



Alaska Railroad Corporation *News Release*

DATE: August 1, 2014

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ARRC Announces Ribbon Cutting for Tanana River Crossing *Community event*

ANCHORAGE, Alaska — The Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC) kicks off a ribbon-cutting ceremony at noon on August 5, 2014, to mark completion of Alaska's newest and longest bridge. Hosted at the bridge construction site in Salcha, the event is open to the public, and will feature dignitary comments, a walking tour over the bridge and a barbecue. Speakers include Governor Sean Parnell, U.S. Senators Lisa Murkowski and Mark Begich, Congressman Don Young, Lt. General Russell Handy and local elected leaders.

The Tanana River crossing — a bridge and levee — is the first phase of the Northern Rail Extension (NRE). At 3,300 feet, the sturdy 19-pier bridge was built using more than 11,500 tons (23 million pounds) of steel, 12,000 cubic yards (CY) of concrete, 9,000 truckloads of riprap, and 600,000 CY of embankment. Construction wraps up within the project's original schedule and having spent no more than its allotted funding of \$188 million— \$104 from the Department of Defense and \$84 million from the state.

"We are excited about the completion of the Tanana River Crossing," said Linda Leary, Chair of the Alaska Railroad Board of Directors. "The sheer size of the project made it a daunting task to undertake, but at the end of the day, we had a great team that was able to get this project done on time and under budget."

Given the project's complexity, risk factors and inflexible budget, ARRC chose a Construction Management General Contractor (CMGC) model of project management. After selecting Kiewit as general contractor, the railroad's project managers co-located with the contractors. For the next year and a half, the project managers worked side-by-side with subject experts from Kiewit, HDR Alaska, Hanson Professional Services, Shannon & Wilson and PDC.

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“Employing the CMGC model allowed us to work through every manner of concern that we could face through this project in a very efficient manner,” said ARRC President and CEO Bill O’Leary. “Combined with an incredibly robust outreach program we were able to work with people in the community to solve problems before they arose and really provide some tangible community benefits.”

The project team also worked closely and often with regulatory agencies that sometimes had overlapping authorities. Participating agencies included State Fish & Game and Natural Resources, and U.S. Corps of Engineers and Fish & Wildlife Service. “Through ongoing dialogue, the agencies understood engineering and construction limitations, and the contractors understood agency concerns. It worked very well,” said ARRC Project Management Director Brian Lindamood.

To enhance cost management, ARRC also enlisted a Project Advisory Committee comprised of three experts — engineering, construction and project costing —who had been involved in large bridge projects in Alaska. Quarterly, the committee reviewed construction and payment estimates and then provided input to project and senior management, assessing how the project was going and the areas that may need more attention. This averted potential problem areas.

The NRE is a multi-phased effort aimed at building and operating a new rail line between North Pole and Delta Junction. When completed, the extension will include 80 miles of new track linking the existing Eielson Branch rail line at the Chena River Overflow Structure to a point near Delta Junction. The proposed rail line will provide freight and potentially passenger rail services serving commercial interest and communities in or near the project corridor. The river crossing was necessary to fulfill transport needs and avoid mountainous terrain along the northeast bank of the river. A new rail line may also cross the Salcha, Little Delta and Delta Rivers as well as Delta Creek. NRE has long been heralded as a key step toward an eventual rail extension to Canada.

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The Department of Defense (DOD) has large training areas south of the Tanana River between Fairbanks and Delta Junction. Access to the Joint Pacific Area Range Complex (JPARC) has been limited to ice roads during winter. This project provides access from the Richardson Highway to the Tanana River, a crossing of the Tanana River, and a staging area for military use immediately south of the river. Subsequent rail development would also use this crossing.

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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: Alaska Railroad Corporation; Attention: Legal Department; P.O. Box 107500; Anchorage, AK 99510; or by email at: 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.