

Mat-Su Road/Rail Crossing Upgrades

Background

The Alaska Railroad (ARRC) typically issues a permit to allow a roadway or pathway to cross the railroad tracks. The entity (often a state or local government) that requests a permit essentially owns the crossing and is responsible for its upkeep. Each year, ARRC works with the agencies that manage and maintain roadways that cross the track. ARRC and agencies – including the Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (ADOT/PF), Matanuska-Susitna Borough (MSB) and City of Wasilla Public Works departments – regularly review the at-grade (road and rail at the same level) crossings for maintenance actions needed by both trains and vehicle traffic. As maintenance needs are identified, agencies

work together to fund and execute crossing surface upgrades which may include rebuilding the track, updating surface panels, repaving the approaches, and re-stripping the crossing pavement markings.

Recent and Current Upgrades

In 2014, 10 crossings were upgraded railroad system-wide (Seward to Fairbanks) including four upgrade projects within the Mat-Su Borough – at Fireweed (Glenn Hwy Frontage) Road near the Glenn/Parks interchange; at Matanuska Spur Road; at Fairview Loop Road near the intersection with Old Matanuska, and at Fishhook-Willow Road in Willow. In 2017, \$1.7 million in planned road/rail crossing upgrade projects throughout the Matanuska-Susitna Borough include:



Crossing upgrade work in 2014 on Matanuska Spur Road, less than a mile east of the Glenn / Parks Hwy interchange.

- 1. Meadow Lakes Road:** located just west of Wasilla, at ARRC Milepost (MP) 167.3, about a mile down Meadow Lakes Road from the intersection with the Parks Highway. ARRC will partner with ADOT/PF using federal Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) funding to completely rebuild the crossing with new track and new concrete crossing panels. Motorists can expect to detour the site via Pittman Road for 3-4 days.
- 2. W. Cheri Lake Drive:** located a few miles north of the Big Lake Road at ARRC MP 171.3, this crossing is near the intersection of Cheri Lake Drive and the Parks Highway. ARRC will partner with ADOT/PF using federal HSIP funding to completely rebuild the crossing with new track and new concrete crossing panels. Motorists can expect to a short, temporary detour constructed to afford access during construction.
- 3. Old Willow Station Road:** located in Willow at ARRC MP 185.6, this crossing received some preliminary surface work in the summer of 2016. ARRC will rebuild the crossing, remove the unused siding track, and relocate the crossing signals using a combination of ARRC and Federal Transportation Administration funding. Motorists can expect to detour the work site via Willow-Fishhook Road for 3-4 days.
- 4. Hidden Hills Road:** located near MP 88 on the Parks Highway at ARRC MP 202.9 in North Willow. ARRC will partner with ADOT/PF using federal HSIP funding to completely rebuild the crossing with new track and new concrete crossing panels. Motorists can expect a short, temporary detour constructed to afford traffic access during construction.
- 5. East 2nd Avenue:** located in Talkeetna, near the local airport. ARRC will partner with ADOT/PF using federal HSIP funding to completely rebuild the crossing with new track and concrete crossing panels. Motorists can expect a short, temporary detour constructed for traffic access during construction.



The Matanuska Spur Road crossing is paved after crossing improvements are completed in 2014-2015.



The crossing upgrade at Willow-Fishhook Road in 2014-2015 includes concrete crossing panels that will be used in several 2017 projects.



Concrete panels are placed at the crossing with Fairview Loop Road as part of an upgrade in 2014-2015.

PROJECT FACTS

Matanuska-Susitna Borough Road / Rail Crossing Upgrades Scheduled for 2017

