The U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) approved the Alaska Railroad (ARRC) request for a $2.5 million grant to pursue a master plan for the Seward Marine Terminal Expansion project. Funding is from the FY 2014 National Infrastructure Investments or TIGER VI Discretionary Grants Program.

A Passenger Traffic Study, Freight Traffic Study, and Transportation Connectivity Study will provide the foundation of a new Seward Marine Terminal Expansion Master Plan, which will help ARRC prioritize infrastructure improvements to better serve regional, state and national communities, partners, and customers.

The railroad owns three docks in Seward: the East dock used most frequently for freight; the West dock used primarily for passenger vessels, and the coal loading dock. ARRC also owns uplands adjacent to the docks and a rail operating yard. For years, the railroad has sought to enhance and expand docking and freight-handling capabilities and improve uplands to accommodate growing demand for use of facilities within the Seward port area.

According to VP Corporate Planning & Real Estate Jim Kubitz, a driving factor in the Master Plan is the fact that the passenger dock is nearing its useful life. It was built in 1966 after the 1964 earthquake destroyed the former railroad dock.

“The grant provides an opportunity to plan to rebuild that dock and integrate it into the mix with the freight and coal docks which we have previously master planned,” said Kubitz.
The Alaska Railroad’s 2015 annual poster / print will be available at four sale-and-sign events, all held on a Saturday, and all featuring Girdwood artist Dawn Gerety.

ANCHORAGE: 10am to 2pm Nov. 1, at the Historic Depot (411 W. First Avenue)

FAIRBANKS: 10am to 2pm Nov. 8, at the Fairbanks Depot (1745 Johansen Expressway)

WHITTIER: 10am - Noon Nov. 15 at the Alaska Marine Hwy System Ferry Terminal (1/4 West Camp Road)

GIRDWOOD: 2 - 4pm Nov. 15 at the Girdwood Center for Visual Arts (by the bakery at 194 Olympic Mountain Loop)

Entitled Whittier Surprise, the original acrylic painting depicts a passenger train moving toward this Prince William Sound gateway harbor town. “Emerging from the Anton Anderson Tunnel on the Whittier side is a dramatic moment. Rounding the corner into Passage Canal, the scene varies from surrounding woods to marine activity and valley floor to ocean scape,” said Gerety. “There is a moment of mood that Whittier never fails to deliver … it’s always a surprise. Hence the name.”

For details, visit www.AlaskaRailroad.com > Community > Art Print.

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As reported earlier, Windfall Films television production company returned this summer to work on a second season of Railroad Alaska, a documentary showcasing the Alaska Railroad and the people who live “off the grid” in road-less areas along the railroad route. The show is sponsored by the Discovery Channel.

Three of the 10 episodes planned for Season Two are complete and producers have indicated the weekly series will premier Saturday, October 25, on the Destination America network, which translates to the following channels in Alaska:

- GCI Channel 105
- GCI high definition Channel 691
- Direct TV channel 286
- Dish Network channel 194

The film crew are set to return to Alaska in October to finish filming some segments that will be used in episodes that will air later in the year.

Hurricane Turn train Conductor Warren Redfearn organized a celebration to honor a customer relationship that has spanned five decades. On Sept. 8, 1964, Clyde (a railroad retiree) and Mary Lovel moved into their home within a half mile of Sherman Siding, near ARRC Milepost 258. Located along the Hurricane Turn flagstop route, the remote homestead is known fondly as “Sherman City Hall.” Since 1964, railroaders have hauled supplies and transported Lovel family members to and from the homestead via passenger trains and the ARRC Tundra freight service.

Mary & Clyde Lovel pose with Hurricane Turn Conductor Warren Redfearn during an early September celebration.
RAILROAD SUPPORTS PALMER STATE FAIR

ARRC offers affordable, popular transportation to/from fair; and participates in parade

The State Fair Train service was exceptionally successful, with all trains sold out over the seven days it operated in late August and on Labor Day September 1. More than 3,000 fair-goers took advantage of the convenient transit times and low fares made possible in large part due to a partnership with Green Star Inc., and sponsorships by six organizations: Alaska Energy Authority, ConocoPhillips, Council of Alaska Producers, Denali PEAK Homeschool / Correspondence, Lynden and Shell. (Photo by Frank Keller)

Federal-Era Records Move to State Archives

In 2009, the railroad transferred ownership of all federal-era records (1914 – 1984) to the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). When NARA closed its Alaska facility this summer, over 1,700 cubic feet of records were transferred to the State Archives. “An inventory of the materials will be placed on our website, so that tomorrow’s seeker of information — from a retired engineer in Fresno to the postgraduate student in the cloud over France — can easily determine Alaska Railroad content in the Archives,” said State Archivist Dean Dawson, who noted that the goal is to have the records accessible by January 2015.

Alaska Railroad historical records offer a rare and comprehensive look at historic events and decisions that helped shape the state’s political and economic climate. They are a valuable resource to historians and curious citizens alike. People can request Alaska Railroad historical records from the State Archives, which will supply them as hard copies, or scan the originals into TIFF or PDF files. Simple requests typically require a three- to five-day turnaround. Complex requests may take longer. In cases involving multi-hour queries, the State Archives recommends that parties come to the archive facility or send a qualified researcher from a list maintained by the archives. Eventually, the Alaska Railroad records may be digitized once fiscal and personnel resources are available. State Archives staff may explore potential grant funding after the records are appraised and the scope of a digitization project can be determined.
Alaska Railroad VP Business Management & Corporate Affairs Wendy Lindskoog won the League of Railway Industry Women (LRIW) 2014 Outstanding Woman of the Year Award on Sept. 22. The award is presented to a woman who improved the rail industry through her work in a professional railway leadership role. Recipients must demonstrate innovation, problem-solving and consistent excellence to her organization and surrounding community. Lindskoog was recognized for her 15-year service as a senior manager and executive for the Alaska Railroad, as well as for service outside the company. LRIW is an international association that provides leadership and support for the personal and professional growth of women in railroading and railway-related business. The LRIW Outstanding Woman of the Year Award is co-sponsored by Progressive Railroading magazine, which is read by more than 25,000 international rail and transit executives. Lindskoog was featured on the cover of the September issue.

Alaska Railroad Director of Project Management Brian Lindamood was named Senior VP of the American Railway Engineering and Maintenance-of-Way Association (AREMA) and to the AREMA Board of Governors on Oct. 1. He joins high-level engineer and maintenance professionals from railroads around the country to provide leadership to this railroad industry standard and trade organization. AREMA’s mission is to develop and advance technical and practical knowledge and recommended practices pertaining to the design, construction and maintenance of railway infrastructure. As Senior VP he also chairs AREMA’s Functional Group Board of Directors, which focuses on six areas: Engineering Services, Track, Maintenance, Communications & Signals, Structures, and Passenger & Transit. Lindamood will become AREMA’s President next fall for the 2015-2016 term, and will remain on the Board of Governors through fall 2017.