



# **Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities**

*Alaska State Rail Plan*  
*House Transportation Committee*  
Murray Walsh, ADOT&PF

February 21, 2013

# Why a State Rail Plan?

- Rail plans are required by the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act (PRIIA) of 2008.
- The plan outlines the State's vision for rail's role in freight and passenger (including commuter) transportation.
- The plan identifies funding needs and sources.



# What is PRIIA?

The Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-432) requires states have a Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)-approved State Rail Plan to receive federal funding.





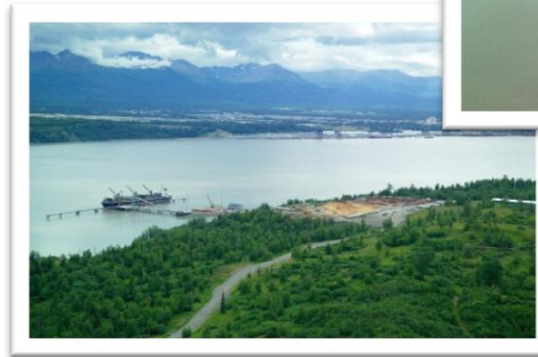
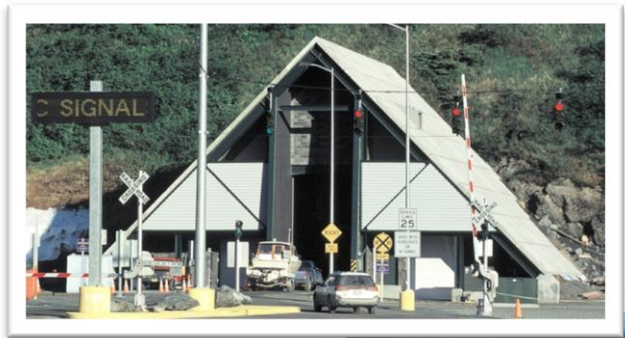
# Purposes of a State Rail Plan

- To set forth **state policy** involving freight and passenger rail transportation, including commuter operations (if relevant).
- To present **priorities and strategies** to enhance rail service that benefits the public.
- To serve as the **basis for federal and state rail investments** within the state.



# Why ADOT&PF?

- Alaska Statute 44.42 assigns ADOT&PF the responsibility to plan for all modes of transportation.
- There is more than one railroad in the state; there may be more in the future.
- Movement of freight or passengers involves more than rail service alone – other modes of transport are involved.



# Alaska's Railroads





# Rail Economics—Freight

- On average, railroads are **four times more fuel efficient than trucks**, according to an independent study for the Federal Railroad Administration.
- Moving freight by rail **reduces emissions of particulate matter by 90 percent**, especially important in communities such as Fairbanks.
- Moving freight by rail also **reduces highway wear and tear**, and maintenance costs.



# Rail Economics—Freight

## Mode of Transportation



One Barge



One Rail Car



100-car Train Unit



Large Semi

	Tons	Bushels	Gallons	Miles per Gallon (1 ton of cargo)
One Barge	1,500	52,500	453,600	514
One Rail Car	100	3,500	30,240	
100-car Train Unit	10,000	350,000	3,024,000	469
Large Semi	26	910	7,865	59

\*Information courtesy of the Iowa Department of Transportation



# Passenger Service

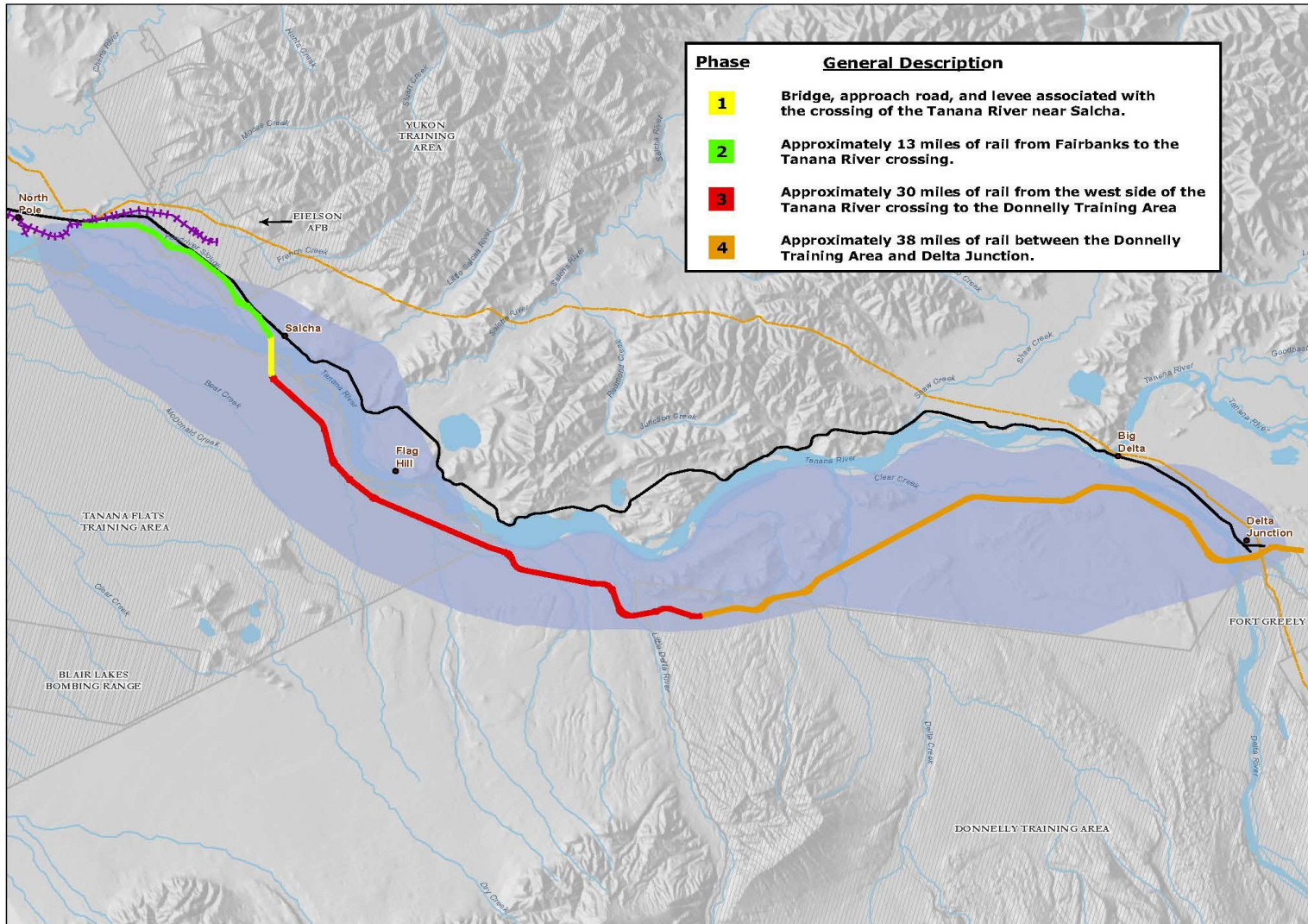
Around the world, passenger service falls into three categories:

- **Passenger** – Inter-city travel
- **Commuter** – short-haul rail passenger transportation in metropolitan and suburban areas
- **Excursion** – to ride the train for the rail experience

The Alaska Railroad is a Passenger Service system. White Pass & Yukon Route is an Excursion system.



# Northern Rail Extension



## Phase 1-4

Figure 2.2-2

### Legend

- Corridor Area
- Military Boundary
- Existing Railroad
- Trans-Alaska Pipeline
- Richardson Highway
- Rivers and Streams

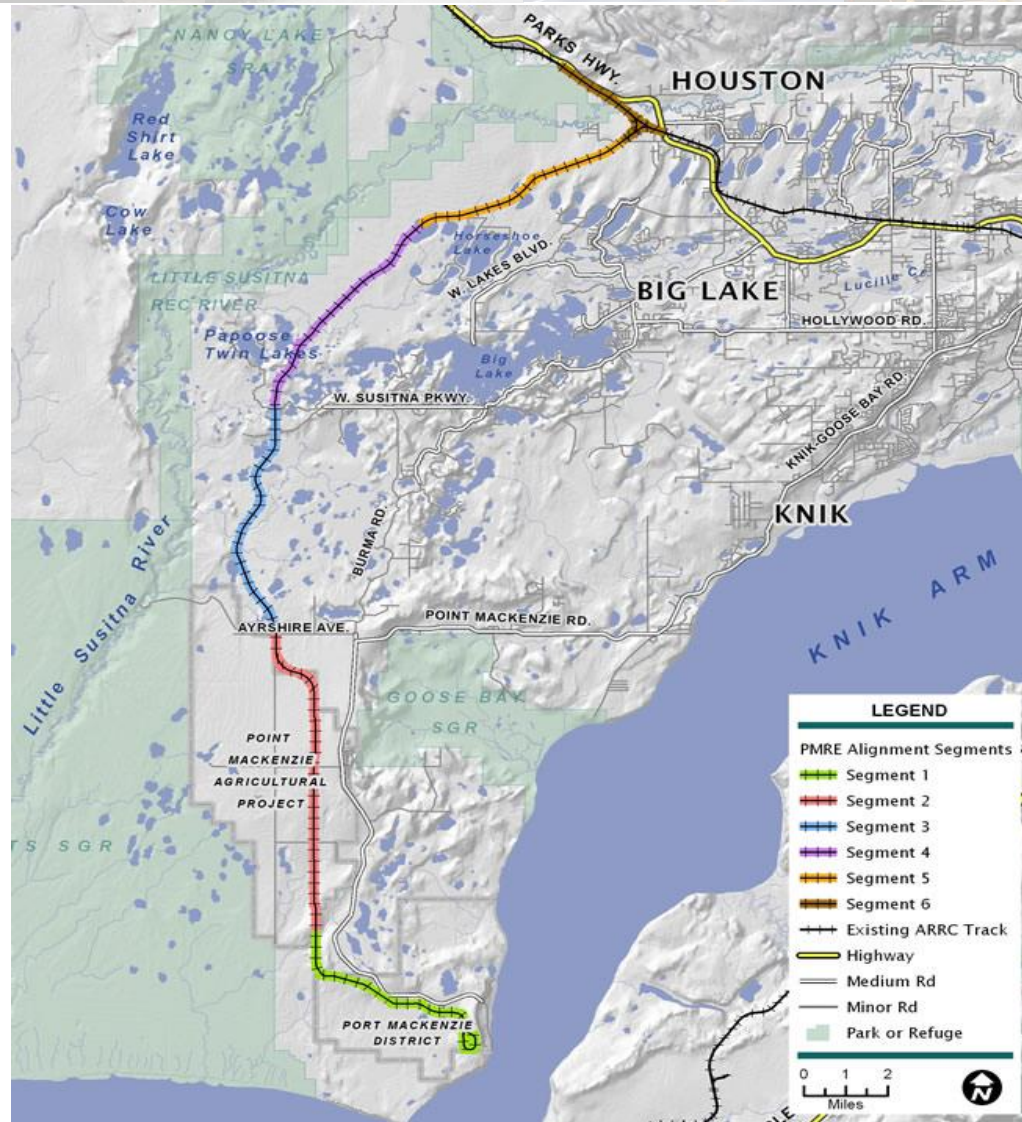


Map Projection: NAD 83 SP3 Feet  
 Data Sources: HDR, Inverness, CDEC/CEC  
 Author: HDR/Inverness, Inc.  
 Date: 15 February 2010

The information displayed here is for planning and review purposes only.



# Port MacKenzie Extension







# Public Input and Governmental Coordination

The plan allows for:

- ***Comment and other input*** from the public, units of local government, rail carriers, commuter and transit authorities where relevant, and other stakeholders and interested parties within the state.
- ***Intergovernmental coordination*** by means of a review of the freight and passenger rail service activities and initiatives by regional planning agencies, regional transportation authorities, and municipalities within the state and within the region.



# Steering Committee Members

- **Christopher Aadnesen**, President/Chief Executive Officer, Alaska Railroad
- **Susan K. Bell**, Commissioner, Alaska Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development
- **Eugene N. Hretzay**, President, White Pass & Yukon Route Railroad
- **Pat Kemp**, Commissioner, Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
- **Daniel S. Sullivan**, Commissioner, Alaska Department of Natural Resources



# Steering Committee Guidance

1. Both rail and road should be considered in future transportation corridors. It is not necessarily the case that a new corridor will be developed [only] as a road.
2. The state may expect continued growth, especially in the Anchorage (Girdwood) to Matanuska-Susitna Borough corridor. This corridor could be expected to need additional interconnectedness and intermodal support.
3. Seasonal employment in Denali Park may support additional passenger service.
4. Be aggressively enthusiastic (in plan development) for rail passenger services, both intercity and commuter service, particularly between the Mat-Su and Anchorage.
5. The planning effort is to cast a wide net and to think big and look afar. Rail line relocations and new rail extensions should both be considered.
6. Look for opportunities to develop island railroad routes – those not connected to other railroads - for natural resource development.



# Steering Committee Guidance (Continued)

7. Possible rail development options that the steering committee would like to see examined include realignments, railroads for natural resource development, railroads as pipelines, etc.
8. It is important to keep the focus on resource development.
9. The plan is part of a vision to develop the resources of Alaska and ensure that those resources can be shipped to the Lower 48 states, (and the rest of the world) contributing to additional US manufacturing.
10. We are working on Arctic development. The plan should account for the possible role of rail in expanded activity in the arctic.
11. The project team was asked to review the 1985 vision (developed at the transfer of the ARRC from federal to state ownership) and update it. Many projects and corridors have already been identified. The state may need to clarify ambiguities generated by other legislative aspects, such as some Department of Natural Resources (DNR) legislation.
12. The steering committee will convene for its next meeting following Task 7, when the draft market analysis has been completed.



# Rail Plan Content

1. An inventory of the existing overall rail transportation system and rail services and facilities within the State and an analysis of the role of rail transportation within the State's surface transportation system.
2. A review of all rail lines within the State, including proposed high-speed rail corridors and significant rail line segments not currently in service.
3. A statement of the State's passenger rail service objectives, including minimum service levels, for rail transportation routes in the State.
4. A general analysis of rail's transportation, economic, and environmental impacts in the State, including congestion mitigation, trade and economic development, air quality, land use, energy-use, and community impacts.
5. A long-range rail investment program for current and future freight and passenger infrastructure in the State that meets the requirements of subsection (b).
6. A statement of public financing issues for rail projects and service in the State, including a list of current and prospective public capital and operating funding resources, public subsidies, State taxation, and other financial policies relating to rail infrastructure development.
7. An identification of rail infrastructure issues within the State that reflects consultation with all relevant stakeholders.

# Rail Plan Content (Continued)

8. A review of major passenger and freight intermodal rail connections and facilities within the State, including seaports, and prioritized options to maximize service integration and efficiency between rail and other modes of transportation within the State.
9. A review of publicly funded projects within the State to improve rail transportation safety and security, including all major projects funded under section 130 of title 23.
10. A performance evaluation of passenger rail services operating in the State, including possible improvements in those services, and a description of strategies to achieve those improvements.
11. A compilation of studies and reports on high-speed rail corridor development within the State not included in a previous plan under this subchapter, and a plan for funding any recommended development of such corridors in the State.
12. A statement that the State is in compliance with the requirements of section 22102. (The federal Local Rail Freight Assistance Eligibility)





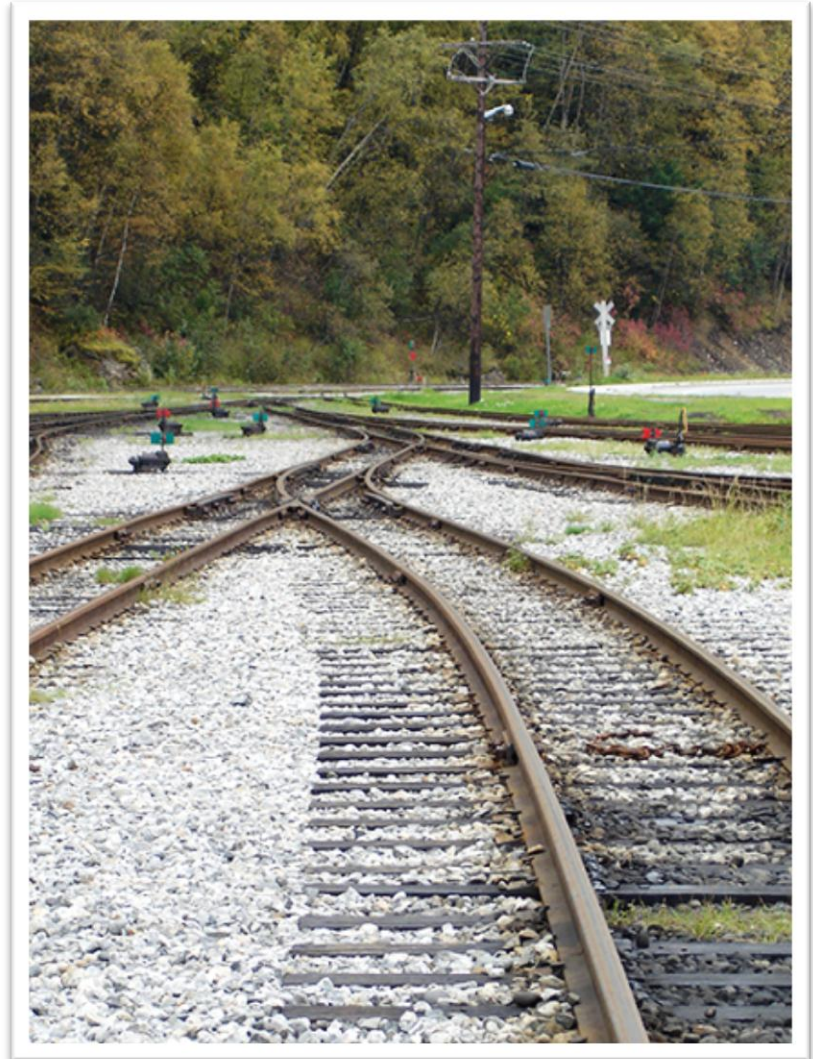


# Details

- Plan horizon: 20 Years.
- Must be updated every 5 years at minimum.
- Must be approved by U.S. Department of Transportation.
- There are draft federal guidelines for state rail plans. Ours will meet those guidelines and all requirements of the federal rail law.

# Rail Plan—Not in Isolation

- The State Rail Plan must be coordinated with the State's Long Range Transportation Policy Plan.
- MAP-21 (the bill to reauthorize Federal-aid highway and highway safety programs) allows for the development of a State Freight Plan, but does not yet require its development.



# Public Involvement

The plan development process will have a robust public involvement component.

- Public meetings on-line and in Haines, Skagway, Seward, Anchorage, the Mat-Su area, Fairbanks, and Nome
- A 26-person Technical Advisory Group appointed by the ADOT&PF Commissioner
- More than 650 people on our e-mail update list







# Thank you

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