Welcome! Please Sign in

Port MacKenzie Rail Extension Project
Public Open House
Wednesday, April 24, 2013

Houston Middle School Gym
12801 W. Hawk Lane
Houston, Alaska
Port MacKenzie is a deepwater port owned and operated by MSB.

Port planning began in the early 1970s; facilities developed in 1990s.

Three railroad corridor studies explored possibility of rail extension.

In June 2007 MSB and ARRC agreed to pursue jointly federal approval for a new rail line.


Final Environmental Impact Statement issued on March 25, 2011.

November 2011 - Record of Decision issued.

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 and Culverts

- 17 total crossings/culverts
- ARRC and MSB have worked with user groups to identify crossing locations and to develop access plans
2012 Project Accomplishments

- Project Office in Big Lake opened
- $88 million in PMRE construction projects began
- Clearing and earthwork began on Segment 1
- More than 2.1 million cubic yards of earth moved
• Substantial completion of Segment 3
• Major construction of Segments 1 and 6
• Construct five bridges, including a clear span bridge over the Little Susitna River
• Install a fish passage culvert along the ARRC mainline, enhancing fish passage opportunities along the Little Susitna River
• Continue acquiring project right-of-way in Segments 2, 4, and 5
Being a Good Neighbor

- Final design development reduced wetlands impacts by 48 acres
- Smaller construction segments allows use of multiple local contractors
- Design and construction will maintain natural water flow and drainage patterns
- Nearly all waterway crossings are oversized to exceed 100-year flood event, preserve sensitive fish habitat, and avoid impacts to fish passage
- All crossings are designed to allow continued summer and winter access for pedestrians, boats, and wildlife
- Trail connections and access maintained for mushers and recreational users
- Several thousand cords of low-cost firewood made available
- Long-term reduction of truck traffic on Port MacKenzie roads
HIGHLIGHTS

- Length: 4.9 miles
- Approx. 4 million cubic yards of earth to be moved; approx. 2.1 million cubic yards moved to date
- Closest residence: 4,400 feet
- Baker Farm Bridge crossing unnamed stream
  ◦ Three-span, approx. 84 feet in total length
- Winter trail crossing structure
  ◦ 19-foot-diameter galvanized steel multi-plate pipe, 146 feet long

Construction Firm: Bristol Construction Services

Contact: Shane Ferrell, Project Manager

Construction Start: Spring 2012

Final Construction Completion: Fall 2014
Segment 1

What to Expect - Traffic and Access

- Winter trail access to be maintained
- Increased truck traffic on Port MacKenzie Road during construction
- No access to new railroad grade during construction
Anticipated Schedule

- Construction proceeding on schedule
- Winter work completed for the season
- Snow removal in process to speed thawing of embankment
- Earthwork anticipated to resume in May 2013
- Work schedule generally 6 days per week (Mon. – Sat.), 10 hours per day, during May – September (peak construction period)
**HIGHLIGHTS**

- **Length:** 6.5 miles
- **Closest residence:** 1,300 feet
- **Approx.** 1.1 million cubic yards of earth to be moved
- **Clearing has begun**
- **Includes three bridges**
  - Diamond Lake Outfall (5-span, precast girder and steel beam)
  - Historic Iditarod Trail (3-span, precast girder)
  - Iditarod Trail (3-span, precast girder)
- **Anticipated winter shutdown:** Nov. 2013 – Feb. 2014
- **Seeding:** Spring 2014

**Construction Firm:** Quality Asphalt Paving (QAP)

**Contact:** Steve Spidal

**Construction Start:** Spring 2013

**Final Construction Completion:** Spring 2014
Segment 3
What to Expect - Traffic and Access

- West Susitna Parkway closed at Papoose Twins Road junction
- Road can be accessed for local traffic by calling QAP Construction superintendent
- Expect Ayrshire Road to be closed for short periods in late May–early June for natural gas pipeline work
**HIGHLIGHTS**

- Length: 7.4 miles
- Bid opening scheduled for May 16, 2013
- State general obligation bids recently sold to fund this segment
- Construction work limited until July 15, 2013 due to U.S. Fish and Wildlife bird nesting window
- Closest residence: 970 feet
- Approx. 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)
- **Estimated Start:** Late summer 2013
- **Anticipated Completion:** Fall 2015

Segment out for bid, no contractor selected yet.
(Contractors can visit www.alaskarailroad.com/corporate/contracting/solicitations/tabid/408/Default.aspx for more information.)
HIGHLIGHTS

• Length: 5.1 miles
• Proceeding with clearing and working out approach to MP 175 culvert installation
• Closest residence: 762 feet
• Approx. 630,000 cubic yards of earth to be moved
• Will create a new “Y” rail connection on northeastern end of project, plus new siding adjacent to the ARRC mainline to Fairbanks
• “Y” will enable freight service between Port Mac-Fairbanks (north) and Port Mac-Anchorage/Kenai (south)
• Includes new railway bridge over Little Susitna River (120-foot single span, steel girder)
• Includes fish passage culvert at MP 175 (Teddy Creek; 6-foot-diameter steel pipe, 92 feet long)

Construction Firm: Granite Construction
Contact: Ira LeSage
Construction Start: Spring 2013
Final Construction Completion: Spring 2014
Use caution on Millers Reach Road
**Future Segments**

**Segment 2**
- **HIGHLIGHTS**
  - Length: 8.3 miles
  - Within Port MacKenzie Agricultural District
  - Closest residence: 399 feet
  - 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
  - Closest residence: 1,620 feet
  - Includes three at-grade crossings
Future Segments

Segment 7

POTENTIAL CONTRACTS
- Communications network
- Railway signaling
- Administration and maintenance building and fueling facility at the Terminal Reserve
- Electrical service installation
- 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 signage and active grade crossing devices (flashing lights and gates)
Right-of-Way

What You Should Know

- The majority of land affected by the rail extension is owned by the MSB, State of Alaska, and Native corporations.
- The MSB and ARRC have minimized impacts to private property as much as practicable.
- MSB is leading the property acquisition efforts.
- All property needed for the project will be appraised by a professional third-party appraiser.
- Property will be purchased at fair market value as established by the appraiser.
Costs and Funding

• Total Project Cost: $272.5 million (2007 dollars)

• MSB has secured $171 million in state legislative appropriations:
  ◦ 2008: $10 million State Grant
  ◦ 2009: $17.5 million State Grant
  ◦ 2011: $35 million State Grant
  ◦ 2012: $30 million State Grant
  ◦ 2013: $23.5 million State Grant, $30 million General Obligation Bond
  ◦ 2014: $25 million State Grant
  ◦ Additional funds required to complete the project: $101.5 million

• State funding plus construction by segment allows MSB to hire local construction firms

• No federal funds utilized
Susitna Parkway & Millers Reach Road
Personal Use Firewood Areas

Firewood is available on a first-come, first-served basis.

- A $25 permit is required, and can be obtained from:
  ◊ Land & Resource Management Division
    Mat-Su Borough Administration Building
    350 E. Dahlia Avenue, Palmer
    8am – 5pm, Monday – Friday
  ◊ Big Lake Library
    (907) 892-6475
    BigLake.Library@matsugov.us

- The permit must be in your possession during the removal of wood from the site.
- In addition to the permit cost, the cost for each cord of wood is $25, with a maximum of six cords per household per year.

The permit will expire after all available wood has been removed, but no later than December 31, 2013. Please call the Land & Resource Management Division at 745-9869 if you have any questions.
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: Julie Jessen, Public Involvement Lead Port MacKenzie Rail Extension Project 12900 West Creek Frontage Road Wasilla, Alaska 99623
- Email 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:
Cliff Williams, P.E., Resident Engineer
Port MacKenzie Rail Extension Project
12900 West Creek Frontage Road
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Phone: (907) 892-6000
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