



Curve Realignment and Improvement Near Eklutna

PROJECT FACTS

Project Scope

The Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC) plans to realign and improve the track along a curve at ARRC Milepost (MP) 142 near Eklutna. The track curve realignment project will reduce a 4-degree curve to a 3-degree curve in both the main line track and the parallel siding track. It will also relocate a maintenance spur track from the north end of the curve to the south end, as well as lengthen the spur from 130 feet to 1,000 feet. The project includes construction of a gravel access road beside the siding track to allow maintenance access to railcars requiring inspection and repair. 700 feet of jersey barrier will be installed on the outer edge of the access road to separate train operations from areas of public access to Eklutna lands. The project will also upgrade a timber crossing across two tracks (mainline and siding) to a concrete crossing. The realignment project will remain completely within the existing ARRC right-of-way.

Project Benefits

- Crossing improvements will improve the surface drivability and provide better lines-of-sight for drivers. The crossing provides Eklutna Inc. members better access to their lands northwest of the Alaska Railroad tracks.
- Existing track speed on either side of this curve is 49 miles-per-hour (mph). The project is expected to increase track speeds from the current 45 mph maximum to 49 mph. This will allow trains to operate at a uniform, higher speed, thereby reducing noise, improving operating safety, and increasing operational efficiency. The Alaska Railroad will also realize operational benefit from the addition of the inspection road and extension of the maintenance spur track.

- Jersey barriers will enhance safety in the area of road / rail intersection by physically separating public vehicular traffic from the active rail corridor.
- The project continues the Alaska Railroad's efforts to improve train speed and transit time between Anchorage and the Mat-Su Valley in support of future commuter rail service.

Status

- The Alaska Railroad applied for a U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) Rail Line Relocation (RLR) grant in October 2010. In mid-September 2011, the USDOT announced that the Alaska Railroad is one of eight recipients (out of 51 applications) approved to receive RLR grant funding.
- ARRC plans to complete final design and begin construction by summer 2012.

Cost and Funding

- The total cost of the project is estimated at \$1.425 million. The Alaska Railroad is contributing a 20% match (\$285,000). The USDOT portion at 80% is \$1.14 million.

