

Alaska Richardson Steese Highways Corridor Action Plan

Final Report & Recommendations

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Roads and Highways Board

November 5, 2024

Anchorage

Public Comment Summary

- Comment period on Public Review Draft
 - Opened April 8, 2024
 - Closed May 17, 2024
- Three ways to comment
 - E-mail
 - Public meeting testimony: Tok (April 30), Fairbanks (May 1), Delta Junction (May 2)
 - Written comments by form or letter
- 127 commentors; 400 comments (estimated, many commentors provided multiple comments)

Primary Comment Categories

- Overall Mine and Ore-Haul Support (106 oppose mine, 4 in support, 17 no opinion).
- Use Alternatives Besides Current Ore haul (53 stated preference other alternatives).
- B-Train and Pavement Damage (62 observed pavement damage or expressed concerns).
- B-Train Impacts on Maintenance and Operations Costs (57 cited concerns)
- B-Train Bridge Impacts (26 are concerned about bridge overloads, 5 concerned about B-Trains on narrow bridges).
- B-Train Impacts on Traffic Operations and Mobility (16 cited experience or concern regarding B-Train effects on traffic flow).
- B-Train Impacts on Traffic Safety (55 cited concerns on safety impacts for school students and bus transportation, pedestrians and bicycles, and vehicular traffic safety).
- B-Train Impacts on Environment (51 cited concerns about environmental impacts; noise, water quality, fish and wildlife, and air quality).

Recommendations

- Alternatives considered Public Input to establish recommendations
- DOT&PF Staff are reviewing final draft.
- Expected to “Publish” within 2 weeks.

Report Section	Alternative(s)	Majority TAC Support	Additional Cost (\$Millions)	Implementation Horizon: Short-, Medium-, Long-Term (S, M, L)	Benefits to Travelling Public After Ore Haul	Implementation Program	Comments
11.2	Construct Truck Climbing / Passing Lanes	Y	\$22M - \$51M	M, L	Yes	STIP	Preliminary engineering required to establish locations of climbing lanes, SVT, or combination thereof.
11.3	Slow Vehicle Turnouts	Y	\$4.7M	M, L	Yes	STIP	
11.4	School Bus Stop Improvements						
	ROW Clearing to Improve Winter Sight Distance	Y	UNK	S	Yes	M&O	Short-term brush clearing by State M&O
	DOT&PF and School Districts to Establish Permanent Bus Stops	Y	UNK	S, M	Yes	STIP or Local	Specialized study effort preceding permanent lighting and signing. TAC supports signing and lighting
	Transponders- HAAS Alert	NA	UNK	S	UNK	UNK	Require private-public partnerships

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11.5	Operator (Kinross) Alternatives						
	<i>Internal Policies on Allowing Passing</i>	Y	UNK	S	N	Kinross / BGT	Policy to yield to following vehicles to avoid unsafe passing.
	<i>Internal Policies to Prevent B-Trains Platooning and Queuing</i>	N	UNK	S	N	Kinross / BGT	
	<i>Policy to Avoid Travel in Poor Weather</i>	Y	UNK	S	N	Kinross / BGT	Required by AAC
	<i>Policy to Reduce Speeds (5 to 10 MPH) Between Traffic Signals</i>	No Input Asked	UNK	S	N	Kinross / BGT	Reduce red-light running
	<i>Driver Training, B-Train Snow and Ice Removal, Emergency Response Plan, Safety Plan</i>	Y	UNK	S	N	Kinross / BGT	These are presumed to be in place.
11.6	Bridge Monitoring and Improvements	Y	UNK	S	N	Bridge Section	Addresses Monitoring only. Bridge improvements and replacements are underway under STIP

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11.7	Increase Hours of Scale Operation	N	UNK	S	N	DOT&PF	Scale data showed 18% of B-Trains weigh more than 162,815 pounds, which prompted posting 80-ton weight limits on Chena Flood Control Bridges. It is unlikely that funding or staffing constraints will allow full time staffing at weight stations. Instead, consider staggering work shifts so that all hours of the day will have coverage at least part of the time.
11.8	Increase Summer and Winter Maintenance and Operations	No Input Asked	Varies	S, M	Y	O&M, STIP	Additional Costs: Summer Pavement M&O- \$4.2M Winter M&O- \$3.5M Winter Facilities- \$3.2M
11.9	Pavement Projects	No Input Asked	\$490M	M, L	Y	STIP	
11.10	Install Variable Speed Limit Signs	N	\$7M	M, L	Y	STIP	Ten-mile spacing on ARS corridor. Continues current project on Richardson Hwy south of Fairbanks.
11.11	Geospatially Map All Pullover Locations and Integrate With ITS	Y	UNK	S, M	Y	STIP	
11.12	Vegetation Clearing to Improve Wildlife Mortality and ADF&G Wildlife Monitoring Alternatives	Y	UNK	S	Y	M&O	ADF&G monitoring would identify increased collisions areas. M&O can provide spot clearing. Reduces wildlife mortality and crashes.

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11.13	Increase Awareness of B-Train Characteristics (and Operational Requirements)	Y	UNK	S	Y	DOT&PF, Kinross	Use public service announcements or advertisements to improve awareness of B-Train operations and promote safety. This could be a Private-public venture.
11.15	Install Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) Devices at Traffic Signals	N	\$0.4M	S	Y	STIP	Systems that dynamically adjust signal timing and prevent red-light-running
11.16	Install Additional Road Weather Information System Stations	Y	\$0.5M	S, M	Y	STIP	One or two additional RWIS stations (Alaska Highway).
11.17	Grants for Emergency Medical Services Resources and Training	Y	UNK	S, M	Y	UNK	

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Thank You