

E1-18458



"Starzak, Richard"
<RStarzak@icfi.com>
10/26/2010 12:15 PM

To Martin Buser <buserdog@mtaonline.net>
cc "Summerville, Alan" <ASummerville@icfi.com>,
"David.Navecky@stb.dot.gov"
<David.Navecky@stb.dot.gov>, "Wallis, Jennifer"
bcc

Subject RE: more thoughts

Hi Martin,
Thanks, it was a pleasure to chat with you before the meeting and to hear your views during the meeting. I think your thoughts below could be a good potential solution to maintain long trails until there is a safe crossing point. This would be an excellent topic to bring up when we have our working group under the PA. Even though there would be only two trains per day, safety is of the utmost importance, and crossing tracks is always a dangerous problem. Once we know which alignment is selected, we can take a close look at the trail use along that route, and try to figure out the best way to keep the historic character of the trails and maintain the traditional dog sledding use in a safe manner. In your suggestion, were you thinking the trails would be within the railroad right-of-way or just graded by the railroad? Also, if the trails are close to the tracks, would train noise "spook" the dogs, or are they so focused on their work that they just ignore the train?

Rick

Rick Starzak
ICF International
213 627-5376 x 222

-----Original Message-----

From: Martin Buser [mailto:buserdog@mtaonline.net]
Sent: Tuesday, October 26, 2010 8:39 AM
To: Starzak, Richard
Subject: more thoughts

Moose and Dogs.

Richard, thanks for inviting me to the little gathering last week. I had a couple of thoughts on the rail road corridor since:

I am aware of a few accidents over the year between dog teams and trains. One was in Nenana where a whole dog team got run over by a train (Joe Runyan's dogs) and several incidents occurred between Hurricane and Talkeetna over the years.

Those were the days when the rail corridor was the only ribbon of possible travel for some of the very remote residents. We all know the rail corridor is not supposed to be traveled on, but reality is that people live there because of the rail road.

I think times have changed and moose are to thank for. I'm sure you are aware of the "moose coalition" or something like that. In recent years, they opened up trails on either side of the tracks. They even groom the "trails" so moose have alternate routes on either side of the tracks. This has cut the moose fatalities drastically and has helped the local people to travel safe to their remote lands.

I think the same idea will work with the rail spur in our neck of the woods.

Feel free to call me if you need more information and or have questions. My direct (and somewhat private) number is 355 7898

Happy Trails

Martin