



On the Right Track
Update from the Alaska Canada Rail Link Project

Welcome to the first issue of On the Right Track – your monthly news update from the Alaska Canada Rail Link Project Office.

We at the project office hope to share information that proves both useful and illuminating to you and your community or organization as the project advances toward completion this summer.

Most importantly, we look forward to your thoughts, questions and feedback.

If you know an individual or organization that should receive our monthly update or to receive On the Right Track, please email Project Communications Coordinator, Amanda Leslie at amanda@amandaleslie.ca.

See you again in February!

Amanda

Project Timeline

1. Stage 1, Market and Engineering Feasibility Assessment - Ongoing
2. Stage 2, Financial Feasibility and Public Interest Assessment - to start spring 2006
3. Full Feasibility Study - completion summer 2006

First Contracts Awarded in Rail Link Feasibility Study

Tuesday, October 11, 2005

The initial contracts were awarded in the Alaska-Canada Rail Link Feasibility Study, comprising the first two parts of a four-part market, technical, financial and public interest analysis. More than one million dollars in contracts was awarded in this first stage with approximately 45 per cent going to northern companies.

“We were very impressed by the capability and depth of expertise local companies demonstrated,” said Project Manager Kells Boland. “The work was divided into smaller packages to give northern contractors access to the project and we feel we are creating the very best team possible to tackle the requirements of the study.”

A selection committee appointed by the study’s joint Alaska-Canada Management Working Group conducted the evaluation process, which was based on individual qualifications, experience and cost. Special consideration was placed on the value of local knowledge.

Expressions of interest for the study’s financial analysis have been received, are currently being evaluated and will be awarded this spring. The study is scheduled for completion this summer. For more information and news about the Alaska-Canada Rail Link Feasibility Study, please visit www.alaskacanda-rail.com

A First in Canadian History: Aboriginal Ownership of Railway Line

December 2005

Iron Ore Company of Canada (IOC) and First Nations Group, Tshiuetin Rail Transportation Inc., concluded a historic agreement for the transfer of passenger rail services in Quebec and Newfoundland and Labrador.

Tshiuetin Rail Transportation Inc., comprised of the Innu Nation of Matimekush-Lac John, the Naskapi Nation of Kawawachikamach and Innu Takuaihan Uashat mak Mani-Utenam, has acquired the northern section of IOC’s Quebec North Shore and Labrador Railway Company Inc. (QNS&L).

The line runs between Emeril Junction, Newfoundland and Labrador and Schefferville, Quebec and will be operated for both passenger and freight rail services.

Tshiuetin Rail Transportation Inc. will also take over the operation of passenger rail service from Sept-Iles, Quebec to Schefferville through Emeril Junction, while IOC will maintain proprietorship over the southern section of its QNS&L rail line between Sept-Iles and Labrador City.

IOC is one of Canada’s leading producers of iron ore. Started in 1954, with its first shipment of ore, IOC currently has operations in Labrador City and Sept-Iles, Quebec, which employ close to 1700 people.

For more information about IOC and QNS&L, please visit www.ironore.ca.

Cash Minerals Announces Positive Conclusions from Skagway Ore Terminal Review

December 15, 2005

VANCOUVER – Cash Minerals Ltd. today announced the completion of the review of Skagway Ore Terminal, an all-weather port located in Alaska.

Cash Minerals is planning to ship Division Mountain coal from Yukon, through Skagway, to Pacific Rim markets. The proposed annual throughput of 1.2 million tonnes per year would be shipped mainly via Panamax vessels, which have coal carrying capacities of approximately 70,000 tonnes. For further information, please visit www.cashminerals.com

State of Alaska FY07 Budget

December 2005

The Governor of Alaska, Frank H. Murkowski, has proposed that \$50M in the state's 2007 capital budget be set aside for a pre-construction plan and Environmental Impact Statement should the ongoing feasibility study determine the project economically viable.

If the feasibility study, to be complete this summer, demonstrates that construction is not currently economically viable, the funds will be returned for the state Legislature to re-appropriate for other purposes. For further information, please visit www.gov.state.ak.us

Alaska Canada Rail Link - FAQ s

Who is funding the feasibility study?

The State of Alaska and the Yukon are sharing the financial responsibility for the study with each jurisdiction contributing equally to the project's estimated total cost of \$5 to \$6 Million.

Will the railway run through my community?

The study is examining all rail routes that appear to have any value in terms of transporting necessary goods and materials into, out of and within the Alaska-Yukon-Northern B.C. region and the most feasible route will be determined with the study's conclusion this summer.

In Alaska, there will be less than 200 miles of rail to be built from Delta Junction in Alaska to the Yukon border so there are no major route alternatives to be examined there. In Yukon, there are two major options both converging at Watson Lake: the Alaska Highway route and a more northerly route generally paralleling the Robert Campbell Highway along the Tintina Trench. In B.C. options include connecting to the existing BC Rail link at Fort Nelson or to the partially completed Dease Lake extension.

In addition to a full rail route connection through the Yukon and B.C. to Alaska, various combinations of rail and road access to ports are under consideration.

How will the route be selected?

While the feasibility study will rank possible rail routes in order of economic viability, the final route selection will ultimately be decided by a consortium of investors, working within the established regulatory and governance framework.

What will the completed study decide?

The completed study will provide sound economic and engineering information to build a “business case” for private and/or public investment in a rail link from Alaska through the Yukon to northern B.C.

If the study reveals that the railway is not financially feasible at this time, the extensive body of knowledge that has been developed will become a legacy for long range transportation planning in the north and the criteria for future rail investment viability will be determined.

We Want to Hear From You

Informing, including and receiving input from your organization or community is crucial to the success of the Alaska-Canada Rail Link Feasibility Study.

Please let us know what is foremost on your minds regarding the project and we will be happy to address your inquiries and concerns in subsequent issues.

Email your thoughts and comments to Amanda at amanda@amandaleslie.ca or call 867.456.3862.