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Port MacKenzie Rail Extension Project
Public Open House
Wednesday, March 19, 2014

Houston Middle School Gym
12801 W. Hawk Lane
Houston, Alaska
Project Overview

- Port MacKenzie is a deepwater port owned and operated by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough (MSB)

- *Final Environmental Impact Statement* for the Port MacKenzie Rail Extension issued by the Surface Transportation Board on March 25, 2011
  - Record of Decision issued November 2011

- Project includes rail line spur and associated rail operation facilities between Port MacKenzie and ARRC’s existing main line

- Rail line will cross seven existing roads; five at-grade and two separated-grade crossings are planned

- ARRC proposes clear span bridges over three navigable and two non-navigable waterways
Proposed Crossings

- 17 total crossings
- ARRC and MSB have worked with user groups to identify crossing locations and to develop access plans
**Trail Relocation**

**HIGHLIGHTS**

- Current status: trail clearing underway
  - Trees are being chipped and cleared
- Approximately 12 miles of new trails will be created
  - New trails will be 25 feet wide and have enlarged intersections.

**Construction Firm:** Gage Tree Service  
**Construction Start:** Winter 2014  
**Final Construction Completion:** Spring 2014
Overpasses and Underpasses

Railway Underpass of Holstein Avenue

Railway Overpass of Reddane Avenue
Railroad Right-of-Way

- Maintenance access is part of the railroad right-of-way
- Maintenance access is not public use
  - For your safety and protection, please do not ride, walk, ski, or bike within the railroad right of way
- The maintenance access ends at major river crossings
- Bridge crossings are for railway traffic only
2013 Project Accomplishments

- New bridge over the Little Susitna River completed
- Segment 1 is 80 percent complete
  - Figure Eight Loop Trail undercrossing is 90 percent complete
  - Baker Farm Bridge complete
- Segment 3 is 80 percent complete
- Segment 6 is 90 percent complete
- Segment 4 is 10 percent complete

From top right:
Segment 1 Winter Trail,
Segment 3 Bridge Materials at Iditarod Trail,
Segment 3 Stabilization Material,
Segment 6 Culvert Installation at North Wye
2014 Proposed Benchmarks

• Substantial completion of Segments 1, 3, and 6
• Major construction of Segment 4
• Construct six bridges
  ◦ Diamond Lake Outlet (Seg. 3)
  ◦ Historic Iditarod Trail (Seg. 3)
  ◦ Iditarod Race Trail (Seg. 3)
  ◦ MP K20.76 (Seg. 4)
  ◦ MP K22.79 (Seg. 4)
  ◦ MP K27.88 (Seg. 4)
• Continue acquiring project right-of-way in Segments 2 and 5
Being a Good Neighbor

- Final design development reduced wetlands impacts by 44 percent
- Construction segments allows use of multiple local contractors
- Design maintains natural water flow and drainage patterns
- Waterway crossings are oversized to exceed 100-year flood event, preserve sensitive fish habitat and riparian areas, and avoid impacts to fish passage
- All crossings are designed to allow continued access for pedestrians, boats, and wildlife
- Trail connections and access maintained for mushers and recreational users, and racers
- Long-term reduction of truck traffic on Port MacKenzie roads
HIGHLIGHTS

- Length: 4.9 miles
- Approximately 3.3 million of 4 million cubic yards moved to date
- Baker Farm Bridge
  - Three-span, approximately 84 feet in total length
- Winter trail crossing structure
  - A 146-foot-long, 19-foot-diameter galvanized steel multi-plate pipe with 14.4 feet of maximum overall height
- Winter Trailhead parking lot located at MP 18.1 Point MacKenzie Road

Construction Firm: Bristol Construction Services
Contact: Shane Ferrell
Construction Start: Spring 2012
Final Construction Completion: Fall 2014
HIGHLIGHTS

• Length: 7.7 miles
• Approximately 1.1 million cubic yards of earth moved
• Includes three bridges
  ◊ Diamond Lake Outfall (5-span, precast girder and steel beam)
  ◊ Historic Iditarod Trail (3-span, precast girder)
  ◊ Iditarod Race Trail (3-span, precast girder)
• West Susitna Parkway closed during construction at Papoose Twins Road
  ◊ Road can be accessed for local traffic by calling QAP
• Finish bridge work and complete seeding: Spring 2014

Construction Firm: Quality Asphalt Paving (QAP)
Contact: Steve Spidal
Construction Start: Spring 2013
Final Construction Completion: Spring 2014
Segment 4

HIGHLIGHTS

• Length: 7.4 miles
• Approximately 1.1 million cubic yards of earth to be moved
• Includes three bridges
  ◊ Tributary to Little Susitna (140-foot 5-span, concrete girder)
  ◊ Iron Dog Trail (140-foot 5-span, concrete girder)
  ◊ Houston Loop Trail (112-foot 4-span, concrete girder)

Construction Firm: Bristol Construction Services
Contact: Shane Farrell
Construction Start: Winter 2013
Anticipated Completion: Fall 2015
Segment 6

HIGHLIGHTS

- Length: 1.8 miles
- Approximately 630,000 cubic yards of earth moved
- Will create a new “Y” rail connection on northeastern end of project, plus new siding adjacent to the ARRC main line to Fairbanks
- Includes new railway bridge over Little Susitna River (120-foot single span, steel girder)

Construction Firm: Granite Construction
Contact: Ira LeSage
Construction Start: Spring 2013
Final Construction Completion: Spring 2014
Future Segments

Segment 2

HIGHLIGHTS
- Length: 7.1 miles
- Within Port MacKenzie Agricultural District
- Location of ARRC Terminal Reserve
- Includes a road and trail crossing, and a bridge and trail crossing
- Access maintained at all road crossings

Segment 5

HIGHLIGHTS
- Length: 4.2 miles
- Within Millers Reach burn area
- Includes three at-grade crossings
Future Segments

Segment 7

POTENTIAL CONTRACTS

• Communications network
• Administration and maintenance building and fueling facility at the Terminal Reserve
• Civil work, Port MacKenzie to Houston
• Moose-related landscaping

Segment 8

HIGHLIGHTS

• Track construction from Millers Reach Road to Port MacKenzie Loop, with associated grade crossing protections
HIGHLIGHTS

• 15 railroad signals will direct train traffic and provide information on the state of the line
  ◊ Wasilla to Kashwitna
  ◊ 5 mainline signals to be upgraded
  ◊ 10 new locations, 6 of which are near Houston

• Signal construction will require installation of additional power lines
  ◊ Power provided by Matanuska Electric Association

• Mainline signalization will not increase the number of at-grade crossings

Construction Firm: Midvale Electric
Contact: Dave McCourtney, HDR
Construction Start: Spring 2014
Final Construction Completion: Fall 2014
Costs and Funding

- Total Project Cost: est. $272.5 million (2007 dollars)
- MSB has secured $171 million in state legislative appropriations
  - $60 million requested for FY 2015
  - $40 million to be requested in FY 2016
- State funding plus construction by segment allows MSB to hire local construction firms
- No federal funds utilized
- Final project completion estimated for 2018, pending funding availability
Your Input is Important!

You are welcome to comment on the project’s construction impacts.

• Submit a comment form in the box TONIGHT
• Fax comments to: (907) 644-2022
• Mail comments to:
  Sim Brubaker, P.E.
  Port MacKenzie Rail Extension Project/HDR
  2525 C Street, Ste 305
  Anchorage, AK 99503
• E-mail comments to: pmre@akrr.com
For general project questions:
Patty Sullivan, Public Affairs Director
Matanuska-Susitna Borough, Office of Public Affairs
350 East Dahlia Avenue
Palmer, Alaska 99645
Phone: (907) 745-9577
E-mail: patty.sullivan@matsugov.us

For ARRC questions:
Stephenie Wheeler, Corporate Communications Officer
Alaska Railroad Corporation
327 West Ship Creek Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99501
Phone: (907) 265-2671
E-mail: wheelers@akrr.com

For construction questions:
Sim Brubaker, P.E., Resident Engineer
Port MacKenzie Rail Extension Project/HDR
2525 C Street, Ste 305
Anchorage, AK 99503
Phone: (907) 892-6000
E-mail: pmre@akrr.com

Visit: www.portmacrail.com