



Alaska Railroad Corporation *News Release*

DATE: January 11, 2012
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:
Stephanie Wheeler, 265-2671

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

Additional open house events in Anchorage, Fairbanks and Seward

ANCHORAGE, Alaska – The Alaska Railroad (ARRC) invites the public to an open house 4:00-6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, January 18, at Evangelo's Restaurant, Mile 40 Parks Highway in Wasilla. 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 the Mat-Su Valley, Southcentral Alaska and system-wide, including:

- Port MacKenzie Rail Extension
- South Wasilla Rail Line Relocation
- Rail Curve Realignment and Improvement near Eklutna
- Ship Creek Intermodal Transportation Center (Phase Two)
- Positive Train Control
- Track Rehabilitation and Bridge Rehabilitation/Replacement
- Drainage Improvements and Embankment Protection

The Wasilla event is the second in a series of POP Open House events. Open Houses in other locations are scheduled as follows:

- **Anchorage** – 4:00-6:30 p.m., Tuesday, January 17 – Anchorage Historic Depot, 411 W. First Avenue. Emphasis will be on projects located in and around Anchorage and Southcentral Alaska.
- **Fairbanks** – 4:00-6:30 p.m., Tuesday, January 31, at the Alaska Railroad Depot, 1745 Johansen Expressway. Emphasis will be on projects located in Interior Alaska.
- **Seward** – 10:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., Friday, February 17 – Breeze Inn, 303 N. Harbor Street. Emphasis will be on projects located in and around Seward and Southcentral Alaska.

-more-



Alaska Railroad Corporation *News Release*

Project Open House in Wasilla – January 11, 2012

Page 2 of 2

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.

- 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).