

Bentonite Leads Way to Alaska

Wyoming bentonite is riding the high iron to Alaska and prospects are rosy that Equality State oilfield and other products will find a market in the 49th state.

Burlington Northern officials in Casper Thursday told of the development, which is expected to grow as the pace of activities increase at the oil-rich Alaskan North Slope.

The link to Alaska is a dividend resulting from the BN's newly-instigated twice daily trains Nos. 77 and 78, which link Casper with deep water ports of Vancouver, B. C. and Seattle all the way to the Gulf Coast port of Galveston, Tex., said Richard A. Beulke, vice president-Omaha region for the railroad.

Casper is the only stop for the trains in Wyoming, but bentonite is being shipped now for Seattle where barge and boat trains hurry it on to Fairbanks. Additional activity, including the shipping of Wyoming oilrigs, along with Oklahoma and Texas oilfield equipment, is expected as drilling in the north is intensified, said Beulke.

BN operates the largest freight run under one company's banner, 26,000 miles of tracks, and employs some 44,000 persons in its six divisions, two of which, Omaha and Billings, serve Wyoming, Beulke noted.

He added that the railroad has been in the black since the merger, its stock has zoomed in recent weeks following a low when the Penn Railroad debacle made the news, and railroading's future is bright, Beulke said.

The railroad's share of Wyoming business, too, has increased, due in large part to the phenomenal development of coal production and marketing which has created massive demands for the low sulphur, high BTU coal. The demand is expected to increase rather than diminish, said Beulke.

Marketing Bentonite to Alaska

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