

# Railroad at a Glance

## ORGANIZATION

### History, Ownership & Operation

- Federal government built the railroad 1914 -1923 in order to open the territory to development.
- State purchased railroad in 1985 for \$22.3 million.
- Independent corporation managed by a 7-member board of directors appointed by the governor.
- State law mandates self-sustaining operations and responsibility for financial and legal obligations.

### Mission

- Provide safe, quality transportation and real estate services.
- Operate profitably to be self-sustaining.
- Foster economic development (infrastructure and services).

### Assets

- 656 total miles of track
- 1030 freight cars (including non-revenue cars)
- 45 passenger railcars
- 51 locomotives + 2 power cars
- Yards: Seward, Anchorage, Whittier, Fairbanks

### Employees

- Not part of state personnel system.
- **2023 Benefits & Wages:** \$81.0 million
- **Year-round:** 590      • **Seasonal:** 184
- **Average Age:** 41.5      • **Avg. Years Service:** 9.4
- **Male:** 634 (82%)      • **Female:** 138 (18%)
- **Non-Binary:** 2      • **Veterans:** 116 (15%)
- **Resident Hire:** 90+%
  - **Union represented:** 541, of those:
 

• AFGE/Alaska Railroad Workers Union	298
• Alaska Train Dispatchers Association	8
• TCU/Brotherhood Railway Carmen	38
• International Brotherhood of Teamsters	57
• United Transportation Union	140

## FINANCIAL

Financial totals for 2023 are audited as of April 1, 2024.

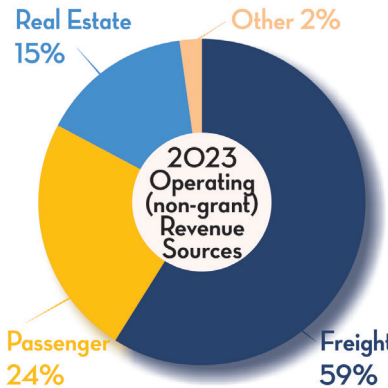
- **2023 Assets:** \$1.341 billion
- **2023 Revenue:** \$264.4 million (including \$58.0 million in grant revenue)
- **2023 Net Income:** \$44.3 million
- **2024 Forecast Net Income:** \$35.5 million

Railroading is capital-intensive, requiring substantial annual investment to adequately maintain equipment and infrastructure. Revenue in excess of expense (net income) is reinvested in capital improvement projects and infrastructure maintenance programs.

## BUSINESS LINES

### Freight Business

- **Freight:** 3.5 million tons in 2023
- ARRC hauls natural resources including coal, gravel and petroleum products; and commodities including industry chemicals and supplies, dry goods, hazardous materials, pipe, lumber, heavy equipment and specialty items. ARRC offers seamless freight service between shipping points in North America to many Alaska destinations. Crucial to this link is Alaska Rail Marine, a rail-barge operating between Seattle and Whittier.



### Passenger Business

- **Passengers:** 540,329 in 2023
- ARRC typically transports a half million passengers annually. The pandemic severely reduced ridership in 2020 (32,069 passengers), while 2021 saw a partial rebound (200,381), with substantial recovery in 2022. ARRC offers year-round regularly-scheduled rail transportation. Mid-May to mid-September, trains run daily between Anchorage-Seward, Anchorage-Whittier, and Anchorage-Denali/Fairbanks. In winter (mid-September to mid-May), trains operate between Anchorage

and Fairbanks primarily on weekends.

## Real Estate Business

Real estate holdings: approximately 37,000 acres:

- 38% (~14,000 acres) for track bed and right-of-way
- 6% (~2000 acres) for other railroad operations (rail yards)
- remaining 56% for long-term lease or permit use

## RAILROAD CONTRIBUTIONS

### Transportation Link

Alaska's transportation infrastructure is sparse with 640 square miles of land for every mile of paved road. As of 2020, approximately 35% of Alaska's public roads are paved. Many places in Alaska have no road access and are accessible only by air, ferry or rail.

Based on 2023's 540,000 passengers, and an industry average of 36 passengers per motorcoach, the Alaska Railroad helped traffic congestion on Alaska Highways by moving the equivalent of 15,000 motorcoaches by rail. Train travel reduces road maintenance issues and enhances road safety.

Rail offers low-impact public transport to public treasures like Denali National Park and Chugach National Forest. Thus, people of all physical abilities gain safe wilderness access.

- **Denali National Park:** In 2023, the park received 498,722 visitors, with 113,166 (23%) arriving by train.
- **Chugach Forest:** In 2023, 50,187 passengers rode the Glacier Discovery train into forest areas; and 15,341 passengers experienced the Whistle Stops south of Portage. Compared to 49,559 and 14,571 passengers respectively in 2022.

ARRC subsidizes essential public transportation services to roadless areas where thousands of people live and recreate. This includes the year-round *Hurricane Turn* flagstop service and the Anchorage-Fairbanks winter (October through April) *Aurora* train service.

### Community Involvement

- The railroad operates through 13 municipalities and boroughs. ARRC is a member of the state and local chambers of commerce along the railbelt, and a supporter/sponsor of dozens of civic organizations that promote economic growth and commerce, ranging from tourism to mining.
- ARRC enhances the quality of life for Alaskans around the state with annual in-kind donations of rail transportation services. In 2023, ARRC supported over 250 charitable, civic and community non-profits with over \$220,000 of in-kind donations of rail tickets, posters/prints, used ties, and chartered use of the historic *Denali Car*.

- ARRC prioritizes programs benefitting youth / education:
  - Discounts for school groups during the school year.
  - Provides in-kind donations and, volunteers and supports educational activities as a school-business partner.
  - Since 1981, ARRC has partnered with school districts to offer a vocational program to train high school students to serve as hosts onboard summer passenger trains.
- The Alaska Railroad also supports the military community:
  - In-kind rail travel donations to the Armed Services YMCA "Y on Rail" program.
  - In-kind donations to support military morale activities.
  - 20% discount for active duty military members, military retirees and their dependents.

### Environmental Stewardship

- **Green Star:** ARRC is a long-time Green Star awardee. A program of the 501(c)3 non-profit Alaska Forum, Green Star provides technical assistance and recognition to businesses and organizations that practice waste reduction, pollution prevention and energy conservation. In 2011, Green Star presented ARRC with its top *Super Nova* award for setting high environmental standards.
- **Recycling:** The Alaskans for Litter Prevention and Recycling (ALPAR) organization has twice honored ARRC with ALPAR awards (2006 and 2011) for supporting backhaul of recyclable materials. ARRC has repeatedly donated gondolas to haul scrap metal out of rural communities along the Yukon River, and transported truck trailers that backhaul materials for recycle in the Lower 48.
- **Freight Impacts:** Rail mitigates highway congestion and safety issues, reduces roadway wear and lowers emissions. On average, one freight train can carry the load of 280-plus trucks.
  - In 2023, ARRC transported 25,466 hopper and tanker railcars (gravel, coal and petroleum), from mines or facilities to various distribution points. This equates to about 173,939 trucks traveling 18.1 million highway miles.
  - In 2023, ARRC carried 23,068 cargo-filled trailers and containers on trains moving from Anchorage, Seward and Whittier ports to distribution points all along the railroad.
- **Fuel Efficiency:** According to the American Association of Railroads, a freight train can move a ton of freight nearly 500 miles on one gallon of fuel. Thanks to technology improvements, railroad fuel efficiency has greatly improved since 1980. According to a study commissioned by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), railroads are 3-4 times more fuel-efficient than trucks, on average.