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December 20, 2007

Ms. Victoria J. Rutson
Chief, Section of Environmental Analysis
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, S.W.
Room 1106
Washington, D.C. 20423

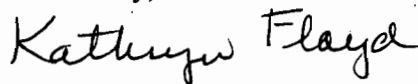
Re: Finance Docket No. 34658, The Alaska Railroad Corp. -- Petition For Exemption
From 49 U.S.C. §10901 To Construct and Operate a Rail Line Between North
Pole, Alaska and Delta Junction

Dear Ms. Rutson:

On behalf of the Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC), this is in response to your October 22, 2007 request for information in connection with the above-referenced proceedings. Specifically, attached hereto please find responses to all questions relating to rail line noise and vibration, geotechnical studies, GIS and mapping data, and rail construction and operations information.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Kathryn Kusske Floyd

Enclosure

cc: David C. Navecky, SEA
Alan Summerville, ICF
Eileen Reilly, ARRC (w/o encl.)
Brian Lindamood, ARRC (w/o encl.)

(1) Noise and Vibration

- a. Provide the most current version of the *Noise and Vibration Technical Report for the Eielson Branch Realignment Project* and supplemental analyses.**

Information provided on attached DVDs.

- b. Provide the average length of rail cars on each type of train described in the April 2007, *Technical Memorandum Supplemental Noise and Vibration Analysis for the Fort Wainwright Realignment Project*.**

Coal cars nominally 55'

Intermodal cars are 50% 60' flats and 50% 90' flats

Tank cars (Flint Hills) are about 62' each

All other cars going to the Airport Branch average 55'

Passenger cars are generally 85' in length

- c. Confirm (or correct) the following summary of daily train passbys on the Eielson Branch for the current train traffic documented in the 2007 *Technical Memorandum***

Milepost	Airport train	Coal train	Petroleum train	Total
0 – 6	2	1	4	7
6 – 17		1	4	5
17 – 20		1		1

There are two 'pass-bys' for the airport branch (MP 0-6) 5-6 days per week. Fort Wainwright coal is normally handled on this train (MP 4-5). We are presently running two petroleum trains per day (4 pass-bys) to North Pole (M.P. 17). The coal traffic to Eielson (MP 20) about 50% of the time is actually tacked onto the petroleum train such that when the switching is finished in North Pole, the coal cars are taken to Eielson, and then the in-bound petroleum is taken back to Fairbanks with whatever is coming from Eielson.

- d. Confirm that the number of trains and train lengths used in the analysis described in the *Noise and Vibration Technical Report for the Eielson Branch Realignment Project*: (1) are the same as those in the *Technical Memorandum, Supplemental Noise and Vibration Analysis for the Fort Wainwright Realignment Project* and (2) provide a comprehensive picture of current rail traffic on the Eielson Branch.**

Information provided on attached DVDs.

- e. Provide the estimated length of passenger trains that would run between Delta Junction and Fairbanks.**

It will either be 1 DMU (90' in length) or 1 locomotive and two coaches (assume 85' each for all three pieces of equipment).

- f. Is it ARRC policy to sound the train horn for both private and public at-grade highway-rail crossings? For at-grade pedestrian or recreational trail crossings?**

ARRC will sound locomotive horns per FRA regulations at all grade crossings unless otherwise covered by quiet zone agreements.

(2) Safety

- a. What types of safety warning and/or protection does ARRC intend to use for at-grade crossings of the proposed rail line with recreational trails and private crossings?**

It is anticipated that most low-volume private crossings will have cross-bucks posted at the crossings. Trail crossings will likely be grade separated dependent upon the typical vehicular use (dog sled, snow machine, skiing, etc.). A typical trail crossing proposed can be seen in Exhibit 'A'.

(3) Hydrology and Geotechnical Information

- a. Provide geotechnical data and reports from investigations in 2007 for the Northern Rail Extension Project.**

See information on attached DVDs.

- b. Provide a copy of the final UAF study of a Tanana River crossing, if available.**

See information on attached DVDs.

- c. Provide the results of ice dam investigations when they become available.**

See information on attached DVDs.

- d. Provide hydrologic and hydraulic analyses and reports prepared to support the preliminary design details for bridge and culvert crossings as presented in the stream crossing table, stream crossing map book, and preliminary design drawings, including the following, if available:**

- 1. Report describing and/or supporting the approach and rationale for stream crossings, including: conceptual and/or preliminary designs for culverts, culvert batteries, small and large bridges.**

See information on attached DVDs.

- 2. Report summarizing hydraulic, hydrologic, and/or scour analyses (or models) and other factors (e.g., seasonal flow character, ice jams,**

lateral shifting) in support of conceptual and preliminary bridge designs at major stream crossings (Tanana, Delta River, Delta Creek, Little Delta, Salcha).

See information on attached DVDs.

- 3. Report describing the rationale for determining conveyance types and sizes, including any peak flow analyses, and other characteristics (e.g., ice effects, sediment transport issues) for specific stream crossings as indicated in the stream crossing data file.**

All structures were designed for the 100-year event. Once the minimum functional size was determined, other factors, such as fish passage were considered. Where fish habitat was known, structures were generally modified in the spirit of the MOU between ADF&G and ADOT pertaining to fish passage and the crossing of water bodies.

- 4. Additional supporting documentation, if available, regarding field survey measurements, and data analyses that were used in the selection of the alternative alignments.**

All supporting documentation is being provided herewith or has been previously provided.

(4) GIS and Mapping Information

- a. Provide available aerial photography coverage of the area from North Pole to Fairbanks if ARRC coverage is of higher resolution than FNSB coverage.**

See information on attached DVDs.

- b. Provide an updated data catalogue of GIS information and updated versions of any GIS data layers that have been added or modified since the July 6, 2006 GIS data submission. Please provide this information in electronic form to both SEA and its independent third-party contractor. Please include the following in this submission:**

- 1. GIS shape files for bridge and culvert locations submitted in June 2007;**
- 2. GIS shape files delineating stream drainage area boundaries, if available;**
- 3. GIS files, maps, and reports for wetland delineations, functions, and value assessments, when available.**

See information on attached DVDs.

- c. Confirm the location of the DTA boundary shown on the Rev. 5 maps. [A DTA representative has indicated that the boundary shown on Map 17 of the Rev. 5**

map set is not in the correct location and that it should run through Clear Lake rather than to the northeast of the lake].

The delineation of military training areas was derived from commercially available sources and has not been independently verified.

(5) Other Technical Reports

- a. Provide available technical reports (in addition to the report reference in 1(a) above) prepared in support of the Eielson Branch and Fort Wainwright Realignment Environmental Assessments.**

See information on attached DVDs.

Construction Information

(1) Bridges and Culverts

- a. Provide the estimated length and elevation of Delta Creek, Delta River, Little Delta River and Salcha River railroad and vehicle (where applicable) bridges. [Section (2)(c) of the May 24, 2007 response to SEA's October 12, 2006 information request indicates that hydraulic modeling and statistical analyses have been used to estimate the length of the bridges, but the response does not include estimated lengths for these bridges].**

See information on attached DVDs.

- b. Provide information on how ARRC plans to cross the Trans-Alaska Oil Pipeline sufficient to describe these crossings (one per alignment but in different locations) as part of the proposed action and alternatives.**

See Exhibit 'C'.

(2) Roads

- a. Describe road improvements, if any are planned for construction or operation, from the Richardson Hwy to the Tanana River bridge at the Salcha crossing location for the route shown in Section (2)(c) of the attachment to the May 24, 2007 response to SEA's October 12, 2006 information request.**

Improvements will be based upon consultation with the road's owner (either the state or the borough), and will likely include marginal grading/widening of the existing surface, and additional surface treatments including gravel, and potentially asphalt. Additional consultation with DOT will provide what, if any, improvements may be required at the intersection of the Richardson Highway and the access route.

- b. Indicate (e.g., on a map) the anticipated location of the Richardson Hwy following relocation in the vicinity of the Salcha school.**

See Exhibit 'D'.

- c. Provide a drawing of the proposed access route from the Richardson Hwy to the Tanana River bridge at the Flag Hill crossing location and describe any anticipated road improvements.**

See Exhibit 'E'.

- d. Provide a description and/or schematic drawing(s) of typical at-grade and grade-separated crossings of recreational trails and the rail line.**

See Exhibit 'A'.

(3) Facilities

- a. Provide current descriptions and maps and/or GIS or autoCAD data showing the locations of anticipated ancillary facilities, such as construction staging areas (if outside the ROW), overburden (organic material) disposal areas, communication towers (including anticipated height and access roads, if any), and planned passenger station.**

Planned passenger station facilities in Delta Junction are shown in Exhibits 'F'. The facilities on the south side are for the Delta South alternative. The Facility on the north side is for Delta Central and Delta North.

Communications towers are shown in Exhibit 'B'. There will be three new tower sites (Moose Creek Bluff, Site "A" and Site "B") and use of existing state of Alaska sites (Harding Lake, Canyon Creek, and Delta Junction). The maximum height of any new tower will be 180 feet.

The loading facility shown within Donnelly was provided for the military's use. The military has not commented as to whether they would like to see this added to the project. Additionally, a section facility will be located within, or near the access road loop for the Tanana Bridge.

Staging areas, borrow sites, and overburden disposal areas are not known at this time. It is presumed that borrow areas, once identified, would be located every three to five miles along the alignment. This will be based upon locating acceptable fill material in areas with minimal or no impact upon wetlands, cultural sites, or other sensitive habitat. It is reasonable to assume that up to 50-75% of unusable material (i.e., overburden) will be placed in the borrow sites. The remaining unusable overburden will be used for re-vegetation along the right-of-way, wetlands mitigation locations, and other non-structural topographic features.

- b. Identify the activities that ARRC plans to conduct at the Flag Hill material processing site.**

The ARRC has no plans to develop Flag Hill as part of this project. All ballast and hard rock resources are anticipated to come from local commercial sources, or from the ARRC's quarry facility in Curry, Alaska. The staging area for the bridge would no longer be co-located with the processing site at Flag Hill. The staging area would be the same size as Salcha crossing of the Tanana River.

(4) Personnel and Materials

- a. Provide an estimate of peak annual employment for construction.**

Estimated 300 people.

- b. Provide an estimated quantity of ballast to supplement the information on construction materials and quantities provided in Section (5)(b) of the attachment to the May 24, 2007 response to the October 12, 2006 information request.**

491,000 cubic yards.

Operational Information

(1) Train Operation

- a. Provide a track chart showing the speed of trains and grade crossing locations on the Eielson Branch.**

See Exhibit 'G'.

- b. Provide estimated typical operating speeds at each highway-rail at-grade crossing for freight service.**

See Exhibit 'H'.

- c. Provide estimated typical operating speeds at each highway-rail at-grade crossing for passenger service.**

See Exhibit 'H'.

- d. Provide the typical number and length of locomotives per passenger train and freight train using the Northern Rail Extension to supplement the information provided in Operational Information Section (1)(c) of the attachment to the May 24, 2007 response to the October 12, 2006 information request.**

One.