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March 12, 2008

David Navecky
STB Finance Docket No. 35095
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001

Re: Port MacKenzie Rail Spur/Social & Economics

Dear Mr. Navecky,

Enclosed is a copy of a letter from the Alaska Railroad, Director of Strategic Planning, Bruce Carr, dated 12/11/2002. In a nutshell, it supports Corridor 3, the Port MacKenzie/Willow route. I agree with the content of his letter.

In previous studies, Corridor 3, the Willow Route, was favored for a variety of reasons. **“It is the only corridor which now fulfills the appropriate purpose of a rail link to the port to move natural resources into and out of the port with a minimum of disruption to current and projected transportation corridors serving economic development in the Point MacKenzie area.”**

Yes, the Willow Route may cost more to build initially, but there are other concerns. This corridor travels through thousands acres of land that can be used for future expansion of a combination of commerce, industry, and residential tax base. Why run a rail spur through an area that disrupts current residents, does not have nearly the potential for growth on each side of the route, and does not have the future tax base that the Willow Route has?

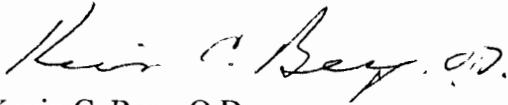
Anchorage is running out of available open land. For years there has been discussion of a “Knik Arm Bridge” to connect Anchorage and the Port Mackenzie area.

- Studies have been done and there is apparently money available for the bridge. If in fact, the bridge is a good idea and is going to happen eventually, it certainly makes sense for all sectors of government to work together for everyone’s mutual benefit.
- **“While this need has taken fifty years to develop, it is clear that Point MacKenzie is a rapidly growing area and the Alaska Rail Road has no desire to try and re-align another spur in the next twenty years, which is likely to happen with the other corridors.”**

- “Corridor 3 appears to be favored by the public.”
- “It appears that property ownership concerns are less of an obstacle than other corridors.”
- “Corridor three has the added benefit of appearing to align with the Knik Arm Crossing more favorable especially as a transportation link from Anchorage to Fairbanks.”

Please don't allow politics or special interest groups to be short-sighted in their thinking. If this rail spur is a good idea, please do it right! Look well into the future! Build it out in the open and build it so there can be expansion and tax base. There is enough room along the Willow Route to create a new city!

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kevin C. Berg, O.D." The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Kevin C. Berg, O.D.

ALASKA RAILROAD CORPORATION



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December 11, 2002

Mr. Norm Gutcher, P.E.
Tryck Nyman Hayes Inc
911 W. 8th Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Re: Mat-Su Rail Corridor Feasibility Study Comments

Dear Mr Gutcher:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed rail corridor from Port MacKenzie northward. I would like to compliment you on the public presentation at Houston High School on November 20, 2002. The presentation material was plentiful and your staff was knowledgeable about issues concerning the project. I was particularly impressed with the way your staff handled several of the more hostile comments from the public. Their demeanor was professional and polite.

The Alaska Railroad (ARR) supports the newly defined Corridor 3. It is the only corridor which now fulfills the appropriate purpose of a rail link to the port: to move natural resources into and out of the port with a minimum of disruption to current and projected transportation corridors servicing economic development in the Pt MacKenzie area.

ARR's concern with all the other corridors fall into two areas:

- 1) ARR still ends up in the immediate Wasilla area
- 2) ARR splits the current and projected future growth areas in Pt. MacKenzie

ARR's market for natural resources is from the north. Except for corridor three, ARR will be forced to continue to bring all trains through the growing Nancy Lake to Wasilla area before gaining the Pt. MacKenzie spur. This is counter-productive for Wasilla and places the Railroad in the middle of residential areas currently under construction and projected residential development in the future. ARR is facing re-alignment in the Wasilla area now to accommodate Wasilla's desire for a better economic development environment. While this need has taken fifty years to develop, it is clear that Pt MacKenzie is a rapidly growing area and ARR has no desire to try and re-align another spur in the next twenty years which is likely to happen with the other corridors.

Based on the comments I heard at the public meeting, Corridor 3 appears to be favored by the public. Additionally, it appears that property ownership concerns are less of an obstacle than other corridors, geography/geology appears to favor this route more, and it places the connection back into ARR's mainline far north of Wasilla. Corridor three has the added benefit of appearing to align with the Knik Arm Crossing more favorably especially as a transportation link from Anchorage to Fairbanks.

ARR continues to be very interested in this project and continues to encourage you to keep us informed as the study progresses.

Sincerely,

Bruce Carr
Director, Strategic Planning

CC: Wendy Lindskoog, ARR
Tom Brooks, ARR