



Alaska Railroad Corporation Operation Lifesaver Alaska **NEWS RELEASE**

DATE: July 19, 2013
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Governor Proclaims July 21-27 as Alaska Rail Safety Week

Proclamation underscores Summer Rail Safety Campaign

ANCHORAGE, Alaska – Governor Sean Parnell has proclaimed July 21-27 to be Alaska Rail Safety Awareness Week, enhancing a summer rail safety public education campaign organized and funded by the Alaska Railroad (ARRC) and Operation Lifesaver Inc. (OLI). Kicked off in May, the “Track Wise: Summer Rail Safety Campaign” incorporates activities, signs and public service announcements (PSA) that encourage residents and visitors to stay safe around railroad tracks and crossings within rail belt communities. While infrequent, fatal accidents involving pedestrians, recreational vehicles and automobiles have occurred along the Alaska Railroad tracks in recent years. Nationally, according to the Federal Railroad Administration, nearly 1,960 highway-rail crossing collisions and 442 pedestrian rail trespass fatalities occurred in 2012.

The proclamation recognizes the importance of public education in preventing vehicle and pedestrian accidents at highway-railroad crossings and other railroad property, and encourages all citizens to adopt rail safety practices. In addition to the proclamation, Governor Parnell also invited the Alaska chapter of Operation Lifesaver (OL-AK) to participate in the Governor’s Picnics in Palmer (July 19), Anchorage (July 20), and Fairbanks (July 21). The OL-AK / ARRC display at the picnics will include rail safety information, Operation Lifesaver giveaways and a drawing to win Alaska Railroad tickets. People may have already seen or heard some of the other more noticeable campaign elements, including:



- Radio PSAs broadcast on Southcentral Alaska radio stations in July and August
- Rail safety signs at entrances to trails near the tracks in Anchorage, Mat-Su Valley and Fairbanks
- PSA notices published in the Frontiersman newspaper in July and August
- Rail safety signs on People Mover and Valley Mover public buses May through August
- Rail safety decals on two locomotives

Groups may request a rail safety presentation by contacting the OL-AK State Coordinator, Dwight West, at (907) 265-2691. More information is available at www.AlaskaRailroad.com > Corporation > Safety & Security > Operation Lifesaver. The Alaska Railroad underwrote about a third (36%) of the \$26,000 campaign, with about \$17,000 funded by an Operation Lifesaver grant.

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Executive Proclamation by Governor Sean Parnell

WHEREAS, due to Alaska's unique geography, Alaskan's rely on many methods of transportation to meet their freight and transport needs; and

WHEREAS, Alaska's railroads are a vital infrastructure for the state, offering passenger services to residents and visitors, as well as freight services to citizens and businesses; and

WHEREAS, safety programs and an informed public are important in preventing railroad accidents and fatalities; and

WHEREAS, collisions between trains and motor vehicles or pedestrians can be prevented by increased public awareness of the dangers at and around railroad property and proper procedures for crossing a railroad on foot or in a vehicle; and

WHEREAS, May through September are the busiest months for rail traffic in Alaska; and

WHEREAS, as Alaskans participate in summer activities, it is important to observe all signs and warnings near tracks and trains in order to reduce serious and sometimes-fatal accidents involving trains.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Sean Parnell, Governor of the State of Alaska, do hereby proclaim July 21-27, 2013 as:

Alaska Rail Safety Awareness Week

In Alaska, and encourage all citizens to observe added caution as motorists or pedestrians near tracks or trains.

Dated: July 11, 2013

For more information about the summer rail safety campaign, contact ARRC Corporate Communications Officer Stephenie Wheeler at (907) 265-2671 or External Affairs Manager Tim Sullivan at (907) 265-2357.

The ARRC is an Equal Opportunity Corporation. If you need special assistance (including language) 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, zappasi@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

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Media Note: The Operation Lifesaver logo is available upon request.

The Operation Lifesaver safety decal is affixed to two ARRC locomotives, and photography can be arranged through Sullivan or Wheeler.

