

Alaska State Legislature

Senator Cathy Giessel
Senate Majority Leader
Senate District E
907-465-4843



120 4th Street
Alaska State Capitol,
Room 121
Juneau, AK 99801

Senate Bill 47 Sponsor Statement

“An Act relating to Chugach State Park; and providing for an effective date.”

Chugach State Park hosts 1.5 million visitors annually – more than Denali National Park – and most of the road traffic leading to the park originates from outside of the Anchorage Hillside neighborhood. The roads that provide access to the park, including the Glen Alps and Upper DeArmoun/Canyon Road corridors are in need of significant upgrades. In 2023, Anchorage residents voted to establish the Chugach State Park Access Service Area (CASA), which includes the Anchorage Bowl, creating the first mechanism for financing capital upgrades to roads leading to Chugach State Park. In 2024, Anchorage voters approved a \$4 million bond to fund much needed improvements to Canyon Road, which is in poor condition. This project involves paving and drainage for about 0.6 miles of the road, extending to the park boundary. About half of this section lies within Chugach State Park, and because the municipality cannot bond for improvements on state-owned land, those portions fall outside the scope of the bond.

To address this, SB 47 reinforces existing statutes designating the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) as the agency responsible for maintaining public roads within Chugach State Park. This ensures DOT&PF will continue managing the maintenance of roads that provide access to this important state resource. Additionally, the bill grants the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) the authority to grant easements or rights-of-ways within Chugach State Park to municipalities. This provision allows municipalities to improve access to the park, provided they meet certain requirements. Before granting any easements, the DNR commissioner must provide public notice and hold hearings. If an easement is granted, responsibility for maintaining and repairing the road will shift from the state to the municipality.

By allowing municipalities to assume responsibility for certain infrastructure improvements, SB 47 provides the flexibility needed to support upgrades that will increase safety, access, and overall public enjoyment of Chugach State Park. It creates a pathway for municipalities to invest in and maintain key resources within their community, improving access to trailheads and other park features.

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Senate Bill 47 (Version G)

Sectional Analysis

“An Act relating to Chugach State Park; and providing for an effective date.”

Section 1. Amends AS 41.21.122: Management Responsibility.

This section adds language to the management responsibility of Chugach State Park clarifying that the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) is responsible for maintenance within the park except for as provided by the new subsections added in section 2.

Section 2. Adds new subsections to AS. 41.21.122: Management Responsibility.

This section adds new subsections allowing the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to grant an easement or a right-of-way within Chugach State Park to a municipality if:

1. The easement or right-of-way is requested by the municipality,
2. The municipality pays for all costs DNR may require obtaining an easement or right-of-way,
3. The municipality assumes the duty of maintaining the easement or right-of-way, and any constructed facilities,
4. The duration of the easement or right-of-way is set in the easement,
5. DNR provides public notice and holds a public meeting, and
6. The easement will improve public access to the park, and it is in the public's interest.

Section 3. Provides for an effective date.

This section provides for an effective date of July 1, 2025.

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Explanation of Changes

Senate Resources CS for Senate Bill 47

Version A to Version G

“An Act relating to Chugach State Park; and providing for an effective date.”

The committee substitute adopts the following changes:

Section 1, page 1, lines 6-7

Deletes “and control of highway access and”.

Section 2, page 2, lines 8-10

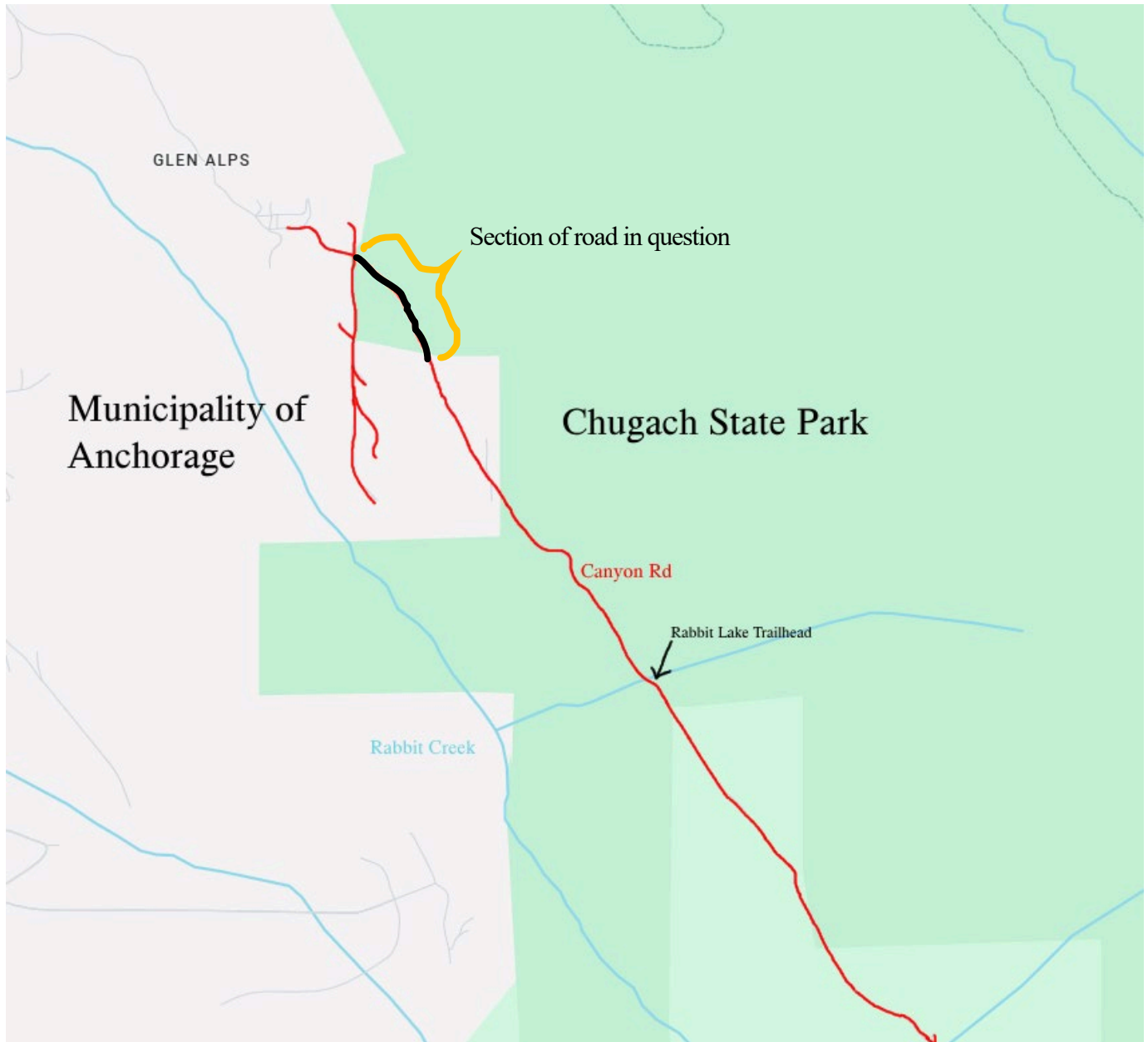
Adds language confining the purpose of an easement or right-of-way within Chugach State Park to repairing, maintaining, and constructing roads and related facilities.

Section 2, page 2, lines 11-17

Adds 4 additional requirements for a municipality to obtain an easement or right-of-way if:

1. The easement or right-of-way is requested by the municipality.
2. The municipality pays for all costs DNR may require obtaining an easement or right-of-way.
3. The municipality assumes the duty of maintaining the easement or right-of-way, and any constructed facilities.
4. The duration of the easement or right-of-way is set in the easement.

SB 47 Backup





Alaska State Parks

Feb 7 • 🌐

Alaska State Parks post from February 7, 2025

⚠️ Chugach State Park Update – Canyon Road Hazard ⚠️

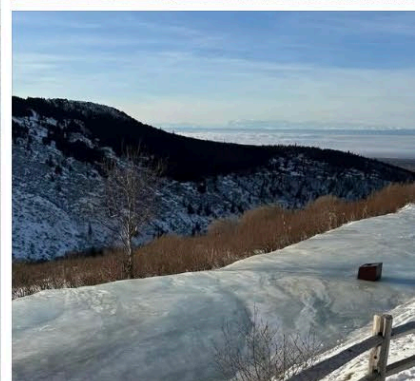
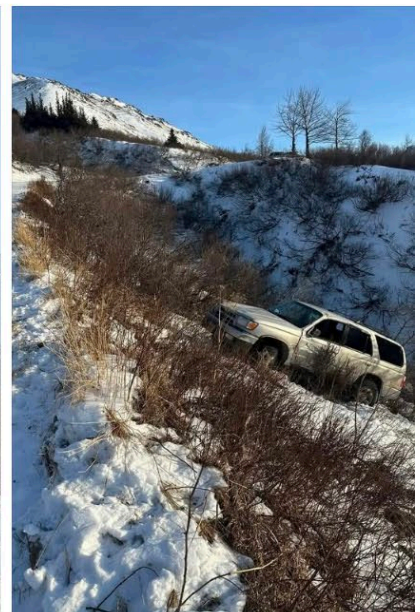
Travel is NOT advised on Canyon Road due to extreme conditions. Do not attempt to drive up.

A significant frozen ice flow is covering the road, creating dangerous conditions. There have been reports of vehicles sliding off the road.

For those heading to Rabbit Lakes or Sunny Side Flattop Trailhead, please reconsider your plans and check conditions before traveling.

Stay safe and be prepared for winter hazards.

[#ChugachStatePark](#) [#TrailConditions](#) [#WinterSafety](#)
[#AlaskaStateParks](#)



From the Office of Senator Cathy Giessel

Fiscal Note

State of Alaska
2025 Legislative Session

Bill Version: SB 47
Fiscal Note Number: _____
() Publish Date: _____

Identifier: SB047-DNR-DPOR-02-12-25
Title: CHUGACH STATE PARK EASEMENTS
Sponsor: GIESSEL
Requester: (S)TRA

Department: Department of Natural Resources
Appropriation: Parks & Outdoor Recreation
Allocation: Parks Management & Access
OMB Component Number: 3001

Expenditures/Revenues

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below.

(Thousands of Dollars)

	FY2026 Appropriation Requested	Included in Governor's FY2026 Request	Out-Year Cost Estimates				
OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY 2026	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029	FY 2030	FY 2031
Personal Services							
Travel							
Services							
Commodities							
Capital Outlay							
Grants & Benefits							
Miscellaneous							
Total Operating	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Fund Source (Operating Only)

None							
Total	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Positions

Full-time							
Part-time							
Temporary							

Change in Revenues

None							
Total	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Estimated SUPPLEMENTAL (FY2025) cost: 0.0 (separate supplemental appropriation required)

Estimated CAPITAL (FY2026) cost: 0.0 (separate capital appropriation required)

Does the bill create or modify a new fund or account? No
(Supplemental/Capital/New Fund - discuss reasons and fund source(s) in analysis section)

ASSOCIATED REGULATIONS

Does the bill direct, or will the bill result in, regulation changes adopted by your agency? No
If yes, by what date are the regulations to be adopted, amended or repealed? N/A

Why this fiscal note differs from previous version/comments:

Through the committee process, the Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) understanding of this legislation has changed. As such, the municipality seeking an easement would pay for the costs of an easement, the department no longer estimates a fiscal impact.

Prepared By:	Ricky Gease, Director	Phone:	(907)269-8701
Division:	Parks and Outdoor Recreation	Date:	02/12/2025 08:00 AM
Approved By:	Brent Goodrum, Deputy Commissioner	Date:	02/12/25
Agency:	Department of Natural Resources		

FISCAL NOTE ANALYSIS

STATE OF ALASKA
2025 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BILL NO. SB 47

Analysis

Senate Bill 47 proposes updates to the management responsibilities of Chugach State Park, allowing for greater flexibility in land management and infrastructure improvements.

This bill allows the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to grant easements or rights-of-way in Chugach State Park to municipalities if such actions improve public access or are in the public interest. This authority solves an issue allowing municipalities to bond for improvements inside of a legislatively designated state park.

This bill will improve infrastructure and encourage tourism, benefiting businesses such as tour operators, outdoor outfitters, and local retailers. This bill has the potential to allow for more commercial use of park land due to improved access and safety to trailheads within Chugach State Park.

DNR does not anticipate a fiscal impact, as the municipality requesting an easement or right-of-way under this bill shall be responsible for all applicable application fees and costs associated with processing a request.