



Alaska Railroad Corporation *News Release*

DATE: September 21, 2012
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Stephenie Wheeler, 265-2671
(907) 382-3327 (cell)

Weather impacts Alaska Railroad schedules, services

ANCHORAGE, Alaska — Passenger and freight train traffic has had service interruptions since Tuesday, September 18, due to extreme weather, including high winds and high water events. Currently, train traffic scheduled to travel north of Wasilla is cancelled at least until Monday due to damage from rivers flooding in the Matanuska-Susitna Valley. Alaska Railroad (ARRC) crews are addressing washouts and bridge damage in several areas impacted by high, fast water along a 70-mile stretch of the rail corridor between Willow and Gold Creek.

Susitna River basin flood waters have washed out a 500-foot long section of track at railroad milepost 261, just south of Gold Creek. Crews are staging equipment this evening and will begin placing fill material in the morning. Repair is expected to take until Monday, depending on weather.

Several bridges are at risk between Willow and Talkeetna, with water scouring the abutments. Railroad bridges include those crossing Little Willow Creek (near mile 73 on the Parks Highway); Sheep Creek (near Mile 88 on the Parks Hwy) and Kashwitna River (near Mile 82 on the Parks Hwy). Railroad maintenance crews are currently assembling equipment and rip-rap material to begin fortification efforts this evening. This work has been coordinated with appropriate agencies.

The regularly scheduled weekend Aurora winter passenger train is also cancelled for this weekend. From mid-September to mid-May, the Aurora train travels Anchorage to Fairbanks on Saturday and returns Fairbanks to Anchorage on Sunday, offering a flagstop service in the area between Talkeetna and Hurricane along the way, each way. Passengers will instead be bussed Anchorage to Fairbanks on Saturday, and from Fairbanks on Anchorage on Sunday. The Alaska Railroad is considering a special flagstop train once flooding impacts are under control. Note: the monthly Hurricane Turn flagstop train that travels between Anchorage and Talkeetna on the first Thursday of the month is still scheduled to operate October 4. Please contact the Alaska Railroad reservations number at (907) 265-2494 for travel updates.

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Freight trains normally scheduled to run between Anchorage and Fairbanks will not operate until damage to the track and bridges are repaired. The Alaska Railroad is working to meet the needs of cruise company customers that normally charter passenger trains traveling between Whittier and Denali through late September.

The Alaska Railroad corridor between Anchorage and Seward and Whittier remains open. Minor washouts have occurred in the Seward area in the last several days and have been repaired.

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Major washout just south of Gold Creek.

ARRC is an Equal Opportunity Corporation. If you need special assistance (including language) in order to participate in any ARRC service, program, or activity, please contact: Alaska Railroad Corporation; Attention: Legal Department; P.O. Box 107500; Anchorage, AK 99510; or by email at: zappasi@akrr.com, (907) 265-2461; via Alaska Relay Service for hearing impaired – dial 7 11 anywhere inside Alaska, OR dial toll-free from anywhere outside the state 1-800-770-8255 (voice); 1-800 770-8973 (TTY). Upon request, printed materials can be made available in alternate formats.