



**ALASKA RAILROAD  
TRANSFER ACT  
("ARTA")**

**UNITED STATES CODE  
TITLE 45  
CHAPTER 21**

[June 2005]

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# UNITED STATES CODE

## TITLE 45 - RAILROADS

### CHAPTER 21 - ALASKA RAILROAD TRANSFER

#### 1201. FINDINGS

The Congress finds that--

(1) the Alaska Railroad, which was built by the Federal Government to serve the transportation and development needs of the Territory of Alaska, presently is providing freight and passenger services that primarily benefit residents and businesses in the State of Alaska;

(2) many communities and individuals in Alaska are wholly or substantially dependent on the Alaska Railroad for freight and passenger service and provision of such service is an essential governmental function;

(3) continuation of services of the Alaska Railroad and the opportunity for future expansion of those services are necessary to achieve Federal, State, and private objectives; however, continued Federal control and financial support are no longer necessary to accomplish these objectives;

(4) the transfer of the Alaska Railroad and provision for its operation by the State in the manner contemplated by this chapter is made pursuant to the Federal goal and ongoing program of transferring appropriate activities to the States;

(5) the State's continued operation of the Alaska Railroad following the transfer contemplated by this chapter, together with such expansion of the railroad as may be necessary or convenient in the future, will constitute an appropriate public use of the rail system and associated properties, will provide an essential governmental service, and will promote the general welfare of Alaska's residents and visitors; and

(6) in order to give the State government the ability to determine the Alaska Railroad's role in serving the State's transportation needs in the future, including the opportunity to extend rail service, and to provide a savings to the Federal Government, the Federal Government should offer to transfer the railroad to the State, in accordance with the provisions of this chapter, in the same manner in which other Federal transportation functions (including highways and airports) have been transferred since Alaska became a State in 1959.

(Pub.L. 97-468, Title VI, §602, Jan. 14, 1983, 96 Stat. 2556)

**[Editor's Note:** §601 of Pub.L. 97-468 provided that "This title may be cited as the Alaska Railroad Transfer Act of 1982."]

## **1202. DEFINITIONS**

As used in this chapter, the term--

(1) "Alaska Railroad" means the agency of the United States Government that is operated by the Department of Transportation as a rail carrier in Alaska under authority of the Act of March 12, 1914 (43 U.S.C. 975 et seq.) (popularly referred to as the "Alaska Railroad Act") and section 6(i) of the Department of Transportation Act, or, as the context requires, the railroad operated by that agency;

(2) "Alaska Railroad Revolving Fund" means the public enterprise fund maintained by the Department of the Treasury into which revenues of the Alaska Railroad and appropriations for the Alaska Railroad are deposited, and from which funds are expended for Alaska Railroad operation, maintenance and construction work authorized by law;

(3) "claim of valid existing rights" means any claim to the rail properties of the Alaska Railroad on record in the Department of the Interior as of January 13, 1983;

(4) "date of transfer" means the date on which the Secretary delivers to the State the four documents referred to in section 1203(b)(1) of this title;

(5) "employees" means all permanent personnel employed by the Alaska Railroad on the date of transfer, including the officers of the Alaska Railroad, unless otherwise indicated in this chapter;

(6) "exclusive-use easement" means an easement which affords to the easement holder the following:

(A) the exclusive right to use, possess, and enjoy the surface estate of the land subject to this easement for transportation, communication, and transmission purposes and for support functions associated with such purposes;

(B) the right to use so much of the subsurface estate of the lands subject to this easement as is necessary for the transportation, communication, and transmission purposes and associated support functions for which the surface of such lands is used;

(C) subjacent and lateral support of the lands subject to the easement; and

(D) the right (in the easement holder's discretion) to fence all or part of the lands subject to this easement and to affix track, fixtures, and structures to such lands and to exclude other persons from all or part of such lands;

(7) "Native Corporation" has the same meaning as such term has under section 102(6) of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 3102(6));

(8) "officers of the Alaska Railroad" means the employees occupying the following positions at the Alaska Railroad as of the day before the date of transfer: General Manager; Assistant General Manager; Assistant to the General Manager; Chief of Administration; and Chief Counsel;

(9) "public lands" has the same meaning as such term has under section 3(e) of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1602(e));

(10) "rail properties of the Alaska Railroad" means all right, title, and interest of the United States to lands, buildings, facilities, machinery, equipment, supplies, records, rolling stock, trade names, accounts receivable, goodwill, and other real and personal property, both tangible and intangible, in which there is an interest reserved, withdrawn, appropriated, owned, administered or otherwise held or validly claimed for the Alaska Railroad by the United States or any agency or instrumentality thereof as of January 14, 1983, but excluding any such properties disposed of, and including any such properties acquired, in the ordinary course of business after that date but before the date of transfer, and also including the exclusive-use easement within the Denali National Park and Preserve conveyed to the State pursuant to this chapter and also excluding the following:

(A) the unexercised reservation to the United States for future rights-of-way required in all patents for land taken up, entered, or located in Alaska, as provided by the Act of March 12, 1914 (43 U.S.C. 975 et seq.);

(B) the right of the United States to exercise the power of eminent domain;

(C) any moneys in the Alaska Railroad Revolving Fund which the Secretary demonstrates, in consultation with the State, are unobligated funds appropriated from general tax revenues or are needed to satisfy obligations incurred by the United States in connection with the operation of the Alaska Railroad which would have been paid from such Fund but for this chapter and which are not assumed by the State pursuant to this chapter;

(D) any personal property which the Secretary demonstrates, in consultation with the State, prior to the date of transfer under section 1203 of this title, to be necessary to carry out functions of the United States after the date of transfer; and

(E) any lands or interest therein (except as specified in this chapter) within the boundaries of the Denali National Park and Preserve;

(11) "right-of-way" means, except as used in section 1208 of this title--

(A) an area extending not less than one hundred feet on both sides of the center line of any main line or branch line of the Alaska Railroad; or

(B) an area extending on both sides of the center line of any main line or branch line of the Alaska Railroad appropriated or retained by or for the Alaska Railroad that, as a result of military jurisdiction over, or non-Federal ownership of, lands abutting the main line or branch line, is of a width less than that described in subparagraph (A) of this paragraph;

(12) "Secretary" means the Secretary of Transportation;

(13) "State" means the State of Alaska or the State-owned railroad, as the context requires;

(14) "State-owned railroad" means the authority, agency, corporation or other entity which the State of Alaska designates or contracts with to own, operate or manage the rail properties of the Alaska Railroad or, as the context requires, the railroad owned, operated, or managed by such authority, agency, corporation, or other entity; and

(15) "Village Corporation" has the same meaning as such term has under section 3(j) of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1602(j)).

(Pub.L. 97-468, Title VI, §603, Jan. 14, 1983, 96 Stat. 2556)

## **1203. TRANSFER AUTHORIZATION**

### **(a) Authority of Secretary; time, manner, etc., of transfer**

Subject to the provisions of this chapter, the United States, through the Secretary, shall transfer all rail properties of the Alaska Railroad to the State. Such transfer shall occur as soon as practicable after the Secretary has made the certifications required by subsection (d) of this section and shall be accomplished in the manner specified in subsection (b) of this section.

**(b) Simultaneous and interim transfers, conveyances, etc.**

(1) On the date of transfer, the Secretary shall simultaneously:

(A) deliver to the State a bill of sale conveying title to all rail properties of the Alaska Railroad except any interest in real property;

(B) deliver to the State an interim conveyance of the rail properties of the Alaska Railroad that are not conveyed pursuant to subparagraph (A) of this paragraph and are not subject to unresolved claims of valid existing rights;

(C) deliver to the State an exclusive license granting the State the right to use all rail properties of the Alaska Railroad not conveyed pursuant to subparagraphs (A) or (B) of this paragraph pending conveyances in accordance with the review and settlement or final administrative adjudication of claims of valid existing rights;

(D) convey to the State a deed granting the State (i) an exclusive-use easement for that portion of the right-of-way of the Alaska Railroad within the Denali National Park and Preserve extending not less than one hundred feet on either side of the main or branch line tracks, and eight feet on either side of the centerline of the "Y" track connecting the main line of the railroad to the power station at McKinley Park Station and (ii) title to railroad-related improvements within such right-of-way.

Prior to taking the action specified in subparagraphs (A) through (D) of this paragraph, the Secretary shall consult with the Secretary of the Interior. The exclusive-use easement granted pursuant to subparagraph (D) of this paragraph and all rights afforded by such easement shall be exercised only for railroad purposes, and for such other transportation, transmission, or communication purposes for which lands subject to such easement were utilized as of January 14, 1983.

(2) The Secretary shall deliver to the State an interim conveyance of rail properties of the Alaska Railroad described in paragraph (1)(C) of this subsection that become available for conveyance to the State after the date of transfer as a result of settlement, relinquishment, or final administrative adjudication pursuant to section 1205 of this title. Where the rail properties to be conveyed pursuant to this paragraph are surveyed at the time they become available for conveyance to the State, the Secretary shall deliver a patent therefor in lieu of an interim conveyance.

(3) The force and effect of an interim conveyance made pursuant to paragraphs (1) (B) or (2) of this subsection shall be to convey to and vest in the State exactly the same right, title, and interest in and to the rail properties identified therein as the State would have received had it been issued a patent by the United States. The Secretary of the Interior shall survey the land conveyed by an interim conveyance to the State pursuant to paragraphs (1)(B) or (2) of this subsection and, upon completion of the survey, the

Secretary shall issue a patent therefor.

(4) The license granted pursuant to paragraph (1)(C) of this subsection shall authorize the State to use, occupy, and directly receive all benefits of the rail properties described in the license for the operation of the State-owned railroad in conformity with the Memorandum of Understanding referred to in section 1205(b)(3) of this title. The license shall be exclusive, subject only to valid leases, permits, and other instruments issued before the date of transfer and easements reserved pursuant to subsection (c)(2) of this section. With respect to any parcel conveyed pursuant to this chapter, the license shall terminate upon conveyance of such parcel.

**(c) Reservations to United States in interim conveyances and patents**

(1) Interim conveyances and patents issued to the State pursuant to subsection (b) of this section shall confirm, convey and vest in the State all reservations to the United States (whether or not expressed in a particular patent or document of title), except the unexercised reservations to the United States for future rights-of-way made or required by the first section of the Act of March 12, 1914 (43 U.S.C. 975d). The conveyance to the State of such reservations shall not be affected by the repeal of such Act under section 615 of this title.

(2) In the license granted under subsection (b)(1)(C) of this section and in all conveyances made to the State under this chapter, there shall be reserved to the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Agriculture, as appropriate, existing easements for administration (including agency transportation and utility purposes) that are identified in the report required by section 1204(a) of this title. The appropriate Secretary may obtain, only after consent of the State, such future easements as are necessary for administration. Existing and future easements and use of such easements shall not interfere with operations and support functions of the State-owned railroad.

(3) There shall be reserved to the Secretary of the Interior the right to use and occupy, without compensation, five thousand square feet of land at Talkeetna, Alaska, as described in ARR lease numbered 69-25-0003-5165 for National Park Service administrative activities, so long as the use or occupation does not interfere with the operation of the State-owned railroad. This reservation shall be effective on the date of transfer under this section or the expiration date of such lease, whichever is later.

**(d) Certifications by Secretary; scope, subject matter, etc.**

(1) Prior to the date of transfer, the Secretary shall certify that the State has agreed to operate the railroad as a rail carrier in intrastate and interstate commerce.

(2)(A) Prior to the date of transfer, the Secretary shall also certify that the State has agreed to assume all rights, liabilities, and obligations of the Alaska Railroad on the date of transfer, including leases, permits, licenses, contracts, agreements, claims, tariffs, accounts receivable, and accounts payable, except as otherwise provided by this chapter.

(B) Notwithstanding the provisions of subparagraph (A) of this paragraph, the United States shall be solely responsible for--

(i) all claims and causes of action against the Alaska Railroad that accrue on or before the date of transfer, regardless of the date on which legal proceedings asserting such claims were or may be filed, except that the United States shall, in the case of any tort claim, only be responsible for any such claim against the United States that accrues before the date of transfer and results in an award, compromise, or settlement of more than \$2,500, and the United States shall not compromise or settle any claim resulting in State liability without the consent of the State, which consent shall not be unreasonably withheld; and

(ii) all claims that resulted in a judgment or award against the Alaska Railroad before the date of transfer.

(C) For purposes of subparagraph (B) of this paragraph, the term "accrue" shall have the meaning contained in section 2401 of Title 28.

(D) Any hazardous substance, petroleum or other contaminant release at or from the State-owned rail properties that began prior to January 5, 1985, shall be and remain the liability of the United States for damages and for the costs of investigation and cleanup. Such liability shall be enforceable under 42 U.S.C. 9601 et seq. for any release described in the preceding sentence.

(3)(A) Prior to the date of transfer, the Secretary shall also certify that the State-owned railroad has established arrangements pursuant to section 1206 of this title to protect the employment interests of employees of the Alaska Railroad during the two-year period commencing on the date of transfer. These arrangements shall include provisions--

(i) which ensure that the State-owned railroad will adopt collective bargaining agreements in accordance with the provisions of subparagraph (B) of this paragraph;

(ii) for the retention of all employees, other than officers of the Alaska Railroad, who elect to transfer to the State-owned railroad in their same positions for the two-year period commencing on the date of transfer, except in cases of reassignment, separation for cause, resignation, retirement, or lack of work;

(iii) for the payment of compensation to transferred employees (other than

employees provided for in subparagraph (E) of this paragraph), except in cases of separation for cause, resignation, retirement, or lack of work, for two years commencing on the date of transfer at or above the base salary levels in effect for such employees on the date of transfer, unless the parties otherwise agree during that two-year period;

(iv) for priority of reemployment at the State-owned railroad during the two-year period commencing on the date of transfer for transferred employees who are separated for lack of work, in accordance with subparagraph (C) of this paragraph (except for officers of the Alaska Railroad, who shall receive such priority for one year following the date of transfer);

(v) for credit during the two-year period commencing on the date of transfer for accrued annual and sick leave, seniority rights, and relocation and turnaround travel allowances which have been accrued during their period of Federal employment by transferred employees retained by the State-owned railroad (except for officers of the Alaska Railroad, who shall receive such credit for one year following the date of transfer);

(vi) for payment to transferred employees retained by the State-owned railroad during the two-year period commencing on the date of transfer, including for one year officers retained or separated under subparagraph (E) of this paragraph, of an amount equivalent to the cost-of-living allowance to which they are entitled as Federal employees on the day before the date of transfer, in accordance with the provisions of subparagraph (D) of this paragraph; and

(vii) for health and life insurance programs for transferred employees retained by the State-owned railroad during the two-year period commencing on the date of transfer, substantially equivalent to the Federal health and life insurance programs available to employees on the day before the date of transfer (except for officers of the Alaska Railroad, who shall receive such credit for one year following the date of transfer).

(B) The State-owned railroad shall adopt all collective bargaining agreements which are in effect on the date of transfer. Such agreements shall continue in effect for the two-year period commencing on the date of transfer, unless the parties agree to the contrary before the expiration of that two-year period. Such agreements shall be renegotiated during the two-year period, unless the parties agree to the contrary. Any labor-management negotiation impasse declared before the date of transfer shall be settled in accordance with chapter 71 of Title 5. Any impasse declared after the date of transfer shall be subject to applicable State law.

(C) Federal service shall be included in the computation of seniority for transferred employees with priority for reemployment, as provided in subparagraph (A)(iv) of this paragraph.

(D) Payment to transferred employees pursuant to subparagraph (A)(vi) of this paragraph shall not exceed the percentage of any transferred employee's base salary level provided by the United States as a cost-of-living allowance on the day before the date of transfer, unless the parties agree to the contrary.

(E) Prior to the date of transfer, the Secretary shall also certify that the State-owned railroad has agreed to the retention, for at least one year from the date of transfer, of the offices of the Alaska Railroad, except in cases of separation for cause, resignation, retirement, or lack of work, at or above their base salaries in effect on the date of transfer, in such positions as the State-owned railroad may determine; or to the payment of lump-sum severance pay in an amount equal to such base salary for one year to officers not retained by the State-owned railroad upon transfer or, for officers separated within one year on or after the date of transfer, of a portion of such lump-sum severance payment (diminished pro rata for employment by the State-owned railroad within one year of the date of transfer prior to separation).

(4) Prior to the date of transfer, the Secretary shall also certify that the State has agreed to allow representatives of the Secretary adequate access to employees and records of the Alaska Railroad when needed for the performance of functions related to the period of Federal ownership.

(5) Prior to the date of transfer, the Secretary shall also certify that the State has agreed to compensate the United States at the value, if any, determined pursuant to section 1204(d) of this title.

(Pub.L. 97-468, Title VI, §604, Jan. 14, 1983, 96 Stat. 2556)

**[Editor's Note:** §(b)(1) was amended in 2003 to delete reference to reversion, see §1209 below. §(d)(2)(D) was added in 2004 by Pub.L. 108-447, Div. H, §152.]

## **1204. TRANSITION PERIOD**

### **(a) Joint report by Secretary and Governor of Alaska; contents, preparation, etc.**

Within 6 months after January 14, 1983, the Secretary and the Governor of Alaska shall jointly prepare and deliver to the Congress of the United States and the legislature of the State a report that describes to the extent possible the rail properties of the Alaska Railroad, the liabilities and obligations to be assumed by the State, the sum of money, if any, in the Alaska Railroad Revolving Fund to be withheld from the State pursuant to section 1202(10)(C) of this title, and any personal property to be withheld pursuant to section 1202(10)(D) of this title. The report shall separately identify by the

best available descriptions (1) the rail properties of the Alaska Railroad to be transferred pursuant to section 1203(b)(1)(A), (B), and (D) of this title; (2) the rail properties to be subject to the license granted pursuant to section 1203(b)(1)(C) of this title; and (3) the easements to be reserved pursuant to section 1203(c)(2) of this title. The Secretaries of Agriculture, Defense, and the Interior and the Administrator of the General Services Administration shall provide the Secretary with all information and assistance necessary to allow the Secretary to complete the report within the time required.

**(b) Inspection, etc., of rail properties and records; terms and conditions; fiscal restrictions**

During the period from January 14, 1983, until the date of transfer, the State shall have the right to inspect, analyze, photograph, photocopy and otherwise evaluate all of the rail properties of the Alaska Railroad and all records related to the rail properties of the Alaska Railroad maintained by any agency of the United States under conditions established by the Secretary to protect the confidentiality of proprietary business data, personnel records, and other information, the public disclosure of which is prohibited by law. During that period, the Secretary and the Alaska Railroad shall not, without the consent of the State and only in conformity with applicable law and the Memorandum of Understanding referred to in section 1205(b)(3) of this title--

- (1) make or incur any obligation to make any individual capital expenditure of money from the Alaska Railroad Revolving Fund in excess of \$300,000;
- (2) (except as required by law) sell, exchange, give, or otherwise transfer any real property included in the rail properties of the Alaska Railroad; or
- (3) lease any rail property of the Alaska Railroad for a term in excess of five years.

**(c) Format for accounting practices and systems**

Prior to transfer of the rail properties of the Alaska Railroad to the State, the Alaska Railroad's accounting practices and systems shall be capable of reporting data to the Interstate Commerce Commission in formats required of comparable rail carriers subject to the jurisdiction of the Interstate Commerce Commission.

**(d) Fair market value; determination, terms and conditions, etc.**

(1) Within nine months after January 14, 1983, the United States Railway Association (hereinafter in this section referred to as the "Association") shall determine the fair market value of the Alaska Railroad under the terms and conditions of this chapter, applying such procedures, methods and standards as are generally accepted as normal and common practice. Such determination shall include an appraisal of the real and personal property to be transferred to the State pursuant to this chapter. Such appraisal by the Association shall be conducted in the usual manner in accordance with

generally accepted industry standards, and shall consider the current fair market value and potential future value if used in whole or in part for other purposes. The Association shall take into account all obligations imposed by this chapter and other applicable law upon operation and ownership of the State-owned railroad. In making such determination, the Association shall use to the maximum extent practicable all relevant data and information, including, if relevant, that contained in the report prepared pursuant to subsection (a) of this section.

(2) The determination made pursuant to paragraph (1) of this subsection shall not be construed to affect, enlarge, modify, or diminish any inventory, valuation, or classification required by the Interstate Commerce Commission pursuant to subchapter V of chapter 107 of Title 49.

(Pub.L. 97-468, Title VI, §605(a) - (d), Jan. 14, 1983, 96 Stat. 2556)

## **1205. LANDS TO BE TRANSFERRED**

### **(a) Availability of lands among the rail properties**

Lands among the rail properties of the Alaska Railroad shall not be--

(1) available for selection under section 12 of the Act of January 2, 1976, as amended (43 U.S.C. 1611, note), subject to the exception contained in section 12(b)(8)(i)(D) of such Act, as amended by subsection (d)(5) of this section;

(2) available for conveyance under section 1425 of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (Public Law 96-487; 94 Stat. 2515);

(3) available for conveyance to Chugach Natives, Inc., under sections 1429 or 1430 of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (Public Law 96-487; 94 Stat. 2531) or under sections 12(c) or 14(h)(8) of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1611(c) and 1613(h)(8), respectively); or

(4) available under any law or regulation for entry, location, or for exchange by the United States, or for the initiation of a claim or selection by any party other than the State or other transferee under this chapter, except that this paragraph shall not prevent a conveyance pursuant to section 12(b)(8)(i)(D) of the Act of January 2, 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1611, note), as amended by subsection (d)(5) of this section.

### **(b) Review and settlement of claims; administrative adjudication process; management of lands; procedures applicable**

(1)(A) During the ten months following January 14, 1983, so far as practicable

consistent with the priority of preparing the report required pursuant to section 1204(a) of this title, the Secretary of the Interior, Village Corporations with claims of valid existing rights, and the State shall review and make a good faith effort to settle as many of the claims as possible. Any agreement to settle such claims shall take effect and bind the United States, the State, and the Village Corporation only as of the date of transfer of the railroad.

(B) At the conclusion of the review and settlement process provided in subparagraph (A) of this paragraph, the Secretary of the Interior shall prepare a report identifying lands to be conveyed in accordance with settlement agreements under this chapter or applicable law. Such settlement shall not give rise to a presumption as to whether a parcel of land subject to such agreement is or is not public land.

(2) The Secretary of the Interior shall have the continuing jurisdiction and duty to adjudicate unresolved claims of valid existing rights pursuant to applicable law and this chapter. The Secretary of the Interior shall complete the final administrative adjudication required under this subsection not later than three years after January 14, 1983, and shall complete the survey of all lands to be conveyed under this chapter not later than five years after January 14, 1983, and after consulting with the Governor of the State of Alaska to determine priority of survey with regard to other lands being processed for patent to the State. The Secretary of the Interior shall give priority to the adjudication of Village Corporation claims as required in this section. Upon completion of the review and settlement process required by paragraph (1)(A) of this subsection, with respect to lands not subject to an agreement under such paragraph, the Secretary of the Interior shall adjudicate which lands subject to claims of valid existing rights filed by Village Corporations, if any, are public lands and shall complete such final administrative adjudication within two years after January 14, 1983.

(3) Pending settlement or final administrative adjudication of claims of valid existing rights filed by Village Corporations prior to the date of transfer or while subject to the license granted to the State pursuant to section 1203(b)(1)(C) of this title, lands subject to such claims shall be managed in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding among the Federal Railroad Administration, the State, Eklutna, Incorporated, Cook Inlet Region, Incorporated (as that term is used in section 12 of the Act of January 2, 1976 (Public Law 94-204; 89 Stat. 1150)), and Toghottthele Corporation, executed by authorized officers or representatives of each of these entities. Duplicate originals of the Memorandum of Understanding shall be maintained and made available for public inspection and copying in the Office of the Secretary, at Washington, District of Columbia, and in the Office of the Governor of the State of Alaska, at Juneau, Alaska.

(4) The following procedures and requirements are established to promote finality of administrative adjudication of claims of valid existing rights filed by Village Corporations, to clarify and simplify the title status of lands subject to such claims, and to avoid potential impairment of railroad operations resulting from joint or divided ownership in substantial segments of right-of-way:

(A)(i) Prior to final administrative adjudication of Village Corporation claims of valid existing rights in land subject to the license granted under section 1203(b)(1)(C) of this title, the Secretary of the Interior may, notwithstanding any other provision of law, accept relinquishment of so much of such claims as involved lands within the right-of-way through execution of an agreement with the appropriate Village Corporation effective on or after the date of transfer. Upon such relinquishment, the interest of the United States in the right-of-way shall be conveyed to the State pursuant to section 1203(b)(1)(B) or (2) of this title.

(ii) With respect to a claim described in clause (i) of this subparagraph that is not settled or relinquished prior to final administrative adjudication, the Congress finds that exclusive control over the right-of-way by the Alaska Railroad has been and continues to be necessary to afford sufficient protection for safe and economic operation of the railroad. Upon failure of the interested Village Corporation to relinquish so much of its claims as involve lands within the right-of-way prior to final adjudication of valid existing rights, the Secretary shall convey to the State pursuant to section 1203(b)(1)(B) or (2) of this title all right, title and interest of the United States in and to the right-of-way free and clear of such Village Corporation's claim to and interest in lands within such right-of-way.

(B) Where lands within the right-of-way, or any interest in such lands, have been conveyed from Federal ownership prior to January 14, 1983, or is subject to a claim of valid existing rights by a party other than a Village Corporation, the conveyance to the State of the Federal interest in such properties pursuant to section 1203(b)(1)(B) or (2) of this title shall grant not less than an exclusive-use easement in such properties. The foregoing requirements shall not be construed to permit the conveyance to the State of less than the entire Federal interest in the rail properties of the Alaska Railroad required to be conveyed by section 1203(b) of this title. If an action is commenced against the State or the United States contesting the validity or existence of a reservation of right-of-way for the use or benefit of the Alaska Railroad made prior to January 14, 1983, the Secretary of the Interior, through the Attorney General, shall appear in and defend such action.

**(c) Judicial review; remedies available; standing of State**

(1) The final administrative adjudication pursuant to subsection (b) of this section shall be final agency action and subject to judicial review only by an action brought in the United States District Court for the District of Alaska.

(2) No administrative or judicial action under this chapter shall enjoin or otherwise delay the transfer of the Alaska Railroad pursuant to this chapter, or substantially impair or impede the operations of the Alaska Railroad or the State-owned railroad.

(3) Before the date of transfer, the State shall have standing to participate in any administrative determination or judicial review pursuant to this chapter. If transfer to the State does not occur pursuant to section 1203 of this title, the State shall not thereafter have standing to participate in any such determination or review.

**(d) Omitted** [amended various Native claim statutes, see 43 U.S.C. §1611 note]

**(e) Liability of State for damage to land while used under license**

The State shall be liable to a party receiving a conveyance of land among the rail properties of the Alaska Railroad subject to the license granted pursuant to section 1203(b)(1)(C) of this title for damage resulting from use by the State of the land under such license in a manner not authorized by such license.

(Pub.L. 97-468, Title VI, §606(a) - (c), (e), Jan. 14, 1983, 96 Stat. 2556)

**[Editor's Note:** §(c)(1) amended in 1984 to delete reference to expedited review as if under ANILCA, see Pub.L. 98-620, §402(52).]

**1206. EMPLOYEES OF ALASKA RAILROAD**

**(a) Coverage under Federal civil service retirement laws; election, funding, nature of benefits, etc., for employees transferring to State-owned railroad; voluntary separation incentives**

(1) Any employees who elect to transfer to the State-owned railroad and who on the day before the date of transfer are subject to the civil service retirement law (subchapter III of chapter 83 of Title 5) shall, so long as continually employed by the State-owned railroad without a break in service, continue to be subject to such law, except that the State-owned railroad shall have the option of providing benefits in accordance with the provisions of paragraph (2) of this subsection. Employment by the State-owned railroad without a break in continuity of service shall be considered to be employment by the United States Government for purposes of subchapter III of chapter 83 of Title 5. The State-owned railroad shall be the employing agency for purposes of section 8334(a) of Title 5 and shall contribute to the Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund a sum as provided by such section, except that such sum shall be determined by applying to the total basic pay (as defined in section 8331(3) of Title 5) paid to the employees of the State-owned railroad who are covered by the civil service retirement law, the per centum rate determined annually by the Director of the Office of Personnel Management to be the excess of the total normal cost per centum rate of the civil service retirement system over the employee deduction rate specified in section 8334(a) of Title 5. The State-owned railroad shall pay into the Federal Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund that portion of the cost of administration of such Fund which is demonstrated by the Director of the Office of Personnel Management to be

attributable to its employees.

(2) At any time during the two-year period commencing on the date of transfer, the State-owned railroad shall have the option of providing to transferred employees retirement benefits, reflecting prior Federal service, in or substantially equivalent to benefits under the retirement program maintained by the State for State employees. If the State decides to provide benefits under this paragraph, the State shall provide such benefits to all transferred employees, except those employees who will meet the age and service requirements for retirement under section 8336(a), (b), (c) or (f) of Title 5 within five years after the date of transfer and who elect to remain participants in the Federal retirement program.

(3) If the State provides benefits under paragraph (2) of this subsection--

(A) the provisions of paragraph (1) of this subsection regarding payments into the Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund for those employees who are transferred to the State program shall have no further force and effect (other than for employees who will meet the age and service requirements for retirement under section 8336(a), (b), (c) or (f) of Title 5 within five years after the date of transfer and who elect to remain participants in the Federal retirement program); and

(B) all of the accrued employee and employer contributions and accrued interest on such contributions made by and on behalf of the transferred employees during their prior Federal service (other than amounts for employees who will meet the age and service requirements for retirement under section 8336(a), (b), (c) or (f) of Title 5 within five years after the date of transfer and who elect to remain participants in the Federal retirement program) shall be withdrawn from the Federal Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund and shall be paid into the retirement fund utilized by the State-owned railroad for the transferred employees, in accordance with the provisions of paragraph (2) of this subsection. Upon such payment, credit for prior Federal service under the Federal civil service retirement system shall be forever barred, notwithstanding the provisions of section 8334 of Title 5.

(4)(A) The State-owned railroad shall be included in the definition of "agency" for purposes of section 3(a), (b), (c), and (e) of the Federal Workforce Restructuring Act of 1994 and may elect to participate in the voluntary separation incentive program established under such Act. Any employee of the State-owned railroad who meets the qualifications as described under the first sentence of paragraph (1) shall be deemed an employee under such Act. **[Editor's Note: This section was added in 1994, Pub.L. 103-226, §10(a).]**

(B) An employee who has received a voluntary separation incentive payment under this paragraph and accepts employment with the State-owned railroad within 5 years after the date of separation on which payment of the incentive is based shall be required to repay the entire amount of the incentive payment unless the head of the State-owned

railroad determines that the individual involved possesses unique abilities and is the only qualified applicant available for the position.

**(b) Coverage for employees not transferring to State-owned railroad**

Employees of the Alaska Railroad who do not transfer to the State-owned railroad shall be entitled to all of the rights and benefits available to them under Federal law for discontinued employees.

**(c) Rights and benefits of transferred employees whose employment with State-owned railroad is terminated**

Transferred employees whose employment with the State-owned railroad is terminated during the two-year period commencing on the date of transfer shall be entitled to all of the rights and benefits of discontinued employees that such employees would have had under Federal law if their termination had occurred immediately before the date of the transfer, except that financial compensation paid to officers of the Alaska Railroad shall be limited to that compensation provided pursuant to section 1203(d)(3) (E) of this title. Such employees shall also be entitled to seniority and other benefits accrued under Federal law while they were employed by the State-owned railroad on the same basis as if such employment had been Federal service.

**(d) Lump-sum payment for unused annual leave for employees transferring to State-owned railroad**

Any employee who transfers to the State-owned railroad under this chapter shall not be entitled to lump-sum payment for unused annual leave under section 5551 of Title 5, but shall be credited by the State with the unused annual leave balance at the time of transfer.

**(e) Continued coverage for certain employees and annuitants in Federal health benefits plans and life insurance plans [Editor's Note: This entire section was added in 1988, Pub.L. 100-238, and replaced in current form in 1994, Pub.L. 103-226, §10(b).]**

(1) Any person described under the provisions of paragraph (2) may elect life insurance coverage under chapter 87 of Title 5 and enroll in a health benefits plan under chapter 89 of Title 5 in accordance with the provisions of this subsection.

(2) The provisions of paragraph (1) shall apply to any person who--

(A) on March 30, 1994, is an employee of the State-owned railroad;

(B) has 20 years or more of service (in the civil service as a Federal employee or as an employee of the State-owned railroad, combined) on the date of retirement from the State-owned railroad; and

(C)(i) was covered under a life insurance policy pursuant to chapter 87 of Title 5 on January 4, 1985, for the purpose of electing life insurance coverage under the provisions of paragraph (1); or

(ii) was enrolled in a health benefits plan pursuant to chapter 89 of Title 5 on January 4, 1985, for the purpose of enrolling in a health benefits plan under the provisions of paragraph (1).

(3) For purposes of this section, any person described under the provisions of paragraph (2) shall be deemed to have been covered under a life insurance policy under chapter 87 of Title 5 and to have been enrolled in a health benefits plan under chapter 89 of Title 5 during the period beginning on January 5, 1985, through the date of retirement of any such person.

(4) The provisions of paragraph (1) shall not apply to any person described under paragraph (2) until the date such person retires from the State-owned railroad.

(Pub.L. 97-468, Title VI, §607, Jan. 14, 1983, 96 Stat. 2556)

## **1207. STATE OPERATION**

**(a) Laws, authorities, etc., applicable to State-owned railroad with status as rail carrier engaged in interstate and foreign commerce**

(1) After the date of transfer to the State pursuant to section 1203 of this title, the State-owned railroad shall be a rail carrier engaged in interstate and foreign commerce subject to part A of subtitle IV of Title 49 and all other Acts applicable to rail carriers subject to that chapter, including the antitrust laws of the United States, except, so long

as it is an instrumentality of the State of Alaska, the Railroad Retirement Act of 1974 (45 U.S.C. 231 et seq.), the Railroad Retirement Tax Act (26 U.S.C. 3201 et seq.), the Railway Labor Act (45 U.S.C. 151 et seq.), the Act of April 22, 1908 (45 U.S.C. 51 et seq.) (popularly referred to as the "Federal Employers' Liability Act"), and the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act (45 U.S.C. 351 et seq.). Nothing in this chapter shall preclude the State from explicitly invoking by law any exemption from the antitrust laws as may otherwise be available.

(2) The transfer to the State authorized by section 1203 of this title and the conferral of jurisdiction to the Interstate Commerce Commission pursuant to paragraph (1) of this subsection are intended to confer upon the State-owned railroad all business opportunities available to comparable railroads, including contract rate agreements meeting the requirements of section 10713 of Title 49, notwithstanding any participation in such agreements by connecting water carriers.

(3) All memoranda which sanction noncompliance with Federal railroad safety regulations contained in 49 CFR Parts 209-236, and which are in effect on the date of transfer, shall continue in effect according to their terms as "waivers of compliance" (as that term is used in section 20103(d) of Title 49).

(4) The operation of trains by the State-owned railroad shall not be subject to the requirement of any State or local law which specifies the minimum number of crew members which must be employed in connection with the operation of such trains.

(5) Revenues generated by the State-owned railroad, including any amount appropriated or otherwise made available to the State-owned railroad, shall be retained and managed by the State-owned railroad for railroad and related purposes.

(6)(A) After the date of transfer, continued operation of the Alaska Railroad by a public corporation, authority or other agency of the State shall be deemed to be an exercise of an essential governmental function, and revenue derived from such operation shall be deemed to accrue to the State for the purposes of section 115(a)(1) of Title 26. Obligations issued by such entity shall also be deemed obligations of the State for the purposes of section 103(a)(1) of Title 26, but not obligations within the meaning of section 103(b)(2) of Title 26.

(B) Nothing in this chapter shall be deemed or construed to affect customary tax treatment of private investment in the equipment or other assets that are used or owned by the State-owned railroad.

**(b) Procedures for issuance of certificate of public convenience and necessity; inventory, valuation, or classification of property; additional laws, authorities, etc., applicable**

As soon as practicable after January 14, 1983, the Interstate Commerce Commission shall promulgate an expedited, modified procedure for providing on the date of transfer a certificate of public convenience and necessity to the State-owned railroad. No inventory, valuation, or classification of property owned or used by the State-owned railroad pursuant to subchapter V of chapter 107 of Title 49 shall be required during the two-year period after the date of transfer. The provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) and section 382(b) of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (42 U.S.C. 6362(b)) shall not apply to actions of the Commission under this subsection.

**(c) Eligibility for participation in Federal railroad assistance programs**

The State-owned railroad shall be eligible to participate in all Federal railroad assistance programs on a basis equal to that of other rail carriers subject to part A of subtitle IV of Title 49.

**(d) Laws and regulations applicable to national forest and park lands; limitations on Federal actions**

After the date of transfer to the State pursuant to section 1203 of this title, the portion of the rail properties within the boundaries of the Chugach National Forest and the exclusive-use easement within the boundaries of the Denali National Park and Preserve shall be subject to laws and regulations for the protection of forest and park values. The right to fence the exclusive-use easement within Denali National Park and Preserve shall be subject to the concurrence of the Secretary of the Interior. The Secretary of the Interior, or the Secretary of Agriculture where appropriate, shall not act pursuant to this subsection without consulting with the Governor of the State of Alaska or in such a manner as to unreasonably interfere with continued or expanded operations and support functions authorized under this chapter.

(e) The State-owned railroad may take any necessary or appropriate action, consistent with Federal railroad safety laws, to preserve and protect its rail properties in the interests of safety.

(Pub.L. 97-468, Title VI, §608, Jan. 14, 1983, 96 Stat. 2556)

**[Editor's Note:** §§(a)(1) and (c) were amended in 1995 to reflect abolition of the Interstate Commerce Commission, Pub.L. 104-88, §326. §(a)(5) was amended and § (e) was added in 2004, Pub.L. 108-447, Div. H, §152.]

**1208. FUTURE RIGHTS-OF-WAY**

**(a) Access across Federal lands; application approval**

After January 14, 1983, the State or State-owned railroad may request the Secretary of the Interior or the Secretary of Agriculture, as appropriate under law, to expeditiously approve an application for a right-of-way in order that the Alaska Railroad or State-owned railroad may have access across Federal lands for transportation and related purposes. The State or State-owned railroad may also apply for a lease, permit, or conveyance of any necessary or convenient terminal and station grounds and material sites in the vicinity of the right-of-way for which an application has been submitted.

**(b) Consultative requirements prior to approval of application; conformance of rights-of-way, etc.**

Before approving a right-of-way application described in subsection (a) of this section, the Secretary of the Interior or the Secretary of Agriculture, as appropriate, shall consult with the Secretary. Approval of an application for a right-of-way, permit, lease, or conveyance described in subsection (a) of this section shall be pursuant to applicable law. Rights-of-way, grounds, and sites granted pursuant to this section and other applicable law shall conform, to the extent possible, to the standards provided in the Act of March 12, 1914 (43 U.S.C. 975 et seq.) and section 1202(6) of this title. Such conformance shall not be affected by the repeal of such Act under section 615 of this title.

**(c) Reversion to United States [Repealed.** Pub.L. 108-7, Div. I, Title III, §345(5), Feb. 20, 2003, 117 Stat. 418.]

*Reversion to the United States of any portion of any right-of-way or exclusive-use easement granted to the State or State-owned railroad shall occur only as provided in section 1209 of this title. For purposes of such section, the date of the approval of any such right-of-way shall be deemed the "date of transfer."*

(Pub.L. 97-468, Title VI, §609, Jan. 14, 1983, 96 Stat. 2556)

**1209. REVERSION [Repealed.** Pub.L. 108-7, Div. I, Title III, §345(5), Feb. 20, 2003, 117 Stat. 418.]

**(a) Reversion or payment to Federal Government for conversion to use preventing**

**State-owned railroad from continuing to operate**

*If, within ten years after the date of transfer to the State authorized by section 1203 of this title, the Secretary finds that all or part of the real property transferred to the State under this chapter, except that portion of real property which lies within the boundaries of the Denali National Park and Preserve, is converted to a use that would prevent the State-owned railroad from continuing to operate, that real property (including permanent improvements to the property) shall revert to the United States Government, or (at the option of the State) the State shall pay to the United States Government an amount determined to be the fair market value of that property at the time its conversion prevents continued operation of the railroad.*

**(b) Reversion upon discontinuance by State of use of any land within right-of-way;**

**criteria for discontinuance**

*If, after the date of transfer pursuant to section 1203 of this title, the State discontinues use of any land within the right-of-way, the State's interest in such land shall revert to the United States. The State shall be considered to have discontinued use within the meaning of this subsection and subsection (d) of this section when:*

*(1) the Governor of the State of Alaska delivers to the Secretary of the Interior a notice of such discontinuance, including a legal description of the property subject to the notice, and a quitclaim deed thereto; or*

*(2) the State has made no use of the land for a continuous period of eighteen years for transportation, communication, or transmission purposes. Notice of such discontinuance shall promptly be published in the Federal Register by the Secretary, the Secretary of the Interior, or the Secretary of Agriculture, and reversion shall be effected one year after such notice, unless within such one-year period the State brings an appropriate action in the United States District Court for the District of Alaska to establish that the use has been continuing without an eighteen-year lapse. Any such action shall have the effect of staying reversion until exhaustion of appellate review from the final judgment in that action or termination of the right to seek such review, whichever first occurs.*

**(c) Conveyances by United States subsequent to reversion**

*Upon such reversion pursuant to subsection (b) of this section, the Secretary of the Interior shall immediately convey by patent to abutting landowners all right, title and interest of the United States. Where land abutting the reverted right-of-way is owned by*

*different persons or entities, the conveyance made pursuant to this subsection shall extend the property of each abutting owner to the centerline of the right-of-way.*

**(d) Discontinuance by State of use of national park or forest lands; jurisdiction upon reversion**

*If use is discontinued (as that term is used in subsection (b) of this section) of all or part of those properties of the Alaska Railroad transferred to the State pursuant to this chapter which lie within the boundaries of the Denali National Park and Preserve or the Chugach National Forest, such properties or part thereof (including permanent improvements to the property) shall revert to the United States and shall not be subject to subsection (c) of this section. Upon such reversion, jurisdiction over that property shall be transferred to the Secretary of the Interior or the Secretary of Agriculture, as appropriate, for administration as part of the Denali National Park and Preserve or the Chugach National Forest.*

**(e) Payment into Treasury of United States of excess proceeds from sale or transfer of all or substantially all of State-owned railroad; limitations**

*Except as provided in subsections (a) through (d) of this section, if, within five years after the date of transfer to the State pursuant to section 1203 of this title, the State sells or transfers all or substantially all of the State-owned railroad to an entity other than an instrumentality of the State, the proceeds from the sale or transfer that exceed the cost of any rehabilitation and improvement made by the State for the State-owned railroad and any net liabilities incurred by the State for the State-owned railroad shall be paid into the general fund of the Treasury of the United States.*

**(f) Enforcement by Attorney General**

*The Attorney General, upon the request of the Secretary, the Secretary of the Interior, or the Secretary of Agriculture, shall institute appropriate proceedings to enforce this section in the United States District Court for the District of Alaska.*

(Pub.L. 97-468, Title VI, §610, Jan. 14, 1983, 96 Stat. 2556)

**1210. OTHER DISPOSITION**

If the Secretary has not certified that the State has satisfied the conditions under section 1203 of this title within one year after the date of delivery of the report referred to in section 1204(a) of this title, the Secretary may dispose of the rail properties of the Alaska Railroad. Any disposal under this section shall give preference to a buyer or transferee who will continue to operate rail service, except that--

(1) such preference shall not diminish or modify the rights of the Cook Inlet Region, Incorporated (as that term is used in section 12 of the Act of January 2, 1976 (Public Law 94-204; 89 Stat. 1150)), pursuant to such section, as amended by section 606(d) of this title; and

(2) this section shall not be construed to diminish or modify the powers of consent of the Secretary or the State under section 12(b)(8) of such Act, as amended by section 606(d)(5) of this title.

Any disposal under this section shall be subject to valid existing rights.

(Pub.L. 97-468, Title VI, §611, Jan. 14, 1983, 96 Stat. 2556)

## **1211. DENALI NATIONAL PARK AND PRESERVE LANDS**

On the date of transfer to the State (pursuant to section 1203 of this title) or other disposition (pursuant to section 1210 of this title), that portion of rail properties of the Alaska Railroad within the Denali National Park and Preserve shall, subject to the exclusive-use easement granted pursuant to section 1203(b)(1)(D) of this title, be transferred to the Secretary of the Interior for administration as part of the Denali National Park and Preserve, except that a transferee under section 1210 of this title shall receive the same interest as the State under section 1203(b)(1)(D) of this title.

(Pub.L. 97-468, Title VI, §612, Jan. 14, 1983, 96 Stat. 2556)

## **1212. APPLICABILITY OF OTHER LAWS**

### **(a) Actions subject to other laws**

The provisions of chapter 5 of Title 5 (popularly known as the Administrative Procedure Act, and including provisions popularly known as the Government in the Sunshine Act), the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App. 1 et seq.), the National Historic Preservation Act (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.), section 303 of Title 49, and the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) shall not apply to actions taken pursuant to this chapter, except to the extent that such laws may be applicable to granting of rights-of-way under section 1208 of this title.

### **(b) Federal surplus property disposal; withdrawal or reservation of lands**

The enactment of this chapter, actions taken during the transition period as provided in section 1204 of this title, and transfer of the rail properties of the Alaska Railroad under authority of this chapter shall be deemed not to be the disposal of Federal surplus property under the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949 or the Act of October 3, 1944, popularly referred to as the "Surplus Property Act of

1944" (50 U.S.C. App. 1622). Such events shall not constitute or cause the revocation of any prior withdrawal or reservation of land for the use of the Alaska Railroad under the Act of March 12, 1914 (43 U.S.C. 975 et seq.), the Alaska Statehood Act (note preceding 48 U.S.C. 21), the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.), the Act of January 2, 1976 (Public Law 94-204; 89 Stat. 1145), the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (Public Law 96-487; 94 Stat. 2371), and the general land and land management laws of the United States.

**(c) Ceiling on Government contributions for Federal employees health benefits insurance premiums**

Beginning on January 14, 1983, the ceiling on Government contributions for Federal employees health benefits insurance premiums under section 8906(b)(2) of Title 5 shall not apply to the Alaska Railroad.

**(d) Acreage entitlement of State or Native Corporation**

Nothing in this chapter is intended to enlarge or diminish the acreage entitlement of the State or any Native Corporation pursuant to existing law.

**(e) Judgments involving interests, etc., of Native Corporations**

With respect to interests of Native Corporations under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.) and the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 3101 et seq.), except as provided in this chapter, nothing contained in this chapter shall be construed to deny, enlarge, grant, impair, or otherwise affect any judgment heretofore entered in a court of competent jurisdiction, or valid existing right or claim of valid existing right.

(Pub.L. 97-468, Title VI, §613, Jan. 14, 1983, 96 Stat. 2556)

**1213. CONFLICT WITH OTHER LAWS**

The provisions of this chapter shall govern if there is any conflict between this chapter and any other law.

(Pub.L. 97-468, Title VI, §614, Jan. 14, 1983, 96 Stat. 2556)

## **1214. SEPARABILITY**

If any provision of this chapter or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of this chapter and the application of such provision to other persons or circumstances shall not be affected thereby.

(Pub.L. 97-468, Title VI, §616, Jan. 14, 1983, 96 Stat. 2556)

**[Editor's Note:** Approved January 14, 1983.]

**[Editor's Note:** §615 of Pub.L. 97-468 was not codified into the U.S. Code. It amended numerous other federal statutes to reflect transfer of the Alaska Railroad from federal ownership, for example the Public Health Services Act, the Railroad Retirement Act of 1974, the Department of Transportation Act, and so on.]