

COMMUNITY

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Alaska Railroad Corporation
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PREMIER COMMUTER RAIL CAR VISITS

Self-propelled "DMU" car makes an impression in Alaska

Colorado Railcar's new self-propelled commuter railcar (a DMU) made quite a splash in Alaska during its visit July 23-August 13, 2003. From Seward to Anchorage to Fairbanks, the new DMU drew train enthusiasts out to experience a rail car of the future.

Local and state transit planners and policy leaders joined the railroad for a test ride. The sleek red car inspired positive discussion on development of a commuter rail service in Southcentral Alaska.

Aboard the DMU, former state legislator Katie Hurley said, "There is just no good reason why we can't do this. I'm ready." Mat-Su Borough planning commissioner Chris Rose agreed, stating, "This is too important not to do."

Being part of Colorado Railcar's demonstration tour not only enticed the public, it provided a fantastic opportunity for Alaska Railroad train crews and mechanical employees to examine the new equipment.

"The Colorado Railcar DMU performed perfectly on our railroad during its

demonstration tour," said Robert Stout, Vice President and Chief Mechanical Officer. "The DMU would be a good match with our existing low level dome passenger equipment and any similar equipment that the Alaska Railroad might purchase. I was particularly impressed with its performance on the 3 percent grade [incline]..."

(See "DMU in Alaska")



Government and civic leaders, and transportation planners from Anchorage and the Mat-su Valley took the DMU for a test ride between the Anchorage depots and Wasilla depot.

Alaska Railroad
Ongoing Projects:

Fairbanks Intermodal Facility

Nenana Rail Relocation study

Denali Depot Improvements

Palmer Park-and-Ride Center

Anchorage-to-Wasilla
Track Realignment

Anchorage Rail Capacity Study

South Anchorage Double Track

Anchorage Yard Ops Center

Ship Creek Intermodal Center

Improved Sidings & Signals

Whittier Development Planning

Seward Intermodal Terminal

For updates or comments on
these projects, visit the Alaska
Railroad web site at
www.AlaskaRailroad.com

WHITTIER SEES FLURRY OF ARRC ACTIVITY

Railroad addresses maintenance, operations, customer and planning needs

From docks and buildings new and old, to plans for the future freight and passenger operations, Whittier has been a hotspot for railroad attention and activity over the past couple of years.

The Railroad completed the \$2.25 million Equipment Maintenance Shed this spring. The rest of the old transit shed, which had previously housed heavy equipment (bulldozers, etc.), was demolished in late summer.

Like the transit shed, the adjacent Marginal Wharf is far past its prime and was condemned this spring. To accommodate the handful of displaced tour boat and fish processing operations that had been using the wharf, ARRC upgraded the Delong Dock to provide water and electrical service. Cruise West's *Spirit of Columbia* vessel, and Great Pacific and RC Collins fish processing operations began using Delong Dock this summer.

Looking out recently from Delong Dock, ARRC Dock and Real Estate Manager Lester Lunceford pointed to a small tug boat pulling a hefty load. "See that big floating dock? That's part of the private dock Lynden is building for use by Princess Cruises," he said. To coincide with the dock's opening in 2004, ARRC will construct a covered platform to accommodate cruise ship passengers heading from Whittier to Anchorage. Pulling these and other railroad projects together is the



Cruise West's Spirit of Columbia moves to Delong Dock in summer 2003.

Whittier Master Plan, an ongoing effort that considers present and future freight operations, evaluates existing facilities, and conceptualizes rehabilitated or new marine facilities. Major goals include: improving rail passenger and pedestrian safety, increasing passenger service, separating freight and passenger operations, and constructing a new passenger terminal and maintenance facilities. The plan will be made available for public review and comment by the end of the year. ●



The new heavy equipment maintenance facility (top), replaces the old transit shed, which is being demolished.



The Marginal Wharf was condemned in spring 2002 for safety reasons.

IS THERE ENOUGH TIME TO CLEAR THE TRACK?

Safety Dan says, 'Track trespassers put public, train crews in harms way'

Would you stroll on the airport tarmac, or ride your 4-wheeler down the middle of the highway? Of course not! Unfortunately, some folks believe that walking or riding on railroad tracks is safe; thinking there is plenty of time to clear the track if need be.

Statistics, however, prove otherwise. Wind, a helmet, engine sounds, and other distractions can, and do, prevent trespassers from realizing a train is coming. Sometimes with dire consequences. For example:

- On August 22, 2003, a train hit a dog on the track. When the dog's

owner was trying to yank the dog clear, both were thrown from the track. Eerily, this closely resembled an accident several years ago, when a pregnant woman trying to retrieve her dog was hit and killed by a train.

- In 2001, a southbound coal train struck a snowmachiner trying to free her machine from the track, It threw her and the machine a great distance and broke her leg.
 - In 1999, the engineer on a train full of children pulled the emergency brake, an action that greatly increases derailment risk, in order to avoid hitting snowmachiners on the track.
- The most recent incident happened

in late August 2003, when a passenger train headed for the Alaska State Fair in Palmer was barely able to stop before



Safety Dan

hitting a hunter on the Knik River bridge. Had it been one of ARRC's 80-car gravel trains, which require more than a mile to stop, the man would have been hit or forced to jump.

For these and other reasons, trespassing is illegal; we want you to be safe! Railroad security agents continually monitor the tracks to keep people off... for their sake and safety, yours and ours. ●

DMU IN ALASKA...

(continued from page 1)

The Alaska Railroad continues to coordinate with Anchorage and Mat-Su area local governments, whose support and involvement is critical to funding and establishing commuter rail service between Alaska's largest city and Alaska's fastest-growing communities in the Mat-Su Valley. ●



The premier DMU was on display for the public to view in communities along the railbelt.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Efforts to promote commuter rail are now underway with the formation of an advocacy organization in 2002. The Citizens' Commuter Rail Advocacy Committee includes members of the Anchorage Assembly, and representatives from local media, local business, environmental groups and interested citizens. The Alaska Railroad provides technical support.

The committee holds monthly brown bag lunch meetings. People are welcome to get involved at the level that best suits them — either active participation in the committee and its sub-committees, or simply monitoring committee progress via email updates

For more information, leave a message at 227-6852. Someone from the committee will get back to you. ●

FOUR DEPOT FACILITIES OFFER UNIQUE MEETING SPACE

Railroad to publish policies & procedures for depot use on website

Looking for a new place to gather for a conference, employee event or other organizational function? Consider the Alaska Railroad's depots in Anchorage, Seward and Fairbanks. These facilities are available for use by non-profit entities and by private/corporate businesses, as long as they are not political.



Anabel Leigh

- **Bill Sheffield Alaska Railroad Depot at the Anchorage International Airport** — This striking, modern piece of architecture features a full catering kitchen, table/chair and audio/visual equipment rentals, and nearby paid parking. 3,400 sq. ft. Capacity is 500. Available year-round.
- **Anchorage Historic Ship Creek Depot** — Built in 1942, this depot features the classic charm of that era, with large pillars, wooden accents and gold trim. 3,400 sq. ft. Capacity is 250. Nearby paid parking. Available Sept. 14 to May 15.

- **ARRC Seward Dock Terminal** — ARRC's largest available facility features vast space and versatility. 24,000 sq. ft. Capacity is 1,675. Free parking. Available year-round.
- **Fairbanks Depot** — This centrally-located facility is perfect for small gatherings seeking a cozy, quaint atmosphere. 2,400 sq. ft. Capacity is 125. Free parking. Available Sept. 14 to May 15.

The railroad is putting the finishing touches on the *ARRC Depot Use Policies & Procedures* booklet, which outlines facility features and the steps to renting meeting space. It will be available soon at ARRC's Real Estate division at 327 Ship Creek Avenue in Anchorage or on-line at www.AlaskaRailroad.com.

For more information, or to reserve depot space, contact Anabel Leigh, Facilities Technician, (907) 265-2216 or leigha@akrr.com.

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