

# Northern Rail Extension Project Phase One



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

(Updated June 2013)

### Construction

#### **1 What is the construction schedule for 2013?**

On-site construction will continue 20 hours per day, six or seven days per week as weather allows.

#### **2 What will the restrictions be on river traffic and travel during and after construction?**

A temporary project bridge is currently spanning the river, and snowmachiners and boaters should take extreme caution in the area. Following construction, the permanent bridge will allow boat traffic, with a minimum of 10 feet of clearance depending on water levels.

### Levee

#### **1 What is the status of levee construction?**

The North Bank levee—approximately 2.1 miles long—is substantially complete. Rip rap placement will occur through spring 2014. More than 200,000 cubic yards of rip rap have been installed so far.

#### **2 Has the river moved?**

Since the completion of the levee in 2012, the north bank line of the Tanana River is fixed and will not change. On the South Bank, our observations show that the bank line as of 2012 remains unchanged.

#### **3 Where did the rock for the levee come from? Have you run out?**

The rip rap is mined from a pit in North Pole, AK. Brown's Hill Quarry is the supplier. Approximately 100,000 tons have been produced so far. Rip rap deliveries to the project are ongoing, and will run through September 2013.

### Bridge Design

#### **1 How big is the bridge? How high above the river is it?**

The bridge is designed to American Railway Engineering and Maintenance-of-way Association or AREMA standards (Railroad Design Standards). This means it is designed to accommodate

functioning Class I railroad traffic, the heaviest freight-loading allowed for rail traffic in the US. There is slightly more than 15' from the river's Ordinary High Water (OHW) mark to the bottom flange of the girder.

**2 Are you done with piling?**

Pile driving to re-build the 2013 Temporary Access began early June and will continue through the end of the month. This completes about one half of the total trestle bridge. The balance of the trestle will be constructed later in July. Pile driving for the permanent bridge is expect to resume later in July and is expected to run into the fall.

**3 How far down are the pilings?**

The piling varies in depth; however, the average the pile length is approximately 130'.

**4 How far is it to bedrock in this area?**

None of the soil boring completed by the geotechnical engineer during the design stage of the project encountered bed rock. This was expected as the Middle Tanana River Valley consists of sands and gravels. The bridge foundation design is based on generating capacity in this soil composition.

**5 How will the bridge withstand events such as earthquakes, and ice and log jams?**

The bridge is designed to current AREMA standards. Log jams are not conducive to normal operations of the railroad. The bridge will require ongoing inspections and maintenance to ensure piers are kept free of log jams. The bridge is designed to the appropriate criteria for seismic events expected in interior Alaska. However, an extreme seismic event's effect on the bridge is not readily determinable.

**6 Has work started on the other side?**

We expect to have temporary access trestle/causeway completed by late July/early August. This will allow access to the other side of the river or the South Bank.

**Military**

**7 Will there be any public access on the bridge?**

The military will control access across the bridge, and traffic is expected to be limited to military truck traffic. Lands in the Tanana Flats Training area will continue to be managed by Fort Wainwright.

**8 Will there be a gate at Tom Bear Trail?**

Yes, access across the bridge will be restricted.

**9 Who will be responsible for maintenance of Tom Bear Trail following completion of the project? Who will take down the trees overhanging Tom Bear Trail?**

The ARRC is working to establish a Road Service Authority to maintain Tom Bear Trail. In the meantime, Kiewit has removed some trees that were considered safety hazards. Kiewit and the ARRC will continue to monitor trees through the construction phase.

**10 What facilities will the military develop on the other side of the river?**

The military is in the process of preparing a draft Environmental Impact Statement outlining proposed development in the Tanana Flats Training Area. Details can be found at <http://www.jparceis.com/>.

**11 How will the future of Eielson Air Force Base affect the project?**

The bridge provides access to the Tanana Flats Training Area for Stryker Brigade training exercises. Changes to Eielson AFB will have no impact on the project.

**Amenities**

**12 Is there a bike or walking path planned?**

Not at this time. Pending available funding, a plan for such amenities may be possible.

**Other Phases and General Project Information**

**13 When will Phase Two be constructed?**

Construction of additional project phases is based on future funding availability. Currently, no funds have been allocated for Phase Two.

**14 Where can I find more information and project contacts?**

The project website: <http://northernrailextension.com/> contains information relating to the project and construction phases, past public meetings, project news, contact information, and more. For general information on the Alaska Railroad Corporation, contact Stephenie Wheeler at 907-265-2449, or e-mail [public\\_comment@akrr.com](mailto:public_comment@akrr.com). For questions regarding Phase One construction, contact Mark Peterburs at [peterbursm@akrr.com](mailto:peterbursm@akrr.com).