

Russia floats tunnel to U.S. idea

by UPI

MOSCOW - Russia has unveiled a plan for a 64-mile tunnel under the Bering Sea to link it with North America at a cost of more than \$1 billion per mile.

Maxim Bystrov, deputy head of Russia's agency for special economic zones, said it would be "a business project, not a political one," the Times of London reported Friday.

The concept is that the \$65 million tunnel would allow for a high-speed railway line, energy links and a fiber optic cable network, the report said.

Proponents say it would repay construction costs by generating up to 100 million tons of freight traffic each year, as well as supplying oil, gas and electricity from Siberia to the United States and Canada.

Russian Railways is considering the construction of a route from Pravaya Lena, south of Yakutsk, to a 1,300-mile line from Cape Prince of Wales, in western Alaska, to Fort Nelson, British Columbia.

Critics claim Alaska has its own large oil reserves and China's huge market was closer and more lucrative.

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