

# ALASKA RAILROAD CORPORATION



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*For Immediate Release*

## **Passenger Train Collides with Stuck ATV**

Anchorage – At approximately 7 PM Saturday, crew members of the Alaska Railroad Corporation's (ARRC) Denali Star reported colliding with an ATV about 30 miles south of Fairbanks. The northbound train, with over 400 passengers, was forced into an emergency braking procedure after the engineer realized the ATV was stuck on the tracks. The driver and a juvenile passenger on the ATV were able to jump to safety before the collision. The impact from the train totaled the ATV. No injuries to train passengers or the ATV riders were reported. The train received no damage and continued to Fairbanks after a safety inspection.

The incident occurred near ARRC milepost 433. Preliminary investigation reveals that three adults and one juvenile were heading to a remote cabin south of Fairbanks on two ATV's. The riders were using the railroad tracks for access to the cabin. The adults on the first ATV were able to remove the vehicle from the tracks but the driver of the second ATV could not because of slick conditions. He and the juvenile abandoned the ATV when it became clear it would be hit. The driver of the stuck ATV is from Anchorage. The other driver and riders were from Fairbanks.

"Every year we tell people to stay off the tracks and this is why," said President and CEO, Patrick Gamble. "People using railroad tracks for access not only put themselves in danger, but our passengers and employees as well. An emergency stop greatly increases the chances for a derailment. We are grateful that no one was hurt."

The adults could expect to receive citations, which are a Class B Misdemeanor, and hold a maximum fine of \$1000 and/or possible jail time up to 90 days. ARRC Special Agents continue to investigate this incident.

ARRC regularly reminds residents that railroad tracks and the land 100 feet on either side of the tracks are ARRC private property. Trespassing on ARRC property is illegal and a punishable offense that can result in fines and/or jail time. More importantly, it is exceptionally dangerous with hazards that can result in injuries or death.

The Alaska Railroad Corporation is a self-sustaining, state-owned corporation that operates without state subsidy, that provides year round passenger and freight service to a number of rail belt communities from Seward to Fairbanks.