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United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
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1793 (AK-932)

DEC 20 2005

Ms. Victoria Rutson, Chief
Section of Environmental Analysis
Office of Economics, Environmental Analysis, and Administration
Surface Transportation Board
Washington, D.C. 20423

Re: STB Finance Docket Number 34658, The Alaska Railroad Corporation-Petition for Exemption to Construct and Operate a Rail Line Between Eielson AFB and Fort Greely, Alaska.

Dear Ms. Rutson:

This responds to your letter of October 12, 2005, on behalf of the Surface Transportation Board to Gary Foreman inviting the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to be a cooperating agency on the Environmental Impact Statement for a new rail line from Eilson Air Force Base, Alaska to Fort Greely, Alaska. The BLM is interested in becoming a cooperating agency in the Environmental Impact Statement process for the State of Alaska's proposed railroad construction. Cooperation may expedite agency NEPA compliance for the project.

The BLM has not received a right of way application from the State of Alaska. However, a right of way grant from the BLM under Title V of the Federal Land Management Policy Act is required for this project. A minimum of 5 to 6 miles of the proposed railway alignment involves land managed by the BLM.

The BLM wishes to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with your agency since the Surface Transportation Board intends to lead the environmental review. The MOU should name agency contacts, and identify the lead and cooperating agency responsibilities as required in 40 CFR 1501.6 (a) and (b). The MOU will also identify special resource needs, data requirements, and issues to be addressed in the analysis.

Project coordination will be the responsibility of the BLM Fairbanks District Office, Fairbanks, Alaska. Please feel free to contact Mr. Gary Foreman, Planner and Environmental Specialist, at (907) 474-2339.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John Duncan".

Acting

Henri R. Bisson
State Director