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## **State of Arizona Railroad Inventory & Assessment – 2007 Executive Summary**

The Arizona Department of Transportation retained R.L. Banks and Associates to develop the State of Arizona 2007 Railroad Inventory and Assessment. The purpose of this effort is to provide an overview of the current existing rail network of Arizona railroads as they exist today. This includes all Class I, short line, mining, terminal/switching and tourist railroad operations. This is the first such railroad inventory for the State of Arizona since 2000.

The scope of work required that the consultant provide a detailed inventory of service levels, track conditions, operations and current operating statistics, ownership, connections, safety information and future plans regarding all freight and passenger service for Arizona. One of the new features of this update is a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) map of Arizona's railroad network, which was developed using GPS data and field inspections by ADOT and RLBA staff. From this field work, ADOT has also created a vast photographic archive of the entire state railroad network. This report also provides tonnages and types of material of freight that are imported and exported to and from Arizona.

This report was completed over a 12 month period that included extensive travel along every railroad route in the state. Some of this information will be used to review grade crossing improvements in coordination with the ADOT Utilities & Railroad Engineering Division, the Arizona Corporation Commission. Another new aspect of this report is to identify the needs of existing shortline railroads, with comparative analysis of other peer states that provide public assistance for continued rail operations in order to supplement their highway capacity.

Although the State of Arizona Railroad Plan has been produced numerous times since 1976, this particular edition of the State of Arizona Railroad Inventory & Assessment addresses preservation strategies and funding. Railroad preservation opportunities, either for future state need (often called rail banking) or public-private partnerships, are critical components of preserving railroad right of way for public transportation purposes. Funding is always a factor in acquiring or improving railroad corridors. This report provides a basic understanding of the current conditions of funding from the federal government.

In Arizona there are currently two Class I railroads, eleven short line and mining railroads, seven terminal/switching railroads and two tourist railroads. There are currently over 2,200 railroad miles in Arizona and 1,800 public and private grade crossings throughout the state. In 2005, Arizona's railroads originated and terminated nearly 31 million tons of freight traffic in the state.

For 130 years, railroads have played an integral part in the development, direction and quality of life of Arizona. In conclusion, it is important to recognize the direct and indirect public benefits of the private railroads. The benefits include the transportation of significant quantities raw materials and manufactured goods, alternative passenger services, reduced transportation costs, significant employment and tax revenues, reduced highway maintenance cost, congestion and accidents, and the reduction of pollution and fossil fuels. The railroads' vital role in Arizona's future will continue for many years to come.

## Arizona Railroads

