



# COMMUNITY

Alaska Railroad Corporation  
4th Quarter, 2000



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

## SHEFFIELD ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT



Alaska Railroad President and CEO Bill Sheffield announced he would retire as chief executive officer of the Railroad in January. Sheffield informed the board of directors at their regular December meeting.

"The past year has been extremely arduous," Sheffield said, "The Railroad experienced an unfortunate string of events in 1999 and it has taken us some time to get those areas straightened out. I had considered leaving earlier, but since the accidents happened on my watch, I felt obligated to fix what was wrong before I moved on."

Sheffield has held the position since 1997 and has overseen a period of dramatic growth in Railroad operations. During his tenure, Sheffield sought and won millions of dollars in federal money for much-needed improvements to the line. "Our highest priority was to take the Railroad we inherited and bring it up to national standards," he said. "With the active assistance of our delegation in Washington, we've received more than \$240 million in

federal funds to accomplish in four years what had been put off for the past 20. I'm proud of all the employees who are making this accelerated schedule possible. "

Alaska Railroad Board Chairman, John Binkley, said Governor Sheffield brought leadership and vision to the Alaska Railroad. "The Alaska Railroad is a far better railroad than it was when Governor Sheffield took over. We are safer, we serve our customers

better, and we are more profitable. I admire and appreciate the lifelong dedication Governor Sheffield has given to Alaska."

Binkley said Sheffield has set us on course to better meet the Alaska Railroad's mission to foster economic development and improve Alaska's transportation system.



The Railroad has more than 20 capital projects currently underway, including; constructing a new freight dock in Seward and renovating the existing dock into a passenger service facility, constructing new rail depots at Ted Stevens International Airport, Fairbanks and Denali Park; upgrading and realigning track between

*(continued on back page)*

Alaska Railroad  
Ongoing Projects:

Anchorage Airport Rail Station

Denali Depot

Seward Dock Improvements

Whittier Pedestrian Underpass

Anchorage/Wasilla  
Line Changes

Fairbanks Intermodal Facility

Anchorage/Fairbanks  
Railyard Study

On-Board Communications  
System Upgrade

Ship Creek Improvements

Anchorage Rail Depot

Whittier Dock  
Improvement Study

For updates on these  
projects, visit the Alaska  
Railroad website at  
[www.alaskarailroad.com](http://www.alaskarailroad.com)

# NEW SWITCHES MODERNIZE RAILROAD

Marking a significant event in Railroad history, the Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC) will begin using remote-controlled and heated switches at Hurricane siding located about 50 miles north of Talkeetna.

“These new switches launch the Railroad into a new era of modernization,” said Governor Bill Sheffield, President and CEO of the Alaska Railroad. “These switches, once placed in key locations along the rail line, will allow the railroad to improve safety and efficiency by enabling us to move more and longer trains in meet and pass situations.”

According to Sheffield, the new switches represent the first phase of a \$60 million program that will place signalized, heated switches, and extended sidings along the rail line.

Trainmen will be able to open and close the switch from the cab of the locomotive using the keypad on their radio. In addition, the heaters will blow hot air on the switches keeping them free of ice and snow. Combined, these features create a time savings and reduce employee exposure to risk of injury from manually thrown and cleared switches.

The system also improves safety because the system can detect breaks in the rail or problems with the switches. Derailments and other incidents frequently originate at sidings and switches.

Hurricane siding was chosen as a test site for several reasons, said Sheffield. “It’s next to a staffed section house. It’s

accessible to the road and power generator systems. And, it typically receives a tremendous amount of snow. In addition, Hurricane siding was extended this summer to 6,000 feet, up from 2,440 feet, making it a more valuable and usable siding.”



# EILEEN REILLY TO HEAD NEW CAPITAL PROJECTS DEPARTMENT

In recent years the Railroad has initiated a multitude of projects designed to improve its operations throughout the state. Many of these projects are being made possible with funds received through federal appropriations. With more than 20 capital projects being planned and implemented over the next five years, the need to realign the Railroad organizational structure to better manage this effort became apparent.

Effective last month, a new Capital Projects Department was formed. The organization is being headed by Vice President, Eileen Reilly. The

new department will enable the Railroad to better coordinate resources, realize efficiencies and facilitate communication about projects throughout the company. In addition to managing and monitoring project progress and expenditures on all Railroad projects, it will ensure conformance with requirements of funding agencies.

The new reorganization is not expected to result in major changes to current job duties. Initial staffing of the department will include existing personnel augmented by consultants on

a short-term basis. The capital project staff will be funded through the allocation of cost to the federal grant projects.

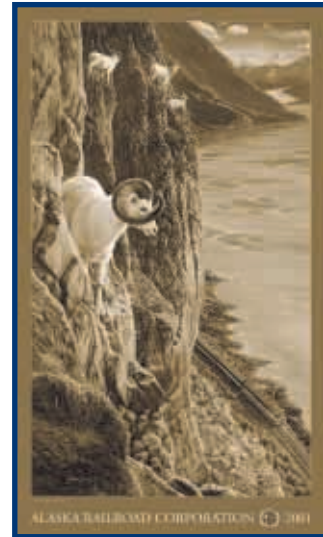
# RAILROAD TO ISSUE 2001 POSTER

The Alaska Railroad chooses an Alaska artist each year to design a poster which features an aspect of Railroad operations. The series commemorates the transfer of ownership of the Railroad from the federal government to the State of Alaska. Anchorage artist James Havens was selected to design the 2001 poster.

"James Havens is a highly-talented artist known for his images of Alaska," said Scott Banks, public affairs officer.

"We're very pleased with the concept he submitted and the technique he has used to portray the railroad."

This year's image is a Dall sheep's eye-view of Turnagain Arm with a northbound passenger train being pulled by one of the Railroad's new SD70MAC locomotives. The 2001 image will be reproduced on lapel pins, posters and limited-edition art prints. All items will be available for purchase in January.



# ALASKA RAILROAD WINS BEST OF THE BEST

The Alaska Railroad has more than shiny new locomotives to show off these days. It received three international awards at the 2001 Onboard Services Awards presented by Airline, Ship and Catering Onboard Services Magazine in Orlando, Florida Dec. 5. The awards recognize excellence in four industries including airline, cruise line, railroad and terminal concessions.

The Railroad won the 2001 Overall Onboard Services Award for outstanding overall service integrating all elements related to passenger safety, comfort and enjoyment in a railroad environment. In addition, the Railroad received the Diamond Award for Outstanding Uniforms and a Diamond Award for Outstanding Onboard Services.

President and CEO Bill Sheffield said that all Alaskans should be proud of the awards. "These awards confirm that we offer an outstanding experience to people who ride our trains. We provide them the best service through some of the world's most magnificent scenery. We couldn't do it without our outstanding employees and the people throughout this

state who provide the overall Alaska experience to our visitors," he said.

Laurie Herman, Director of Passenger Services, said employees work hard every day to make sure Alaska's visitors have the trip of a lifetime. "This is truly an honor to be recognized as an industry leader in delivering outstanding service to our passengers. We are ecstatic that we have received the awards."

Last season, Alaska Railroad moved approximately 700,000 passengers. Within the next three years, the railroad expects to move more than a million passengers.

Alaska Railroad provides daily passenger service between Anchorage and Fairbanks, Anchorage and Seward and Anchorage and Whittier, mid-May through mid-September.

*The Alaska Railroad made history on Sunday, Oct. 1, when it ran a 32-car passenger train, the longest in its history. The train stretched about a half mile long as it made its 26-mile run to Indian and back carrying 1,600 passengers.*

# SHEFFIELD

(continued from front page)

Anchorage and the Mat-Su Valley and installing improved signalization along that corridor. The latter improvements will make commuter service feasible between Wasilla and Girdwood.

The Railroad also just embarked on a three-year, \$60 million program that will install electric heated switches, and extended sidings along the rail line. The upgrades are designed to improve safety and efficiency and will enable the Railroad to move more and longer trains in meet and pass situations. Sheffield oversaw the addition of new locomotives and passenger equipment to meet the Railroad's growing needs and saw the Ship Creek master development plan through to completion.

Sheffield said he thinks the board will complete its search for a new CEO quickly. "We have an excellent team of professionals at every level of the Railroad and a terrific board of directors. It doesn't take a railroad professional to do this job but rather somebody who knows the state and its people," he said. "It shouldn't take long to find the right person."

Sheffield said he has no immediate plans past retirement. "I've been working since I was 14 years old and I've held the two best jobs in Alaska - the opportunity to serve the public as Governor and Railroad President. It might take me awhile to figure out what I want to do next."

---

## WINTER PASSENGER SCHEDULE IN EFFECT

Riding across Alaska's winter landscape is one of the state's best kept travel secrets says Laurie Herman, director of passenger services. "There's something magical about traveling past mountains, glaciers, and forests blanketed in unbroken snow," Herman said. "I hope more Alaskans will take advantage of this unique service."

The new winter schedule between Fairbanks and Anchorage will be in effect until mid-May when the summer season begins.

Northbound (Saturday)		Southbound (Sunday)	
Anchorage	8:30 am	Fairbanks	8:30 am
Wasilla	10:05 am	Talkeetna	4:05 pm
Talkeetna	11:35 am	Wasilla	6:00 pm
Fairbanks	8:00 pm	Anchorage	8:00 pm

PRRST STD  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
ANCHORAGE, AK  
PERMIT NO. 500

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

