



February 19, 2010 Ali Helgoth, Staff Writer, *Elko Daily Free Press*

First train arrives at railport

ELKO — The first train pulled into the Northeastern Nevada Regional Railport Thursday morning.

“It’s just exciting to see the cars start and the business open,” said Assistant Elko County Manager Cash Minor.

The three cars arrived empty and will be filled with materials by Pacific Steel & Recycling and shipped away.

“We’ve all waited a very long time for this,” said Pam Borda, executive director of the Elko County Economic Diversification Authority.

A public grand opening is planned March 9.

The first big load, a shipment of pipes for the Ruby Pipeline Project, is expected March 1.

ECEDA has spearheaded the railport project, designed as a way to attract new industries to Elko County.

The project has suffered numerous delays. In 2005 county officials predicted the facility would be in operation in 2007.

Minor estimated the county has invested about \$12 million into the project, which will allow businesses to receive and ship products by rail.

“This was done as a first class railport,” Minor said, adding county commissioners put a lot of work into the facility, which can be expanded as needed. Plans for a second phase were drawn up with the first phase of the project.

Union Pacific drops off rail cars and transload facility operator Savage Services transports them to customers and brings them back to be picked up by Union Pacific.

All of the lots that front the tracks have been sold, Minor said. In addition to Pacific Steel & Recycling, Spirit Minerals, SAS Global and Ormaza Construction have purchased parcels.

Businesses do not have to be located at the railport to take advantage of rail transportation, though.

Savage Services will operate the railport, and part of its duties include providing transloader services and making sure businesses located on-site and others that want to utilize the service have access to rail, Savage Midwest Regional Manager Dan Price told the Free Press in November.



The facility will operate Monday through Friday to start, subject to change based on customer needs, but it could become a 24 hour a day facility with 10-20 employees working for Savage, he said.

Price said Thursday it's exciting to receive the first shipment.

"It's taken time, but with the patience of the county and support of ECEDA we're just happy to have this partnership," he said.