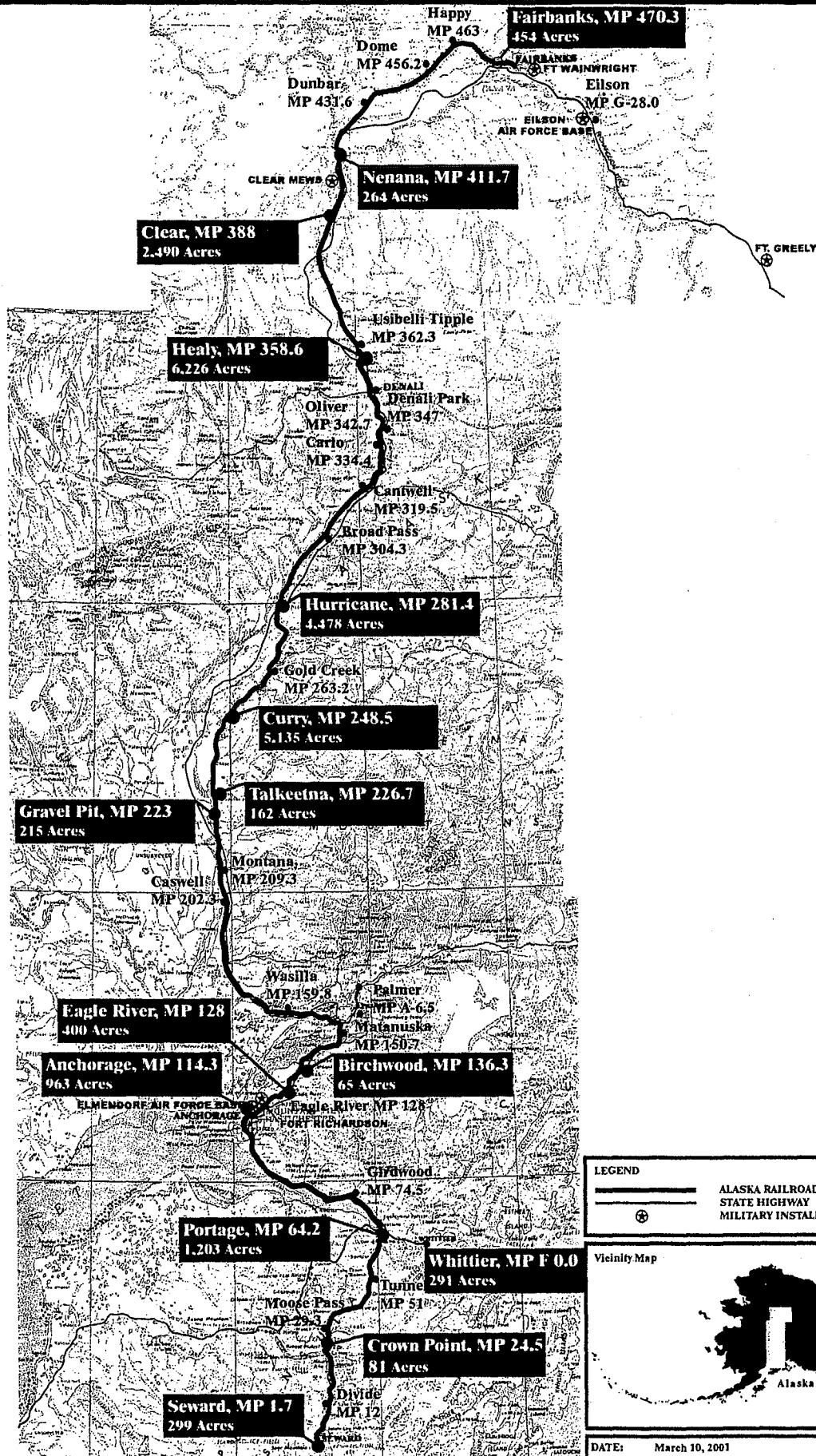




# ALASKA RAILROAD MAJOR LAND RESERVES



**LEGEND**

- ALASKA RAILROAD
- STATE HIGHWAY
- MILITARY INSTALLATION

Vicinity Map

Alaska

DATE: March 10, 2001

John F. Bennett

## 1. History of Railroad

- A. How was the Alaska Railroad Established?
- B. Act of 1914
  - a) Executive Orders (EO')
  - b) Purchase Alaska Central Railroad (Seward to Kern)
  - c) Purchase Tanana Valley Railroad
- C. Railroad Construction
  - a) Alaska Engineering Commission
    - i. Route Selection and Construction Design
    - ii. Built by Contract Labor
- D. Railroad Operations
  - a) Seward to Grandview
  - b) Chickaloon to Anchorage
  - c) Seward to Nenana & Fairbanks to Nenana
- E. Federal Management of the Railroad
  - a) Alaska Engineering Commission – Department of Interior
  - b) War Department (Department of Defense) during WWII
  - c) Department of Transportation (until sold to State)
- F. The Alaska Railroad Transfers to State Ownership
  - a) Federal Legislation Authorized to sell Alaska Railroad
  - b) Federal Requirements to Transfer Railroad Lands
    - a. Interim Conveyances
    - b. Exclusive Licenses
    - c. Exclusive Use Easements
    - d. New US Surveys
    - e. Quiet Claim Deed
    - f. Patents
  - c) State Legislation Authorizing Purchase of Railroad (ARTA)
    - i. New "Alaska Railroad Corporation" (ARRC)
    - ii. ARRC is a State owned Corporation to be managed as a private entity
      - a. Railroad lands to be managed by ARRC
      - b. Land can not be sold without special legislative approval

## MAJOR EVENTS IN THE LIFE OF THE ALASKA RAILROAD

- March 12, 1914 The U.S. Congress agrees to fund construction and operation of a railroad from Seward to Fairbanks. Estimated construction cost - \$35 million.
- June, 1915 Anchorage is created as a railroad construction town along Ship Creek where the railroad moves its headquarters from Seward.
- 1917 Railroad construction crews peak at 4,500 workers
- July 15, 1923 President Warren C. Harding drives the golden spike in ceremonies at Nenana, one of the state's largest cities.
- 1927 Annual deficits decline to less than \$1 million for the first time.
- 1930 A combined population of 5,400 people in Seward, Anchorage and Fairbanks, the three towns of any size along the railbelt, is unable to generate enough business to make the railroad profitable.
- 1938 Under the management of Col. Otto F. Ohlson, The Alaska Railroad operates its first profitable year. Since that year, Congress has never had to appropriate money for operations.
- 1940-44 World War 11 brings large profits from hauling military and civilian supplies and materials.
- 1944 Whittier opens as a second port. Diesel locomotives begin to replace steam engines, a process completed in 1966 when the last steam engine was sold.
- Post War Congress approves \$100 million rehabilitation program.
- October 18, 1947 The inaugural run of the AuRoRa, a blue and gold streamliner, marks upgraded passenger service between Anchorage and Fairbanks.
- 1953 Competition from roads forces passenger service from Seward to be discontinued. Extensive track rehabilitation completed.

- May, 1962 First car-barge service established at Whittier, followed by train-ship service in June, 1964. These services enable rail cars from any point along The Alaska Railroad.
- April 25, 1963 President John F. Kennedy signs executive order making the Alaska Railroad tariff rates subject to the authority of the Interstate Commerce Commission.
- March 27, 1964 Railroad damage from the great earthquake estimated at \$30 million. Freight service from Anchorage to Fairbanks is restored by April 6, passenger service is back on line April 11 and freight service to Whittier is underway April 20.
- April, 1967 Control of The Alaska Railroad passes from the Secretary of the Interior to the Secretary of Transportation
- January 14, 1983 President Ronald Reagan signs into law legislation authorizing transfer of The Alaska Railroad to the State of Alaska.
- April 20, 1983 Dedication of a new rail barge doubles the Canadian National Aqua-Train rail capacity to Alaska from Prince Rupert, B.C. The new barge- carries 56 cars per trip.
- July 15, 1983 The Secretary of Transportation Elizabeth Dole and Governor Bill Sheffield sign a report detailing the Alaska Railroad's property, assets and liabilities to be transferred to the State.
- September 3, 1983 The U.S. Railway Association sets the fair market value of The Alaska Railroad at \$22.3 million.
- May, 1984 Alaska legislature authorizes Sheffield to negotiate with government on the terms of Railroad's transfer to the State.
- July 5, 1984 Governor Bill Sheffield signs legislation establishing the quasi-public Alaska Railroad Corporation and its seven-member board of directors.
- January 5, 1985 The Alaska Railroad becomes the property of the State of Alaska in transfer ceremonies held in Nenana.