for taking time to attend the North Pole Road/Rail Crossing Reduction Project public scoping meeting on January 26, 2011, at the North Pole City Hall. As noted at the meeting, an Environmental Assessment (EA) will be prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Public input early in the process is very helpful to project team members who will be analyzing alternatives from environmental, engineering, social and economic perspectives.

This letter acknowledges receipt of your written comments and historical notes, which were hand-delivered by you at the scoping meeting on January 26, 2011. Your comments will be incorporated into the EA process.

Thank you for your interest in this project and the Alaska Railroad.

Sincerely,

Stephenie Wheeler, Corporate Communications Officer
(907) 265-2671, wheelers@akrr.com

1/26/11
BONNE WILSON

1862	The Homestead Act of 1862 allows for 160 acre homesteads to be filed by U.S. citizens
1914	The Act of March 12, 1914 an Act to authorize the President of the United States to locate, construct and operate railroads in the Territory of Alaska and for other purposes... acquire Right of Way all patents reserve to the United States Right of Way for the construction of railroads, telegraphs and telephone lines
5/20/46	Carl Finell files for Homestead
1/16/47 or 1/28/47	letter from War Department sent to entry men that Right of Way will traverse entries, easement will be created in patents Finell #14 on list of entries that letter was suppose to be sent to. Note letters make notation of traverse and easement, do not discuss taking land or reduction in size of homestead due to railroad "fee" letter from Director United States Dept Interior BLM to Manager District Land Office Fairbanks, notes spur line right of way, will traverse the property (note on Homestead of John Gilmore -- located on Eielson spur)
3/28/49	Carl Finell issues easement to GVEA for power line easement continues to demonstrate and exercise ownership in property. GVEA easement is within RR right-a-way.
12/8/1949	Carl Finell receives final patent to US homestead for full 160 acres, notice of March 12, 1914 law within patent but no deduction from the full 160 acres for the amount of property the railroad crosses over conflictors none, Rights of way--none, withdrawals--none
8/20/51	note 2/7/50 notation of spur line right of way be made upon records, from Chief of Land Use & Disposal Division of Adjudication
9/15/69	Remainder of Finell homestead is purchased by Hector & Jeannette Therriault
1982	staff report regarding Alaska Railroad Transfer --regarding Right-of-Way/Other Third-Party Interests Related to this issue is the question of other third-party claims potentially outstanding against railroad holdings. These possible claims consist of other private sector interests which may have been established over the years on portions of the railroad's 38,000 acres. Right-of-way lands appear to be the primary area where this type of problem is likely to exist. Indications suggest that in magnitude there are probably not that many problems of this nature. It should also be pointed out that our research suggest there is little to be gained by attempting to address this question in federal transfer legislation versus dealing with it later on a case-by-case basis. Testimony regarding RR transfer note easements.
1983	Questions on easements and right-a-ways and being able to transfer
1985	ARTA Alaska Railroad Transfer Act --Section 1203 (B) ...deliver to the State an interim conveyance of the rail properties of the Alaska Railroad that are not conveyed pursuant to subparagraph (A) of this paragraph and are not subject to unresolved claims of valid existing rights ...The exclusive use easement granted pursuant to subparagraph (D) of this paragraph and all rights afforded by such easement shall be exercised only for railroad purposes and for such other transportation, transmission or communication purposes for which lands subject to such easements were utilized as of 1/14/83 the license shall be exclusive subject only to valid leases, permits and other instruments issued before the date of transfer and easements reserved pursuant to subsection (c) (2) of this section ARTA generally speaks of easements and right of ways, does address subject to other instruments issued before the date of transfer, also transfer easement for surface does not transfer subsurface. SECTIONS 1208 & 1209 contain Reversion clauses —allowing for transfer back to adjacent property owners through Governor of Alaska
2/23/1989	Swenson Complaint
1994 --1997	Questions and letter regarding easement, right-a-way, exclusive use easement

	<p>Memo from Railroad chief counsel pg 2 ...if the federal government did not have an estate at least equal to the exclusive use easement in specific properties. Congress enactment of ARTA may conceivably have effected an inverse condemnation of private property rights.</p> <p>railroad notes need to review title search on Eielson branch</p> <p>Memo from Railroad Chief counsel – if United States did not own this level of title in any lands it inversely condemned the rights that it guaranteed to the state.. it is equally possible that the federal government either failed to deal with existing property owners or, if it did, failed to record any evidence of its acquisition of the Right of Way</p>
4/16/1998	<p>Railroad commissions Brunner report</p> <p>Brunner report – questions regarding land rights on Eielson spur</p> <p>Brunner report speaks about easements, right-a-way, mentions statute of limitations— but does not take into effect Reversionary Clause.</p>
2003	<p>107th & 108th Congress</p> <p>Railroad in requests language be inserted into ARTA to allow land transfer around Ft. Richardson and Elmendorf. in researching this land transfer at some point decides that land that are being traded could revert back to property owner if use is discontinued under reversionary clause.</p> <p>Railroad requests Reversionary Repeal</p>
2003	<p>ARTA Sections 1208 and 1209 Reversion Clause repealed in omnibus bill</p>
Dec 2005	<p>railroad moves to close Ruby Crossing, protest of Ruby Crossing lead to discovery of reversionary clause repeal</p>
Dec 2005	<p>Memo from RR – that railroad had at least and exclusive use easement, does not state fee or ownership</p>
Jan 2006	<p>Land owner discovers that Reversionary clause in ARTA has been repealed</p>
Jan 2006	<p>Land owner seeking information regarding Interim Conveyance, and titles that will be issued to railroad</p> <p>Note landowner was never contacted regarding this transfer, continued to believe that instruments of title previously granted– US patent—was valid document awarding title to property</p>
May 2006	<p>Document from AK RR Why Reversionary Repeal</p>
July 2006	<p>Letter to land owner regarding interim conveyance and transfers</p>
2008	<p>BLM correspondence</p>



February 8, 2011

Valerie K. Matthew
2457 Loomis Drive
North Pole, AK 99705

CORPORATE AFFAIRS

TEL 907.265.2671

FAX 907.265.2365

Dear Ms. Matthew:

Thank you for providing written comments regarding the North Pole Road/Rail Crossing Reduction Project. An Environmental Assessment (EA) will be prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Public input early in the process is very helpful to project team members who will be analyzing alternatives from environmental, engineering, social and economic perspectives.

This letter acknowledges receipt of your comments on February 8, 2011, via mail. Your comments will be incorporated into the EA process.

Thank you for your interest in this project and the Alaska Railroad.

Sincerely,

Stephenie Wheeler, Corporate Communications Officer
(907) 265-2671, wheelers@akrr.com



North Pole Road/Rail Crossing Reduction Project

Your input is important to the Alaska Railroad as we pursue an environmental assesment of options to reduce road/rail at-grade crossings along the rail through North Pole. Please write legibly (printing is appreciated). Attach additional sheets if necessary.

COMMENT DEADLINE: February 28, 2011

Name
Valerie K. Matthews

Phone
907 488-9076

Address
*2457 Locks Dr.
North Pole, AK 99705*

Email
2/3/11


Your Comments:


Sirs:
Having attended the rail relocation meeting in North Pole, I was pleased to hear that the tracks may be moved at the nine mile location, to run behind or on top of the dike. This would surely be a better route than the present one -
However, it was also mentioned that a spur would be left in place for some distance along the old track. Since we live at 12 mile village, it seems to me that we're now will have two rail lines to contend with, double the noise, double herbicides in the area, and this will impact fields at 10 mile and 11 mile also. -
I hope you'll reconsider that spur line -


*Sincerely,
Valerie K. Matthews*


COMMENT

The Alaska Railroad welcomes your input. Please send your written comments:

 Capital Projects - Public Comment
Alaska Railroad Corporation
P.O. Box 107500
Anchorage, AK 99510-7500

 ARRC's TTY/TTD 265-2620
or voice 265-2494
Alaska Relay TTY 800-770-8973 or
voice 1-800-770-8255

 public_comment@akrr.com

 Fax (907) 265-2365

Smith, Alicia

Subject: FW: 100 mile trail easement (North Pole Project)

From: Stephenie Wheeler [<mailto:wheelers@akrr.com>]
Sent: Monday, February 14, 2011 11:36 AM
To: Diane Ludwig
Cc: Barbara Hotchkin; Greg Lotakis; Campfield, Heather
Subject: Re: 100 mile trail easement (North Pole Project)

Brooks -

We assume you are referring to the North Pole Road/Rail Crossing Reduction project that is considering, among other options, a possible realignment of the railroad track on or along the Tanana River Levee. Within this context, we appreciate your providing written comments regarding this project. As you may know, an Environmental Assessment (EA) is being prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Public input early in the process is very helpful to project team members who will be analyzing alternatives from environmental, engineering, social and economic perspectives. This message acknowledges receipt of your comments on February 13, 2011, via email. Your comments will be incorporated into the EA process.

Thank you for your interest in this project and the Alaska Railroad.

Regards,

- Stephenie

Stephenie Wheeler
Corporate Communications Officer
Alaska Railroad Corporation
P.O. Box 107500
Anchorage, AK 99510-7500
Physical: 327 W. Ship Creek Avenue
(907) 265-2671 (office)
(907) 382-3327 (cell)
wheelers@akrr.com

>>> Diane Ludwig <northernludwig5@acsalaska.net> 2/13/2011 3:10 PM >>>
AK. Rail Road Co.

Just wanted to be on record as supporting the 100 mile trail and that the railroad grant easements for the trail and crossings along the Tanana River dike.

thankyou,

Brooks Ludwig

Smith, Alicia

Subject: FW: RAILROAD REROUTE PROPOSAL (North Pole Project)

From: Stephenie Wheeler [<mailto:wheelers@akrr.com>]
Sent: Monday, February 14, 2011 11:50 AM
To: beargst@ak.net
Cc: Barbara Hotchkin; Greg Lotakis; Campfield, Heather
Subject: Re: RAILROAD REROUTE PROPOSAL (North Pole Project)

John -

Thank you for providing written comments regarding the North Pole Road/Rail Crossing Reduction Project. An Environmental Assessment (EA) will be prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Public input early in the process is very helpful to project team members who will be analyzing alternatives from environmental, engineering, social and economic perspectives. This message acknowledges receipt of your comments on February 13, 2011, via email. Your comments will be incorporated into the EA process.

Thank you for your interest in this project and the Alaska Railroad.

Regards,

- Stephenie

Stephenie Wheeler
Corporate Communications Officer
Alaska Railroad Corporation
P.O. Box 107500
Anchorage, AK 99510-7500
Physical: 327 W. Ship Creek Avenue
(907) 265-2671 (office)
(907) 382-3327 (cell)
wheelers@akrr.com

>>> John Johnston <beargst@ak.net> 2/13/2011 8:27 AM >>>

In regards to the 100-Mile Loop Trail and the proposed reroute of ARR tracks through North Pole the ARR must give consideration to the trail(s) the follow and pass the Tanana River Levee.

These are established trails that have a high usage by local residents for recreation, hunting, trapping and fishing access onto and across the Tanana River.

The trail know as the 100 Mile Loop is an important aspect to Fairbanks history and trail systems and must be considered and provide for.

Thank You.

--
"everybody's ignorant, only on different subjects"
Will Rogers

Smith, Alicia

Subject: FW: Tanana levee reroute

From: Stephenie Wheeler [<mailto:wheelers@akrr.com>]
Sent: Monday, February 14, 2011 11:40 AM
To: Mike Kramer
Cc: Barbara Hotchkin; Greg Lotakis; Campfield, Heather
Subject: Re: Tanana levee reroute

Mike -

We assume you are referring to the North Pole Road/Rail Crossing Reduction project that is considering, among other options, a possible realignment of the railroad track on or along the Tanana River Levee. Within this context, we appreciate your providing written comments regarding this project. As you may know, an Environmental Assessment (EA) is being prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Public input early in the process is very helpful to project team members who will be analyzing alternatives from environmental, engineering, social and economic perspectives. This message acknowledges receipt of your comments on February 13, 2011, via email. Your comments will be incorporated into the EA process.

Thank you for your interest in this project and the Alaska Railroad.

Regards,

- Stephenie

Stephenie Wheeler
Corporate Communications Officer
Alaska Railroad Corporation
P.O. Box 107500
Anchorage, AK 99510-7500
Physical: 327 W. Ship Creek Avenue
(907) 265-2671 (office)
(907) 382-3327 (cell)
wheelers@akrr.com

>>> "Mike Kramer" <mkramer@bnblaw.com> 2/13/2011 9:38 AM >>>

The 100 mile trail would be impacted by this proposed reroute. Please accomodate the trail in your planning.

Sent from my iPhone please forgive typos

Smith, Alicia

Subject: FW: RR Realignment through North Pole

From: Stephenie Wheeler [<mailto:wheelers@akrr.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, February 15, 2011 8:21 AM
To: HL
Cc: Barbara Hotchkin; Greg Lotakis; Campfield, Heather
Subject: Re: RR Realignment through North Pole

Helyn -

Thank you for providing written comments regarding the North Pole Road/Rail Crossing Reduction project, which is considering, among other options, a possible realignment of the railroad track on or along the Tanana River Levee. As you may know, an Environmental Assessment (EA) is being prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Public input early in the process is very helpful to project team members who will be analyzing alternatives from environmental, engineering, social and economic perspectives. This message acknowledges receipt of your comments on February 14, 2011, via email. Your comments will be incorporated into the EA process.

We appreciate your interest in this project and the Alaska Railroad.

Regards,

- Stephenie

Stephenie Wheeler
Corporate Communications Officer
Alaska Railroad Corporation
P.O. Box 107500
Anchorage, AK 99510-7500
Physical: 327 W. Ship Creek Avenue
(907) 265-2671 (office)
(907) 382-3327 (cell)
wheelers@akrr.com

>>> "HL" <arctic-loon@mosquionet.com> 2/14/2011 7:46 PM >>>

I appauld your work to realign the RR tracks to make less crossings with vehicular traffic. **I do want to remind you of the existing trail that is on the Tanana levy. This trail has existed for many years and I hope you realise the necessity of the access to this trail, and any trail crossings that you would need to have so as not to obliterate and existing trail.**

Thank You.
Helyn Lefgren



North Pole Road/Rail Crossing Reduction Project

Your input is important to the Alaska Railroad as we pursue an environmental assessment of options to reduce road/rail at-grade crossings along the rail through North Pole. Please write legibly (printing is appreciated). Attach additional sheets if necessary.

COMMENT DEADLINE: February 28, 2011

Name		Phone	
JEANNETTE THERRIault		907-488-8585	
Address		Email	
2473 Old Richardson Hwy. N. Pole		dandj@acsalaska.net	

Your Comments:

I am glad to see progress toward moving the railroad out of the centre of the city of North Pole. I have lived in the Hiway Park area since 1952. The area has seen some major development since that time.

Many of the property owners along the present railline from 6 mile to the refinery will finally have access to their property. New roads between Badger Road and the 4-lane on the section lines would open a large area to development and a new tax base for the borough

Some thought should be given to changing the current proposal to making the change from 3 mile crossing also. The present spur would continue to serve those businesses that are along the Old Richardson Hwy.

Property owners should be able to reposses what was taken when the railroad was first put in during the 2nd World War.

The Alaska Railroad welcomes your input. Please send your written comments:



Capital Projects - Public Comment
Alaska Railroad Corporation
P.O. Box 107500
Anchorage, AK 99510-7500



ARRC's TTY/TTD 265-2620
or voice 265-2494
Alaska Relay TTY 800-770-8973 or
voice 1-800-770-8255



public_comment@akrr.com



Fax (907) 265-2365

COMMENT FORM

APPENDIX D

Agency Scoping Materials

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Sign-in Sheet.....	15



December 21, 2010

Judith Bittner
Alaska Department of Natural Resources
State Historic Preservation Office
550 West 7th Ave. / Suite 43
Anchorage, AK 99501

Subject: Agency Scoping Meeting
ARRC North Pole Road/Rail Crossing Reduction Project

Dear Ms. Bittner:

The Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC), in cooperation with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), is initiating preliminary engineering and preparation of an Environmental Assessment (EA) for a proposed road/rail crossing reduction project through North Pole (North Pole Rail project). We invite you or your representatives to participate in an agency scoping meeting:

**Wednesday, January 26, 2011
10:00 to 12:00
Hotel North Pole
449 N Santa Claus Lane
North Pole, Alaska 99705**

ARRC proposes to reduce the number of crossings on a portion of its Eielson Branch through North Pole by realigning approximately 8 miles of railroad track. The purpose is to enhance public safety in downtown North Pole and improve ARRC's operating efficiency while ensuring continued rail access to existing and potential future ARRC customers along that portion of the Eielson Branch. The tracks between ARRC Mile G12 (Richardson Highway Mile 9) and the Chena River Floodway (Mile G20) would be realigned on or near the Tanana River levee. The existing at-grade crossing of the Richardson Highway would be removed, and a new separated grade crossing would be installed. Please refer to the attached figures showing the project area and conceptual design.

The proposed North Pole Rail project is Phase 1 of a larger proposed realignment project – the Fairbanks Area Rail Line Relocation. The North Pole rail project has independent utility and would provide immediate safety benefits, so preliminary engineering and EA preparation are now being initiated.

During the agency scoping meeting, we will describe the proposed project and potential alternatives, identify anticipated environmental issues and permitting requirements, and listen to any agency concerns. We will also outline a schedule for the EA process.

For preliminary research results of environmental resources in the project area, see Attachment A. Also attached to this letter is a list of scoping questions specific to your

agency or organization's purview (Attachment B). Please review this list for your specific agency or organization, and include any pertinent information that you can provide with your written comments.

If you are not able to attend the meeting, but would like to participate by teleconference, instructions on how to join the conference call are provided below:

Participants please dial:
Toll-free: 866-866-2244
International: 404-260-1415

When prompted, enter the code below followed by the # sign:
6071265

You are also invited to attend the public scoping meeting on Wednesday, January 26, 2010 from 3:30 to 6:30 p.m. at the North Pole City Hall at 125 Snowman Lane. It will include brief presentations scheduled for 4:00 and 5:30 p.m.

If you have questions about the proposed project or the scheduled meetings, please call me at (907) 265-2313 or Greg Lotakis at (907) 265-2217. We look forward to seeing you at the meeting.

Sincerely,



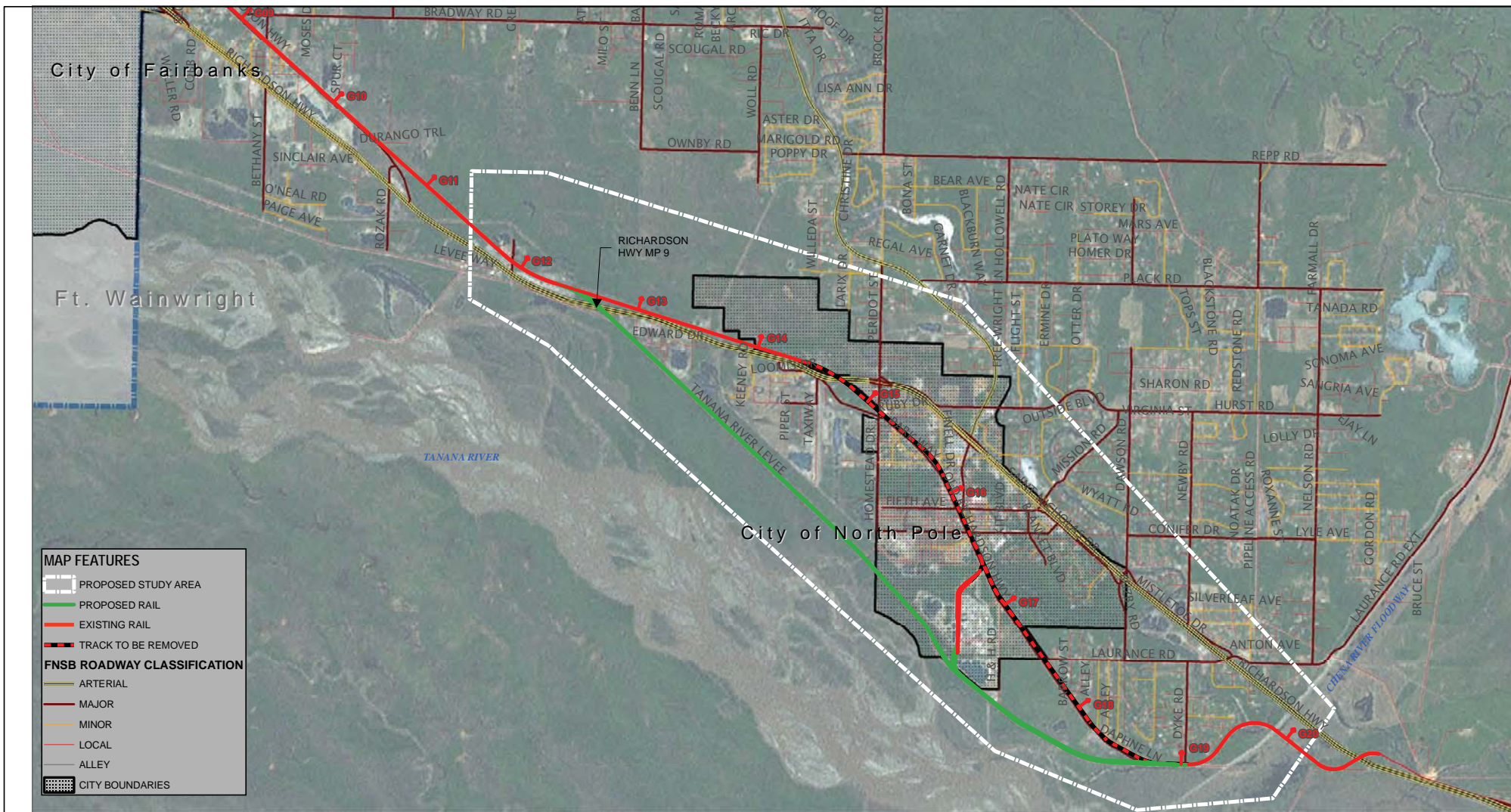
Barbara C. Hotchkin
Manager, Project Permits & NEPA

Enclosures:

Figure 1, Study Area Site Map
Figure 2, Typical Rail Sections
Figure 3, Richardson Highway Rail Crossing Area
Attachment A, Preliminary Research Results of Environmental Resources
Attachment B, Agency-Specific Scoping Questions
Attachment C, Agency Scoping List

cc:

Greg Lotakis, ARRC, Project Manager
Kristen Hansen, DOWL HKM, Environmental Project Manager
John Winkle, FRA, Program Manager



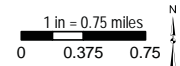
MAP FEATURES

- PROPOSED STUDY AREA
- PROPOSED RAIL
- EXISTING RAIL
- TRACK TO BE REMOVED

FNSB ROADWAY CLASSIFICATION

- ARTERIAL
- MAJOR
- MINOR
- LOCAL
- ALLEY

CITY BOUNDARIES



310 K STREET,
SUITE 200
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99501
PHONE: 907-264-6750

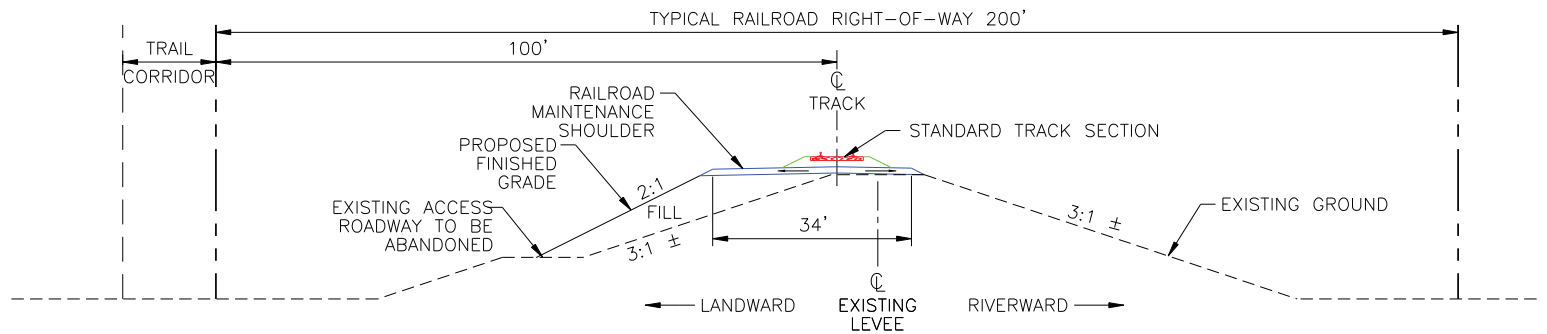
ALASKA RAILROAD CORPORATION
ENGINEERING SERVICES
P.O. BOX 107500, ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99510-7500

PROJECT: **NORTH POLE ROAD/RAIL CROSSING REDUCTION PROJECT**

TITLE: **STUDY AREA SITE MAP**

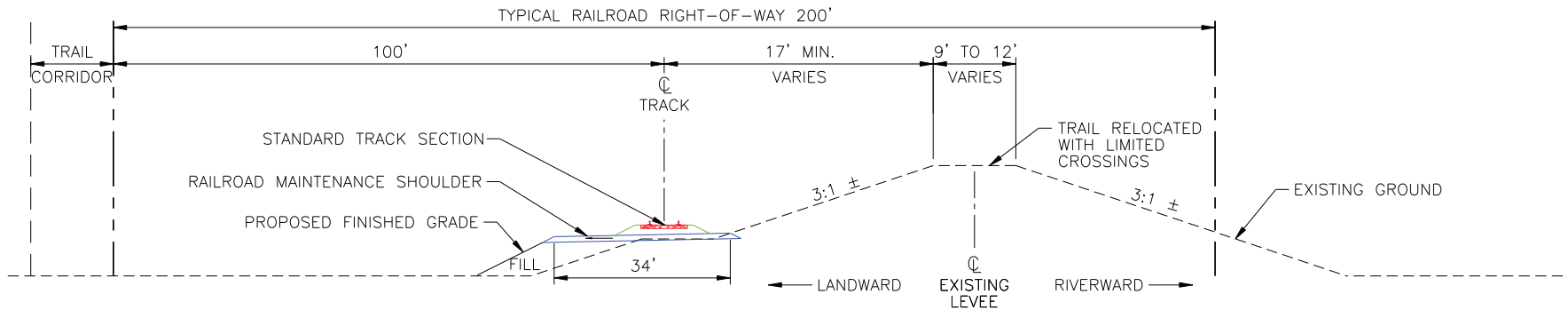
DESIGNED BY: KMW	SCALE: 1" = 0.75 MI	DATE: 12/17/2010	DATE NO.:
DRAWN BY: KMW			
CHECKED BY: LJT			
APPROVED BY: JM			

EX-1 DWG NO. **1** OF **3**



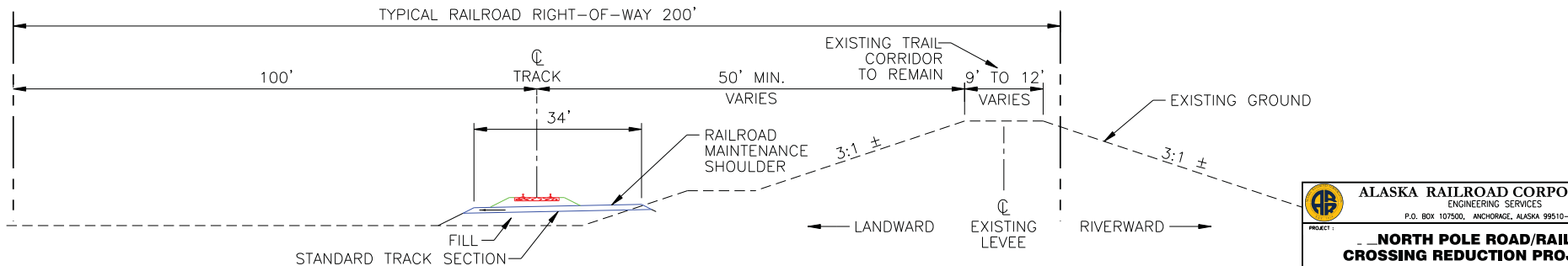
1 TYPICAL SECTION - ALTERNATIVE A (TRACK ON LEVEL)

SCALE: 1" = 20'




2 TYPICAL SECTION - ALTERNATIVE B (TRACK INSIDE LEVEE)

SCALE: 1" = 20'



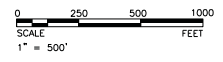
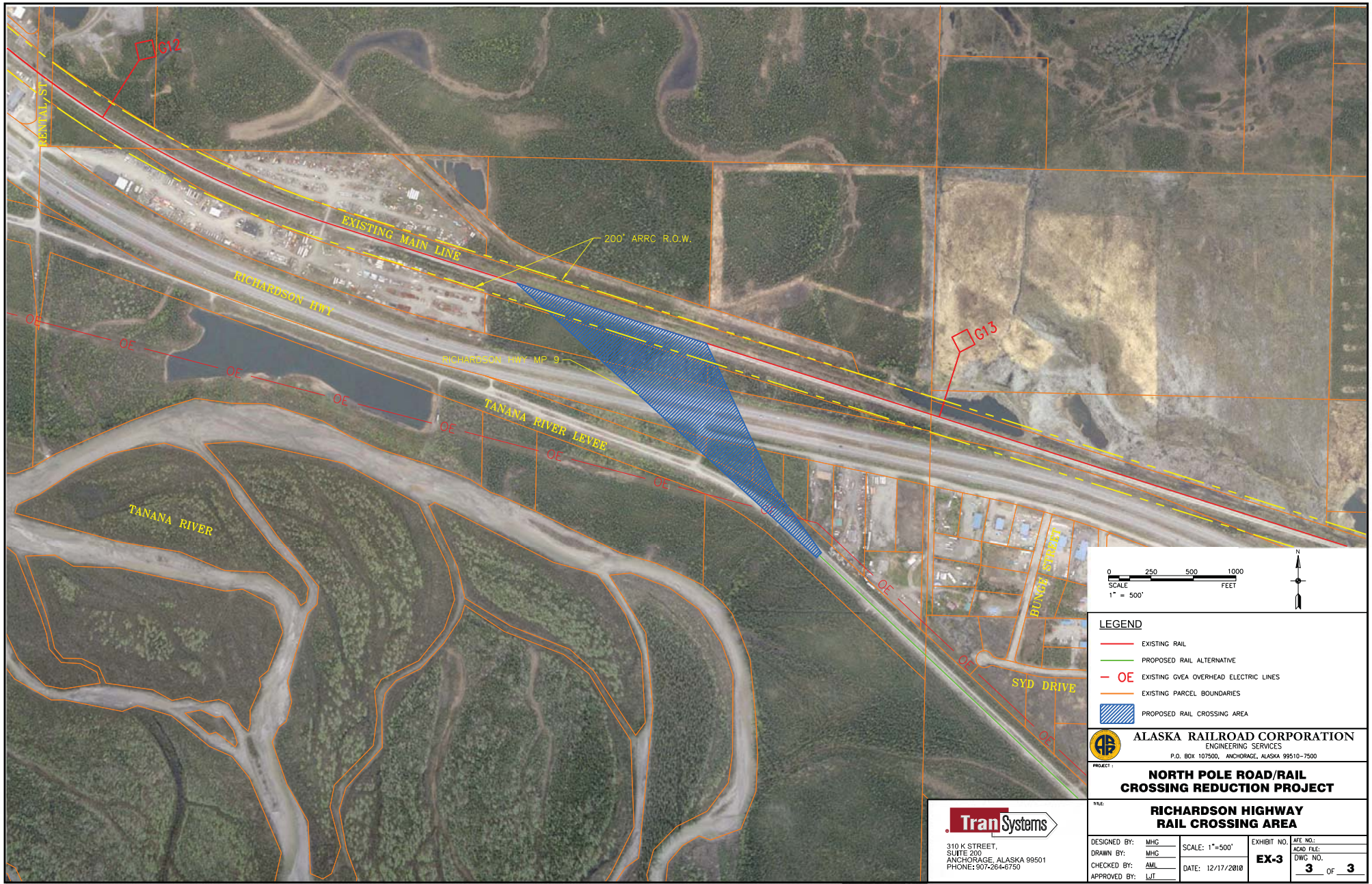
3 TYPICAL SECTION - ALTERNATIVE C (RAIL INSIDE LEVEE WITH MAXIMUM RAIL/TRAIL SEPARATION)

SCALE: 1" = 20'

 ALASKA RAILROAD CORPORATION ENGINEERING SERVICES P.O. BOX 107500, ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99510-7500			
PROJECT : NORTH POLE ROAD/RAIL CROSSING REDUCTION PROJECT			
DATE: TYPICAL RAIL SECTIONS			
DESIGNED BY: AML	SCALE: AS NOTED	EXHIBIT NO:	DWG. NO.:
DRAWN BY: AML	DATE: 12/17/2010	EX-2	2 OF 3
CHECKED BY: LJT			
APPROVED BY: JM			



310 K STREET,
 SUITE 200
 ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99501
 PHONE: 907-264-6750



LEGEND	
	EXISTING RAIL
	PROPOSED RAIL ALTERNATIVE
	EXISTING OVERHEAD ELECTRIC LINES
	EXISTING PARCEL BOUNDARIES
	PROPOSED RAIL CROSSING AREA

ALASKA RAILROAD CORPORATION
ENGINEERING SERVICES
P.O. BOX 107500, ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99510-7500

PROJECT: **NORTH POLE ROAD/RAIL CROSSING REDUCTION PROJECT**

NAME: **RICHARDSON HIGHWAY RAIL CROSSING AREA**



310 K STREET,
SUITE 200
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99501
PHONE: 907-264-6780

DESIGNED BY: MHC	SCALE: 1"=500'	EXHIBIT NO. EX-3	SHEET NO. 3 OF 3
DRAWN BY: MHC	DATE: 12/17/2010	ROAD FILE:	DWG. NO. 3
CHECKED BY: AML			
APPROVED BY: LJT			

ATTACHMENT A
Environmental Resources and Preliminary Research Results
For the
ARRC North Pole Road/Rail Crossing Reduction Project

Air Quality: According to Alaska Administrative Code (AAC), 18 AAC 50 (as amended through December 9, 2010), the Fairbanks North Star Borough and North Pole urban areas have been designated by the federal administrator as nonattainment for PM-2.5. Both areas are subject to maintenance plan requirements for carbon monoxide, as required under 42 U.S.C. 7505a, and as adopted by reference in 18 AAC 50.030 as part of the state air quality control plan.

Coastal Zone Management: According to Alaska Department of Natural Resources (ADNR) Coastal Zone and Coastal District Boundaries Map, the proposed project does not lie within the coastal zone boundaries of the State of Alaska (www.alaskacoast.state.ak.us/GIS/boundary.htm).

Contaminated Sites, Spills, and Underground Storage Tanks: A search of the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation's (ADEC's) contaminated sites database (<http://www.dec.state.ak.us/spar/csp/search/default.asp>) revealed multiple contaminated sites within the immediate project area. A FirstSeach Database has been ordered to determine if the existing contaminated sites could potentially impact the proposed project. Further research and coordination with ADEC will be conducted to help determine the likelihood of encountering known contaminated sites during construction.

Historical, Archeological, and Cultural Properties: A record search and literature review were conducted of the Alaska Heritage Resource Survey (AHRS), Office of History and Archaeology was completed for project area in support of a 2005 draft environmental assessment and cultural resource investigation that encompassed the project area. It includes a field survey to identify archaeological sites and historic structures in the study area. Consultation in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act will be conducted with the State Historic Preservation Office and local tribal entities to determine whether this project is likely to affect any historic or cultural resources.

Wetlands: A review of the United States Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) National Wetland Inventory (NWI) website (www.wetlandsfws.er.usgs.gov/wtlnds/launch.html) indicated that there are wetlands in the area of the proposed project. A wetlands delineation will be conducted in the spring/summer of 2011.

Anadromous Fish Streams/Essential Fish Habitat: A review of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game's (ADF&G) *Atlas to the Catalog of Waters Important for the Spawning, Rearing or Migration of Anadromous Fishes* (www.gis.sf.adfg.state.ak.us) identified both the Tanana River, which runs parallel to the Tanana River Flood Control Levee, and the Chena River as being of importance to the rearing or migration of anadromous fishes.

State Refuges, Critical Habitat Areas, and Sanctuaries: A review of the ADF&G's website listing critical habitats in the State of Alaska (www.sf.adfg.state.ak.us/SARR/SpecialAreas/SpecialAreas.cfm) revealed that there are no refuges, critical habitat areas, or sanctuaries within or near to the project area.

ATTACHMENT A
Environmental Resources and Preliminary Research Results
For the
ARRC North Pole Road/Rail Crossing Reduction Project

Local Land Use Plans, Local Parks: Local land use plans that will be considered in the development of this project include the *Tanana Basin Area Plan (2010)*, the *North Pole Land Use Plan*, and the *Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan for the Fairbanks North Star Borough (revised 2006)*. According to the *Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan*, the Tanana River Flood Control Levee Trail has been the main recreational trail connection between South Fairbanks and North Pole, and the plan identifies this route as the primary option to connect the southern portion of the 100 Mile Loop Trail. The *North Pole Land Use Plan* shows the 100 Mile Loop Trail along the levee.

Land Ownership and Use: Land ownership and use within the project area is mixed between federal, military, state, borough, private and Alaska Railroad Corporation. The Tanana River Flood Control Levee, located within the project area, is on land mainly owned by the Fairbanks North Star Borough with a small portion owned by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Navigability, Floodplain Management: A review of the United States Army Corps of Engineers Alaska District website (www.poa.usace.army.mil/reg/NavWat.htm) lists the Tanana River as navigable for 455 miles. Navigable portions of the Tanana River are located near the proposed project area.

The Fairbanks North Star Borough participates in flood hazard mapping through the Federal Emergency Management Act (FEMA). Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) were checked to see if the project area is located within an active floodplain. Community ID Map #0250090212H indicates that the area on the river side of the Tanana River levee is within a 100 year floodplain. Isolated areas on the North Pole side of the levee are also within the 100 year floodplain.

Federal Recreation Areas: There are no Federal Recreation Areas located within, or adjacent to the project area.

Bureau of Land Management (BLM): According to the BLM website, no BLM public lands are located within the proposed project area (www.blm.gov/nstc/jurisdictions/).

Threatened and Endangered Species: There are no protected species within the project vicinity.

Bald Eagles: According to the USFWS online *Alaska Bald Eagle Nest Atlas* (<http://164.159.151.40/private/alaskabaldeagles/viewer.htm>) no bald eagle nests were identified in the project area.

National Wildlife Refuges: A review of the USFWS website indicated that there are no national wildlife refuges with the project area (<http://alaska.fws.gov/nwr/map.htm>).

National Parks, Preserves, Monuments, and Wild and Scenic Rivers: The project area is not located within any national parks, preserves, or monuments. Therefore, there would be no impacts to these resources. There are no wild and scenic rivers in the project vicinity.

ATTACHMENT B - AGENCY-SPECIFIC SCOPING QUESTIONS

ARRC North Pole Road/Rail Crossing Reduction Project

Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation

In addition to identifying any concerns and/or issues your agency might have with the proposed project, the following information is requested:

1. We have researched the ADEC Contaminated Sites, Spills and LUST program databases and any findings are identified in the scoping letter and/or Appendix A. If you know of any other confirmed or suspected contaminated sites, spills and any registered underground or above-ground fuel storage tanks that may affect or be affected by the proposed project please provide that information.
2. Identify any water quality concerns.
3. Provide information and/or data on existing (permitted or unpermitted) solid waste landfills, dumps, discharges, or sewage lagoons in the project area.
4. Provide information and/or data on existing drinking water supplies in the project area.
5. Provide information and/or data on existing drinking water supplies.
6. Identify any air quality concerns.
7. Identify any permits and/or clearances to be obtained from your agency for the proposed project.

Alaska Department of Fish and Game

In addition to identifying any concerns and/or issues your agency might have with the proposed project, the following information is requested:

1. We have researched the ADF&G's *An Atlas to the Catalog of Waters Important to the Spawning, Rearing or Migration of Anadromous Fishes* and any findings are identified in the scoping letter and/or Attachment A. If you have any other information and/or data on anadromous or resident fish streams in the vicinity of the proposed project, including spawning/rearing habitat and migration corridors please provide us that information.
2. Identify any fish species within the project boundaries that may be used for subsistence.
3. We have researched the ADF&G *State of Alaska Refuges, Critical Habitat Areas and Sanctuaries* and any findings are identified in the scoping letter and/or Attachment A. If these special areas exist in the project vicinity, would the normal activities of these areas be affected by the proposed project?
4. Provide information on wildlife other than fish in the vicinity of the proposed project.
5. Would the project affect wildlife migration corridors or bisect/segment wildlife habitat?
6. Identify any permits and/or clearances to be obtained from your agency for the proposed project.

ADNR, Division of Parks & Outdoor Recreation

In addition to identifying any concerns and/or issues you might have with the proposed project, the following information is requested:

1. State Parks - We have researched the ADNR DPOR *Catalog of the Alaska State Park System* for the project area and any findings are identified in the scoping letter and/or Attachment A. If you know of any other existing or proposed State Parks in the vicinity of the project, and can identify any Park objectives or activities that may conflict with the proposed project please provide that information.

ADNR, Division of Mining, Land and Water

In addition to identifying any concerns and/or issues you might have with the proposed project, the following information is requested:

1. Land Use Plans - We have researched the ADNR Land Use Plan for the project area and any findings are identified in the scoping letter and/or Attachment A. If you know of any other existing and/or proposed land use plans and can identify any land use objectives that may conflict with the proposed project please provide that information.
2. Permits - Identify any permits or clearances to be obtained from your agency for the proposed project.

ADNR, Division of Parks & Outdoor Recreation, SHPO

In addition to identifying any concerns and/or issues you might have with the proposed project, the following information is requested:

1. We have researched the Alaska Heritage Resources Survey (AHRS) for the project area and any findings are identified in the scoping letter and/or Attachment A. If you know of any other confirmed or potential archaeological, historical, and/or cultural sites in the vicinity of the proposed project please provide that information.

City or Borough

In addition to identifying any concerns and/or issues the city or Borough might have with the proposed project, the following information is requested:

1. Identify any existing and/or proposed zoning requirements and/or land use controls in the project area. If permits are required, please identify which ones.
2. Identify any other local improvement project(s) under construction or proposed in the vicinity of the project within the foreseeable future.
3. Describe existing recreational use of the portion of the Tanana River Levee within the project corridor.
4. Does the community support the proposed project?

Bureau of Land Management

In addition to identifying any concerns and/or issues your agency might have with the proposed project, the following information is requested:

1. We have researched the BLM website with respect to BLM Recreation Areas for the project area and any findings are identified in the scoping letter and/or Attachment A. If you have any other information and/or data on Recreation Areas or Native Allotments in the project area that might potentially be affected by the proposal, please provide that information.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

In addition to identifying any concerns and/or issues your agency might have with the proposed project, the following information is requested:

1. Identify any sole source or principal drinking water sources that may be affected by the proposed project.
2. We have researched the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation Contaminated Sites, Spills and LUST program databases and any findings are identified in the scoping letter and/or Attachment A. If you know of any other confirmed or suspected contaminated sites, spills and any registered underground or above ground fuel storage tanks that may affect or be affected by the proposed project please provide that information.
3. Identify any permits and/or clearances to be obtained from your agency for the proposed project.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

In addition to identifying any concerns and/or issues your agency might have with the proposed project, the following information is requested:

1. We have researched the Federal Emergency Management Agency Flood Maps for the project area and any findings are identified in the scoping letter and/or Attachment A. If you know of any other information and/or data with respect to the base floodplains, regulatory floodways, and/or special flood hazard areas of drainages that may be affected by the proposed project, please provide that information.
2. Are there any navigable waters of the U.S. in the project vicinity over which the COE has Section 10 authority?
3. Identify any permits and/or clearances to be obtained from your agency for the proposed project.

U.S. Coast Guard

In addition to identifying any concerns and/or issues your agency might have with the proposed project, the following information is requested:

1. Are there any navigable waters of the U.S. in the project vicinity over which the USCG has authority?
2. Identify any permits and/or clearances to be obtained from your agency for the proposed project.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

In addition to identifying any concerns and/or issues your agency might have with the proposed project, the following information is requested:

1. We have researched the USFWS website with respect to known threatened and/or endangered species and their habitat for the project area and any findings are identified in the scoping letter and/or Attachment A. If you have any other information and/or data on threatened and/or endangered species in the project area that might potentially be affected by the proposal please provide that information.
2. We have researched the USFWS website with respect to identifying National Wildlife Refuge lands in or adjacent to the project area and any findings are identified in the scoping letter and/or Attachment A. If you know of any other existing or proposed refuge lands in the vicinity of the project, and can identify any refuge objectives or activities that may conflict with the proposed project please provide that information.
3. We have researched the USFWS National Wetland Inventory Maps with respect to identifying wetlands in or adjacent to the project area and any findings are identified in the scoping letter and/or Attachment A. If you know of any other wetlands that may be impacted by the project, please provide that information.
4. Provide information or data on important fish and wildlife habitats or migration corridors potentially affected by the proposal.
5. Provide information on known active or inactive eagle nests in the project area.
6. Identify any permits and or clearances to be obtained from your agency for the project.

U.S. Dept. of Commerce **(National Marine Fisheries Services)**

In addition to identifying any concerns and/or issues your agency might have with the proposed project, the following information is requested:

1. We have researched the NMFS website with respect to known threatened and/or endangered species and their habitat for the project area and any findings are identified in the scoping letter and/or Attachment A. If you have any other information and/or data on threatened and/or endangered species in the project area that might potentially be affected by the proposal please provide that information.
2. We have researched the NMFS website to determine if essential fish habitat (EFH) pursuant to the Magnuson Act will be impacted by the proposed project and any findings are identified in the scoping letter and/or Attachment A. If you have any other information and/or data on EFH species or habitat, please provide that information.

ATTACHMENT C - AGENCY SCOPING LIST
North Pole Road/Rail Crossing Reduction Project

FIRST	LAST	AGENCY	DIVISION	ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP
John	Carnahan	Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation	Contaminated Sites	610 University Ave.	Fairbanks	AK	99709
Joan	Hardesty	Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation	Department of Air Quality	610 University Ave.	Fairbanks	AK	99709
Wade	Strickland	Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation	Water Quality Division	550 Cordova St.	Anchorage	AK	99501
Cindy	Heil	Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation	Department of Air Quality	619 E Ship Creek Ave. /Suite 249	Anchorage	AK	99501
Robert	McLean	Alaska Department of Fish & Game	Division of Habitat	1300 College Road	Fairbanks	AK	99701
Dianna	Leinberger	Alaska Department of Natural Resources	Division of Mining, Land and Water	3700 Airport Way	Fairbanks	AK	99709
Judith	Bittner	Alaska Department of Natural Resources	State Historic Preservation Office	550 West 7th Ave. / Suite 43	Anchorage	AK	99501
Ethan	Birkholz	Alaska DOT&PF	Planning	2301 Peger Road	Fairbanks	AK	99709
Barry	Hooper	Alaska DOT&PF	Engineering & Design	2301 Peger Rd. MS-2550	Fairbanks	AK	99709
Robert	Effinger	Alaska DOT&PF	Engineering & Design	2301 Peger Rd. MS-2550	Fairbanks	AK	99709
Bruce	Campbell	Alaska DOT&PF	Engineering & Design	2301 Peger Rd. MS-2550	Fairbanks	AK	99709
Gary	Foreman	Bureau of Land Management		1150 University Avenue	Fairbanks	AK	99709-3899
Michael	Schmetzer	City of Fairbanks	Public Works	800 Cushman St.	Fairbanks	AK	99709
Jerry	Cleworth	City of Fairbanks		800 Cushman St.	Fairbanks	AK	99709
Donna J.	Gardino	City of Fairbanks		800 Cushman St.	Fairbanks	AK	99709
Douglas	Isaacson	City of North Pole		125 Snowman Lane	North Pole	AK	99705
Bill	Butler	City of North Pole	Public Works	125 Snowman Lane	North Pole	AK	99705
Jennifer	Curtis	Environmental Protection Agency	NEPA Review Staff	222 West 7th Avenue #19	Anchorage	AK	99501
Luke	Hopkins	Fairbanks North Star Borough		PO Box 71267	Fairbanks	AK	99707-1267
Paul	Costello	Fairbanks North Star Borough	Land Management	PO Box 71267	Fairbanks	AK	99707-1267
Bernardo	Hernandez	Fairbanks North Star Borough	Community Planning	PO Box 71267	Fairbanks	AK	99707-1267
Scott	Johnson	Fairbanks North Star Borough	Public Works	PO Box 71267	Fairbanks	AK	99707-1267
Jim	Conner	Fairbanks North Star Borough	Air Quality	PO Box 71267	Fairbanks	AK	99707-1267
Michael	Cox	Fairbanks North Star Borough	Parks and Recreation	PO Box 71267	Fairbanks	AK	99707
Peter	Forsling	FHWA, Alaska Division	Engineering Operations Team	709 West 9th Street / Room 851	Juneau	AK	99802
Tim	Haugh	FHWA, Alaska Division	Statewide Programs Team	709 West 9th Street / Room 851	Juneau	AK	99802
Doug	Limpinsel	National Marine Fisheries Service	Western AK Field Office	222 West 7th Ave.	Anchorage	AK	99501
Jim	Helfinstine	U.S. Coast Guard	Bridge Administration	Commander (oan) 17th Coast Guard PO Box 25517	Juneau	AK	99802-5517
Mike	Meeks	US Army Alaska- Fort Wainwright	Public Works	1053 Gaffney Road #6500	Fort Wainwright	AK	99703-6500
Christy	Everett	US Army Corps of Engineers		3437 Airport Way / Suite 206	Fairbanks	AK	99709
David	Williams	US Army Corps of Engineers	Public Works	PO Box 6898	Elmendorf AFB	AK	99506-6898
Colonel Reinhardt	Koenig	US Army Corps of Engineers		PO Box 6898	Elmendorf AFB	AK	99506-6898
Deborah	Rocque	US Fish and Wildlife Service		11 12th Ave / Room 110	Fairbanks	AK	99701

Campfield, Heather

From: Campfield, Heather
Sent: Monday, January 24, 2011 2:39 PM
To: Janice.Wiegers@alaska.gov; joan.hardesty@alaska.gov; cindy.heil@alaska.gov; mac.mclean@alaska.gov; dianna.leinberger@alaska.gov; margaret.carpenter@alaska.gov; barry.hooper@alaska.gov; bruce.campbell@alaska.gov; bob.effinger@alaska.gov; jcfox@ci.fairbanks.ak.us; jcleworth@ci.fairbanks.ak.us; djgardino@ci.fairbanks.ak.us; mayor@northpolealaska.com; bill@northpolealaska.com; mayor@co.fairbanks.ak.us; property@co.fairbanks.ak.us; planning@co.fairbanks.ak.us; SCJohnson@co.fairbanks.ak.us; airquality@co.fairbanks.ak.us; parks@co.fairbanks.ak.us; peter.forsling@dot.gov; tim.haugh@dot.gov; doug.limpinsel@noaa.gov; jhelfinstine@cgalaska.uscg.mil; michael.meeks@us.army.mil; christy.a.everett@usace.army.mil; david.p.williams@usace.army.mil; ak_fisheries@fws.gov
Cc: Barbara Hotchkin; Jeanette Holt; Stephenie Wheeler; Greg Lotakis; Hansen, Kristen
Subject: ARRC North Pole Road / Rail Crossing Reduction Project

Good afternoon all,

This is a reminder that the Alaska Railroad Corporation is holding a scoping meeting for the proposed North Pole Road / Rail Crossing Reduction project on Wednesday, January 26, 2011, from 10 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., at the North Pole Hotel, in North Pole, Alaska.

For those of you who have expressed interest in attending the meeting remotely we have set up a WebEx so that you will be able to view the presentation as well as a teleconference line so that you can participate in the discussion. If you do not have access to a desktop computer to log into the WebEx but would like a PDF of the presentation to reference during the meeting please let me know and I will email a copy of it to you.

To access the teleconference please dial:

Toll-free: 866-866-2244
International: 404-260-1415

When prompted enter the following code:

6071265#

To access the WebEx via your desktop computer:

Go to meetdowlhkm.webex.com

Type in the following username and password

Username: webex@dowlhkm.com

Password: Arrc123

Best regards,

Heather A. Campfield
Environmental Specialist
1133.60432.01





North Pole Road/Rail Crossing Reduction Project

Your input is important to the Alaska Railroad as we pursue an environmental assesement of options to reduce road/rail at-grade crossings along the rail through North Pole. Please write legibly (printing is appreciated). Attach additional sheets if necessary.

COMMENT DEADLINE: February 28, 2011

COMMENT FORM

Name





Phone

Address

Email

Your Comments:

The Alaska Railroad welcomes your input. Please send your written comments:

 <p>Capital Projects - Public Comment Alaska Railroad Corporation P.O. Box 107500 Anchorage, AK 99510-7500</p>	 <p>ARRC's TTY/TTD 265-2620 or voice 265-2494 Alaska Relay TTY 800-770-8973 or voice 1-800-770-8255</p>
 <p>public_comment@akrr.com</p>	 <p>Fax (907) 265-2365</p>



Alaska Railroad Corporation

North Pole Road/Rail Crossing Reduction Project

Agency Scoping Meeting

10:00 a.m. January 26, 2011 • North Pole Hotel • North Pole

Name (First & Last, Please Print)	Title	Agency / Organization	Mailing Address	Phone Number
			Email Address	
Barbara Hofchkin	Manager, Project Permits and NEPA	ARRC	Mail: 327 W. Ship Creek Ave Anchorage, AK 99501	(907) 265- 2313
			Email: hofchkinb@akrr.com	
Jeanette Holt	Environmental Permits Analyst	ARRC	Mail: 307 W. Ship Creek Ave Anchorage, AK 99501	907.265. 2440
			Email: holtj@akrr.com	
Greg Lotakis	ARRC-PROJECTS	ARRC	Mail: lotakisg@akrr.com	907.265. 2217
			Email:	
Bob Henszey	Ffw Bio	USFWS	Mail: no have	456-0323
			Email: have	

Name (First & Last, Please Print)	Title	Agency / Organization	Mailing Address	Phone Number
			Email Address	
Janice Wiegers	Env. Program Specialist	ADDEC/Contaminated Sites	Mail: janice.wiegers@alaska.gov Email: 610 University Ave Fairbanks, AK 99707	907-451-2127
Joe Sisinyak	Range Operations	FL. WW Range Control	Mail: Bldg 5108 Range Rd. FWR AK 99703 Email: mark.sisinyak@us.army.mil	353-1244
Ski Marcinkowski	Ops Office	U.S. Army Alaska 6-3/517	Mail: Email: robert.marcinkowski@us.army.mil	353-7808
Bill Gryder	Chief Civil Engineer	FNSB Public Works	Mail: P.O. Box 71267 ¹²⁶⁷ Fairbanks AK 99707- 2167 Email: bgrydere@fnsb.us	907-459-1360
Tami Sheehan	Land Mgt. Specialist	FNSB Land Mgt.	Mail: PO Box 71267 Fols AK 99707 Email: tsheehan@co.fairbanks.ak.us	907-459-1240

Name (First & Last, Please Print)	Title	Agency / Organization	Mailing Address		Phone Number
			Email Address		
Jennifer Schmetzer	Civil Engineer	FNSB PW	Mail:		459- 1327
			Email:	jschmetzer@fnsb.us	
TODD BOYCE	Trans. Planner	FNSB Com. Planning	Mail:		4591260
			Email:	tboyce@fnsb.us	
B Hernandez	Planner		Mail:	bhernandez@fnsb.us	
			Email:		
B. Hooper	P&E Chief	DOT	Mail:	barry.hooper@alaska.gov	457-2218
			Email:		
Bob Effinger	Environmental Analyst	DOT	Mail:	bob.effinger@alaska.gov	451-5294
			Email:		

Name (First & Last, Please Print)	Title	Agency / Organization	Mailing Address		Phone Number
			Mail:	Email Address	
Stephanie Wheeler		Railroad	Mail:		
			Email:		
Scott Johnson	Director of Public Works	FNSB	Mail:		
			Email:	scjohnson@fnsb.us	
Jim Durst	Habitat Biologist	ADFG Habitat	Mail:	james.durst@alaska.gov	907-459-7254
			Email:		
THOMAS HANCOCK		FNSB	Mail:	HANCOCK@CO.FAIRBANKS.AK.US	459-740
			Email:		
CHRISTY EVERETT	FIELD OFFICE SUPER	USACE	Mail:		474-2166
			Email:		

Name (First & Last, Please Print)	Title	Agency / Organization	Mailing Address		Phone Number
			Mail	Email Address	
Carrie McEnteer	NEPA Branch Chief	Fort Wainwright Army Garrison	Mail:		907 361 9807
			Email:	carrie.mcenteer@ us.army.mil	
Doug Tjesson	Mayor	NP	Mail:		488- 8584
			Email:	mayor@northpolealaska.com	
Bill Butler		City of North Pole	Mail:		
			Email:		
JOHN SCHAEKE	Proj MGR	USACE CHENA FLOOD Proj	Mail:		488. 2748
			Email:		
Tim Fearl	Rgr	Corps of En USACE	Mail:		
			Email:		

Name (First & Last, Please Print)	Title	Agency / Organization	Mailing Address		Phone Number
			Mail:	Email Address	
James Ganner	FWSB Air Quality		Mail:		459-1325
			Email:	jganner@fwsb.us	
DIANNA LEINBERGER LEINBERGER	DNR DMLW LANDS		Mail:	dianna.leinberger@	451- 3014
			Email:	alaska.gov	
Kristen Hanson	DML HKM		Mail:		
			Email:		
Heather Campfield	DML HKM		Mail:		
			Email:		
			Mail:		
			Email:		

Name (First & Last, Please Print)	Title	Agency / Organization	Mailing Address	Phone Number
			Email Address	
Joan Hardesty (telephone)		ADEC	Mail:	
			Email:	
X No? Peter Forsling (telephone)		FHWA	Mail:	
			Email:	
Jennifer Curtis (telephone)		EPA	Mail:	
			Email:	
X No? John Winkle (telephone)		FRA	Mail:	
			Email:	
Doug Houpt (telephone)	Range Planner	Installation Range Office Ft. Wainwright	Mail: Doug.houpt@usace.army.mil (907) 384-7516	
			Email:	

APPENDIX E

Agency Comments Received

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Smith, Alicia

Subject: FW: FYI - AK Railroad planning to move tracks in North Pole

> -----Original Message-----
> From: Smyth, William J (DEC)
> Sent: Friday, January 28, 2011 9:27 AM
> To: Wieggers, Janice K (DEC)
> Cc: Drzewiecki, Gregory W (DEC)
> Subject: RE: FYI - AK Railraod planning to move tracks in North Pole
>
> Janice,
> The only thing that I didn't see mentioned was a Storm Water Pollution
> Plan (SWPP). At some point, as design and construction gets closer,
> they'll need to have a SWPP. The person who would review this plan
> would be Greg Drzewieki in Anchorage.
>
> Bill
>
> -----Original Message-----
> From: Wieggers, Janice K (DEC)
> Sent: Thursday, January 27, 2011 5:26 PM
> To: Christian, Cindy L (DEC); Smyth, William J (DEC); Buteyn, Douglas
> J (DEC); DeRuyter, Thomas R (DEC)
> Subject: FYI - AK Railraod planning to move tracks in North Pole
>
> I attended a scoping meeting for the railroad plans to relocate their
> tracks around North Pole. The railroad is asking for agency comments
> by the end of February, with specific questions listed in Attachment B
> of this document.
>
> I am forwarding this to you because it appears the railroad has not
> contacted anyone other than CS and Air. If you have any questions
> about what was discussed at the scoping meeting, let me know.

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

DIVISION OF HABITAT

SEAN PARNELL, GOVERNOR

1300 COLLEGE ROAD
FAIRBANKS, AK 99701-1551
PHONE: (907) 459-7289
FAX: (907) 459-7303

February 24, 2010

Ms. Barbara C. Hotchkin, Manager
Project Permits and NEPA
Alaska Railroad Corporation
P.O. Box 107500
Anchorage, AK 99510-7500

Dear Ms. Hotchkin:

Re: ARRC North Pole Road/Rail Crossing Reduction Project Scoping Comments

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G), Division of Habitat has reviewed your December 21, 2010 NEPA scoping packet for the proposed North Pole Road/Rail Crossing Reduction Project, which included agency-specific scoping questions and a request for comments. In addition, we attended the January 26, 2011 agency scoping meeting. During the review, Habitat consulted with the ADF&G divisions of Commercial Fisheries, Sport Fish, Subsistence, and Wildlife Conservation.

This project would relocate approximately eight miles of rail line (Eielson Branch G12 to G20) between MP 352.5 of the Richardson Highway and the Moose Creek Flood Control Project floodway. The current alignment follows the Richardson Highway and the Old Richardson Highway through the City of North Pole, while the new alignment would follow the Tanana River Levee southwest of the city core. A new grade separated crossing would be constructed at the Richardson Highway.

GENERAL COMMENTS

In general, ADF&G has few fish or wildlife concerns with the proposed project. To minimize project effects on fish habitat and riparian areas important for wildlife, we recommend that no activity take place riverward of the toe of the existing levee. It is also important that public access to these areas be maintained.

During construction of the Moose Creek Dam flood control project and the Tanana River levee, numerous historic side channels and sloughs were isolated or drained, and a series of seepage channels constructed to drain groundwater from behind the levee. As a result, there are no identified fish bearing water bodies that would be crossed by the project as currently proposed.

The potential for alteration of moose habitat and increased moose strike along the realigned railroad alignment is of some concern to ADF&G, particularly if the track speed limit is significantly increased. We are interested in working cooperatively with ARRC to address this concern as the plans for this project move forward.

ADF&G has a strong interest in both maintaining viable fish and wildlife populations and assuring the ability of the public to access those resources for both consumptive and nonconsumptive purposes. Based on the comments and concerns presented by the City of North Pole and the Fairbanks North Star Borough during the agency scoping meeting, ADF&G will defer to those entities for public access issues along and across the project.

RESPONSES TO ARRC SCOPING QUESTIONS

1. Anadromous and Resident Fish – The Tanana River (Stream No. 334-40-11000-2490) has been specified important for the spawning, rearing, or migration of anadromous fishes (“cataloged”) under AS 16.05.871. Chinook, chum, and coho salmon use the main, side, and high water channels of the Tanana River in the project area. In addition, a number of other species make use of the same waters, including Arctic grayling, burbot, northern pike, lake chub, longnose suckers, slimy sculpin, and round, humpback, and broad whitefish.

A number of historic sloughs and channels in the project area were altered during construction of the Moose Creek Dam flood control project and associated Tanana River levee. Several seepage channels were also constructed that ultimately connect to the cataloged waters of the Chena River. Because the channels are typically ephemeral and maintained as industrial drains rather than functional waterways, the only fish use that has been documented is generally low densities of juvenile resident fish species.

2. Subsistence Resources – The project area lies within the Fairbanks Nonsubsistence Use Area as designated by the Joint Board of Fisheries and Game. This is based on a finding that dependence upon subsistence (customary and traditional uses of fish and wildlife) is not a principal characteristic of the area’s economy, culture, and way of life (AS 16.05.258(c)). A wide variety of resident and anadromous fish, bird, and mammal species are harvested by area residents under personal use and sport regulations, and trapping remains an active pursuit in the greater Fairbanks area. We encourage consultation with Tanana Chiefs Conference, Inc. during preparation of project NEPA documents.
3. Special Areas – There are no legislatively-designated special areas managed by ADF&G (refuges, critical habitat areas, or sanctuaries) within or abutting the project area. The nearest special area is Creamer’s Field Migratory Waterfowl Refuge in Fairbanks, located approximately 14 miles northwest of the project area.
4. Wildlife Resources – A wide range of wildlife species use the project area at least seasonally. Mammals include shrews, coyote, red fox, wolf, weasels, black and brown bears, moose, red and northern flying squirrels, beaver, voles, porcupine, and snowshoe hare. Birds include resident (such as common raven, black-capped and boreal chickadees, redpolls, and downy woodpeckers) and migratory species (such as warblers, American robins, sparrows, owls, ducks, and swans) as well as raptors of various sizes (such as sharp-shinned hawk and bald eagle).

5. Wildlife Habitat – Project effects on migratory travels between uplands and the Tanana River floodplain would likely be similar to those of the existing rail line since the project would generally parallel that route. However, there may be an increased risk for moose-train collisions because of increased train speed, greater surrounding vegetation, and a less urban setting. With Alternative D, or some other riverward alternative, there would be a higher risk of the project affecting or interacting with migratory or daily movements of wildlife along the floodplain and riparian corridor of the Tanana River.
6. Permits and Authorizations – Any work that might occur within the limits of ordinary high water on the riverward side of the levee would likely require a Fish Habitat (Title 16) Permit from ADF&G.

These are rather general responses to each question provided by ARRC. ADF&G is able to provide additional information on each topic if requested.

Any questions or concerns about this permit may be directed to Habitat Biologist Jim Durst at 907-459-7254 or emailed to james.durst@alaska.gov.

Sincerely,



Robert F. "Mac" McLean
Regional Supervisor

ecc: Tim Pilon, ADEC Water, Fairbanks
Al Ott, ADF&G HD, Fairbanks
Bonnie Borba, ADF&G CF, Fairbanks
Jeff Estensen, AD&G CF, Fairbanks
Audra Brase, ADF&G SF, Fairbanks
Marla Carter, ADF&G SF, Anchorage
Jim Simon, ADF&G SUBS, Fairbanks
Don Young, ADF&G WC, Fairbanks
Chris Milles, ADNDR DMLW, Fairbanks
Christy Everett, COE, Fairbanks
NOAA Fisheries, Anchorage
Jewel Bennett, USFWS, Fairbanks
Bernardo Hernandez, Fairbanks North Star Borough
Doug Isaacson, City of North Pole
Greg Lotakis, ARRC, Anchorage
Kristen Hansen, DOWL HKM, Anchorage

RFM/jdd

Smith, Alicia

Subject: FW: NORTH POLE CROSSING REDUCTION PROJECT COMMENTS

From: Stephenie Wheeler [<mailto:wheelers@akrr.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, March 01, 2011 8:42 AM
To: Doug Isaacson
Cc: Bruce Carr; Barbara Hotchkin; Greg Lotakis; Campfield, Heather
Subject: Re: NORTH POLE CROSSING REDUCTION PROJECT COMMENTS

Mayor Isaacson -

Thank you for providing input on the North Pole Road/Rail Crossing Reduction Project. This email acknowledges receipt of your written comments and the City of North Pole resolution which were transmitted via email on February 28, 2011. Your comments and resolution will be incorporated into the project's Environmental Assessment (EA), which will be prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Input early in the process is very helpful to project team members who will be analyzing alternatives from environmental, engineering, social and economic perspectives.

Sincerely,

- Stephenie Wheeler

Stephenie Wheeler
Corporate Communications Officer
Alaska Railroad Corporation
P.O. Box 107500
Anchorage, AK 99510-7500
Physical: 327 W. Ship Creek Avenue
(907) 265-2671 (office)
(907) 382-3327 (cell)
wheelers@akrr.com

>>> "Doug Isaacson" <mayor@northpolealaska.com> 2/28/2011 4:48 PM >>>

The City of North Pole heartily endorses the proposed Alaska Railroad North Pole Crossing Reduction / Road-Rail Relocation Project ("the Project").

1. The City Council has on several occasions passed resolutions endorsing the Project, including Resolution 08-02 (January 7, 2008) and Resolution 09-31 (October 19, 2009); the resolutions are attached.

2. Both of the resolutions have requested appropriations: Resolution 08-02 requested \$1 million for the environmental assessment for Phase 1 (the North Pole realignment section); Resolution 09-31 requested \$50 million in FHWA funds for the same section for construction.
3. We believe the Project should be given Independent Utility status in that it can be accomplished irrespective of the realignment of any other section of railroad track, contributing significantly to reducing at-grade crossings in the North Pole community, ensuring greater public safety and lessening the risk of a catastrophic event (see Resolution 09-31).
4. The removing of the physical track from the heart of the city to past 10 mile (approximately where K&K Recycling is located) is essential to ensuring that dangerous intersections can become regulated (Resolution 09-31) and for opening hundreds of acres to development that is currently restricted to private investment because development would create more at grade crossings.
5. The Project will enhance the operations of the railroad because
 - a. the trains will be allowed to travel faster, a benefit to moving products from Flint Hills North Pole Refinery and products to and from Eielson; and
 - b. other industrial users will be able to directly access the new rail, e.g. Petro Star North Pole Refinery; and
 - c. future troop movements will be expedited to the Tanana River Crossing and the Delta, AK area upon completion of the Northern Extension Project; and
 - d. public safety concerns will be reduced.
6. The Project will build a new grade-separated crossing, replacing the dangerous “Peridot” crossing on the Richardson Highway, a four lane federally funded highway, vastly improving the safety of vehicular traffic and the railroad.

As Mayor of the City of North Pole, I urge the completion of this project in the most expeditious manner, using the project alternative that best protects people and their access to the Tanana River, the environment, and the railroad, which will probably be either Alternative A or C. For further information, I can be reached at email: mayor@northpolealaska.com or phone: 907-488-8584. Thank you.

Douglas W. Isaacson, Mayor

City of North Pole
125 Snowman Lane
North Pole, Alaska 99705
Ph: 907-488-8584
Cell: 907-322-3133
Fx: 907-488-3002

www.northpolealaska.com

North Pole, Alaska: "Where the Spirit of Christmas Lives Year Round"



February 24, 2011

Greg Lotakis, Project Manager
Alaska Railroad Corporation
P.O. Box 107500
Anchorage, Alaska 99510-7500

RE: North Pole Road/Rail Crossing Reduction Project

Dear Mr. Lotakis:

Thank you for your informative presentation on January 26, 2011 at the North Pole Road/Rail Crossing Reduction Scoping Meeting. The Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB) has supported this project through as early as 2001 and most recently through Resolution 2007-36. The primary basis of our support is the improved safety that relocation would bring to the motoring community, especially our school children. We are pleased that the Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC) is proceeding with an Environmental Assessment, where the major issues will be identified and analyzed.

FNSB is both the owner /operator of the Tanana River Levee and the municipal government tasked with the exercise of certain police power responsibilities associated with zoning and platting. The Department of Community Planning is responsible for planning efforts and zoning enforcement. The Department of Parks and Recreation is responsible for implementing and overseeing established FNSB trails and recreational facilities. The Department of Public Works operates and maintains the levee structure, drainage channels, and groins. The Land Management Department is responsible for protecting the land title interests associated with the levee facility. The following comments reflect all these departments' interests and are grouped by subject.

FNSB Regional Comprehensive Plan

This plan is a policy document adopted by the FNSB Assembly in September 2005. The Plan is supportive of this type of project. Strategy 5 of Goal 1 of the Transportation and Infrastructure Chapter states: *Encourage a reroute of the railroad to reduce the number of at-grade railroad crossings; create separate grade crossings for the remainder, when possible.*

North Pole Land Use Plan

This plan is a land use plan for the City of North Pole that was adopted by the FNSB Assembly in January 2010. The land use plan is also supportive of the project. Under "Implementation Strategies" the plan states:

- *Support Alaska Railroad Rail Line Relocation*
- *Provide 200 foot corridor along the Tanana River Levee for rail line relocation through North Pole.*
- *Encourage reversionary land title transfers as per the 1983 Alaska Railroad Transfer Act.*

The plan also states: *Establish off-highway vehicle land use area to be located southwest of the Tanana River Levee/200 foot railroad re-alignment corridor, to extend north to 9 mile. This off-highway vehicle use area is shown on the land use map designating "Pedestrian/Bicycle Facilities Parks and Trails" and public access across the proposed railroad realignment should be provided. In addition, the plan indicates a potential location for a railroad depot for the City of North Pole. This location is shown on the land use map designating "Transportation Facilities."*

Comprehensive Recreational Trails Plan

Located within the proposed ARRC project area is the Flood Control Levee Trail. This multi-use, motorized public recreational trail is part of the FNSB Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan and was adopted by FNSB Assembly Ordinance No. 95-025. It is an established portion of the proposed 100-Mile Loop Trail and receives substantial year-around public use. The general public accesses both the trail and the off-highway use area from the end of Homestead Drive at a section line easement located near North Pole High School.

The trail must remain within the levee corridor and public access across the proposed railroad should be provided for the continued recreational use by city residents and the general public. FNSB recommends a grade-separated crossing for the Flood Control Levee Trail at the Richardson Highway 9-mile crossing. At a minimum, an at-grade crossing should be provided for the trail as part of the proposed railroad realignment.

Title 15, Fairbanks North Star Borough Floodplain Ordinance

The FNSB Floodplain Ordinance was recently amended in April 2010. There are several areas along the proposed railroad realignment that are located within the Special Flood Hazard area according to the Flood Insurance Rate Maps. Per your handout regarding the realignment, it appears that special flood hazard areas will be impacted. Therefore a Floodplain Permit is required.

In addition, our Ordinance states: No person may excavate or remove any material from lands within 250 feet of the centerline of the Tanana Levee structure; except, that excavation and removal for the purpose of constructing foundations for buildings or other structures upon the excavation is permitted. Such excavation shall be backfilled to original ground elevation within 90 days from the date extraction began.

Please consult our Floodplain Administrator, Mr. Doug Sims, at (907) 459-1263 for further information on permitting and excavation activities.

Tanana River Levee Structure

The Tanana River Levee structure is a zoned earthen embankment with a core of semi-pervious silty gravels, an outer shell of sandy gravel, and a drainage blanket of select gravel which extends from the core landward fifteen feet beyond the embankment toe. The levee design requires that a 500 foot natural silt blanket be maintained between the levee and the Tanana River and that open excavations be prohibited for 250 feet landward of the centerline of the embankment. The gravel surface on top of the levee embankment is twelve foot in width and accommodates vehicles for levee patrol and maintenance. Public Works is responsible for all levee operations including 24-hour monitoring of the structure during all high water events, flood fighting operations and emergency repairs, routine inspection every 90 days during the open water season, and routine annual maintenance. The proposed railroad realignment would have significant impacts on these responsibilities.

Major Modification – Construction of rail lines on the levee embankment, the drainage blanket or immediately adjacent to any part of the levee structure will likely qualify as a “major modification” to the system. All major modifications must be reviewed and approved by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) through the office of the Chief of Engineers. To date, FNSB has not undertaken a major modification and we are unfamiliar with the process but believe that it will require a significant amount of analyses and time. We recommend that ARRC contact the USACE for more information on this process. Modifications, major or minor, made to the levee structure without consent by the USACE may jeopardize our recent levee certification. This certification is a requirement by the Federal Emergency Management Agency when a levee is shown on the Flood Insurance Rate Maps as providing protection against the one percent annual chance flood. If the USACE were to pull their certification, FNSB’s maps could be revised to show extensive increases in special flood hazard areas, which would have a significant monetary impact on the residents of the Borough. FNSB could not support a railroad realignment project that did not have USACE approval.

Structural Integrity – The levee structure was not designed nor has FNSB or the USACE analyzed it to see if it can support live train loads. It may or may not be able to support rail traffic and still maintain an adequate factor of safety for stability. FNSB recommends that the ARRC obtain appropriate construction method and material

data including the recent analyses conducted for certification and use the information to complete a structural analysis. An understanding of the full impact of rail traffic loading on the levee's structural integrity is required before FNSB can support the railroad realignment project as presented.

Access Points – As noted above, Public Works is responsible for the operation and maintenance of the levee. Without complete open access to the top, sides, and toe of the levee embankment, the drainage blanket on the landward side of the levee, and the first fifteen feet of silt blanket on the riverward side of the levee, we cannot fully meet our obligation to the USACE. ARRC has noted that five access points have been identified for crossing the proposed alignment. These points may or may not be suitable for all required levee operations. Public Works will need to review our access needs in more detail as the final project alternative is designed.

Ownership Interests

FNSB's ownership interests in the levee, drainage channels and groins arise from a combination of fee simple title and Federal and State Permits. In addition to the levee and drainage channel right-of-ways and groins, FNSB owns a considerable amount of land on the riverward side of the levee for which we have management responsibility. Parks and Recreation manages the Tanana Lakes Facility and Public Works manages the Landfill Gravel Excavation Project. The five access points mentioned by the ARRC have to be evaluated for their relevance for these facilities and obligations. Assuming the ARRC wants a limited access easement similar to the one granted by the federal government, crossing points and use of the existing maintenance road become very important.

How our interests, or a portion of them, might be conveyed or assigned to the ARRC would have to be addressed with the granting agencies, approved by the FNSB Assembly, and likely reviewed by the USACE in some fashion. It is entirely possible that depending upon alignment, additional acquisition of privately held as well as other agency land north of the levee would be required. It is important to develop accurate ownership maps so that acquisition can be taken into project planning considerations. FNSB has provided its ownership information to the ARRC in the past and if more is needed our files are available for review.

Survey and Topographic Data

You are probably aware that in 2009 the USACE hired Dowl Engineers, Inc., to complete a centerline survey and cross section of the levee and drainage channels. Since that time FNSB has been surveying its property interests along the levee and channels. Both the Dowl Survey and our survey data are available for your use.

Through the CC list at the end of this letter we are identifying some of the individuals and agencies with whom FNSB has worked in association with the levee over the years. We are providing them as a courtesy, as I am sure that there are many more that will be identified through the Environmental Assessment public notice process.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey James Jacobson, Chief of Staff

Cc Scott Johnson, Director, Department of Public Works
Bernardo Hernandez, Director, Department of Community Planning
Paul Costello, Director, Department of Land Management
Michael Cox, Director, Department of Parks and Recreation
Jennifer Schmetzer, PE, Department of Public Works
David M. Ratte, FEMA Mitigation Division, Department of Homeland Security, Region X
Marcus D. Palmer, PE, Geotechnical Engineer, USACE
Patricia S. Ophcen, PE, Levee Safety Officer, USACE
Alan B. Cavallo, State Public Assistance Officer, Department of Military and Veterans affairs
Christi Everett, Field Office Manager, Regulatory Division, USACE



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY ENGINEER DISTRICT, ALASKA
P.O. BOX 6898
JBER, ALASKA 99506-0898

District Commander

January 27, 2011

Alaska Railroad Corporation
ATTN: Barbara Hotchkin
P. O. BOX 107500
Anchorage, Alaska 99510-7500

Dear Ms. Hotchkin,

This letter is in response to your letter of December 21, 2010 which requested responses to scoping questions regarding your North Pole Road/Rail Crossing Reduction Project. Input regarding the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Regulatory permitting functions will be provided separately. We are providing these written comments in case we are unable to participate in the scoping meeting on 26 January 2011.

You asked three specific scoping questions in Attachment B to your letter. This letter provides input on Questions 1 and 3 and will also identify additional concerns we have, that are not related to regulatory functions. We will be submitting a separate letter addressing the regulatory issues in questions two and three and any other related regulatory concerns.

Scoping question one is about flood mapping and similar information. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Alaska District has no flood mapping more recent than what can be obtained from FEMA. We recently certified the Tanana River Levee for the Fairbanks North Star Borough, and all of the data and analysis from that work has been transferred to the borough. The Fairbanks North Star Borough has recently been updating flood mapping in conjunction with FEMA, but the Corps is not involved in that effort.

Your third question relates to permits and/or clearances required from the Corps. Again this letter does not address the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Regulatory function permitting requirements. However, the Tanana River Levee is a Federal Project primarily owned and operated by the Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB) under agreement with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers through the Alaska District. Your proposed project is a modification to this Federal Project, as defined by 33 CFR 208.10 and/or 33 USC 408. Altering the levee in order to place a railroad embankment on the crown of the levee, on the stability berm, or within the right-of-way of the levee would constitute a modification. It is incumbent upon the Alaska Railroad Corporation to evaluate this concern and obtain approval at the appropriate level. A major modification requires approval from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Chief of Engineers, Washington, DC. I have attached, for your use, a copy of the Section 408 Submittal Package Guide for modifications requiring approval under 33 USC 408.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is concerned about the integrity of the Federal Project. Ongoing operation of the levee requires that the levee operator (FNSB) have continual access for inspection, maintenance, flood fighting, major repairs, and obtaining data. Changes in access, property ownership, maintenance responsibility, etc. that affect the Federal Project should be based on a plan developed by and between the Fairbanks North Star Borough, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Alaska Railroad Corporation. This plan should cover the entire scope of the proposed work that impacts the Federal Project.

We look forward to further dialogue on your proposal to relocate your North Pole rail lines. If you have any questions or concerns about this letter, please contact Mr. Stephen C. Boardman, Chief, Civil Project Management Branch at (907)753-5799.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Reinhard W. Koenig". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Reinhard W. Koenig
Colonel, Corps of Engineers
District Commander

Encl.

Final
11/12/08

Section 408 Submittal Package Guide

This guide is intended to ensure a complete submittal, aid the review process and serve as a guide for sponsors/applicants requesting approval of significant modifications or alterations to a locally or federally maintained Corps project requiring Chief of Engineers approval under 33 USC 408. Incomplete submittals will delay processing of applicant requests. This information will be submitted to the MSC for quality assurance review prior to making any recommendations to HQUSACE.

Applicant (Normally the Non-Federal Sponsor) Prepared Documents

1. Written request for approval of the project modification

- A detailed description of the proposed modification
- The purpose/need for the modification
- An appropriate map or drawing

2. Technical Analysis and Adequacy of Design. All necessary technical analysis should be provided. The list below is only a guide for typical items that would routinely be expected and is not intended to list every item that could be needed to make this determination.

- Geotechnical Evaluation.
 - Stability
 - Under seepage
 - Erosion Control
 - Vegetation
 - Material usage/borrow/waste/transport/hauling
- Structural
 - Bridges and related abutments
 - Pier penetrations of levee embankments
 - Diaphragm walls
 - Other structural components integral to the project
 - Gates or other operable features
- Hydraulic and Hydrology
 - Changes in inflow
 - Changes in water surface profiles and flow distribution
 - Assessment of local and system wide resultant impacts
 - Upstream and downstream impacts of the proposed alterations, including Sediment transport analysis as needed
 - Impacts to existing floodplain management

- Operation and Maintenance Requirements
 - Applicant facilities
 - Pre flood preparation
 - Post flood clean up
 - Sediment removal
 - Water control management plan
 - Impacts to other Federal projects within the basin
 - Corps facilities

3. Real Estate Analysis

- Reference ER 405-1-12, Chapter 12, Sections I and II.
 - Include:
 - Description of all Lands, Easements and Rights of Way required for the modification, including proposed estates
 - Description of all Lands, Easements and Rights of Way owned as a part of the authorized project
 - Maps clearly depicting both required real estate and existing real estate limits
 - Navigational servitude, facility relocations, relocation housing assistance and any other relevant factors

4. Discussion of Residual Risk. Discuss the changes to the existing level of risk to life, property as a result of the modification. Will the project incur damages more frequently as a result of flooding that will require Federal assistance under PL 84-99? Risk analysis will be used as the method for communicating residual risk.

5. Administrative record for key decisions for related actions for applicants proposed modification such as environmental reports, judges' decisions, permits, etc.

6. Discussion of Executive Order 11988 Considerations

- Justification to construct in the floodplain
- No practicable alternative determination, if Federal agency, Agency determination.
Public Notice Notifications

7. Environmental Protection Compliance. All 408 actions must be in full compliance with all applicable Public laws, executive orders, rules and regulations, treaties, and other policy statements of the Federal government and all plans and constitutions, laws, directives, resolutions, gubernatorial directives, and other policy statements of States with jurisdiction in the planning area. Examples are State water and air quality regulations; State historic preservation plans; State lists of rare, threatened, or endangered species; and State comprehensive fish and wildlife management plans. The District must maintain full documentation of compliance as part of the administrative record. The submittal package provided to HQUSACE will document considerations with significant bearing on decisions regarding the 408 request. Typically the minimum submission will include the following:

- National Environmental Policy Act. The appropriate NEPA process will be determined by the district in consultation with agencies that regulate resources that may be affected by the proposed action. All resources listed in Section 122 of the Rivers and Harbors Act 1970 must be considered. The evaluation will include a description and analysis of project alternatives, the

significance of the effects of each alternative on significant resources. Direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of all reasonably foreseeable actions including the actions of others and natural succession must be considered and documented. A risk analysis must be completed to determine the significance of risks to human life & safety, and property. Mitigation plans must be well described. If Federal funds are or may be involved the mitigation plan must be incrementally justified. NEPA documents will be consistent with 33 CFR 230.

- Endangered Species Act. Coordination/consultation with the US Fish and Wildlife Service and/or NOAA Marine Fisheries Service must be complete. Each agency with jurisdiction over a species that may be affected by the proposed action must provide a letter/memo indicating completion of ESA coordination. This documentation may range from a memo saying no ESA protected species or habitats are in the project impact area through a Biological Opinion.
- Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act. Either a Final FWCA Report or a letter from the USFWS stating that a FWCA Report is not required must be included.
- Marine Protection, Research and Sanctuaries Act For projects involving ocean disposal, or dredged material disposal within the territorial seas, the discharge will be evaluated under Section 103 of the MPRSA. The disposal must meet the criteria established by the EPA (40 C.F.R. 227 and 228). The submittal will document that that materials to be discharged are consistent with the current criteria and the disposal site is suitable.
- Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. The submittal will document efforts to identify designated rivers or river reaches (including potential rivers) in the vicinity of the project, and describe follow-up coordination with the agency having management responsibility for the particular river. If a designated river reach is affected, a letter indicating completed coordination is required from the managing agency.
- Coastal Zone Management Act. If the proposed action is in a coastal zone documentation of a "determination of consistency" with the state coastal zone management program the appropriate State agency (16 U.S.C 1456) must be included.
- Clean Air Act. This is a two-part compliance process. First, the submittal must include a determination that the proposed action is consistent with the Implementation Plan of the affected jurisdiction(s), and concurrence of the appropriate regulatory agency, or a conditional permit. Second, the submittal must include a letter from the USEPA that they have reviewed and commented on the environmental impact evaluations including the NEPA documents.
- HTRW. HTRW includes but is not limited to the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act, the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, and the Toxic Substances Control Act. The submittal package must include documentation that the USEPA and appropriate State and Tribal agencies with jurisdiction or expertise have been given reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed action and that their input has been fully considered. The Corps will not incur additional liability related to HTRW.
- National Historic Preservation Act. This includes all other applicable historic and cultural protection statutes. The submittal package will include documentation that the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and appropriate State and Tribal agencies with jurisdiction or expertise has been given a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed action and that their input

has been fully considered. It is not expected that actual mitigation will be completed but appropriate letters indicating completed Consultation determination of significance must be provided.

- Noise Control Act. Documentation of the significance of noise likely to be generated during construction of the proposed project and the noise that may result due to implementation must be provided. If significant noise may result, a noise mitigation plan must be provided.

District Prepared Documents and Analysis of Applicants Request to be submitted to MSC

1. Transmittal letter to MSC Commander with district's determination of technical soundness and environmental acceptability.
 - a. A physical and functional description of the existing project
 1. Name of authorized project
 2. authorizing document
 3. Law/Section/Date of project authorization
 4. Law Sections/Dates of any post-authorization modifications
 5. Non-Federal sponsor
 6. Congressional Interests (Senator(s), Representative(s) and District(s))
 - b. Project Documents:
 1. Type of Decision Document:
 2. Agency Technical Review (ATR) approval Date
 3. Independent External Peer Review (IEPR) approval date
 - c. Policy, Legal and Technical Analysis:
 1. Is the original project authority adequate to complete the project as proposed?
 2. Has the District Counsel reviewed and approved the decision document for legal sufficiency?
 3. Have all aspects of ATR been completed with no unresolved issues remaining?
 4. Have the District Commander documented policy/legal/technical compliance of the decision document?
 - d. Written request for approval of the project modification (applicant prepared)
 1. A detailed description of the proposed modification
 2. The purpose/need/rationale for the modification
 - e. A description of any related, ongoing Corps studies and studies by others within the watershed
 - f. A description and listing of other Corps projects, ongoing and completed, in the watershed
 - g. A description of any projected/anticipated credit (section 215/104, etc.) for project modification work and date credit agreement(s) signed
 - h. Sponsor letter of understanding of their responsibility to perform all required OMRR&R for project modifications. For approved alterations/modifications, the non-Federal sponsor shall revise/update the

O&M Manual to reflect the non-Federal O&M responsibilities and the O&M Manual shall be approved by the District Engineer.

i. Real Estate Analysis Review (District/Division)

j. Agency Technical Review (ATR), ER 1110-1-12 para. 3-8. (District coordinates review)

Provide a description of the technical review team, consolidate and analyze their comments, resolution of comments and district commentary on adequacy of technical support and submit to MSC. This is the section 408 technical analysis. *Prior coordination with MSC is required to determine ATR requirements for each submittal. New Quality Management ER under review will require all Agency Technical Review (ATR), formerly ITR, .*

2. If there is an associated Section 404/10 permit action, the required public interest and technical evaluations under 33 USC 408 can be done concurrently with that action. Upon completion of the public interest determination and of the technical analyses regarding the impact of the proposed modification on the usefulness of the project, the District Engineer will make a recommendation (with supporting documentation) through the Division Commander to the Chief of Engineers (Attn: Appropriate RIT) for his consideration and approval under 33 USC 408. The District Engineer will make the final Section 404/10 permit decisions following the Chief of Engineers decision under 33 USC 408.

- Where the 408 action requires an EIS and the Corps is the Lead Agency the District will draft the ROD, but it will not be signed until the Corps has completed its 408 analysis *and the Chief of Engineer's has issued 408 approval*. The Corps' ROD and the 408 request will be processed as concurrently as possible to reduce the delay between the 408 decision and ROD. Since the 408 approval requires the highest level of approval, the ROD will be signed in HQUSACE. After the 408 request is approved and the ROD is signed, the district may issue any needed Section 404/10 permits.
- Where the 408 action requires an EA and FONSI, the Corps is the lead Federal agency the District will prepare the EA and the District Engineer will draft the FONSI analyzing the 408 request and any other Corps action, and submit it to the Chief of Engineers for review and approval. After the 408 authorization is signed by the Chief of Engineers the District Engineer may sign the FONSI and issue any needed Section 404/10 permits

3. Coordination of Section 404/10 and NEPA compliance with 408 requests When Other Agencies are Involved

- HQUSACE has determined that the EIS for projects led by another Federal agency and including a component requiring Corps 408 authorization will require two RODs. The Lead Agency under NEPA will prepare a ROD for the overall project. The Corps would be a Cooperating Agency and thus be allowed to adopt the Lead Agency's EIS. The second ROD, will be specific to the Corps' actions, including the 408 approval and/or Section 404/10 permits. The District will draft the ROD, but it will not be signed until the Corps has completed its 408 analysis *and the Chief of Engineer's has issued 408 approval*. The Corps' ROD and the 408 request will be processed as concurrently as possible to reduce the delay between the 408 decision and ROD. Since the 408 approval requires the highest level of approval, the ROD will be signed in HQUSACE. After the 408 request is approved and the ROD is signed, the district may issue any needed Section 404/10 permits.

MSC prepared documentation and analysis of District submission

Policy and Legal Compliance Review

1. Has the MSC certified the legal/policy/technical and quality management of the decision document?
 2. MSC Legal certification approval date
 3. MSC certification of policy compliance date
- .



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY ENGINEER DISTRICT, ALASKA
REGULATORY DIVISION
WESTSIDE BUSINESS PARK
2175 UNIVERSITY AVENUE, SUITE 201E
FAIRBANKS, ALASKA 99709-4927**

January 31, 2011

Regulatory Division
POA-2011-56

Alaska Railroad Corporation
Ms. Barbara C. Hotchkin, Manager Project Permits and NEPA
P.O. Box 107500
Anchorage, Alaska 99510-7500

Dear Ms. Hotchkin:

This letter is in response to your December 21, 2010 request for a Department of the Army (DA) agency scoping letter for your proposed North Pole Road / Rail Crossing Reduction project. The project is located at the start of Section 2, T. 2 S., R. 1 E. ending at Section 23, T. 2 S., R. 2 E., Fairbanks Meridian, USGS map D-1 & C-1; with a start point at Latitude 64.774556° N., Longitude -147.454195° W. and an end point at Latitude 64.721831° N., Longitude -147.291583° W.; realignment of the tracks between ARRC Mile G12, 9 miles from Fairbanks, (Richardson Highway MP 353), and the Chena River Floodway ARRC Mile G20 at Dyke Rd., in North Pole, Alaska. Your project has been assigned number POA-2011-56, Tanana River, which should be referred to in all correspondence with us.

Based on our review of the information you provided and available to our office the following are our responses to your questions:

1. We have researched the Federal Emergency Management Agency Flood Maps for the project area and any findings are identified in the scoping letter and/or Attachment A. If you know of any other information and/or data with respect to the base floodplains, regulatory floodways, and/or special flood hazard areas of drainages that may be affected by the proposed project, please provide that information.

We do not have any additional information.

2. Are there any navigable waters of the U.S. in the project vicinity over which the COE has Section 10 authority?

The Tanana River is a navigable water of the United States (U.S.) in the project vicinity but descriptions of the current proposed alternatives do not indicate any impacts to that water.

3. Identify any permits and/or clearances to be obtained from your agency for the proposed project.

We have determined the proposed project area contains waters of the U.S., including wetlands, under the Corps of Engineers' regulatory jurisdiction. A copy of the Approved Jurisdictional Determination form is available at

<http://www.poa.usace.army.mil/reg/ApprovedJDs.htm> under the above file number.

Based on the description of the proposed alternatives, alternative A would not require additional fill and would therefore not require a permit. However, DA authorization would be required for other proposed alternatives because they require the placement of dredged and/or fill material into waters of the U.S., including wetlands. The Tanana River Levee which is proposed as the location of the rail realignment is part of the Chena River Lakes Flood Control Project, constructed by the Alaska District USACE. Comments will be provided in a separate letter on the engineering and technical aspects of this project as it relates to the flood control project.

Section 404 of the Clean Water Act requires that a DA permit be obtained for the placement or discharge of dredged and/or fill material into waters of the U.S., including jurisdictional wetlands (33 U.S.C. 1344). The Corps of Engineers defines wetlands as those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions.

Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 requires that a DA permit be obtained for structures or work in or affecting navigable waters of the U.S. (33 U.S.C. 403). Section 10 waters are those waters subject to the ebb and flow of the tide shoreward to the mean high water mark, and/or other waters identified by the Alaska District.

Nothing in this letter excuses you from compliance with other Federal, State, or local statutes, ordinances, or regulations.

You may contact me via email Heather.E.McBride@usace.army.mil, by mail at the address above, or by phone (907) 474-2166, if you have questions. For additional information about our Regulatory Program visit our web site at www.poa.usace.army.mil/reg.

Sincerely,



Heather McBride
Regulatory Specialist (SCEP)



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
INSTALLATION MANAGEMENT COMMAND
HEADQUARTERS, U.S. ARMY GARRISON FORT WAINWRIGHT
1060 GAFFNEY ROAD #6000
FORT WAINWRIGHT, ALASKA 99703-6000

Directorate of Public Works

FEB 24 2011

SUBJECT: North Pole Rail Project Scoping Comments

Barbara Hotchkin
Alaska Railroad Corporation
Manager, Project Permits & NEPA
P.O. Box 107500
Anchorage, Alaska 99510-7500

Dear Ms. Hotchkin:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC) proposed North Pole Road/Rail Crossing Reduction Project. The ARRC, in cooperation with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) is proposing a road/rail crossing reduction project through the North Pole, Alaska area. The proposal includes construction of a railroad crossing of the Richardson Highway, realignment of the railroad track on or near the Tanana River Levee and removal of existing at-grade crossings. US Army Garrison Fort Wainwright (USAG FWA) is primarily concerned with the proposed action's effect on the Army-owned Dyke Range Impact Area, as well as the potential impact of the Dyke Range area on the proposed rail realignment.

The ARRC requested input on the proposed realignment from USAG FWA during a scoping session in late January 2011. The following discussion outlines USAG FWA's specific concerns with the proposed action and should be taken into consideration during the preparation of the environmental assessment (EA).

- A portion of the Tanana River Levee bisects the Department of the Army-owned Dyke Range Impact Area (see enclosure 1), regarding ownership of the levee and levee easement through Dyke Range Impact Area as necessary to complete the EA, contact Mrs. Kate Siftar, USAG FWA Master Planning Chief (907) 361-3315 or Mr. Thomas Kretzschmar, Real Estate Division Chief, Alaska District U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (907) 753-2859.
- For any GIS layers needed to accurately reflect Department of the Army-owned land in the EA, contact Mrs. Kate Siftar, USAG FWA Master Planning Chief (907) 361-3315.
- For additional information on potential conflicts between the ARRC's proposed action and current and future military training at Dyke Range Impact Area for the EA, contact Mr. Doug Houpt, USAG FWA Range Planner (907) 384-7516.
- The proposed action and alternatives should specifically identify the width of area required to accommodate the rail realignment and specifically identify the physical features (i.e., levee, trail, transmission line, etc.) and land ownership within the area

considered for future acquisition. Impacts to these features and land owners should be discussed within the EA.

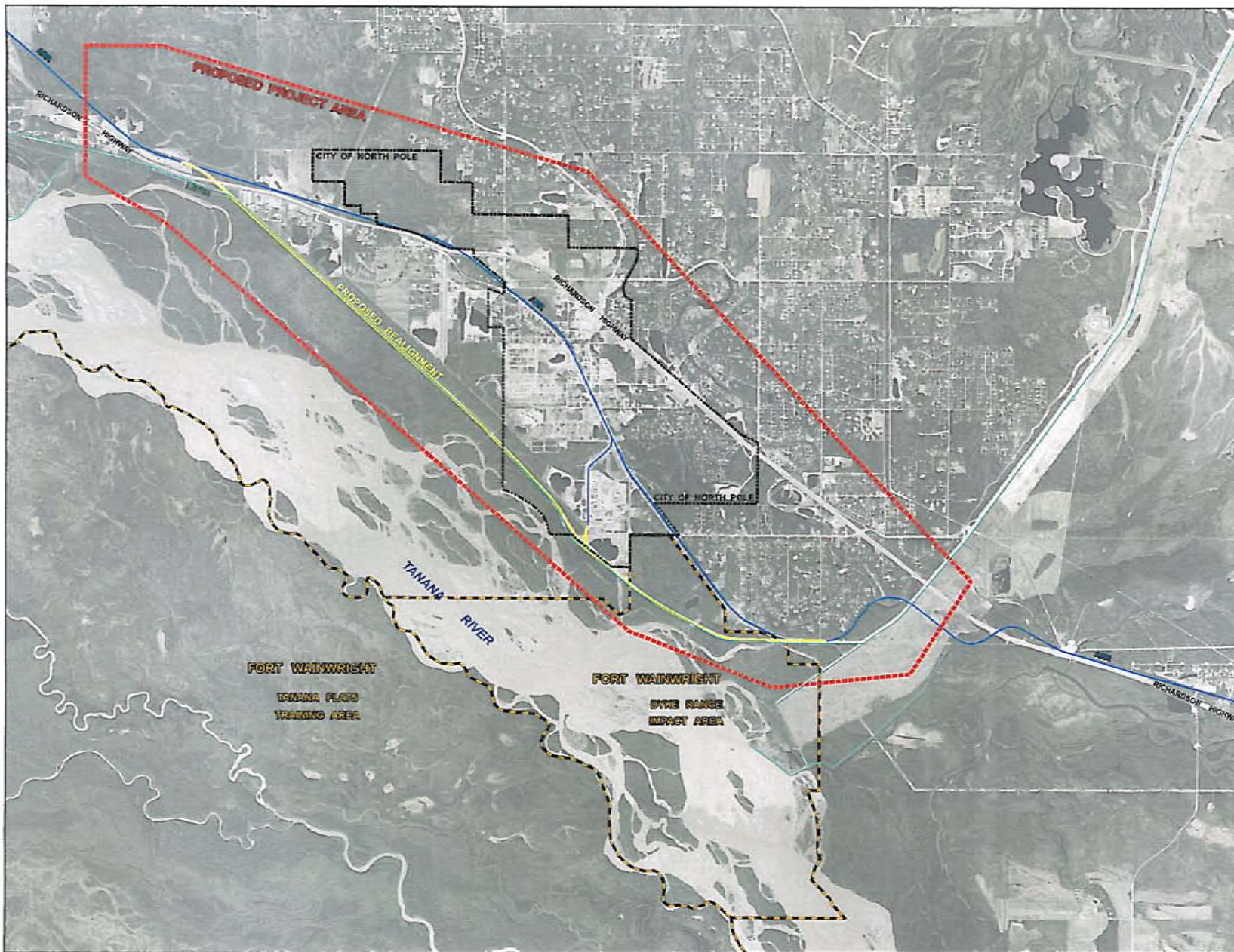
- The proposed action and alternatives should identify how the ARRC/FRA intends to acquire the land necessary for rail realignment. The EA should analyze the impact of this action.
- The Dyke Range Impact Area has not been used for training in over 10 years, but is still classified as an active Army military training range. Past use of the Dyke Range Impact Area has included training associated with anti-aircraft artillery firing point, mortars, recoilless rifles and other explosive munitions. This past use has resulted in the likely presence of unexploded ordnance (UXO). Any work in this area will require a complete survey and investigation by certified UXO technicians.
- If the proposed action were to result in a real estate activity requiring approval by USAG FWA, the Army would be required to conduct its own National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review. In order to facilitate this review, USAG FWA would prefer to adopt the ARRC/FRA NEPA documentation associated with this action. USAG FWA would like to request additional coordination with ARRC/FRA on preliminary versions of the EA prior to release of the Draft EA to the public.
- Fair market value must be paid to the Army for any timber resources taken within Department of the Army-owned land.
- The proposed action should take into consideration wildlife populations and habitat within the region of influence and any Clean Water Act Section 404 requirements.

If you have questions concerning this information, please contact Carlton Haenel, Directorate of Public Works, Environmental Engineer at (907) 361-6249 or Carrie McEnteer, Directorate of Public Works, NEPA Branch Chief at (907) 361-9507.

Sincerely,



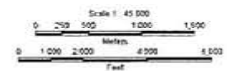
Michael T. Meeks
Director, Directorate of Public Works



FORT WAINWRIGHT ALASKA
ARRC NORTH POLE REALIGNMENT



- Legend**
- Proposed Rail
 - Project Area
 - Existing Alaska Railroad
 - Levee Centerline
 - Installation Boundary
 - City of North Pole



FORT WAINWRIGHT
PRISMAK, ALASKA

PROJECT MAP
ARRC NORTH POLE REALIGNMENT
NORTH POLE ROAD
RAIL CROSSING REDUCTION PROJECT

DIRECTORATE OF PUBLIC WORKS
SEASIDE
FORT WAINWRIGHT, ALASKA

DATE	DIRECTOR	FILE NAME	DRAWN	SHEET
21 Jun 15	© 2015 ARRC, Alaska Railroad Corporation Fort Wainwright, Alaska ARRC North Pole Realignment	ARRC North Pole Realignment	AK	01



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Fairbanks Fish and Wildlife Field Office

101 12th Avenue, Room 110

Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

February 25, 2011



Barbara C. Hotchkin
Manager, Project Permits & NEPA
Alaska Railroad Corporation
P.O. Box 107500
Anchorage, AK 99510-7500

Re: ARRC North Pole Road/Rail Crossing
Reduction Project

Dear Ms. Hotchkin:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has reviewed the scoping questions specific to the Service for the preliminary engineering and preparation of an Environmental Assessment for a proposed road/rail crossing reduction project through North Pole, Alaska (North Pole Rail project). The Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC) proposes to reduce the number of crossings on a portion of its Eielson Branch through North Pole by realigning approximately 8 miles of tracks. The tracks between Richardson Highway Mile 9 and the Chena River Floodway would be realigned on or near the Tanana River levee. The existing at-grade crossing of the Richardson Highway would be removed and a new, separated grade crossing would be installed.

Our answers to the agency-specific scoping questions that you listed in your December 21, 2010 letter to us are as follows:

Threatened and Endangered Species: We concur there are no threatened or endangered species in the project area, thus the Service does not expect project-related activities to adversely impact listed species. This letter constitutes informal consultation under the Endangered Species Act. Preparation of a Biological Assessment or further consultation regarding this project is not necessary at this time.

Wildlife Refuges: We concur that there are no National Wildlife Refuge lands in or adjacent to the project area.

Impacts to Wetlands, Fish, Wildlife and Other Habitat: Quantifying temporary, indirect and permanent impacts are not possible at this stage in the planning process, however, we offer the following ways to avoid and minimize potential adverse impacts.

Wetlands and Riparian Areas: The National Wetland Inventory indicates that there are wetlands in your project area and that you plan to identify those wetlands. We commend you for the proposed wetlands delineation survey work that you will be conducting in the project area in the spring/summer of 2011. A thorough and accurate wetlands inventory will assist with the permitting process.

Service policy regarding impacts to fish and wildlife habitat includes first avoiding, then minimizing, and finally compensating for the remaining unavoidable impacts. These impacts include direct, indirect and temporal impacts. If there are unavoidable impacts for this project, then the Service recommends compensatory mitigation for the unavoidable impacts by restoring or permanently protecting equal or higher-value wetlands nearby.


Fish: The Tanana River is an important fish habitat that may be affected by the proposed activities. The Tanana River, to the other side of the levee, is an anadromous fish body and is listed in the *Atlas to the Catalog of Waters Important for the Spawning, Rearing or Migration of Anadromous Fishes* (www.gis.sf.adfg.state.ak.us). The Tanana River is important to the migration, spawning, and rearing of anadromous fish, including chum, coho, and Chinook salmon. Sediment and debris that is not properly managed during construction (using proper erosion and sediment control BMP's) could negatively impact spawning salmon.

Eagles: The Service has information that bald eagle nests have been located in the vicinity of the project area (USFWS unpublished data, see enclosed map). A survey may need to be conducted to determine the location of active nests prior to construction activities. We recommend conducting nest surveys in the spring when the nests are active and more easily identified. Bald and Golden Eagles, as well as their nests, are protected from take, including disturbance.

Permits: Since the proposed construction activities may disturb nesting eagles, we recommend reviewing our eagle permit website (<http://alaska.fws.gov/eaglepermit/index.htm>) and contacting our Regional Office (permitsR7MB@fws.gov or 907-786-3685) if you have questions.

Conclusion: We appreciate this opportunity for early comment. Should you have any questions concerning these comments, please contact Charleen Veach at 907-456-0276 or charleen_veach@fws.gov.

Sincerely,



Jewel Bennett
Branch Chief
Conservation Planning Assistance

cmv/cmv

cc: Robert McLean, ADF&G - Division of Habitat, Fairbanks
Christy Everett, USACE, Fairbanks

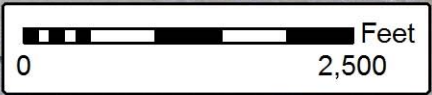


CORA

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APPENDIX F

Scoping Meeting Presentation

Alaska Railroad Corporation

North Pole Road / Rail Crossing Reduction



Scoping Meeting
January 26, 2011

AlaskaRailroad.com

Presentation Agenda

- **Project Background**
- **Purpose & Need**
- **Alternatives Under Consideration**
- **Previous Comments Heard**
- **EA Process and Timeline**



SE View at Rentals St. Crossing

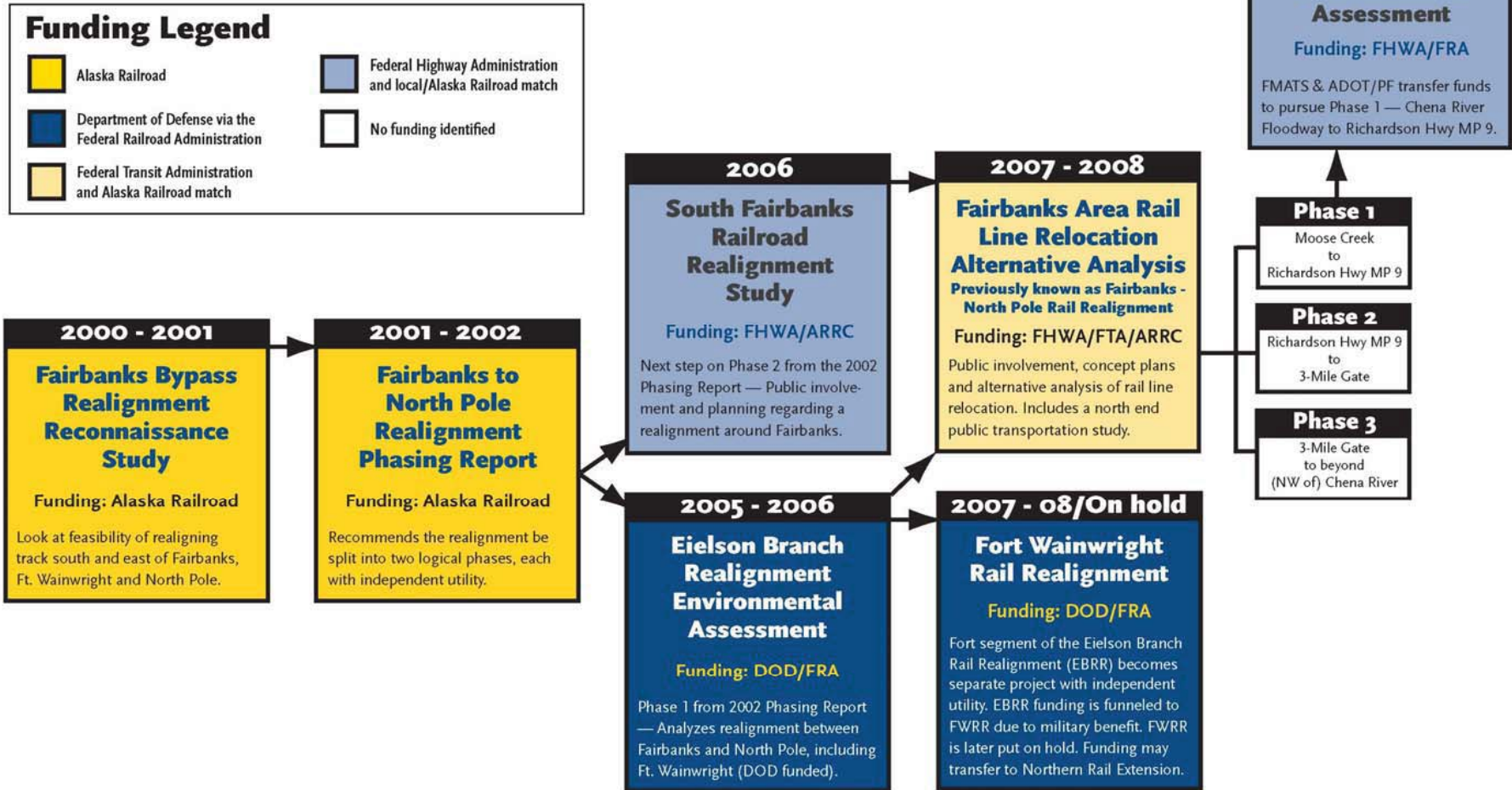
Project Background

- Phase 1 of a larger project
 - Fairbanks Area Rail Line Relocation (FARLR)
- FARLR drew upon several previous studies that began in 2000
- Recent Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between ARRC and FNSB



Role of Previous Studies

The Fairbanks Area Rail Line Relocation project and its associated phases draw on several previous studies and environmental documentation efforts that began in 2000, with additional environmental studies initiated as recently as 2007.



Project Purpose and Need

- Enhance public safety in downtown North Pole and
- Improve ARRC's operating efficiency,

While ensuring continued rail access to existing and potential future ARRC customers.



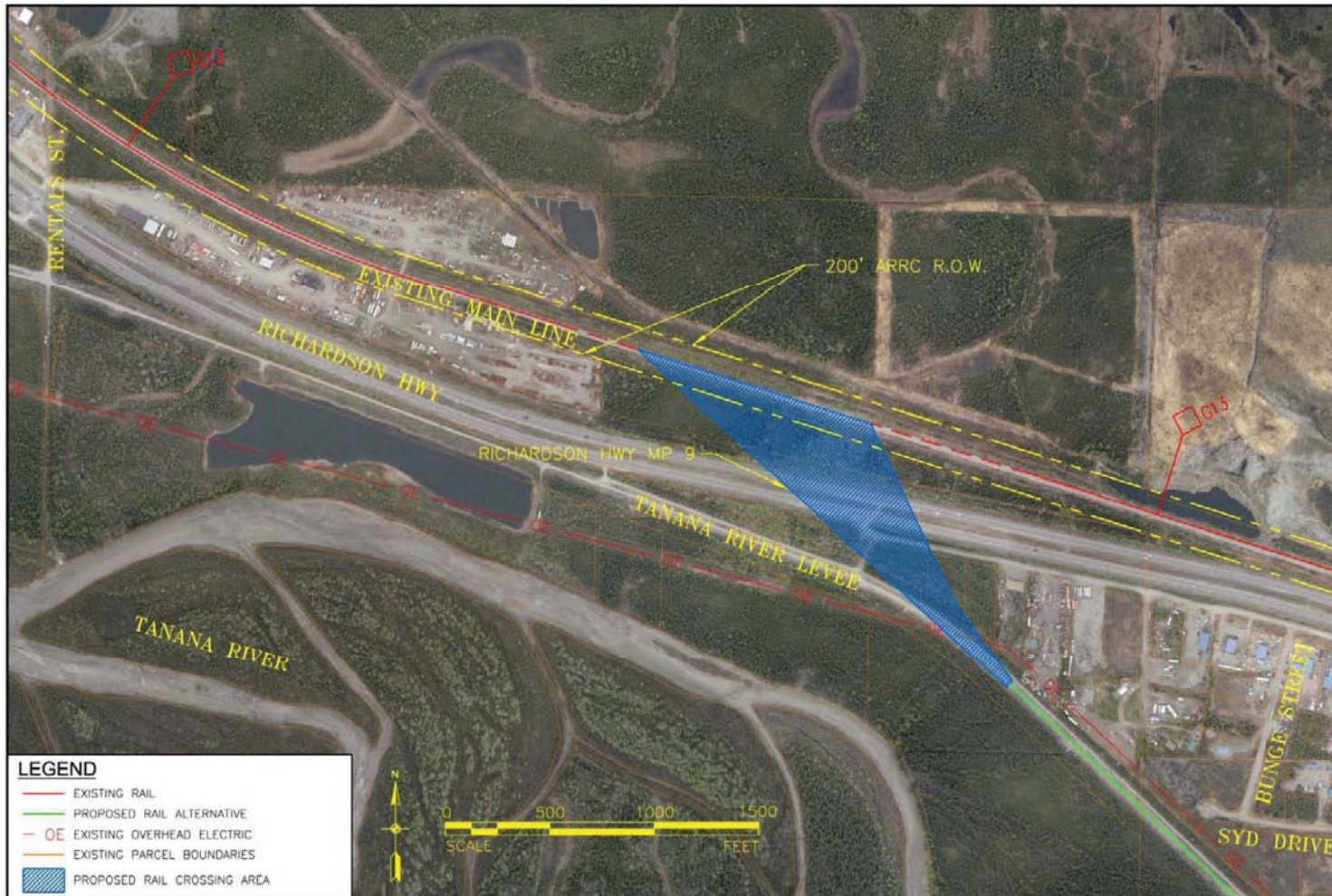
East view at North Pole High School Blvd.

Project Description

- Reduce the number of road / rail crossings (could remove up to 11 crossings).
- Realign approximately 8 miles of railroad track on or near the Tanana River Levee (Levee).
- Remove existing at-grade crossings and construct a new grade-separated crossing at the Richardson Highway.
 - If phased construction, temporary at-grade crossing may be constructed.



Richardson Highway Rail Crossing Area



Project Alternatives

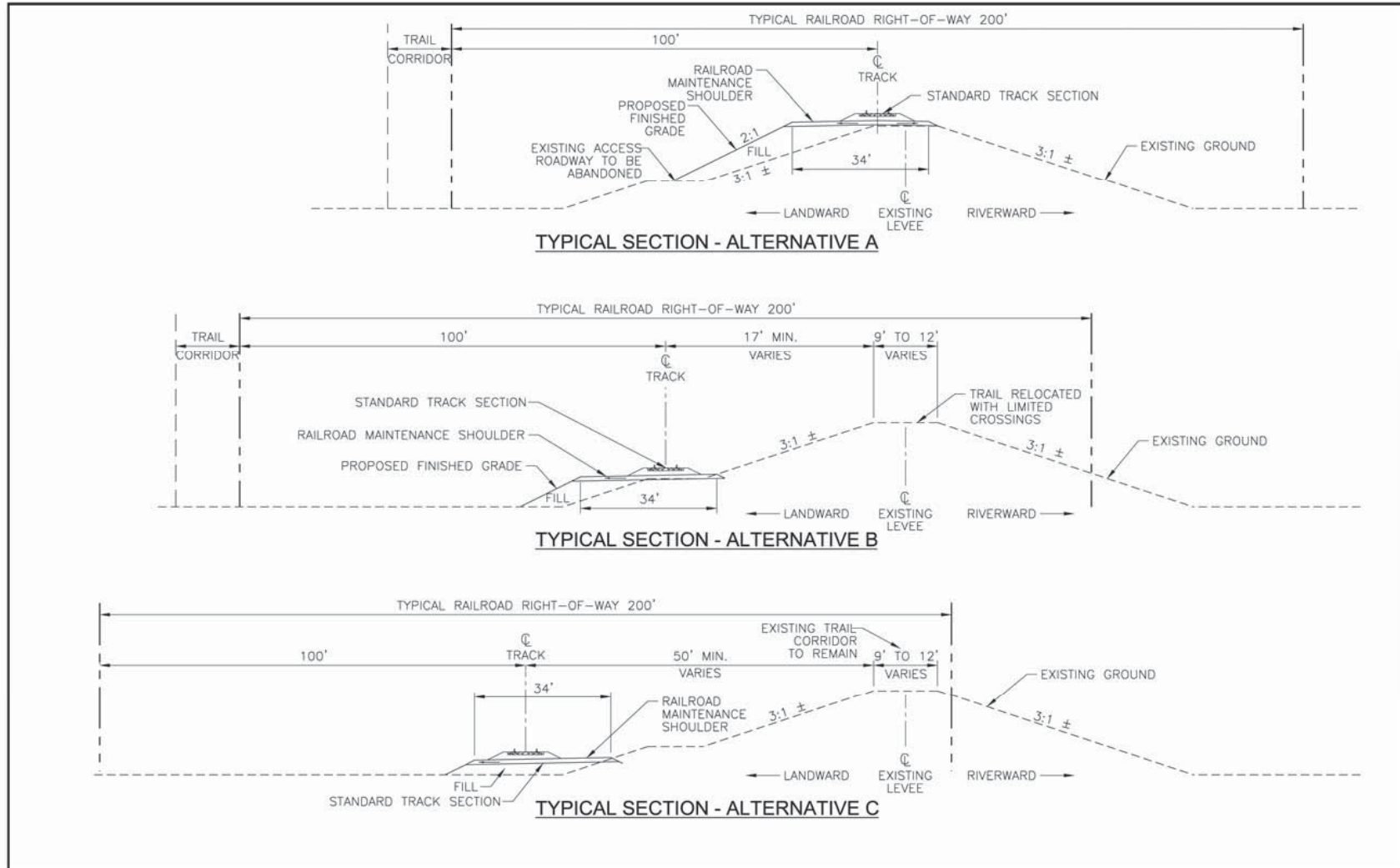
- **No Action Alternative**
- **Alternative A:** Track on Levee (landward).
- **Alternative B:** Track inside Levee.
- **Alternative C:** Inside Levee with rail/trail separation.



SW view on Levee at Tanana River

- **Alternative D:** Track on Levee (riverward).
- **Alternative E:** Existing alignment; grade-separated.

Project Alternatives



Issues Raised by Agencies During Previous Study

- Minimize impacts related to:
 - Wetlands / water quality
 - Fish and wildlife habitat
 - Current uses and recreation activities along Tanana River
- Consider potential contaminated sites



E view of Rail Curve at Old Richardson & Dyke Road

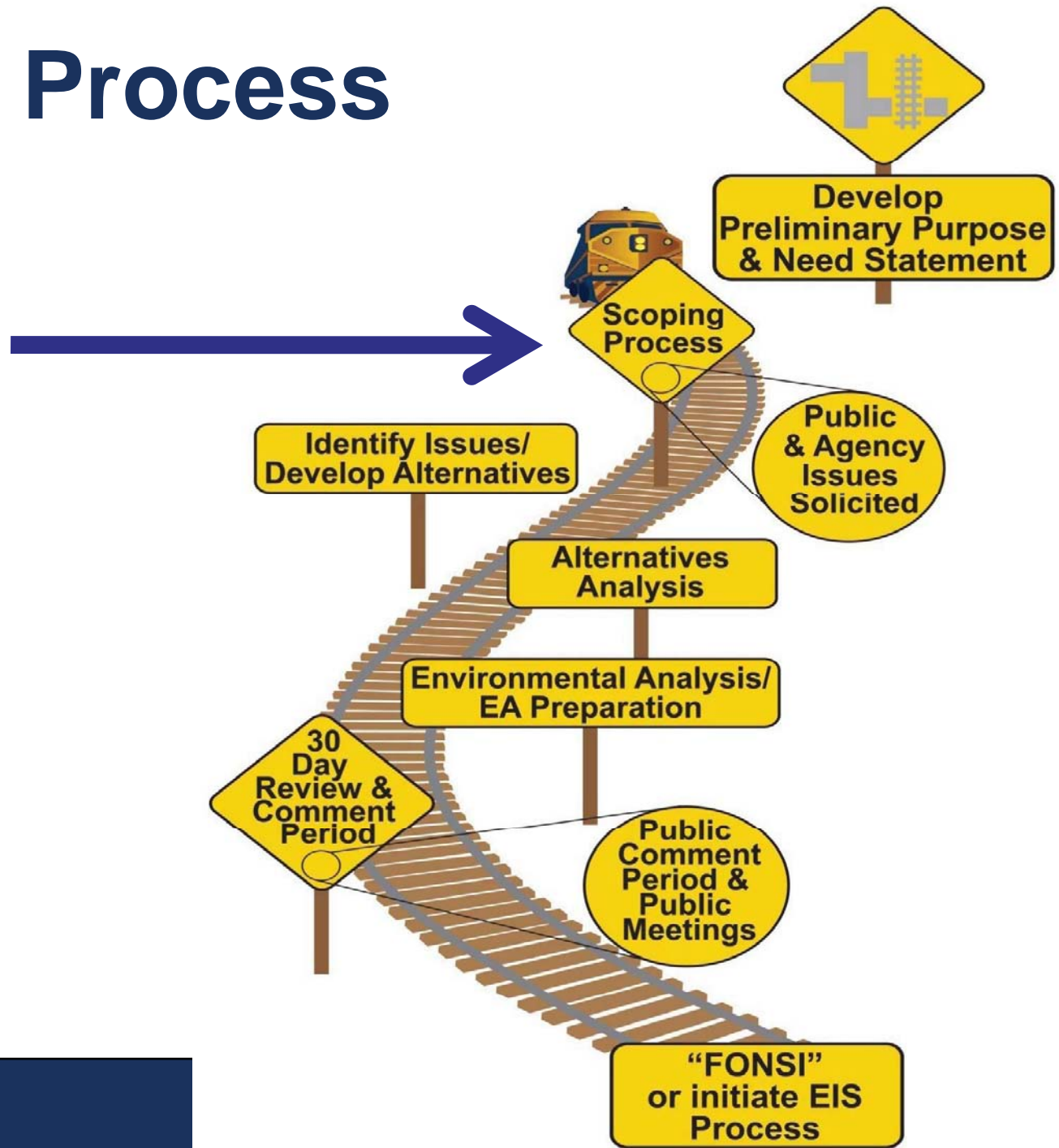
Public Comments Heard During Previous Study

- Reduce at-grade crossings
- Increased traffic at Flint Hills Refinery is a concern
- Maintain rail service to existing customers
- Plan for future commuter rail / consider a rail-to-trail program
- Minimize impacts related to:
 - Residential properties
 - Businesses (loss of access or decreased property value)
 - Water quality
 - Noise and vibration
 - Visual impacts
- What will be done with existing ARRC right-of-way (ROW) where the tracks will be realigned?



EA Process

We Are Here



Environmental Assessment Schedule

North Pole Road/ Rail Crossing Reduction Project	2010		2011												2012	
	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F
Development & Analysis of Alternatives		■	■	■												
Scoping/Data Collection		■	■	■	■	■										
Preparation of Internal Draft EA		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■						
Revisions to EA										■	■					
Final Review/Edits												■	■			
Distribution of Public EA														●		
Public Review & Comment Period (also includes Public Hearing)														■	■	
Response to Comments															■	
FONSI or EIS																■



Contact Us

Review project materials on our website at:

www.alaskarailroad.com

Submit written comments by February 28, 2011 to

public_comment@akrr.com, or to:

Greg Lotakis, Project Manager

Alaska Railroad Corporation

P.O. Box 107500

Anchorage, AK 99510-7500

Phone: 907-265-2217 / Email: *Lotakisg@akrr.com*

Fax: 907-265-3961

Contact Barbara Hotchkin on Environmental Issues

Phone: 907-265-2313 / Email: *hotchkinb@akrr.com*



