



Alaska Railroad Corporation *News Release*

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:
Stephenie Wheeler, 265-2671

Alaska Railroad schedules open house in Seward to discuss proposed capital project plans for 2012

Fourth and last in a series of project open house events

ANCHORAGE, Alaska – The Alaska Railroad (ARRC) invites the public to an open house 10:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on Friday, February 17, at the Breeze Inn, 303 N. Harbor Street, in Seward. The venue provides an opportunity to review and comment on a proposed Program of Projects (POP) for 2012.

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 Seward and Southcentral Alaska, including:

- Seward Coal Loading Facility Improvements
- Seward East Dock Expansion and Security Improvements
- Seward West Dock Investments and Security Upgrades
- Chugach Forest Whistle Stop System
- Portage Section Maintenance Facility
- Whittier Master Planning and Security Fencing
- Ship Creek Intermodal Transportation Center
- MP 142 Curve Realignment Near Eklutna
- Port MacKenzie Rail Extension
- Positive Train Control
- Track Rehabilitation
- Bridge Rehabilitation/Replacement
- Passenger Car Upgrades
- Locomotive Overhauls and Emission Improvements

The Seward event is the fourth and last in a series of POP Open House events. Open houses were scheduled in Anchorage on January 17, Wasilla on January 18 and Fairbanks on January 31.

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The Alaska Railroad has budgeted approximately \$49 million in new spending for capital improvements in 2012. An additional \$68 million is budgeted for two special rail extension projects. Funding comes from federal, state and ARRC sources. About \$11.76 million will come from new Federal Transit Administration (FTA) grants. This amount includes a required 9% matching contribution from the Alaska Railroad. Other federal funding includes \$1.26 million in Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)-administered grants, \$1.43 million from the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), and \$295,000 from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). A \$2.7 million settlement will repair deficient track work originally paid by federal grants. The railroad will also spend about \$8 million of funds generated from the sale of revenue bonds that were sold in 2006 and 2007; bonds are repaid with FTA formula funds. ARRC will spend another \$23.5 million on internally-funded capital projects using revenues generated from passenger, freight and real estate business activity. Finally, the State of Alaska appropriated FY2012 budget funds to support two major rail extension projects. \$44 million was approved mid-2011 to close the funding gap for Phase 1 of the Northern Rail Extension; and ARRC will manage \$24 million of the \$30 million approved mid-2011 to pursue Port MacKenzie Rail Extension construction.

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.

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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).