



COMMUNITY

Alaska Railroad Corporation
3rd Quarter 2016



www.AlaskaRailroad.com • (907) 265-2300

Visit our web site at
AlaskaRailroad.com

Weekly winter passenger
service transports from
Anchorage to Fairbanks.

RR BOOSTS HARD ROCK HAUL EFFICIENCY

Track-side Cantwell stockpiling site lowers cost of in-state source

A train with 30 air-dump cars is filled with crushed hard rock aggregate at the new laydown and loading site at Cantwell.

(Photo by Blake Adolfae)

The Alaska Railroad partnered with Granite Construction and the Alaska Dept. of Transportation & Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) this summer to lower the cost of hauling hard rock aggregate from a source near Cantwell to Anchorage. ADOT&PF uses hard rock for southcentral Alaska paving projects to make road surfaces more durable, particularly in high-volume areas where studded tire traffic creates ruts.



The railroad began hauling hard rock in 2013, when trains loaded in Healy, about 36 miles north of the Panorama Mountain mine where hard rock is crushed on-site. Hard rock trains have also loaded at Broad Pass, which is still 23 miles from the mine. Equipped with a heavy

(see "Rail Hauling Hard Rock..." on page 2)

OLD FAIRBANKS DEPOT BECOMES SCHOOL

Railroad lease helps project to repurpose historic rail station

Spruce Tree Montessori School Founder Sabrina Binkley discusses the old depot renovation.

(Photo by Stephenie Wheeler)

The historic Alaska Railroad (ARRC) depot in Fairbanks recently transformed into a vibrant schoolhouse thanks to local entrepreneurs and contractors, and a 35-year railroad land lease. Spruce Tree Montessori School invited the public to a ribbon-cutting August 31 to celebrate. The newly renovated facility is hailed by neighbors and community leaders as a positive investment.

Originally built in 1959, the historic depot opened in 1960 and served as a train station until 2005, when ARRC completed a new passenger facility off Johansen Expressway. Later in 2005, ARRC sold the historic depot building to the Fairbanks Daily News Miner. A decade later, Sabrina and Ryan Binkley purchased the historic building from the newspaper and leased the nearly one acre of surrounding land from the railroad.



(see "Depot to Schoolhouse..." on page 3)

RAIL HAULING HARD ROCK ...

(continued from page 1)

equipment maintenance facility, siding track and loading ramp, Cantwell is just 9 miles from the hard rock source; but it lacked a good staging and stockpile area. In July, efforts began to establish laydown and loading areas next to the tracks in Cantwell in order to make in-state hard rock more cost-competitive. General Contractors supporting ADOT&PF projects also obtain hard aggregate from Washington state and British Columbia, where material is loaded and barged to the Port of Anchorage.

Previously, the Cantwell loading site was only able to stockpile up to 3,500 tons. Improvements expanded capacity to 10,000 tons. The railroad will have hauled 8 trains carrying a total of 24,425 tons in 2016.

Given the ADOT&PF *Hard Aggregate Usage Policy* adopted at the beginning of 2014, the railroad anticipates continued demand for this commodity. Whether it is barged into Alaska or mined in-state depends in part on cost efficiency. By reducing cost with Cantwell improvements, ARRC increases opportunities to support local resource development and to serve this market. ●

LEASE MAY ENABLE DEVELOPMENT

Lease applications Fairbanks and Anchorage get okay

The Alaska Railroad Board of Directors recently gave the go-ahead for two lease applications that could lead to notable land development in Anchorage and in Fairbanks.

Interested parties are still developing plans and therefore details are not yet available. However, we could see some definitive announcements during the fourth quarter, if and when the leases are executed. In the meantime, public lease notices offer some information about potential uses.

In Fairbanks, a lease of up to 5.5 acres with a term of up to 50 years was approved during the Sept. 15 ARRC Board meeting. Petro Star is developing a fuel storage terminal at this site, located between the railroad and Hanson Road, west of the Johansen Expressway overpass. The City of Fairbanks has zoned this area for general use, to include heavy industrial use. This has drawn interest from a number of potential tenants over the years. In 1996, ARRC obtained an Army Corps of Engineers permit to fill the site's two old gravel pits, and we've been doing so over time as material becomes available.

HC Contractors in North Pole is currently filling and leveling the site in preparation for any future development that would be the responsibility of Petro Star and/or any other tenants that may lease all or part of this site. Site preparation is occurring primarily at night, in order to reduce

congestion during busier daytime hours, and will continue until the weather forces earthwork to stop for the winter.

In Anchorage, the Board approved a lease of up to 2.5 acres at the northwest corner of the Christiansen Drive and 2nd Avenue during an August board meeting. An older GSA building is located on the parcel and is currently being used for storage. Ship Creek Development LLC applied for a 90-year lease term to construct residential condominiums.

Recognizing its valuable proximity to downtown, the Municipality of Anchorage rezoned this area for Planned Community development, meaning a mixed use of residential, retail and office. Other potential retail tenants have expressed interest in leasing nearby parcels to capitalize on this flexible zoning.

If development of these leases move forward, the railroad and residents could begin to see the economic benefits and opportunities as early as 2017. ●



Railroad land on the west end of the Fairbanks Rail Yard and just west of the Johansen Expressway overpass is being filled and leveled as part of a fuel terminal development.

DEPOT TO SCHOOLHOUSE ...

(continued from page 1)

“The new location is ideal as we strive to increase awareness of our school and develop permanency in the educational community. In addition, repurposing a building is aligned with our Montessori philosophy for conservation of environment,” said Founder Sabrina Binkley, who is Head of School, and whose two sons also attend. Binkley worked with local architect L64 Design; general contractor Johnson River Enterprises, and a half dozen local sub-contractors to execute her vision.

“The land lease term will provide us with the stability we need for decades,” noted Binkley. And, like many of the facilities within the railroad’s land reserve in Fairbanks, the depot has been converted to district hot water heat provided by Aurora Energy, making heating far more efficient and cost effective than boiler fuel heat.

The renovated depot building can accommodate at least twice as many students as was possible at the school’s previous facility, which had reached its 50-student



Top: The historic depot when still in use as a rail station prior to 2005. Bottom: The depot is renovated to accommodate Spruce Tree Montessori School, which held a grand opening August 31.

capacity. Enrollment is currently 75 students, Pre-K to 6th grade.

For decades, the depot was situated at the end of the railroad’s mainline track, noted Sabrina during remarks at the grand opening. “Today, it is now a symbolic beginning of the line for children and families of Spruce Tree,” she said. ●

LNG TRANSPORT DEMONSTRATION OFF TO GOOD START

First responder training and first round-trip of transportation test go smoothly

The Alaska Railroad’s liquefied natural gas (LNG) transport demonstration got off to a smooth start. Two LNG ISO containers arrived on loan from Hitachi High-Tech AW Cryo, Inc. based in Vancouver, British Columbia. After being cleaned, inspected and labeled, they were used for training with train crews and first responders along the railbelt.



An LNG-filled ISO container is loaded onto a flatcar before being added to a northbound freight train.

The first round-trip of actually transporting LNG in the ISO containers went without a hitch. The process began September 27 when the containers were trucked to the Titan LNG facility near Port MacKenzie to be filled with Alaska LNG, before returning to the Anchorage rail yard. Here, the containers were loaded onto a flatcar, which was hitched the regular northbound freight train headed

to Fairbanks. The train left on time at 8:15 p.m. and arrived on time in Fairbanks about 7:30 a.m. Within an hour of arrival, Alaska West trucks transferred the ISO containers to two of its flatbed trucks and then hauled them to the Fairbanks Natural Gas storage facility a few miles away. After the containers were emptied, trucks returned them to the rail yard, where the empty ISOs were re-

loaded onto a flatcar and added to the southbound overnight freight train headed back to Anchorage.

Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) officials were on-site to observe the process. The Railroad is scheduled to complete several more round-trips through October. Results will be reviewed with the FRA to ensure regulators are satisfied with ARRC’s ability to safely move LNG. ●



Alaska Railroad Corporation
 P.O. Box 107500
 Anchorage, AK 99510-7500



Contact Corrections

- Please correct the following errors in your newsletter emailing list:
- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> We receive more than one copy | <input type="checkbox"/> Email Address is wrong |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contact person has changed | <input type="checkbox"/> Name is misspelled |

RAILROAD TO RELEASE 2017 ART PRINT / POSTER

Sale-and-sign events with artist scheduled in Anchorage, Fairbanks and Wasilla

The Alaska Railroad releases its 2017 commemorative print at three sale-and-sign events featuring Wasilla artist Taffina Katkus:

- **WASILLA:** Saturday, Nov. 5, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., as part of the Mat-Su Holiday Marketplace event held at the Curtis Menard Memorial Sports Center at 1001 S. Clapp Street
- **ANCHORAGE:** Saturday, Nov. 12, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., at the Anchorage Historic Depot at 411 W. 1st Avenue
- **FAIRBANKS:** Friday, Dec. 2, 4:00 to 7:30 p.m., at the Fairbanks Depot, as part of the First Friday program

Signed and limited edition prints are \$55 and posters are \$30. Specific print numbers between 25 and 750 may be reserved on a first come, first served basis by contacting Stephenie Wheeler at (907) 265-2671.

Entitled *Moonlight Debut*, the original oil painting depicts a winter scene with a locomotive moving through the new multi-

track signal at the juncture of the mainline track and the Port MacKenzie Rail Extension track that is currently under construction. *Sleeping Lady* is part of the mountainous backdrop. This is the second Alaska Railroad annual art print to feature the Houston area.

“The Alaska Railroad train – commandingly moving forward through a star-filled, moonlit night – is a powerful force to help Alaska forge ahead in this 21st century. With this in mind, I titled this painting *Moonlight Debut*,” said Katkus.

A resident of Wasilla, Katkus has called Alaska home for more than 45 years. She previously owned and operated a commercial sign shop for 30+ years and currently

works full time as a professional artist. Katkus also painted the artwork that was the basis of the 2009 and the 2012 Alaska Railroad posters.

More information about the railroad’s annual art program is available at ARRC’s website:

www.AlaskaRailroad.com >
**CORPORATE > In the
 Community.** ●

