



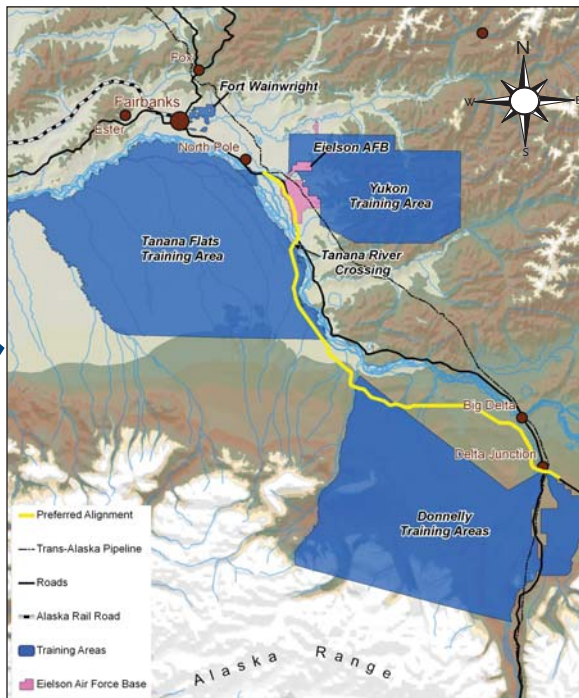
Northern Rail Extension

PROJECT FACTS

Project Scope & Description

The Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC) proposes to construct and operate a new rail line in the area between North Pole and Delta Junction. The project would involve approximately 80 miles of new rail line connecting the existing Eielson Branch rail line at the Chena River Overflow Structure to a point near Delta Junction. The proposed rail line would provide freight and potentially passenger rail services serving commercial interests and communities in or near the project corridor.

The new rail line would be operated as part of the Alaska Railroad system. As a common carrier, the line would be available to the general public, commercial, and military shippers including agricultural and resource development businesses. With a top design speed of 79 miles per hour for passenger trains, the track could support public transit operations between Fairbanks, North Pole, Salcha and Delta Junction.



Area map showing the military training areas south and west of the Tanana River.

The project includes an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). This work consists of identifying and analyzing feasible alignment options, engineering design for selected options, and estimating anticipated construction costs.

A Tanana River crossing is required to fulfill transport needs and avoid mountainous terrain along the northeast bank of the river. The new rail line may also cross the Salcha, Little Delta and Delta Rivers, as well as Delta Creek.

The Department of Defense (DOD) has large training areas south of the Tanana River between Fairbanks and Delta Junction. Access to the Joint Pacific Area Range Complex (JPARC) is currently limited to ice roads during winter. The project scope would develop access from the Richardson Highway to the Tanana River, construct a crossing of the Tanana River, and place a staging area for military use immediately south of the river. Subsequent rail development would also use this crossing. Preliminary conceptual design includes a single traffic lane combined with rail located south of Salcha.

Purpose and Need

The Northern Rail Extension project would provide essential freight and passenger service to support transportation and mobility needs of the region. The project may provide the following:

- **Commercial freight service supporting communities** and commerce in or near the rail corridor, including existing agricultural, mining, and petrochemical industries, thus reducing reliance and wear and tear on the Richardson Highway. Currently, both the agricultural community located near Delta Junction and mineral resource industries in the area receive materials that are initially shipped by rail. Materials must be off-loaded in or near Fairbanks, and then transported by truck via the Richardson Highway.

- **Transportation alternative** to the Richardson Highway for passenger transportation, with scheduled station stops proposed between Fairbanks and Delta Junction by way of North Pole and other communities. Passenger rail service would be available for citizens, military personnel, contractors, and dependent families who wish to travel for work, shopping, medical, educational, or other reasons.
- **Military support.** Access to the JPARC would accommodate year-round access to large military training areas. The Army and Air Force both use the million-acre complex, and their presence is expanding. The Complex provides unique opportunities for large scale, combined training of military units. The Army, in particular, is interested in rail to mobilize military units in and out of the training areas.
- **Support regional tourism.** Tourism is a major industry in Alaska and the rail line would provide further opportunities for visitors to enjoy the Alaska environment.

Benefits

- Common carrier rail service would provide bulk transport of goods to and from existing agricultural developments, mineral resource developments and other business enterprises. Area freight and transit services would enhance opportunities for economic expansion in a relatively isolated area of Alaska. The Alaska Railroad's tourism support to other parts of the system could potentially be expanded to Delta Junction and provide additional opportunities to see Alaska by rail.
- Additional communities within Interior Alaska would be connected by rail to three ports, including the Port of Anchorage, recently designated as one of 15 strategic ports in the nation.
- Public transit would facilitate additional choices for families and individuals seeking safe, reliable, year-round transportation opportunities between the Delta Junction and Fairbanks areas. Rail transit offers an alternative to driving the Richardson Highway, which presents hazardous driving conditions during long, dark, icy winter months.
- Military units would benefit from year-round multi-modal access to joint training areas south of the Tanana River.

- Rail access would avoid use of military vehicle convoys along the Richardson Highway, thereby reducing congestion, saving fuel and minimizing wear-and-tear.

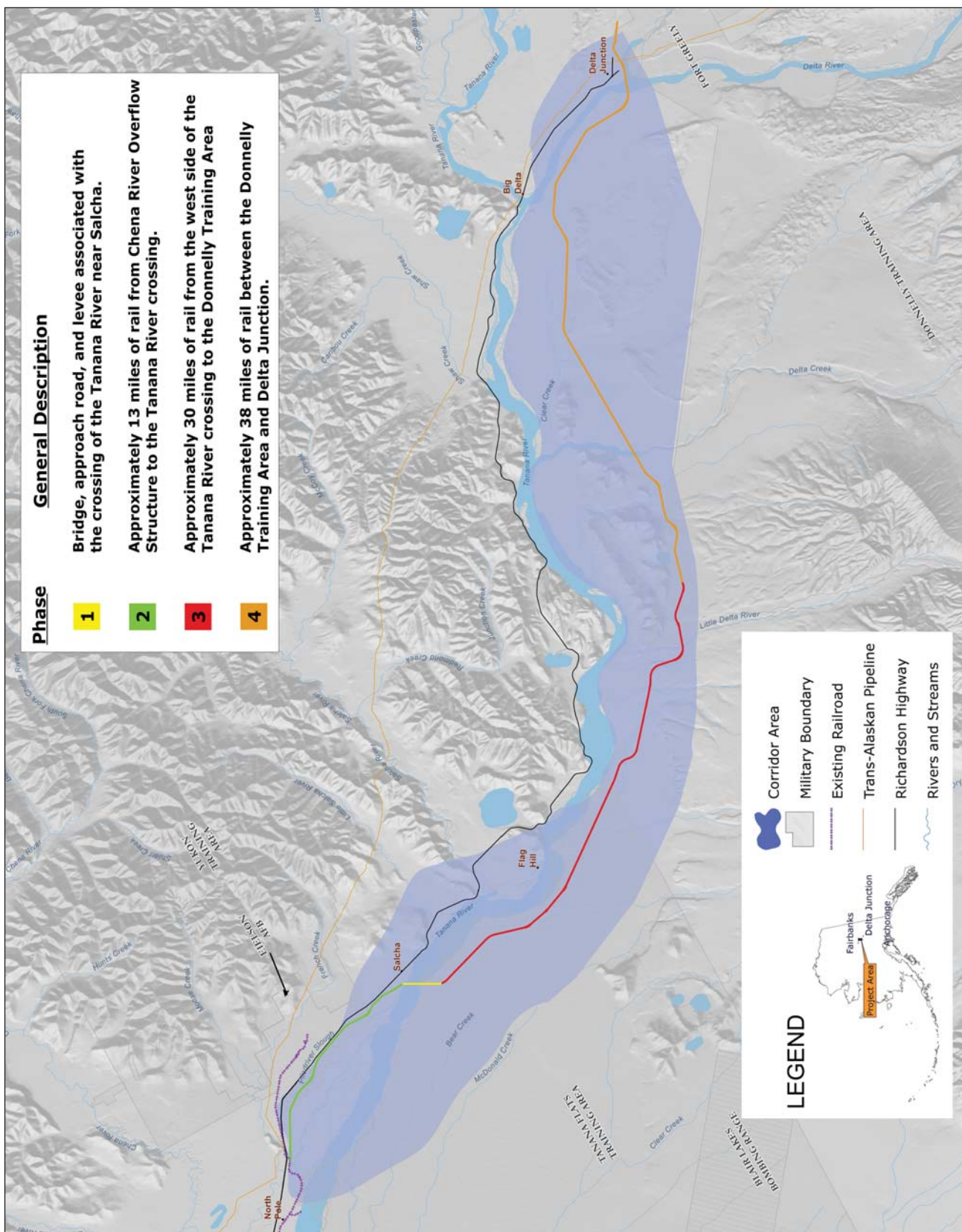
Status/Timeline

- Late 2004, ARRC initiated project conceptual development.
- April 2005, the Surface Transportation Board (STB), the lead federal agency, selected ICF Consulting as the independent third party contractor to prepare the EIS under the STB's direction.
- November 2005, STB published a "Notice of Intent" in the Federal Register.
- December 2005, STB held public and agency scoping meetings.
- December 2008, Draft EIS is released for public review. Public meetings held mid-January in Fairbanks, North Pole, Salcha and Delta Junction. Public comment period ended February 2, 2009.
- September 18, 2009, STB posts Final EIS, available on the STB web site at http://www.stb.dot.gov/stb/environment/key_cases_alaska.html.
- January 5, 2010, STB Record of Decision grants authority to construct and operate the extension.
- Late 2010, Kiewitt selected as Construction Manager-General Contractor for Phase One.
- July 2011, Phase One construction began, with completion expected by July 2014.

Next Steps

- The project will likely progress in four phases, as funding allows:
 - **Phase One** – Tanana River crossing at Salcha (Joint Tanana Range Access) currently under construction.
 - **Phase Two** – Rail construction from Moose Creek near North Pole to the Salcha crossing unfunded.
 - **Phase Three** – Rail construction from the Salcha crossing to the Donnelly Military Training Area unfunded.
 - **Phase Four** – Donnelly to Delta Junction unfunded.

Northern Rail Extension Project Area Map - Four Phases



Cost and Funding

- Preliminary engineering and design and NEPA-mandated environmental assessments and documentation were included in a \$12.5 million budget from an initial Department of Defense (DOD) appropriation in 2005 that was administered as a grant through the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA). DOD appropriations announced in 2006 included \$4 million for NEPA and preliminary engineering work.
- DOD appropriated \$44.2 in 2007 and another \$60 million in 2008, primarily to pursue Phase One, the Tanana River crossing (Joint Tanana Range Access). The State of Alaska appropriated \$40 million in 2010 and another \$44 million in 2011. Funds will be used for engineering, final design of the bridge and levee, permitting, land purchase, preparing the construction area, procuring materials and construction.
- Construction cost for the rail line is estimated to be between \$650 and \$850 million, Funding sources may include federal and state appropriations and financing via the sale of revenue bonds that are secured by advance shipping contracts.

- **The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)** is a cooperating agency with the STB and the administering agency for the federal grant funding the EIS development. The FRA provides technical oversight for the project.
- **Cooperating Federal Agencies.** In addition to the FRA, the following federal agencies have cooperated on the EIS; The Federal Transit Administration (FTA), The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), The Alaska Command (ALCOM), The U.S. Air Force (USAF) 354th Fighter Wing (Stationed at Eielson Air Force Base), The U. S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), and the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG). These agencies reviewed and commented on various aspects of the project throughout development of the EIS.

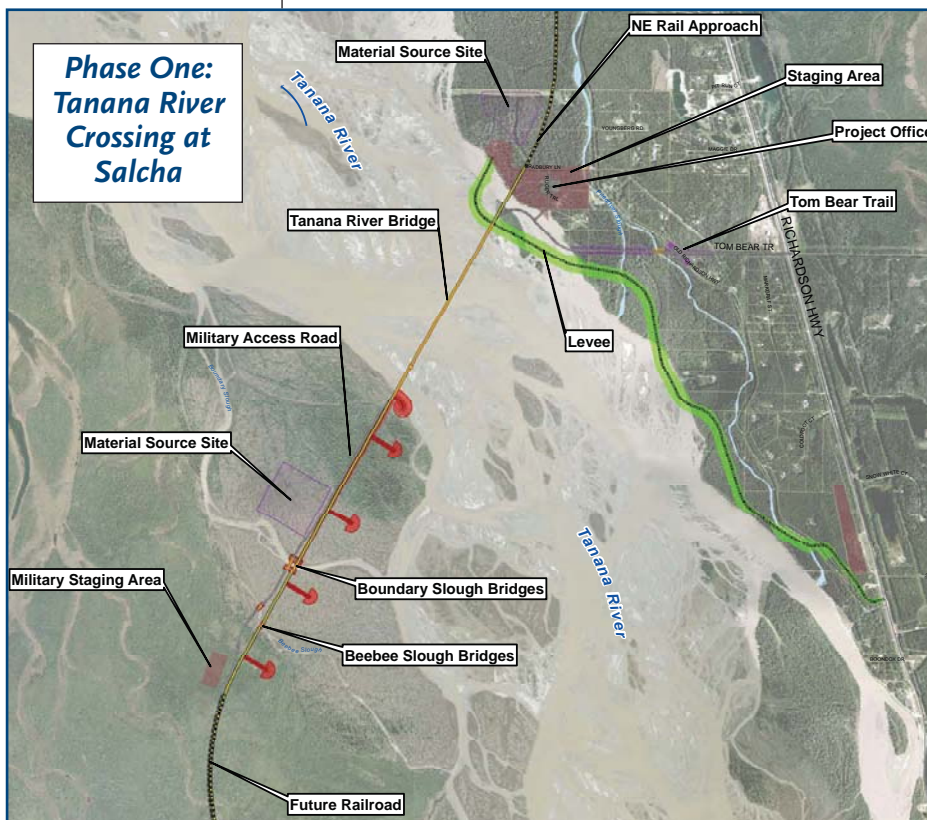
For More Information

- Email public_comment@akrr.com
- Contact ARRC Corporate Communications Officer Stephenie Wheeler at (907) 265-2671.

Project Participants

A number of players are involved with the project:

- **The Surface Transportation Board (STB)** is the approval authority for all new rail line construction in the United States. As such, the STB is the lead federal agency on the project and oversaw the EIS process.
- **The Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC)** is a self sustaining corporation owned by the State of Alaska. ARRC is the Northern Rail Extension project sponsor.





Tanana River Crossing

Northern Rail Extension Phase One

PROJECT FACTS

Project Scope & Description

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Phase One will construct vehicle access from the Richardson Highway to the Tanana River, and a crossing of the Tanana River to accommodate vehicles and provide the foundation for rail.

Purpose and Need

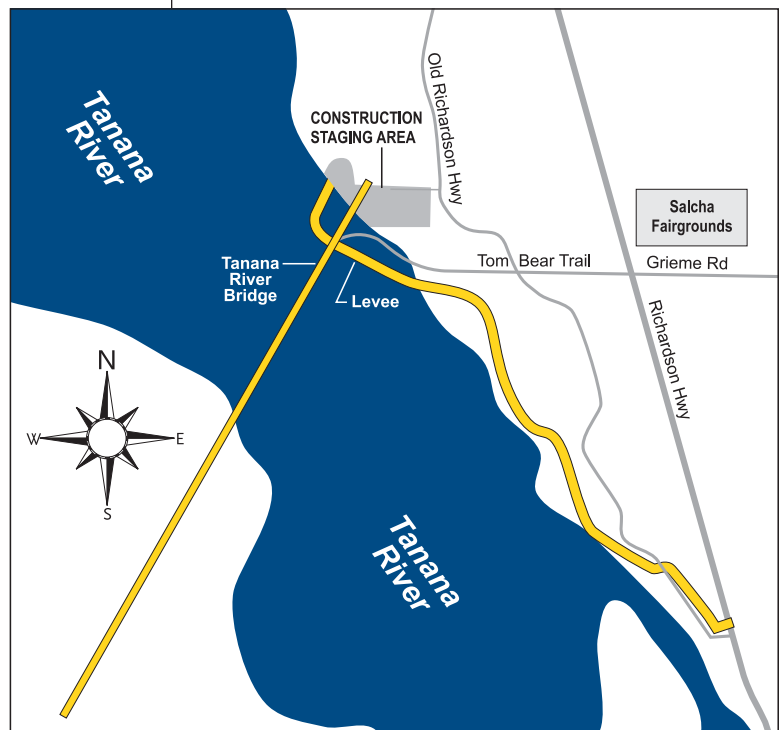
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For later project phases, the crossing will allow new track infrastructure to traverse terrain that is more suitable for rail transportation. The final route was selected after considerable public involvement, environmental and socio-economic research, and preliminary engineering work associated with the Environmental Impact Statement / Study conducted by the Surface Transportation Board.

Status/Timeline

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- **July 2011 - October 2013** — Rip-rap mining, hauling and placement.
- **August 2011** — Staging activities begin, to include establishing a construction yard and office on the north bank of the river.
- **August 23, 2011** — ARRC schedules Public Open House in Salcha to provide an update to residents nearby the construction area.
- **September 28, 2011** — ARRC conducts groundbreaking ceremony at construction site in Salcha to commemorate an historic project.
- **August - December 2011** — Land clearing and construction of temporary bridge over Piledriver Slough.



Phase One: Tanana River Crossing - Construction area map

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- **Fall 2011** — Extension and widening of Tom Bear Trail Road, west of the Old Richardson Highway.
- **Summer 2012** — Bridge pile driving begins, with bridge substructure work continuing through mid-2014.
- **July 2013** — Bank protection and stabilization work to begin along the south bank, continuing through mid-2014.
- Generally, construction activities will occur 20 hours per day, six days per week May - November.
- Phase One construction is scheduled for completion by July 2014. Site clean-up and restoration May through August 2014.

Phase One Cost and Funding

- DOD appropriated \$44.2 in 2007 and another \$60 million in 2008.
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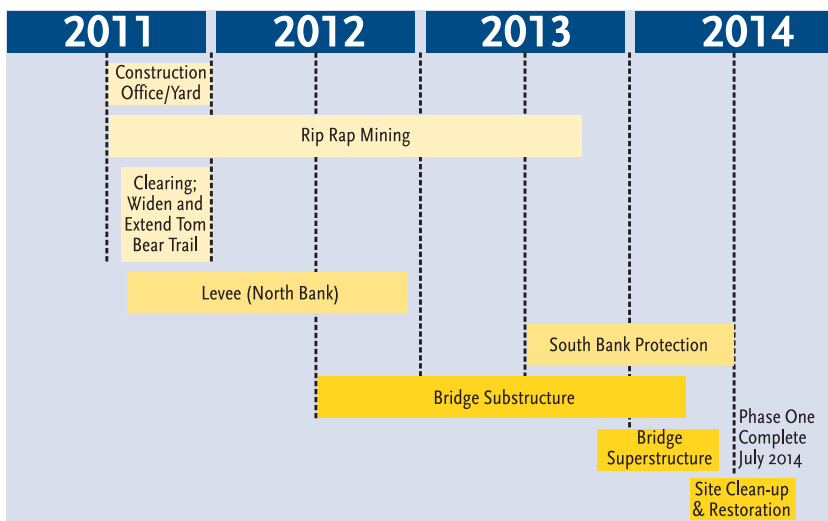
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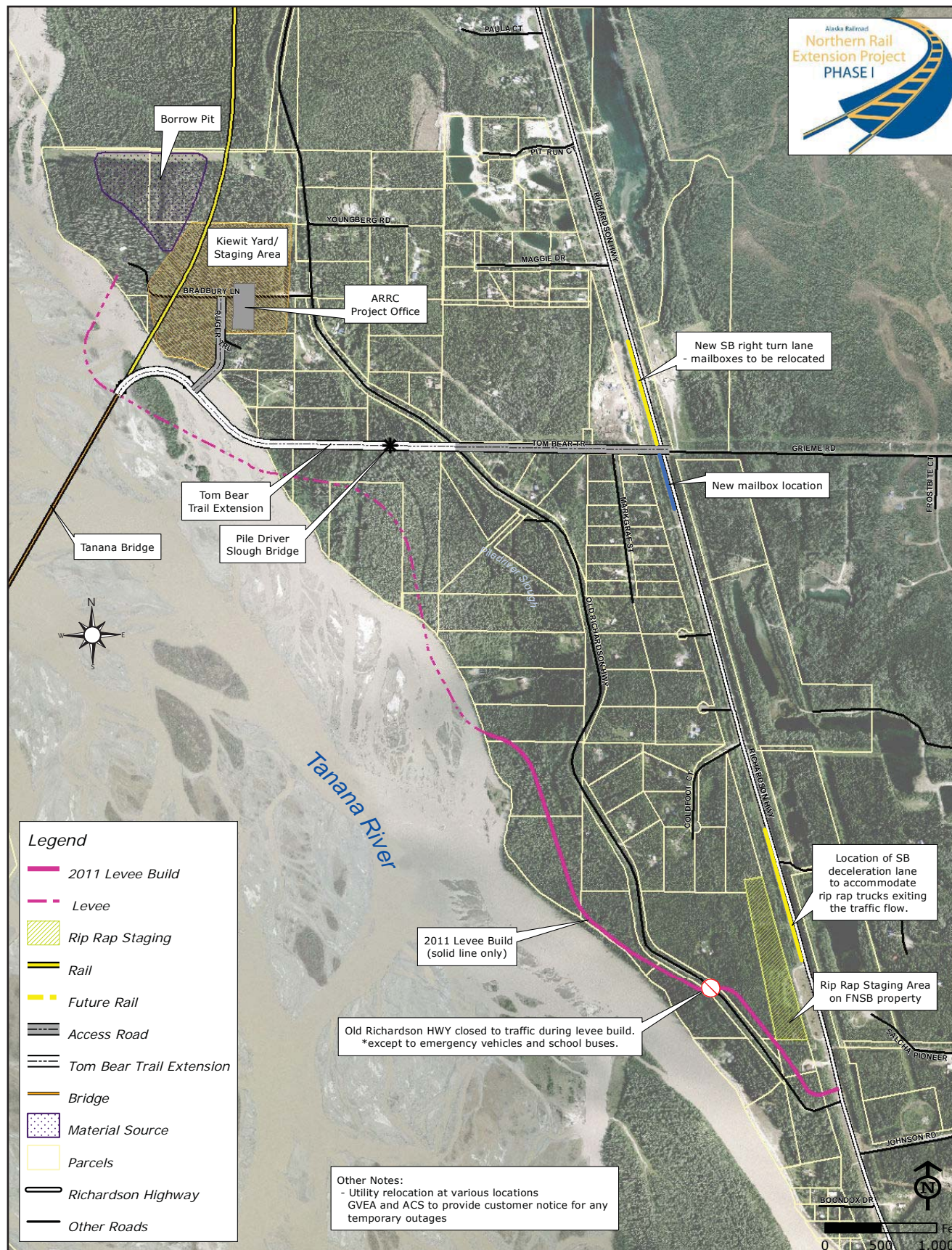
Left: Aerial photos taken by ARRC Board Director John Binkley in late March 2013 show bridge construction activity. Top: progress made on the bridge pier foundations. Bottom: Girders are bolted together into spans in the construction yard. Spans will eventually be set upon the piers.

Phase One Construction Schedule



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Detailed Construction Site Map



General Project and Funding

1. Where does Phase One start?

The rail line for Phase One begins roughly at the northern boundary of the former Bradbury property, but also includes work along Tom Bear Trail and levee construction between Salcha Fire and Rescue and the Old Richardson Highway.

2. How was Phase One funded?

The funding comes from the Department of Defense (\$104.2MM) and the state of Alaska (\$84.0MM).

3. What is the anticipated schedule for the extension project?

Phase One is anticipated to take three years to complete (2014). Construction of phases two through four is funding dependent.

Design

1. How long will the levee be?

The levee will be approximately 11,000 feet long.

2. Why is so much of the levee away from the riverbank?

Engineers developed the alignment to minimize the impact to private home owners. Even so, the Tanana River has been actively migrating to the north. Design and regulatory limitations have prevented ARRC from moving the levee any closer to the banks.

3. With the levee and erosion control measures, how will water get back to the Tanana River after flooding?

Floodwater resulting from groundwater upwelling will flow down-stream using existing flow paths as it does today.

4. How many bridges will be built over Piledriver Slough on Tom Bear Trail?

One bridge (32 feet wide) will be constructed over Piledriver Slough.

5. Will Tom Bear Trail be widened?

Following improvements, Tom Bear Trail will be 32 feet wide. The two travel lanes will be 10 feet wide, and the two shoulders will be 6 feet wide.

6. What is the width of the Tanana River Bridge?

The Tanana River Bridge is designed for one-way rail and military vehicle traffic. The travel way will be 12 feet, 4 inches wide.

Construction

1. What is the work schedule?

Construction will resume in May 2012, with on-site construction 20 hours per day, six days per week as weather allows.

2. How will construction impact traffic on the highway?

Construction traffic will increase along the Richardson Highway between North Pole and Salcha, particularly while rip-rap is being hauled to the site (through fall 2012 and during construction on the south bank levee in late 2013-early 2014). Truck traffic will increase along the Old Richardson in the vicinity of the project area.

3. What is the schedule for adding deceleration lanes?

The deceleration lanes will be completed in summer 2012.

4. What about traffic control coming out of the construction area?

Traffic control plans are available on the project website:

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5. Will Tom Bear Trail be highway grade?

Tom Bear Trail has not been designed as highway grade and will not be paved. It will be surfaced with 6 inches of crushed rock.

6. Where is the rock source? How many loads of rip-rap will be hauled per day?

Rock is coming from a gravel provider in North Pole. Between 20 and 60 truckloads of rip-rap per day will be hauled to the project site through fall 2012.

7. Will mailboxes be moved back to their current location after the project?

All mailboxes at the Tom Bear Trail/Richardson Highway intersection will be permanently relocated to the southwest corner of the intersection in summer 2012. Mailboxes in the vicinity of the Richardson Highway, just north of the intersection of the Old Richardson, will also be permanently relocated.

Employment Opportunities

1. Who is the contractor?

Kiewit Infrastructure West Co. (formerly Kiewit Pacific Co.) of Anchorage will provide construction management and general contracting services for Phase One. Kiewit has employed a number of subcontractors, a list of which is available on the project website: [no longer active website](#).

2. Where can I find information about job opportunities?

Call Kiewit's office at 907-488-7727. Craft positions will be hired through local union halls.

3. Is there a commitment to local hire?

Kiewit is a union contractor, hiring is through the local halls in Fairbanks.

Access

1. Will there be access across the bridge?

The military will control access across the bridge, and traffic is expected to be limited to military truck traffic.

2. Will the bridge restrict boat traffic?

No. The bridge is designed to allow boat traffic, with a minimum of 10 feet of clearance depending on water levels.

3. Will the military continue to build ice bridges?

The military may elect to continue to construct ice bridges as required to provide additional access to the Tanana Flats Training Area.

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Maintenance and Operations

1. Who will maintain the levee?

The ARRC will maintain the levee following construction.

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The ARRC will take responsibility for maintenance costs of the levee and bridge following construction.

3. Will the State maintain Tom Bear Trail after construction?

Tom Bear Trail is a developed section line easement and is maintained by local residents. No plans exist for any government agency to assume the maintenance of Tom Bear Trail.

Impacts

1. Will the levee change the wetlands status/flood plane behind it?

No. For more information on Fairbanks North Star Borough flood zones, visit http://www.co.fairbanks.ak.us/CommunityPlanning/flood_zone_self_help.htm.

2. Will the project alleviate flooding on the Salcha side of the river?

The levee will attenuate the overland flooding frequency for a portion of the area between Tanana River Bridge and the New Richardson Highway. It will not alleviate existing groundwater upwelling.

3. Will there be impacts to drainage?

Piledriver Slough will continue to absorb runoff after the levee is built. Groundwater flow should not be impacted.

4. Will the bridge cause impacts upstream during flood events?

The Tanana River Bridge will increase water levels immediately upstream of the bridge. The levee has been constructed to mitigate any back-water effects from the bridge.

5. Will the project impact property taxes or zoning?

No.

6. What will be done to limit construction-related debris on the highway?

All on-highway truck traffic is the responsibility of the responsible trucking company. Rip-rap, at 25 pounds or more per rock, is less likely to come off the truck than lighter products, such as gravel.

7. What kind of noise impacts can be expected?

Residents closest to the construction site will hear noise from logging and wood chipping this fall. Noise from truck and heavy equipment will also increase along Tom Bear Trail and the Old Rich. Noise and vibration will increase during bridge construction and pile-driving, anticipated to begin in May 2012. A noise and vibration study was completed in 2011; the Phase One Noise Memo is available at no longer active website.

8. Will the staging area be restored after construction?

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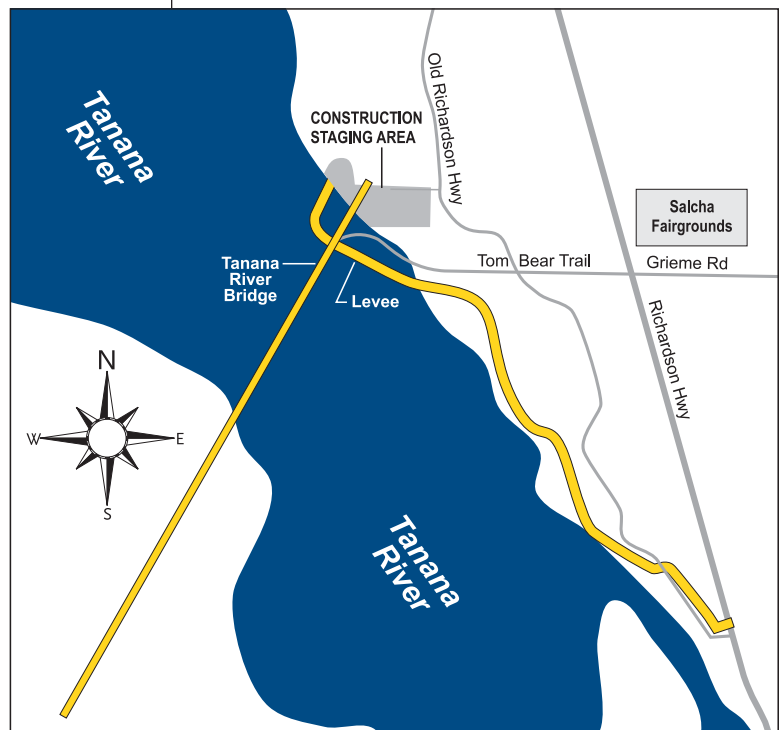
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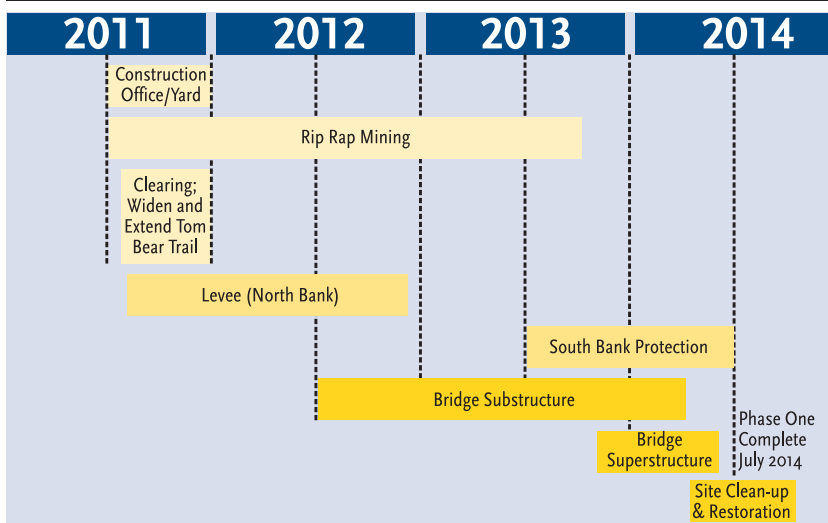
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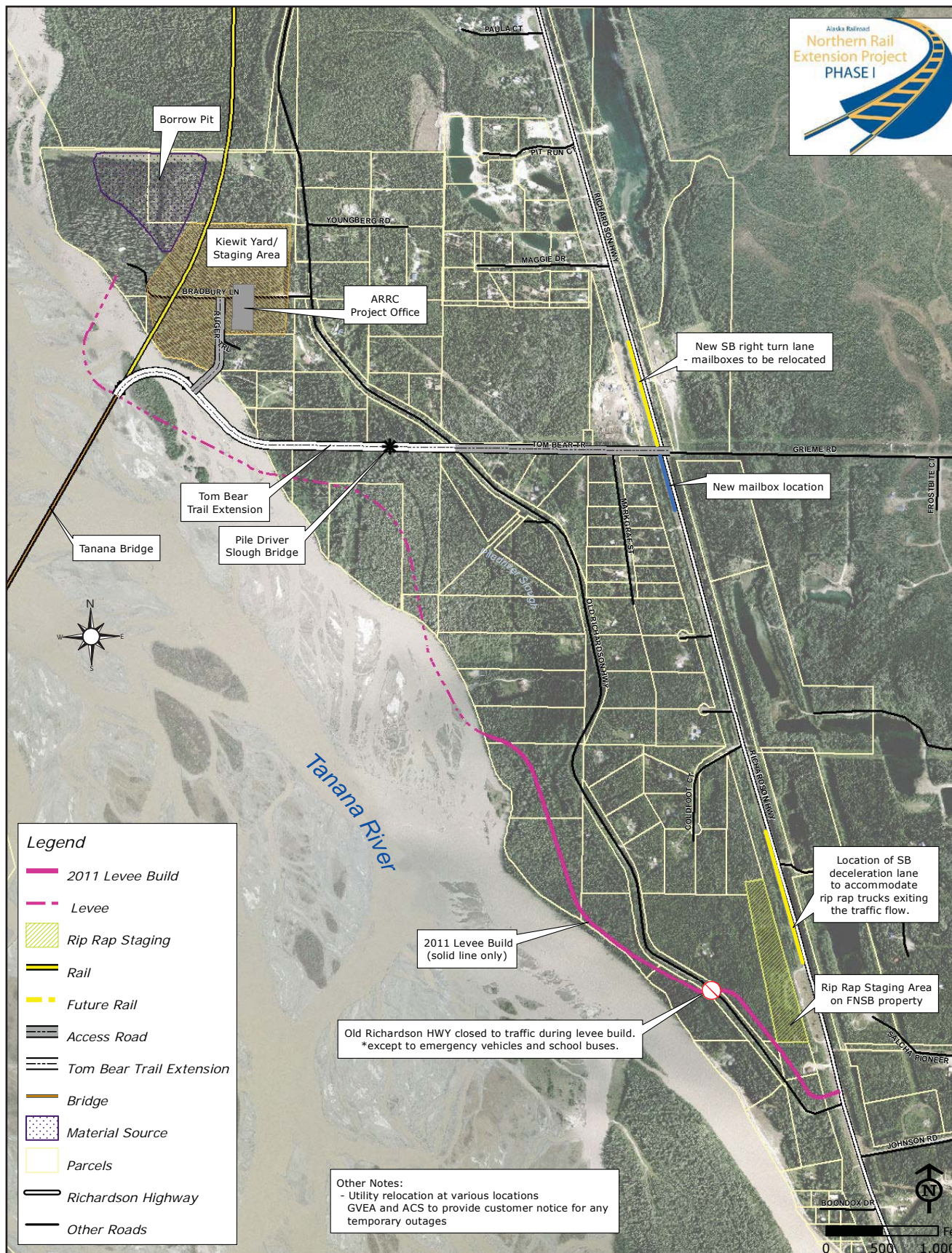
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