



Alaska Railroad Corporation

News Release

DATE: December 12, 2012
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:
Tim Sullivan, 265-2357

Federal Railroad Administration releases FONSI for North Pole Road/Rail Crossing Reduction Project EA

Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) paves way to move project forward

ANCHORAGE, Alaska – On Friday, December 7, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) issued a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Environmental Assessment (EA) of the North Pole Road/Rail Crossing Reduction project. This allows the project to move forward into the next phases — including land acquisition, final design and permitting — as funding is identified.

The project proposes to reduce the number of at-grade (same level) crossings along the Alaska Railroad (ARRC) Eielson Branch track from Richardson Highway Milepost 9 to the Chena River Floodway. The FRA issued the FONSI after considering the potential impacts of several alternatives in the EA and reviewing public comments solicited through public meetings and other outreach. The approved project would realign the track on the landward side of the Tanana River Flood Control Levee, close nine at-grade crossings through the City of North Pole, and relocate the existing crossing over the Richardson Highway, replacing it with a grade-separated crossing.

The EA was financed by \$1 million in Federal Highway Administration funds that were reallocated by the Fairbanks Metropolitan Area Transportation System (FMATS) and the Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities. Funding for next phases has not been identified; however, the Alaska Railroad is seeking funding sources.

“This finding will allow us to work to secure funding for an important project not just for the people of North Pole and Interior Alaska but also for the state as a whole,” said Representative-Elect Doug Isaacson, who also served as North Pole mayor through the EA process, until October 2012. “This is one of several key projects that will further the economic development of the state of which the Alaska Railroad plays a significant part. I look forward to working with my new colleagues in Juneau to provide the funding we’ll need to make the realignment a reality.”

-more-



Alaska Railroad Corporation *News Release*

FRA issues FONSI for North Pole Project – December 12, 2012

Page 2 of 2

The project represents the first phase of a larger proposed project to realign the railroad tracks outside of the more urban areas of Fairbanks and North Pole.

The FONSI documents and attachments are available on the Alaska Railroad web site at www.AlaskaRailroad.com > Capital Projects > Fairbanks / Interior Projects.

- 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, 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. The POP meets public participation requirements of Section 5307 of the Urbanized Area Formula Program (49 U.S.C. 5307)