

***Alaska Trappers Association  
PO Box 82177  
Fairbanks, AK 99708***

EI-16381

Rec'd 2/10/09

**Mr. David Navecky  
STB Finance Document No. 34658  
Surface Transportation Board  
395 "E" Street NW  
Washington, DC 20423-0001**

**1/30/09**

**Mr. Navecky:**

**We wish to comment on the proposed extension of the Alaska Railroad from North Pole to Delta Junction.**

**We've been informed that if the ARR proposal is approved, they will own title to the corridor where the tracks are placed. As owner, they will be allowed to prohibit travel across the corridor. Many trappers live along the Richardson Highway on the north side of the Tanana River, and trap on the Tanana Flats which lie south of the River (and south of the proposed corridor). Travel restrictions which may be implemented by ARR could dramatically interfere with established trapping activities. Establishment of a small number of approved crossing locations would not be acceptable. Trappers need easy access to the Flats without driving an unreasonable distance for that purpose.**

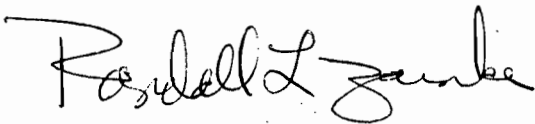
**We've also been informed that the proposed railbed could be elevated a substantial height above existing terrain. Sides of the railbed would be steep. This situation would present a danger to any snow-machines which attempt to cross the proposed elevated railbed.**

**We recommend that the railbed be constructed in such a manner to allow safe crossing by snow-machines.**

**We also question the statement on page S-16 of the Draft EIS that the lynx is a "BLM-listed ... Special Status Species." It took hours to track down the origin and meaning of this phrase. Nobody with the local BLM office or the Alaska Dept of Fish & Game was able to explain it. As close as we can determine this "Special Status" designation was assigned by some group from the Lower 48 and adopted by some new organization affiliated with the university in Anchorage.**

**This designation has no basis in fact. The lynx is an common furbearer in Alaska. Populations increase and decrease in a predictable manner (based on the availability of their primary prey) as they have since time immemorial and will continue to do so into the indefinite future. They deserve no special designation from BLM or any other governmental agency. By including this phrase in your EIS, you given credence to this unjustified status. We hereby request that the section pertaining to lynx as a "Special Status Species" be deleted from the EIS.**

**Sincerely,**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Randall L. Zarnke". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Randall" and last name "Zarnke" clearly distinguishable.

**Randall L. Zarnke, president**