



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Transit
Administration**

REGION X
Alaska, Idaho, Oregon,
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June 3, 2025

William O'Leary
CEO
Alaska Railroad Corporation
PO Box 107500
Anchorage, AK 99510

**Subject: Alaska Railroad Corporation
2025 Right-of-Way Clearing Project
National Environmental Policy Act
Categorical Exclusion Confirmation**

Dear Mr. O'Leary:

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has reviewed the materials Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC) submitted by e-mail on March 27, 2025, and subsequently through May 29, 2025, including an FTA Categorical Exclusion (CE) worksheet and supporting documentation describing the proposed ARRC 2025 Right-of-Way Clearing Project (Project) on the ARRC system in Alaska. FTA understands that the Project activities consist of clearing vegetation on the ARRC mainline track between mileposts 187-195 and 171-173, within the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, Alaska. The Project activities would clear vegetation within the mainline ROW limits (approximately 190-feet out of the typical 200-foot ROW). Hand tools and equipment would be utilized to remove above-ground vegetation, the vegetative mat would not be impacted as a result of this project. Most of these areas have been previously cleared by our regularly scheduled vegetation management program. A contractor will utilize a vegetative buffer of 5-feet to adjacent property owners and a 25-foot buffer from anadromous waterways. Vegetation within the habitat buffer areas will be cut to approximately 3-feet from the surface. Cut material will be mulched and left in place or removed from the buffer zone; large timber may be removed and reused.

The Project would have no effect on any Endangered Species Act-listed species or designated critical habitat, or on any essential fish habitat as outlined in the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. There would be no impact to wetlands or waters of the US and no use of a Section 4(f) resource due to Project activities.

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Project activities are exempt from compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act under Appendix A, Section II. Activity J. Landscaping, Access Roads, and Laydown Areas (2) of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's Program Comment to Exempt Consideration of Effects to Rail Properties Within Rail Right-of-Way, approved on Aug. 17, 2018.

Based on a review of the submitted documentation, FTA has determined that the Project will not result in significant environmental effects, and qualifies as a CE under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) pursuant to 23 CFR Part 771.118(c)8. This determination applies only to the proposed Project as described above and in documentation submitted to FTA on February 21, 2025, and is conditioned on the implementation of the attached mitigation measures. Should the Project scope change or new information on the Project or its potential environmental effects be provided, FTA may require a re-evaluation of the NEPA determination and may withdraw or suspend the CE confirmation or require additional environmental reviews.

This confirmation is not an expressed or implied promise that Federal financial assistance for the Project will be awarded. Please contact me at barney.remington@dot.gov if you have any questions.

Thank you for coordinating with FTA.

Sincerely,

BARNEY RYAN
REMINGTON



Digitally signed by BARNEY
RYAN REMINGTON
Date: 2025.06.03 08:58:24
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Barney Remington
Environmental Protection Specialist

cc: Jeanette Holt, Environmental Analyst II, Alaska Railroad Corporation

Attachment A
Alaska Railroad Corporation
2025 Right of Way Clearing Project
Mitigation Measures

Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC) shall follow all relevant federal, state, and local regulations related to construction and operation of the 2025 Right of Way Clearing Project (Project). ARRC shall implement the following measures to avoid or minimize impacts during both construction and operation:

- General:
 - ARRC or its designated contractor shall obtain necessary permits prior to beginning work.
- Biological Resources:
 - ARRC shall ensure that the USFWS allowable window for clearing activities within forested areas of July 15 through May 1 and for eagles August 31 through March 1 is followed.
 - ARRC shall ensure that a 25-50-ft vegetative habitat buffer for anadromous waterways is followed.