

From: [Game and Deb McGimsey](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: Support for Midtown Park Chalet
Date: Sunday, April 17, 2022 6:02:50 PM

Finance Committee of the Alaska Legislature:

We are writing to strongly support funding for the Midtown Park Chalet, to be built at the Cuddy Park 400-meter ice oval. We frequently skate at the oval, help with ice skating classes given through community resources, and one of us has been an active member of the Alaska Speedskating Club for over 15 years, skating both long and short track. We so strongly believe in this project that we have made a personal cash gift to show our support. Please consider funding this very worthwhile project.

Sincerely,
Robert and Deb McGimsey

Robert & Deb McGimsey
18945 Timberline Drive
Eagle River, AK. 99577
907-694-8642 Hm
907-240-0585 R-cell
907-240-0304 D-cell

From: [Peter Haeussler](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: Support for CAPSIS proposal for Chalet in Midtown Park Anchorage
Date: Friday, April 15, 2022 11:12:13 AM

Dear Finance Committee Members:

I want to voice my strong support for the proposed \$650,000 for construction of a Chalet in Cuddy Family Midtown Park in Anchorage. This park is an amazing place to spend an afternoon in the heart of midtown Anchorage - it has wonderful walking trails, a skating oval in the winter, and a duck pond for the summer. I live in Chugiak, but use it often! But the park is lacking a facility, which is strongly needed as a warming facility for skaters in the winter, and it is also needed for events in the summer. It is the only significant park in Anchorage without such a center. The group spearheading construction of a chalet has been involved with the development of the park for decades, and they have a well conceived concept design, which has support from the Muni. This is a shovel-ready project that will enhance the lives of the many people who live, work, and traverse midtown Anchorage. The dollars are not enough to build the facility, but in combination with a \$250K Muni parks bond, they will be able to leverage funds from a number of deep pocket donors. The Alaska Community Foundation 'Chalet' fund has already raised almost \$20,000 in small donations for the facility, which demonstrates widespread support. The Alaska State Legislature can play a vital and pivotal role in development of the park. Again, I strongly support this proposal and I hope you do too.

Many regards, Peter Haeussler

April 5, 2022

Senate Finance Committee
Alaska State Senate



Alaska Trails, the statewide non-profit, is writing on behalf of the Alaska Long Trail Coalition to request the inclusion of the Alaska Long Trail projects (submitted into CAPSIS) into FY2023 State's capital budget, SB164. The specific request is for \$14.75 Million for projects to fill key gaps along the length of the planned route (*see following pages for details*).

The Alaska Long Trail, when complete, will become a world-class trail system connecting 500+ miles of Alaska's iconic terrain and diverse communities from Seward to Fairbanks, embracing the many ways Alaskans recreate outdoors and bolstering the Alaska economy by attracting visitors from all over the world.

Specific benefits include:

- **Economic Impact** – Outdoor recreation infrastructure *is essential* infrastructure, building on Alaska's global competitive advantage, and supporting local jobs, business opportunities, and a stronger, more durable AK economy. If just half of a typical year's out-of-state travelers had reasons to spend one more day in Alaska, the result would be an additional \$137M in annual spending in our state.
- **Health Benefits** – Long Trails have an ability to inspire use, even if for a single day. The Long Trail will make it inviting and easier for a larger portion of Alaskans to be active, healthy, happy outside.
- **Projects are "Shovel Ready"** – Funding these investments will create much needed construction jobs in the near term, and build skills that will be in demand continuing into the future.
- **Multi-Use** – The Long Trail will be an *Alaska* long trail; a "braided", four-season trail system designed for hikers, bikers, skiers, ATV's, snowmachines, for both day and multi-day use.

The Alaska Long Trail has received **wide bipartisan support**. A broad coalition of partners is working to plan, build and ultimately maintain the trail system. This group identified the projects in this \$14.75M request; spanning five boroughs and related legislative districts. Listed below and attached is a partial record of stated project support:

- Local Governments – resolutions of support from Cities of Seward & Nenana and Assemblies of Fairbanks North Star Borough, Mat-Su Borough, Denali Borough and Anchorage.
- State and Federal Agencies - National Park Service; Chugach National Forest; Alaska DNR DPOR.
- Regional Tourism Marketing/Economic Development Organizations – public testimony by Julie Saupe, ED of Visit Anchorage, and Tim Dillon, ED of the Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District; resolutions of support from Mat-Su Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) and Alaska Travel Industry Association.

We ask that the Senate Finance Committee includes the Alaska Long Trail projects, submitted into CAPSIS, in the FY2023 state capital budget, SB164.

Please call or write if you have questions. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Steve Cleary, Alaska Trails Executive Director

steve.cleary@alaska-trails.org

Chris Beck, AK Trails Initiative Coordinator

chris.beck@alaska-trails.org

Attachments: 1) Statements of support; 2) Details of projects proposed for funding

ALASKA LONG TRAIL – PRIORITY PROJECTS FY2023

| # | TPS # | Project | Use | Amount | Responsible | Location |
|----|-------|--|---|-------------|--|---|
| 1 | 66749 | Isberg 4-Season Trail | multi-use | \$990,000 | Fairbanks North Star Borough | Fairbanks North Star Borough (Areawide) |
| 2 | 66750 | Nenana to Fairbanks Multi-Use Trails, Tanana Valley State Forest | multi-use | \$1,600,000 | DNR Division of Forestry | Nenana |
| 3 | 66751 | Equinox Marathon Trail – Parks Highway to Fairbanks via Ester Dome | mixed: some non-motorized, some multi-use | \$1,450,000 | Fairbanks North Star Borough | Fairbanks North Star Borough (Areawide) |
| 4 | 66753 | Carlo Creek to Crabbies Crossing Separated Path | non-motorized | \$3,700,000 | Denali Borough and AK DOT/PF | Denali Borough |
| 5 | 67023 | Susitna Valley Winter Trail | motorized | \$100,000 | Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation | Mat-Su |
| 6 | 66755 | GPRA Traverse and Little Susitna Loop | non-motorized | \$1,900,000 | MSB, AK State Parks, Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation; Hatcher Alpine Xperience (Skeetawk) | Matanuska-Susitna Borough (Greater Palmer) |
| 7 | 66756 | Palmer Hay Flats Trail | non-motorized | \$100,000 | ADF&G, Mat-Su Borough, Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation | Matanuska-Susitna Borough (Greater Palmer) |
| 8 | 66550 | Alaska Long Trail Anchorage to Mat-Su Reconnaissance Study | non-motorized | \$300,000 | Anchorage Park Foundation | Anchorage - Eagle River - Chugach State Park - Mat-Su Borough |
| 9 | 66548 | Alaska Long Trail Urban Braid - Anchorage Moose Loop | non-motorized | \$800,000 | Anchorage Park Foundation | Anchorage |
| 10 | 66793 | Peters Creek Upper Trail & Bridge | non-motorized | \$30,000 | AK DNR Division of Outdoor Recreation | Anchorage (Eagle River/Chugach State Park) |
| 11 | 66797 | Arctic to Indian Phase 1 Trail Improvements | non-motorized | \$20,000 | AK DNR Division of Outdoor Recreation | Anchorage (Eagle River/Chugach State Park) |
| 12 | 66761 | Turnagain Arm Trail Maintenance and Extension | non-motorized | \$370,000 | AK DNR Division of Outdoor Recreation | Anchorage (South Anchorage) |
| 13 | 66792 | Crow Pass - Eagle River | non-motorized | \$1,500,000 | AK DNR DPOR and volunteers/nonprofits | Anchorage (Eagle River/Chugach State Park) |
| 14 | 66766 | Glacier Creek Bridge - replacement for hand tram | non-motorized | \$1,200,000 | Muni of Anchorage, USFS | Anchorage (Areawide) |
| 15 | 66801 | Glacier Discovery Hut-to-Hut System, Phase 1 | multi-use | \$690,000 | Alaska Huts Association | Kenai Peninsula Borough (North Kenai) |

TOTAL \$ 14,750,000

Contact Alaska Trails www.alaska-trails.org

The Alaska Long Trail

Trail Route Concept

- ● ● Existing Route
- ● ● Proposed Route

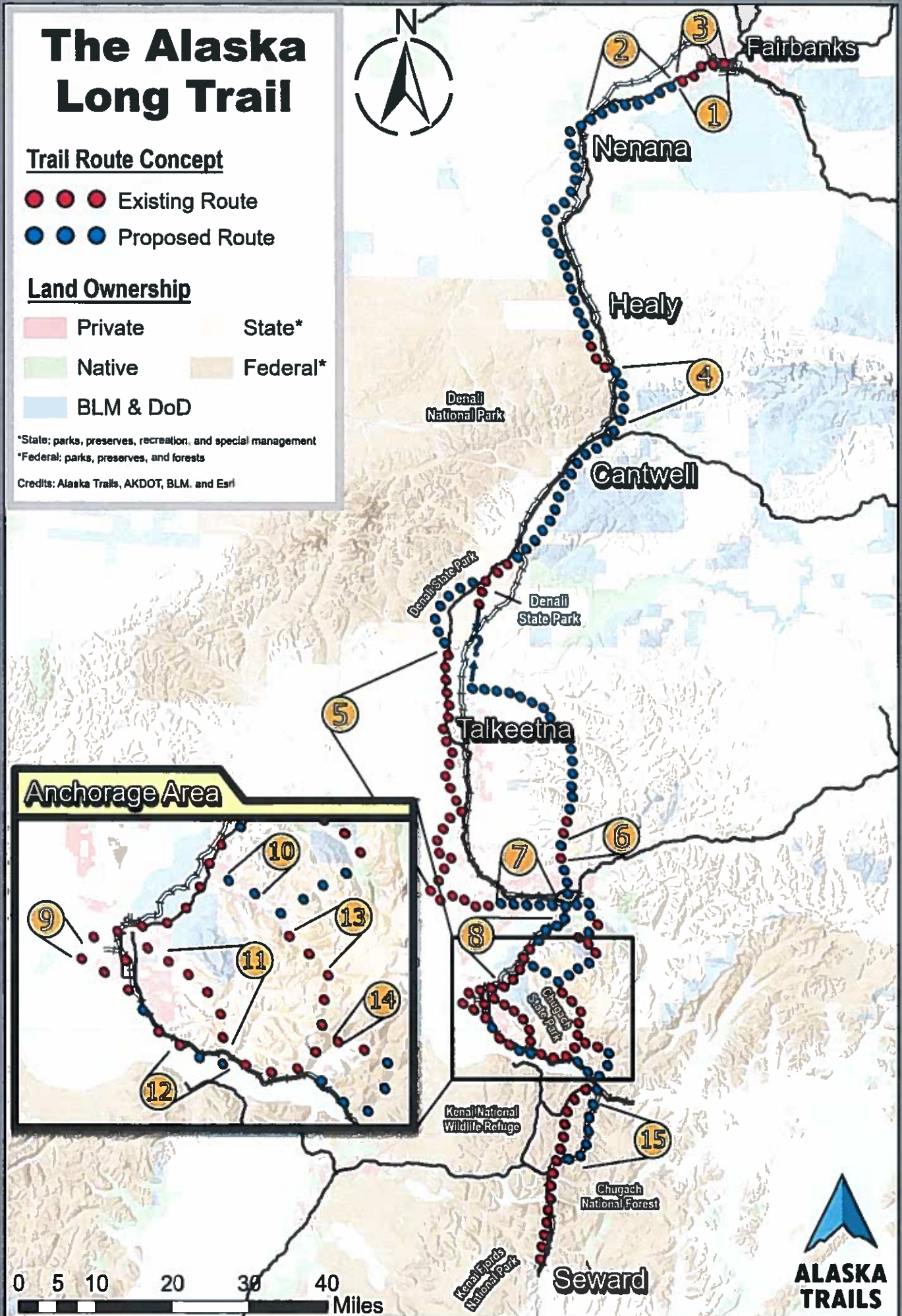
Land Ownership

- | | |
|-----------|----------|
| Private | State* |
| Native | Federal* |
| BLM & DoD | |

*State: parks, preserves, recreation, and special management

*Federal: parks, preserves, and forests

Credits: Alaska Trails, AKDOT, BLM, and Earl



2021 – 2022 RESOLUTIONS AND LETTERS OF SUPPORT FOR THE ALASKA LONG TRAIL

Numerous bipartisan entities expressed support for the Alaska Long Trail in the past year. This document provides a compilation of resolutions, letters of support, and direct testimony record from a number of organizations, agencies, and local governments.

1. Alaska Travel Industry Association (ATIA)
2. Fairbanks North Star Borough Assembly
3. Denali Borough Assembly
4. Mat-Su Borough Assembly
5. Anchorage Assembly
6. City of Seward
7. National Park Service
8. Kenai Mountains – Turnagain Arm National Heritage Area (KMTA)
9. Girdwood Board of Supervisors
10. Latitude 61 Girdwood
11. Anchorage Park Foundation
12. Alaska Huts Association (AHA)
13. Alaska Trails
14. Alaska Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects
15. Interior Trails Quarterly
16. Fairbanks Cycle Club
17. Nordic Ski Club Fairbanks
18. Interior Trails Preservation Coalition
19. Skeetawk, Hatcher Alpine Xperience
20. Single Track Advocates, Anchorage
21. Alaska Chapter of Backcountry Hunters and Anglers
22. Roadmap to a Vital and Safe Anchorage
23. Record of Direct Testimony at 2021 legislative sessions:
 - Clay Walker, Mayor - Denali Borough
 - Julie Saupe, ED – Visit Anchorage
 - Josh Verhagen, Mayor - City of Nenana
 - Tim Dillon, ED – Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District
 - Chris Beck, Trails Initiative Coordinator – Alaska Trails

CONTACTS

Alaska Trails www.alaska-trails.org/the-alaska-long-trail

Chris Beck chris.beck@alaska-trails.org 907-250-4288

Mariyam Medovaya mariyam.medovaya@alaska-trails.org 907-360-9950

**2019-2020
Executive Officers**

Board Chair
Dan Oberletz
Alaska Alpine Adventures, LLC

Vice Chair
Bill Pedlar
Knighly Tours

Secretary/Membership Chair
Holly Johnson
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Camille Ferguson
Sitka Tribe of Alaska
Carol Fraser
Aspen Hotels
Deb Hickok

Explore Fairbanks
Kirk Hoessle
Alaska Wildland Adventures
Craig Jennison

TEMSCO Helicopters
Dennis McDonnell
Alaska Coach Tours

Patti Mackey
Ketchikan Visitors Bureau
Bonnie Quill

Mat-Su Convention & Visitors Bureau
Dan Rough
Holland America Line

Dale Wade
Alaska Railroad Corporation
Tennelle Peterson Wise
Grande Denali LLC

Lt. Governor Kevin Meyer
State of Alaska, EX OFFICIO



***A Resolution in support for the Alaska Long Trail as proposed
by Alaska State Trails***

Resolution #21-1

WHEREAS ATIA as the leading statewide organization for Alaska's visitor industry identifies critical infrastructure projects at the statewide level; and

WHEREAS infrastructure projects can support a strong and vibrant tourism industry; and

WHEREAS trails and outdoor activities can be considered outdoor recreation infrastructure that can be experienced by both residents and visitors; and

WHEREAS Alaska residents and visitor are increasingly seeking outdoor recreation experiences; and

WHEREAS the Alaska Long Trail would be on par with other international long trail projects and proposes a route from Fairbanks to Seward; and

WHEREAS most of the Alaska Long Trail route is on public lands where much of the trail already exists or is in progress; and

WHEREAS an Alaska Long Trail could offer both day and multi-week experiences; and

WHEREAS the Alaska Long Trail connecting communities can generate jobs, business opportunities; and,

WHEREAS increasing Alaska's outdoor recreation infrastructure through trails development, like the Alaska Long Trail, would keep Alaska as a competitive outdoor recreation destination; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the Alaska Travel Industry Association Board of Directors supports the Governor's recommendation for up to \$15.9 million investment in the Alaska Long Trail through the General Obligation Bond, the capital budget, or the American Rescue Plan funds.

**ADOPTED by the
2020-2021 ALASKA TRAVEL INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
JUNE 9th, 2021**

By: Bryce J. Ward, Mayor
Introduced: 04/22/2021
Adopted: 04/22/2021

FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH

RESOLUTION NO. 2021 – 17

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE FAIRBANKS TO SEWARD
MULTI-USE TRAIL, ALSO KNOWN AS THE ALASKA LONG TRAIL

WHEREAS, The Alaska Long Trail is an initiative sponsored by a coalition of partners and led by Alaska Trails that seeks to establish a 500-mile trail from Seward to Fairbanks; and

WHEREAS, The Alaska Long Trail route will utilize the Equinox Marathon Trail and trails in the Isberg Recreation Area; and

WHEREAS, Planned improvements on the Equinox Marathon Trail and trails in the Isberg Recreation Area are consistent with the 2006 Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan, the Isberg Recreation Area Master Plan, and the 2019 Capital Improvement Plan; and

WHEREAS, These trail building projects will provide much needed jobs for Alaskan residents; and

WHEREAS, The Alaska Long Trail will be an attractive destination that encourages visitors to spend time and money in Alaska; and

WHEREAS, The Alaska Long Trail will particularly draw highly sought-after independent travelers from around the world, helping to create jobs and new opportunities for Alaskan tourism and hospitality businesses; and

WHEREAS, The Alaska Long Trail would expand recreation opportunities for the local community, responding to the dramatic increases in demand for outdoor recreation, and providing more chances for Alaska residents to be active, healthy and happy outside; and

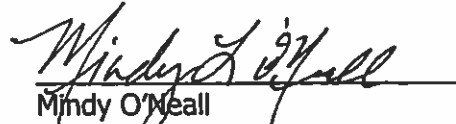
WHEREAS, The trails that would be built to sustainable standards to greatly reduce the costs for trail maintenance; and

WHEREAS, Fairbanks North Star Borough communities stand to benefit from job creation, business opportunities, tax revenue, and expanded recreation opportunities; and


45 WHEREAS, Now is the time to invest in a sustainable future for the
46 Fairbanks North Star Borough and Alaska by supporting the development of a route that
47 will stand alongside the other grand trails of the world.

48
49 NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Assembly of the Fairbanks
50 North Star Borough hereby supports the construction of the Fairbanks to Seward Multi-
51 Use Trail, also known as the Alaska Long Trail.

52
53 ADOPTED THE 22ND DAY OF APRIL 2021.

54
55
56
57
58 
59 Mindy O'Neill
60 Presiding Officer

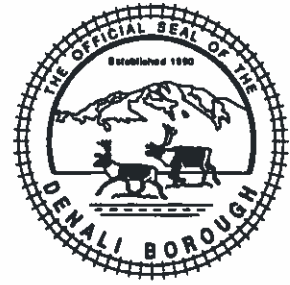
61 ATTEST:

62
63 
64 April Trickey, CMC
65 Borough Clerk
66

67
68 Yeses: Tomaszewski, Cooper, Williams, Sanford, Wilson, Lyke, Cash, Lojewski, O'Neill
69 Noes: None

DENALI BOROUGH

PO Box 480 – Healy AK 99743
Phone (907) 683-1330 – Fax (907) 683-1340
dbgovt@mtaonline.net
www.denaliborough.org



DENALI BOROUGH, ALASKA RESOLUTION NO. 22-15

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE PLANNING AND CONSTRUCTION OF THE ALASKA LONG TRAIL, A MULTI-USE 500-MILE TRAIL CONNECTING SEWARD TO FAIRBANKS

WHEREAS, the Alaska Long Trail is an initiative sponsored by a coalition of partners led by Alaska Trails that seeks to establish a 500-mile trail from Seward to Fairbanks; and

WHEREAS, trails and outdoor activities supported by more and better connected infrastructure can be experienced and enjoyed by both residents and visitors; and

WHEREAS, the demand for outdoor recreation opportunities increasingly outpaces current infrastructure, especially true in Denali; and

WHEREAS, the Alaska Long Trail will connect through the Denali Borough communities and can generate jobs and business opportunities; and

WHEREAS, supporting the Alaska Long Trail is consistent with Denali Borough's vision that residents, businesses, and landowners work together so the Denali Borough remains a spectacular natural environment and a caring community, together providing a great place to live, make a living and raise a family, and a rewarding, unique destination for visitors.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Denali Borough Assembly supports the planning and construction of the Alaska Long Trail.

PASSED and APPROVED by the DENALI BOROUGH ASSEMBLY this 9th day of March 2022.

Mayor Clay Walker

ATTEST:

Amber Renshaw, Borough Clerk





MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH

Office of the Borough Manager

350 East Dahlia Avenue • Palmer, AK 99645

Phone (907) 861-8689 • Fax (907) 861-8669

Mike.Brown@matsugov.us

May 25, 2021

VIA EMAIL

The Honorable David Wilson, District D
The Honorable Mike Shower, District E
The Honorable Shelley Hughes, District F
The Honorable Christopher Kurka, District 7
The Honorable Kevin McCabe, District 8

The Honorable George Rauscher, District 9
The Honorable David Eastman, District 10
The Honorable DeLena Johnson, District 11
The Honorable Cathy Tilton, District 12

Re: Support for the Proposed State of Alaska General Obligation Bond \$13.2 Million Allocation for the Fairbanks to Seward Multi-Use Trail aka the Alaska Long Trail

Dear Mat-Su Valley Senators and Representatives,

Enclosed is a copy of the Borough Assembly's Resolution Serial No. 21-045 supporting the Proposed State of Alaska General Obligation Bond \$13.2 Million allocation for the Fairbanks to Seward Multi-Use Trail aka the Alaska Long Trail.

We appreciate your efforts to support this project.

Sincerely,

Michael Brown
Borough Manager

Enclosure: Resolution Serial No. 21-045

cc: Governor Michael J. Dunleavy (via Todd.Smoldon@Alaska.gov)
Senator Bill Wielechowski
Mayor and Assembly
Mr. John Harris

Providing Outstanding Borough Services to the Matanuska-Susitna Community

Adopted: 05/18/21

**MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH
RESOLUTION SERIAL NO. 21-045**

A RESOLUTION OF THE MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH ASSEMBLY SUPPORTING THE PROPOSED STATE OF ALASKA GENERAL OBLIGATION BOND \$13.2 MILLION ALLOCATION FOR THE FAIRBANKS TO SEWARD MULTI-USE TRAIL ALSO KNOWN AS THE ALASKA LONG TRAIL

WHEREAS, the Alaska Long Trail is an initiative sponsored by a coalition of partners and led by Alaska Trails that seeks to establish a 500-mile trail from Seward to Fairbanks; and

WHEREAS, supporting the Alaska Long Trail is consistent with the Matanuska-Susitna Borough's Land and Resource Management Division policy to provide for an integrated network of easements, rights-of-ways, and trails; and

WHEREAS, projects in the Bond Measure are "shovel ready", which means once funding is available, these trail building projects will provide much needed jobs for Alaskan residents; and

WHEREAS, the Alaska Long Trail project list includes \$1.9 million for trail construction connecting Government Peak Recreation Area with the Hatcher Pass area, within the Matanuska-Susitna Borough; and

WHEREAS, the trails funded under this Bond Measure would be built to sustainable standards, greatly reducing the costs for trail maintenance; and

WHEREAS, construction of the Alaska Long Trail would provide additional reasons for visitors to spend time and money in Alaska, particularly highly sought-after, independent travelers from around the world, helping to create jobs and new opportunities for Alaskan businesses; and

WHEREAS, the Alaska Long Trail would expand recreation opportunities for the local community, responding to the dramatic increases in demand for outdoor recreation, and providing more chances for Alaska residents to be active, healthy and happy outside; and

WHEREAS, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough stands to benefit; in terms of job creation, business opportunities, and tax revenue; and

WHEREAS, now is the time to invest in a sustainable future for the Matanuska-Susitna Borough and Alaska by supporting development of a route that will stand alongside the other grand trails of the world; and

WHEREAS, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Parks, Recreation, and Trails Advisory Board adopted Resolution 20-02 in support of the Alaska Long Trail on October 26, 2020.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Assembly:

- supports investment of \$13.2 million to fund trail projects identified in the Governor's general obligation bond for the Fairbanks to Seward Multi-Use Trail, also known as the Alaska Long Trail; and
- supports shifting this funding to the State's capital budget if the general obligation bond does not move forward

ADOPTED by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly this 18 day of May, 2021.


VERN HALTER, Borough Mayor

ATTEST:


LONNIE R. McKECHNIE, CMC, Borough Clerk

(SEAL)

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: Hale, Nowers, McKee, Yundt, Tew, Sumner, and Boeve

Municipal Clerk's Office
Approved
Date: March 15, 2022

Submitted by: Assembly Chair LaFrance,
Assembly Vice Chair Constant,
Assembly Members Dunbar,
Petersen, Quinn-Davidson,
Rivera, Weddleton, and Zaletel
Reviewed by: Assembly Counsel
For reading: March 15, 2022

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA
AR No. 2022-90

**A RESOLUTION OF THE ANCHORAGE ASSEMBLY SUPPORTING THE
ALASKA LONG TRAIL.**

WHEREAS, the vision for the Alaska Long Trail is a world-class trail system connecting 500+ miles of Alaska's iconic terrain and diverse communities from the Pacific to the Interior, embracing the many ways Alaskans recreate outdoors and bolstering the Alaska economy by attracting visitors from all over the world; and

WHEREAS, with some of the world's most stunning wild places, Alaska is overdue in creating a connected trail system with goals to improve access, build a stronger, more durable economy, improve quality of life, encourage healthy lifestyles, celebrate heritage and sustain what makes Alaska unique; and

WHEREAS, the Alaska Long Trail route from Seward to Fairbanks, where a substantial portion of public land trails already exist, has strong bipartisan support from local, state and national elected officials, businesses and organizations; and

WHEREAS, as Alaska's largest city and airport hub, Anchorage would connect to the Alaska Long Trail through a braided trail system from the Moose Loop trails in Anchorage north to Palmer and the Mat-Su, along the spectacular Tikahtnu-Cook Inlet and Knik River valleys and south along the breathtaking, awe-inspiring Turnagain Arm to Girdwood; and

WHEREAS, the Alaska Long Trail braid from Anchorage to the south needs improved, safe, bicycle and pedestrian access along the Seward Highway from Potter Marsh to Indian, connecting to the Bird to Gird trail and into Girdwood, then connecting south into Chugach National Forest and looping back north over Crow Pass to Eagle River; and

WHEREAS, the Alaska Long Trail braid from Anchorage to the north needs improved, safe and attractive multi-use access along the Glenn Highway Trail from Anchorage to the communities of Chugiak, Eagle River, Eklutna and beyond to the Mat-Su, where the trail would continue north to Fairbanks; and

WHEREAS, the Appalachian, Pacific Crest and other Long Trails are hugely popular attractions and economic drivers; for example, the Appalachian Trail attracts 3 million visitors each year to shop, dine, stay and hike a portion of the 2000+ mile trail; and

1 **WHEREAS**, Anchorage residents support trails through annual voter-approved
2 bonds, and the Alaska Long Trail stands to leverage the value of Anchorage's
3 existing trail system, bringing major recreation and economic benefits to Anchorage
4 and Alaska by attracting a range of travelers from around the world to shop, dine,
5 stay and recreate; and
6

7 **WHEREAS**, now is the time to invest in the future of Anchorage and Alaska's
8 outdoor recreation, tourism and small business economies by supporting the
9 development of an iconic trail that will stand alongside the other grand trails of the
10 nation.
11

12 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE ANCHORAGE ASSEMBLY**
13 **SUPPORTS THE ALASKA LONG TRAIL AND ENCOURAGES INVESTMENT AT**
14 **THE LOCAL, STATE AND NATIONAL LEVEL.**
15

16
17 **PASSED AND APPROVED** by the Anchorage Assembly this 15th day of March,
18 2022.
19

20
21 

22
23 _____
Chair

24 **ATTEST:**
25

26
27 

28 _____
29 Municipal Clerk

**CITY OF SEWARD, ALASKA
RESOLUTION 2021-014**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEWARD,
ALASKA, SUPPORTING THE CONTINUED DEVELOPMENT OF THE
ALASKA LONG TRAIL FROM SEWARD TO FAIRBANKS**

WHEREAS, the Alaska Long Trail is an initiative sponsored by Alaska Trails that seeks to establish a 500-mile trail from Seward to Fairbanks, with a potential expansion extending north of Fairbanks for a total length of 2000 miles; and

WHEREAS, supporting the Alaska Long Trail is consistent with Seward Parks & Recreation's mission to preserve, improve, and promote the city's natural resources, parkland, and recreational opportunities for current and future generations; and

WHEREAS, the Seward 2030 Comprehensive Plan, Goal 3.6.1.1, is "Improve existing and develop additional recreational infrastructure"; and

WHEREAS, the Alaska Long Trail would expand recreation opportunities for the local community, as well as for tourists; and

WHEREAS, the Alaska Long Trail would impart major recreation and economic benefits to Seward and Alaska by attracting highly sought-after independent travelers; and

WHEREAS, Seward, as a terminus city, stands to gain in particular in terms of job creation, business opportunities, and tax revenue; and

WHEREAS, now is the time to invest in a sustainable future for Seward and Alaska by supporting the development of a route that will stand alongside the other grand trails of the world.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEWARD, ALASKA that:

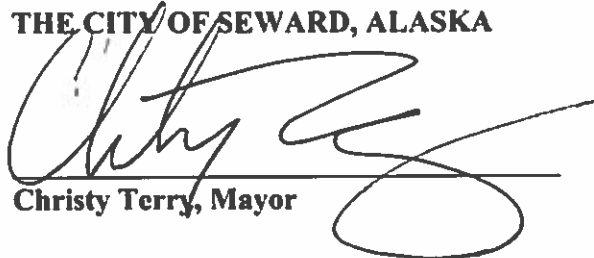
Section 1. The Seward City Council hereby supports the development of the Alaska Long Trail sponsored by Alaska Trails.

Section 2. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon adoption.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the City Council of the City of Seward, Alaska, this 25th day of January, 2021.

**CITY OF SEWARD, ALASKA
RESOLUTION 2021-014**

THE CITY OF SEWARD, ALASKA


Christy Terry, Mayor

AYES: DeMoss, Baclaan, McClure, Casagrande, Seese, Osenga, Terry
NOES: None
ABSENT: None
ABSTAIN: None

ATTEST:


Brenda J. Ballou, MMC
City Clerk

(City Seal)



I'm happy to answer any questions you may have about my support for this important opportunity, and you can call me any time at (907) 227-6163. Thank you for your consideration of this opportunity and, more importantly, for your service to Alaska!

Best,

/s Don Striker
Acting Regional Director



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Interior Region 11 • Alaska
240 West 5th Avenue, Room 114
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

IN REPLY REFER TO

Alaska Senate Transportation Committee
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Senators:

I am writing to express my full support of the \$13.2M in the Governor's GO Bond for the proposed Fairbanks-to-Seward Long Trail. The National Park Service is an active partner with the State of Alaska and the Alaska tourism industry, working together to sustain and expand the quality of Alaska as a destination, and to help support a stronger, more durable Alaska economy. The Long Trail could provide another reason for visitors to choose to spend time and money in Alaska, and we very much support moving forward with this project.

While there are many reasons to support the Long Trail, two are critical to my mind:

- **Expanded Capacity to Support Visitors** – with the COVID-19 virus, National Parks all over America are seeing a spike in use, which builds on an already steady increase in National Park visitation. Because of Alaska's location and constraints on travel, this was not the case in Alaska in summer 2020, but I am confident we will see a significant surge in the coming years. Working with the Denali Borough, the Park Service is committed to expand "frontcountry" opportunities for visitors in and around Denali. As is the case in National Parks around the U.S., visitors are as interested in "edge of park" activities as they are in deeper interior locations. At Denali, those opportunities range from day hikes, to raft trips, ATV and horse back rides, and simply lingering to enjoy a beautiful setting. The two projects proposed in this Long Trail GO Bond package would be very helpful in reaching this goal.
- **Leverage** – The federal government is directing growing funding for trails and outdoor recreation. This includes the substantial expansion of the federal Land Water Conservation Fund, and the 2016 "Centennial Fund". Approving this bond would create opportunities to leverage those funding sources, potentially doubling available dollars.

The National Park Service has a role in managing other long trails, including the Appalachian Trail. We well recognize the power of such trail systems to both preserve our special places and achieve a sustainable economic benefit from such conservation. Few people will travel a trail's full distance, but many people go out of their way to experience even a short portion of a trail that traverses a large expanse of the globe.



KENAI MOUNTAINS-TURNAGAIN ARM NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA

Senator Click Bishop
Senate Co-chair, Finance
Senator.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov

March 14, 2022

Re: Seward-to-Fairbanks Alaska Long Trail Project Support

Dear Senator Bishop:

The Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm National Heritage Area (KMTA) seeks your support for a [set of projects](#) for the planned [Seward-to-Fairbanks Alaska Long Trail](#), submitted into CAPSIS for inclusion in the FY2023 state capital budget. These investments will create much needed construction jobs in the near term and provide lasting benefits to the Alaska's economy, communities, health, and our unique outdoor recreation lifestyles.

The recommended project list was thoughtfully developed by a broad group of partners that are working together to create this system of trails. The overarching goal is to create a world-class multi-braid trail system linking spectacular Alaskan landscapes and communities from Seward to Fairbanks, attracting and inspiring Alaska residents and people from all over the world. The beauty of this multi-braid approach is that the proposed trail system will a) incorporate a variety of year-round uses (motorized and nonmotorized) along different sections of a braided network of routes, thus supporting diverse trail users, and b) include many existing or currently planned trail sections that are almost entirely on public lands, thereby reducing the complexity and cost. As Alaska's only National Heritage Area and one centrally located in South Central Alaska, our work to increase recreational and economic opportunities for the communities of Turnagain Arm and the Kenai Peninsula relies heavily on creating and enhancing our area's outdoor experiences.

The recommended 15 high-priority shovel-ready and planning-ready Long Trail projects were identified and are supported by tourism businesses and tourism marketing organizations, local governments, state and federal agencies, trail organizations, and individual trail users. The projects span five legislative districts and offer enormous benefits to both Alaskans and visitors. Outdoor recreation is essential for our state, and communities and businesses in Alaska have the potential to realize an additional \$137M in annual spending by creating opportunities for state visitors to spend one more day in Alaska and enjoy our region's world class trails. Long Trails like the Appalachian or the Pacific Crest Trail have proven to attract people from all over the planet, and having one here would create more reasons for visitors to spend time and money in Alaska. Few people will travel a trail's full distance, but people go out of their way to experience even a short portion of a trail that traverses a large expanse of the globe. The proposed list of project activities would help create critical infrastructure to sustain visitation and increase the benefits of some of the most popular existing sections of the proposed Long Trail.

For example, rebuilding and rerouting dangerously eroded sections of the Crow Pass Trail (project #13) would improve, expand, and sustain the opportunities on a route critical to both local commercial outfitters and guides, as well as resident and out-of-state visitors. Replacing the now-closed hand tram with a bridge over Glacier Creek in Girdwood (project # 14) would drastically improve safety for the many users of the Winner Creek Trail, address demand for visitation on that trail, and even afford faster access from the road to the trail for emergencies. These are just a handful of examples that demonstrate the widespread and lasting benefits these projects could have.

We ask that you support the inclusion of Alaska Long Trail projects in the FY2023 capital budget. Thanks for all your continuing hard work for our district and Alaska. Please call or write if you have questions.

Sincerely,

Rachel Blakeslee
Executive Director, KMTA NHA



**GIRDWOOD TRAILS
ALASKA**

Dear Senator Roger Holland, and Representative James Kaufman,

On behalf of the Girdwood Trails Committee, I am writing to ask you to support the projects for the planned Fairbanks-to-Seward Long Trail in Alaska.

The value of outdoor recreation in Alaska is evident and a vital thread of the Alaskan way of life. As reported by Alaska Center for Economic Development, there is \$3.2 billion in spending in Alaska tied to outdoor recreation. Look at today's newspaper, 11 of the 21 members of the U.S. cross-country team are from Alaska. Alaska has the 7th largest recreational economy in the U.S., and these investments will support the trail connection infrastructure and create construction jobs, connect communities, and boost Alaska's tourism economy. If half of a typical year's out-of-state travelers spent one extra day in Alaska, that would create an additional \$137M in spending.

This bold trail plan is overdue, and a proven success in the U.S. and countries around the world including Pacific Crest Trail, John Muir Trail, Iditarod Trail, Appalachian Trail, Milford Track, Arizona Trail are a few examples of trail connections that now support the health of communities, both physical and economical, along the routes. This system of trails will link Alaskan landscapes and communities from Fairbanks to Seward, attracting and inspiring Alaska residents and people from all over the world – Including Girdwood. Projects pertaining to this trail plan include five legislative districts and benefit both Alaskans and visitors.

The Long Trail projects have replaced the initial list that was inadvertently put into the GO Bond and CAPSIS. The project proponents recommend support for a slightly expanded list of project activities, increasing the full cost of the project from \$13.2M originally identified by the Governor to \$15.8 M.

We ask you to support Governor Dunleavy's initial proposal for Long Trail funding in the GO Bond (HB 93/SB 74). If the GO Bond does not happen, we ask that you support switching the projects to the Capital Budget, perhaps tapping into federal American Rescue Plan funding.

Thank you for your consideration.

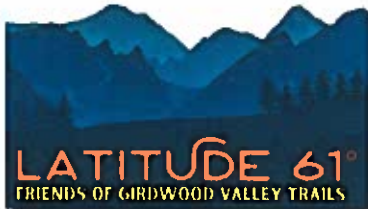
Sincerely,

Deb Essex
Vice-Chair Girdwood Trails Committee
deb@skigirdwood.org

Deb Essex
Girdwood Nordic Ski Club
PO Box 337
Girdwood, AK 99587
deb@skigirdwood.org

Kalie Harrison
Treasurer Girdwood Trails Committee
Kalie.harrison@gmail.com

Kalie Harrison
President Latitude 61° Friends of the Girdwood Valley Trails
PO Box 514
Girdwood, Alaska 99587
Latitude61girdwoodtrails@gmail.com



Senator Roger Holland
Alaska Senate—South Anchorage
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Senator Holland:

Latitude 61° Friends of Girdwood Valley Trails asks you to support the set of projects for the planned Fairbanks-Seward Long Trail in the GO Bond (HB 93/SB74).

First, building this long trail creates jobs for Alaskans, and the lasting impact of such a spectacular trail benefits our economy and communities. South Anchorage and Turnagain Arm economy would benefit immensely from such a trail. If half of a typical year's out-of-state travelers spent one extra day in Alaska, that would create an additional \$137M in spending. Our section of the trail would be well traveled.

Second, the projects for the trail are ready to be built. So much work has been done already that the linked projects for the trail will provide immediate jobs for Alaskans. The projects for the trail span five legislative districts, and all these districts will benefit from the work needed.

Finally, tourism businesses, tourism marketing organizations, local governments, state and federal agencies, trail organizations, and individual trail users endorse this grand project. It is a bipartisan, win/win project. If the GO Bond does not come through, we ask to you support switching the Long Trail project to the Capital budget, perhaps through the American Rescue Plan.

Thank you, Senator Holland.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kalie", followed by a long horizontal flourish.

Kalie Harrison
Latitude 61° Friends of Girdwood Valley Trails
PO Box 514
Girdwood, AK 99587
latitude61girdwoodtrails@gmail.com



January 28, 2022

Honorable Alaska State Legislators:

The Anchorage Park Foundation is submitting eight projects for your consideration for inclusion in the Capital Budget and/or a General Obligation Bond. The list and the CAPSIS numbers for the projects are attached.

These proposals will have a resounding positive impact on communities. They support the stories that bind us together, they create jobs, and they help facilitate a wide variety of activities from hiking, biking, snowmachining, hunting and fishing to travel and tourism. They are supported by a growing coalition of business leaders, public land agencies, local governments, the trails community, neighborhoods, and Alaska Native leaders.

Project proposals include:

Alaska Long Trail –The first phase of this ambitious effort will connect Seward to Fairbanks – starting with the southern trek of the Iditarod National Historic Trail, passing through communities, mountains and glaciers, the Tanana Valley State Forest and into Fairbanks. Business leaders are on board to add this “one more day” visitor enticement to Alaska’s recreation infrastructure. We seek funding for wayfinding to our existing 33-mile “Moose Loop” trail infrastructure, connecting it to the Alaska Long Trail by building the missing links from Anchorage to the Mat-Su and Anchorage to Girdwood – where the trail will go up and over the mountains to Eagle River.

The Tikahtnu – Cook Inlet NHA Feasibility Study is needed to define the scope, boundaries, and local stories of national importance that need to be told for this area of Alaska. Once defined, a Tikahtnu – Cook Inlet NHA would be Congressionally established and locally managed, bringing to Alaska a stream of federal funding to match resources from local community-generated projects.

Alaska’s only existing NHA – the Kenai Mountains Turnagain Arm National Heritage Area - brings attention to Alaska’s 10,000-year history of resilient people and their passions – including fishing, mining and outdoor recreation. We hope this new NHA could be a funding source for some of the connections in the Alaska Long Trail.

The Alaska Long Trail Anchorage to Mat-Su Reconnaissance Study will take the first step in making these connections, by bringing together landowners and stakeholders to investigate the benefits, costs and feasibility of different trail options. A leading candidate route would parallel the Glenn Highway, filling the 8-mile gap from where the existing paved bike trail ends at Mirror Lake, to the northern boundary of the Municipality of Anchorage. Because the Long Trail is planned to be a braided trail system, including hiking, biking and motorized segments,

there may be alternative or additional other trail routes that could meet these trail connection goals. These options will also be investigated through this project, working with willing landowners and stakeholders. Landowners including Alaska Department of Transportation, Chugach State Park, Alaska Railroad, Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge managers, Eklutna, Inc., Native Village of Eklutna, MOA, Mat-Su Borough and trail advocates have indicated a willingness to come together with engineers to map a path forward to connect Alaska's two most populated areas, Anchorage and the Matanuska Susitna Valley.

Indigenous Placemaking – Alaska Natives and Anchorage business leaders agree that locals and visitors benefit from indigenous place name wayfinding and interpretation that tells the story of our cultural heritage through Dena'ina language and history. Investment in Cultural Tourism Infrastructure with Dena'ina leadership is strongly advised for the economy of this region to enhance the visitor experience in our increasingly globalized world. The request for feasibility study resources for the National Heritage Designation will also assist in this effort.

Connecting Neighborhoods – The Anchorage Park Foundation sees our existing active transportation infrastructure – the “Moose Loop” - as a way to connect neighborhoods to our systems of parks and trails. Project proposals improve neighborhood safety and connectivity throughout the Municipality of Anchorage, including Russian Jack, Downtown, Fairview, Lake Otis. It also seeks to connect neighbors in the Native Village of Eklutna, Eagle River, Chugiak and North Peters Creek to the Mat-Su and Anchorage.

The Anchorage Park Foundation strongly supports the Governor's Division of Parks Budget, as it invests in outdoor recreation in our region and across the state, including electronic fee stations and DNR sanitation funds.

We look forward to working with any legislator who sees the benefit of investing in Anchorage parks and trails. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out. You can contact me at beth@anchorageparkfoundation.org or 907.274.1004.

Sincerely,



Beth Nordlund, Executive Director
Anchorage Park Foundation



Dear Senator Begich,

I am writing to ask you to support a set of projects for the planned Seward-to-Fairbanks Alaska Long Trail, submitted into CAPSIS for inclusion in the FY2023 state capital budget. These investments will create much needed construction jobs in the near term and provide lasting benefits for Alaska's economy, communities, health, and our unique outdoor recreation lifestyles.

See more details on the 15 Alaska Long Trail projects submitted for FY2023 capital budget:
www.alaska-trails.org/funding-for-the-alaska-long-trail

The Alaska Long Trail concept is the culmination of a broad group of partners working together to envision Alaska's outdoor recreation infrastructure future. The Alaska Long Trail will connect Alaska's beautiful and diverse public lands and communities, creating opportunities for Alaskans and visitors to Alaska alike to appreciate all the State has to offer. The Alaska Long Trail will incorporate a variety of uses, including motorized and non-motorized sections that will appeal to a diverse use group. Many of these sections already exist, which means the Alaska Long Trail is an affordable and sensible project to implement. The Alaska Long Trail boasts bipartisan support and would stimulate new job and business opportunities, which would create a sustainable positive impact on Alaska's economy.

Alaska Huts Association is a local Alaskan non-profit that strives to create and maintain backcountry lodgings that promote camaraderie, stewardship, outdoor education and Alaska's cultural heritage. It goes without saying that the Alaska Long Trail project would hugely benefit Alaska and opportunities for communities, and visitors to communities, to connect with each other, Alaska's public lands, and its wealth of outdoor recreation opportunities.

Alaska Huts Association asks that you support the inclusion of Alaska Long Trail projects in the FY2023 capital budget.

Thanks for all your continuing hard work for our district and Alaska. Please call or write if you have questions.

Sincerely,

Mackenzie Barnwell, Executive Director of Alaska Huts Association
907-362-7721
mackenzie@alaskahuts.org

May 3, 2021

Senator Bishop
Alaska State Senate



I am writing on behalf of Alaska Trails, the statewide non-profit, to ask for your support for the Fairbanks-to-Seward Alaska Long Trail, as originally endorsed in the Governor's G.O. Bond. The specific request is for \$15.8 Million for projects to fill gaps along the length of the planned route (*see following pages for details*). If the legislature does not proceed with the G.O. Bond, we ask funding shift to the State's capital budget, perhaps with funds from the American Rescue Plan.

Alaska is long overdue to provide a trail matching the great long trails of the world. The Alaska Long Trail would link spectacular landscapes and communities from Fairbanks to Seward, attracting and inspiring Alaska residents and people from all over the world. Specific benefits include:

- **Economic Impact** – Outdoor recreation infrastructure *is essential* infrastructure, building on Alaska's global competitive advantage, and supporting local jobs, business opportunities, and a stronger, more durable AK economy. If just half of a typical year's out-of-state travelers had reasons to spend one more day in Alaska, the result would be an additional \$137M in annual spending in our state.
- **Health Benefits** – Long Trails have a near magical ability to inspire use, mostly for a single day. The Long Trail will make it inviting and easier for a larger portion of Alaskans to be active, healthy, happy outside.
- **Projects are "Shovel Ready"** – Funding these investments will create much needed construction jobs in the near term, and build skills that will be in demand continuing into the future.
- **Multi-Use** – The Long Trail will be an *Alaskan* Long Trail; a "braided", four-season trail system designed hikers, bikers, skiers, ATV's, snowmachines, for both day and multi-day use.
- **Broad Bipartisan Support** – A broad coalition is working to plan, build and ultimately maintain the Alaska Long Trail. This group identified the projects in this \$15.8M request; spanning five boroughs and related legislative districts. Listed below and attached is a partial record of stated project support:
 - Local Governments – resolutions of support from Cities of Seward & Nenana, and the Fairbanks North Star Borough; resolutions from Mat-Su and Denali Boroughs are coming in mid-May.
 - State and Federal Agencies - National Park Service (letter from Don Striker, Regional Director); Chugach National Forest (Iditarod trail partner); Alaska DNR (in DNR's capital budget request)
 - Regional Tourism Marketing/Economic Development Organizations (testimony by Julie Saupe, ED of Visit Anchorage to the Senate Transportation committee; comparable letter coming mid-May from Bonnie Quill, ED of Mat Su CVB; testimony and letter from Tim Dillon, ED of the Kenai Peninsula Economic Development
 - Trail organizations and individual trail users – statements of support and hundreds of hours of active involvement in all stages of the project

We ask that you support what Governor Dunleavy started with the proposal for Long Trail funding in the GO Bond. Please call or write if you have questions. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Steve Cleary Alaska Trails Executive Director

Chris Beck, AK Trails Initiative Coordinator

Attachments: Statements of support; Details of projects proposed for funding

May 3, 2021

Senator Bishop
Alaska State Senate



I am writing on behalf of Alaska Trails, the statewide non-profit, to ask for your support for the Fairbanks-to-Seward Alaska Long Trail, as originally endorsed in the Governor's G.O. Bond. The specific request is for \$15.8 Million for projects to fill gaps along the length of the planned route (*see following pages for details*). If the legislature does not proceed with the G.O. Bond, we ask funding shift to the State's capital budget, perhaps with funds from the American Rescue Plan.

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 - Trail organizations and individual trail users – statements of support and hundreds of hours of active involvement in all stages of the project

We ask that you support what Governor Dunleavy started with the proposal for Long Trail funding in the GO Bond. Please call or write if you have questions. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Steve Cleary Alaska Trails Executive Director

Chris Beck, AK Trails Initiative Coordinator

Attachments: Statements of support; Details of projects proposed for funding

Date: May 10, 2021

Re: HB 93/SB 74 Alaska Long Trail Support

Dear Representative Foster and Representative Merrick,

The Alaska Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) requests your support for the Alaska Long Trail in the Governor's proposed capital budget bill SB 74/ HB 93.

Supporting this section of the capital budget will fund construction of missing segments of the Alaska Long Trail. The trail is already partly constructed and when it is completed it will connect Seward to Fairbanks, via Anchorage and several other communities in between. Over 500 miles long, the Alaska Long Trail spans five legislative districts and will be traveled by Alaskans and visitors from around the world.

Landscape Architects understand the significant beneficial impacts of trail projects. There are examples throughout the country of trails supporting businesses, such as the Appalachian Trail, which brings three million people each year through small towns that would otherwise not see visitors. A [2018 study](#) found that some 63,000 bikers, hikers, and runners on Helena, Montana's South Hills trail system generated \$4.3 million in economic impact and 60 jobs.

In Alaska there is already a robust outdoor recreation economy that would further benefit from the tourist dollars brought in from hikers. Alaska's outdoor recreation economic sector is 7th largest in the US, contributing 3.9% to state GDP and 81% of Alaskans participate in outdoor recreation. Those who will benefit from the development of the Alaska Long Trail include trail designers like Landscape Architects, businesses such as restaurants, grocery stores, outdoor outfitters, guide services, and rental car agencies. Larger cities like Anchorage and Fairbanks would see economic benefits from supporting visitors as they enter and depart from Alaska. Additionally, Alaskans could hike the trail and receive the important health benefits that we value even more after this last year of COVID.

The trail projects are shovel ready and the funding will immediately provide jobs to contractors, building material suppliers and laborers. We ask that you support this project through whichever method is most appropriate: the capital budget, a bond bill, or bypass through federal infrastructure funds.

The Alaska Chapter of ASLA is a professional organization whose mission is to lead, educate, and participate in the careful stewardship, wise planning, and artful design of our cultural and natural environments. The Alaska Chapter of ASLA supports the construction of the Alaska Long Trail because we believe it will benefit Alaskans and will be an economic and social asset for the state.

Written on behalf of the Alaska Chapter ASLA Executive Board.
Sincerely,



Mélisa R. K. Babb, President



Alaska Chapter

The American Society of Landscape Architects

w: www.akasla.org e: aslaak.web@gmail.com

For more information on the Alaska Long Trail: <https://www.alaska-trails.org/the-alaska-long-trail>

Interior Trails Quarterly

A Newsletter about Trails in Interior Alaska

Wednesday, March 10, 2021

Senator Robert Myers
State Capitol Room 510
Juneau AK, 99801

Re: Alaska Long Trail and SB74

Senator Myers:

I urge you to support inclusion of the Alaska Long Trail projects included by Gov. Dunleavy in SB74, the general obligation bond package. The \$13.2 million proposed for the ALT is less than 4 percent of \$357M in bond package, a small but significant investment for our outdoor recreation/tourism industry, which in a normal year supports 1 in 10 Alaska jobs and generates close to \$4 billion.

Short Term Benefits

The Alaska Long Trail will bring a variety of benefits to Interior Alaska and the whole state. In the short run, the ALT will provide construction jobs. Some sections of existing trails will need to be upgraded to handle being part of a statewide trail. New sections of trail will have to be built in areas that have no existing connection. And some bridges will need to be built. All these will benefit our local communities right away.

Local Long Term Benefits

Once these improvements are made, the ALT will bring benefits for years to come. The trail, which will include multiple routes in some places, will provide local people with more places to recreate, helping to encourage people to spend more for outdoor equipment and to travel to new, exciting trails. People recreating on trails brings its own benefits. Many studies have shown that people who spend time outdoors and exercising are happier and healthier, which helps make our whole community happier and healthier.

Statewide Long Term Benefits

The Alaska Long Trail will be the first "long trail" in Alaska, comparable to the Appalachian and Pacific Crest trails in the Lower 48 or the Great Trail in Canada. These "long trails" draw visitors from across the world. A few want to travel the entire route in a single trip. Most want to do just a portion. However, people want to experience them, these "long trails" create an aura that is an excellent marketing tool for the visitor industry. If we can create more reasons for just half of a typical year's out of state visitors to spend one more day in Alaska, the result would be an additional \$137M in annual spending.

Interior Trails Quarterly



Specific Benefits

Specific benefits that would come from this bond measure and the Alaska Long Trail project include:

- Expands and diversifies the base of attractions that supports the tourism industry
- More visitor spending, leading to more and better jobs for Alaskans, and more opportunities for businesses, especially smaller, local Alaska-based businesses.
- More reasons for businesses, residents, retirees to stay in or relocate to Alaska
- Increased visitor spending that generates revenues needed by local governments, to support schools, roads, public safety
- A response to the dramatic increases in demand for outdoor recreation, providing more chances for Alaska residents to be active, healthy and happy outside
- A shift from social trails to sustainable trails, greatly reducing the costs for trail maintenance
- New options to use and leverage federal dollars, to more than double what Alaska puts in, and to help address the backlog of deferred maintenance

I ask that you support keeping the Alaska Long Trail projects in the GO Bond, and then getting the measure passed. Thank you for all your hard work for our district and Alaska.

Sincerely
Eric Troyer
Editor and Publisher

Attachment: Full list of Alaska Long Trail projects in the bond package

CC:

Michaela Anderson, committee aide to Sen Myers: [REDACTED]

Chris Beck, Alaska Long Trail coordinator: [REDACTED]

Steve Cleary, Alaska Trails executive director: [REDACTED]



Fairbanks Cycle Club

www.fairbankscycleclub.org P.O. Box 80183; Fairbanks, AK 99708

Sunday, March 13, 2022

Re: Funding for Alaska Long Trail projects

Interior Alaska State Senators:

The FCC urges you to support funding for Alaska Long Trail projects submitted for state capital budget FY2023. This multi-braided trail from Seward to Fairbanks will accommodate many modes of trail, motorized and non-motorized.

Short-Term Benefits

In the short run, the ALT will provide construction jobs in the form of trail upgrades, new trail connections, and bridges. All these will benefit our local communities right away.

Local Long-Term Benefits

Once built, this trail will bring economic and health benefits. It will encourage people to spend more on outdoor equipment and travel. And many studies have shown that people who spend time outdoors and exercising are happier and healthier, which help make our communities happier and healthier.

Statewide Long-Term Benefits

The Alaska Long Trail will be the first "long trail" in Alaska, comparable to the Appalachian and Pacific Crest trails in the Lower 48. These "long trails" create an aura that is an excellent marketing tool for the visitor industry. They draw people from across the world, even those who want to experience just a part of the trail. If we can create more reasons for just half of a typical year's out-of-state visitors to spend one more day in Alaska, the result would be an additional \$137M in annual spending.

For more on the Alaska Long Trail, including a list of the projects submitted, see this page: <https://tinyurl.com/yrfv2f3y>.

Please support the Alaska Long Trail projects submitted for state capital budget. Thank you for all your hard work for our district and Alaska.

Sincerely
Alyssa Enriquez
President



Saturday, March 12, 2022

Re: Funding for Alaska Long Trail projects

Dear Senators:

The NSCF urges you to support funding for Alaska Long Trail projects submitted for state capital budget FY2023. This multi-braided trail from Seward to Fairbanks will accommodate many modes of trail, motorized and non-motorized.

Short-Term Benefits

In the short run, the ALT will provide construction jobs in the form of trail upgrades, new trail connections, and bridges. All these will benefit our local communities right away.

Local Long-Term Benefits

Once built, this trail will bring economic and health benefits. It will encourage people to spend more on outdoor equipment and travel. And many studies have shown that people who spend time outdoors and exercising are happier and healthier, which help make our communities happier and healthier.

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For more on the Alaska Long Trail, including a list of the projects submitted, see this page: <https://tinyurl.com/yrfv2f3y>.

Please support the Alaska Long Trail projects submitted for state capital budget. Thank you for all your hard work for our district and Alaska.

Sincerely
Chris Puchner
President



INTERIOR TRAILS PRESERVATION COALITION

ITPC

Thursday, March 10, 2022

Re: Funding for Alaska Long Trail projects

Senators of Interior Alaska:

The ITPC urges you to support funding for Alaska Long Trail projects submitted for state capital budget FY2023. This multi-braided trail from Seward to Fairbanks will accommodate many modes of trail, motorized and non-motorized.

Short-Term Benefits

In the short run, the ALT will provide construction jobs in the form of trail upgrades, new trail connections, and bridges. All these will benefit our local communities right away.

Local Long-Term Benefits

Once built, this trail will bring economic and health benefits. It will encourage people to spend more on outdoor equipment and travel. And many studies have shown that people who spend time outdoors and exercising are happier and healthier, which help make our communities happier and healthier.

Statewide Long-Term Benefits

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For more on the Alaska Long Trail, including a list of the projects submitted, go here: <https://tinyurl.com/yrfv2f3y>.

Please support the Alaska Long Trail projects submitted for state capital budget. Thank you for all your hard work for our district and Alaska.

Sincerely
Stan Justice
President

ITPC

P.O. Box 74263, Fairbanks, AK 99707 Phone: (907) 458-7968

Michaella Anderson

From: Skeetawk Board of Directors [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 10, 2021 10:45 AM
Subject: GO Bond Letter of Support

To Whom It May Concern:

As operators of Skeetawk, Alaskan's newest ski area located in Hatcher Pass, we want to urge you to support GO Bond funding for the Long Trail. That project will put people back to work, be good for our business and others in the community, create a new reason for people to spend time and money in the Mat Su, and help diversity the tourism economy. The Skeetawk Executive Committee fully supports the GO Bond funding for the Long Trail.

Sincerely,

Macey "Butch" Shapiro
Board Chair

Nick Jenkins
Board Vice Chair

Chris Bowman
Board Treasurer

Nicole Yount
Board Secretary

Hatcher Alpine Xperience
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

THE ALASKA LONG TRAIL

A PATH FOR A STRONGER ALASKA ECONOMY

VISION: A world-class trail system connecting 500+ miles of Alaska's iconic terrain and diverse communities from the Pacific to the Interior, embracing the many ways Alaskans recreate outdoors and bolstering the Alaska economy by attracting visitors from all over the world.

GOALS AND BENEFITS

With some of the world's most stunning wild places, Alaska is overdue in creating a world-class, long trail system of its own. Goals and outcomes of building the trail include:

- **Improve Access** – Expand year-round non-motorized, motorized, and multi-modal outdoor recreation access; increase the supply of outdoor recreation opportunities which has fallen behind demand.
- **Build a Stronger, More Durable Economy** – Long trails are potent, proven attractions that will increase the time and money travelers spend in Alaska, growing jobs for residents, spawning business opportunities, and invigorating the economies of trail towns and communities along the route and statewide.
- **Enhance Alaskans' Quality of Life** – Make Alaska an even more attractive place to live for current and prospective residents.
- **Encourage Healthy Lives** – Make it easier and more inviting to be active and healthy outside.
- **Celebrate Heritage** – Support, preserve, and celebrate Alaska's vibrant traditional cultures and ways of life.
- **Sustain what Makes Alaska Unique** – Be good stewards of outdoor recreation resources: our wild spaces and healthy ecosystems, lively communities, and access to abundant, diverse recreational experiences. The Long Trail will become a national treasure, benefiting Alaskans, and creating a legacy for future generations.

USE & USERS: The trail aims to support diverse trail users. Uses on specific trail segments will be determined by the realities of terrain and the management policies of individual landowners and agencies. Existing agency policies regarding motorized/non-motorized use for any given trail will not be changed. The ultimate goal is a network of routes accommodating a variety of uses, including some braids open to motorized use, and others for non-motorized hiking, biking and skiing. Some segments may include the Alaska Railroad or, like in Nenana Canyon, with a local rafting guide company.

RESOLUTIONS AND SUPPORT

Numerous organizations, agencies, local governments, and individuals expressed support for the Alaska Long Trail in the past year. Here is the list of organizations, agencies, and local governments that have sent letters of support, passed resolutions, and provided direct testimony at legislative meetings in support of the Alaska Long Trail.

- Fairbanks North Star Borough Assembly
- Denali Borough Assembly
- Mat-Su Borough Assembly
- Anchorage Assembly
- City of Seward
- City of Nenana
- Girdwood Board of Supervisors
- National Park Service
- Alaska Travel Industry Association (ATIA)
- Visit Anchorage (ED testimony to Senate)
- Anchorage Park Foundation
- Anchorage Trails Coalition
- Roadmap to a Vital and Safe Anchorage – Anchorage Chamber
- Mat-Su Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation (MSTPF)
- Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District (KPEDD)
- Kenai Mountains – Turnagain Arm National Heritage Area (KMTA)
- Alaska Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects
- Interior Alaska Trails and Parks Foundation
- Skeetawk, Hatcher Alpine Xperience
- Single Track Advocates, Anchorage
- Alaska Chapter of Backcountry Hunters and Anglers



Photo credits: Tim Chamon, USFS; Ryan Delaney, BLM; Chris Beck, AK Trails

500+ MILES FROM SEWARD TO FAIRBANKS

- **Momentum and Landowner Support:** largely on public land, a substantial portion (25%) already exists
- **Manageable Costs:** buildable terrain, good access
- **Community Connections:** more jobs, businesses, tax revenues
- **"Goldilocks Factor":** Wild, but not too wild; manageable logistics in this most populous area of Alaska for both residents and visitors
- **Multi-Season/Multi-modal:** options for summer and winter; options for river and train-based connections
- **Wow Factor:** mountains, glaciers, wildlife, honoring and celebrating the long, diverse history of these lands

WHO IS MAKING IT HAPPEN? [Alaska Trails](http://AlaskaTrails.org), a statewide non-profit, is coordinating this ambitious project, working with the Long Trail Coalition (representatives from each region along the route) and Regional Working Groups bringing in local trail users, landowners and communities. In addition to determining preferred routes and uses, these groups will explore the best long-term solutions for trail maintenance and management. Options will include a consortium of landowners and agencies along the trail system, perhaps with a dedicated non-profit comparable to the Appalachian Trail Coalition.

LEVERAGE & MATCHING FUNDS: Requested state capital dollars can be used to leverage additional, larger sums of federal LWCF, FLAP, and RTP funds.

PHASING AND NEXT STEPS The Appalachian Trail celebrates its 100-year anniversary in 2025, and that trail is still a work in progress. We are not that patient but know creating the trail will not happen overnight. The Long Trail Coalition is actively working to identify gaps that bring the most near-term value, make progress incrementally, and through that process build support and momentum. Success will require a mixture of funding from state and federal sources, often leveraged by local sources. And as has been the case with other long trails, support by individuals, businesses and non-profits will also be essential.

Now is the time for Alaska to invest in its future by creating a route to stand with the other great long trails of the world.

Visit Alaska Trails for more information
www.alaska-trails.org/the-alaska-long-trail

**CONTACTS**

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Mariyam Medovaya mariyam.medovaya@alaska-trails.org 907-360-9950

GLOBAL POPULARITY:

- **120,000 people** walked New Zealand's "Great Walks"; 50,000 more than a decade ago.
- Interest in Spain's 500-mile Camino de Santiago is steadily increasing, now exceeding **300,000 people** a year.
- Just **20,000 people** have walked the 2,184 miles of Appalachian Trail since 1936, but **3 million people** hike a portion of the trail annually.

(2017 data each of the above)

**IN ALASKA:**

- **\$137 Million** increase in annual spending if just half of typical year out-of-state visitors added "One More Day" to their AK trip.
- **Trail Users Stay Longer, Spend More** New Zealand's generous trail system is a big reason why NZ's average stay is 19 days vs. Alaska's average of 9 days.
- **Growing Demand for Hiking:** the fastest growing activity for both air and cruise out-of-state Alaska visitors 2011-2016.

ALASKA LONG TRAIL - PRIORITY PROJECTS FY2023

Over the last two years, Alaska Trails, working closely with partners, identified 15 high-priority shovel-ready and planning-ready projects along the length of the Alaska Long Trail proposed route. These projects have been submitted to legislature for the FY2023 state capital budget. The table on the following page provides the summary of the projects, and their location is shown on the map below. Detailed information on each of the project is provided on the following pages. "Multi-use" refers to both motorized and non-motorized uses.

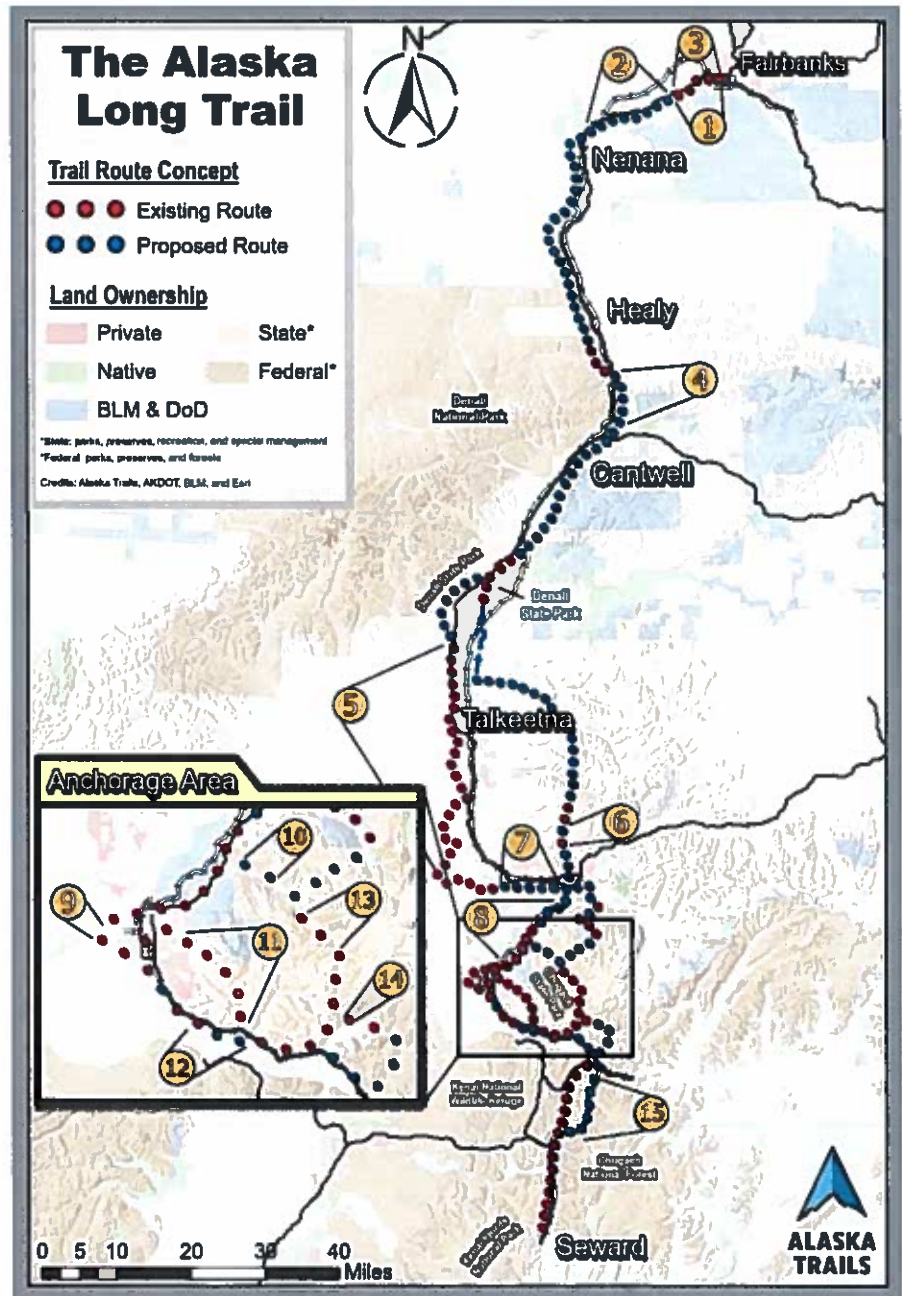
PROJECTS INCLUDE:

- developing multi-use segments on inactive logging roads (#2)
- separated highway paths for safe non-motorized travel (#4)
- upgrading winter trails for multi-use year-round access (#1)
- building new non-motorized trails (#3, 6, 12)
- improving winter maintenance and connectivity for motorized trails (#5)
- building essential bridge connections (#14)
- reconnaissance studies to identify links between existing segments (#7, 8)
- existing trail improvements (#10, 11, 13)
- wayfinding and safety improvements (#9)
- building backcountry trailside cabins (#15)

WHO IS MAKING IT HAPPEN?

[Alaska Trails](https://alaska-trails.org), a statewide non-profit, is coordinating this ambitious project, working with the Long Trail Coalition (representatives from each region along the route) and Regional Working Groups bringing in local trail users, landowners and communities. In addition to determining preferred routes and uses, these groups will explore the best long-term solutions for trail maintenance and management. Grant recipients and partners are identified for each project in the CAPSIS.

LEVERAGE & MATCHING FUNDS: Requested state capital dollars can be used to leverage additional, larger sums of federal LWCF, FLAP, and RTP funds.



ALASKA LONG TRAIL – PRIORITY PROJECTS FY2023

| # | TPS # | Project | Use | Amount | Responsible | Location |
|----|-------|--|--|-------------|--|---|
| 1 | 66749 | Isberg 4-Season Trail | multi-use ¹ | \$990,000 | Fairbanks North Star Borough | Fairbanks North Star Borough (Areawide) |
| 2 | 66750 | Nenana to Fairbanks Multi-Use Trails, Tanana Valley State Forest | multi-use ¹ | \$1,600,000 | DNR Division of Forestry | Nenana |
| 3 | 66751 | Equinox Marathon Trail – Parks Highway to Fairbanks via Ester Dome | mixed: some non-motorized, some multi-use ¹ | \$1,450,000 | Fairbanks North Star Borough | Fairbanks North Star Borough (Areawide) |
| 4 | 66753 | Carlo Creek to Crabbies Crossing Separated Path | non-motorized | \$3,700,000 | Denali Borough and AK DOT/PF | Denali Borough |
| 5 | 67023 | Susitna Valley Winter Trail | motorized | \$100,000 | Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation | Mat-Su |
| 6 | 66755 | GPRA Traverse and Little Susitna Loop | non-motorized | \$1,900,000 | MSB, AK State Parks, Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation; Hatcher Alpine Xperience (Skeetawk) | Matanuska-Susitna Borough (Greater Palmer) |
| 7 | 66756 | Palmer Hay Flats Trail | non-motorized | \$100,000 | ADF&G, Mat-Su Borough, Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation | Matanuska-Susitna Borough (Greater Palmer) |
| 8 | 66550 | Alaska Long Trail Anchorage to Mat-Su Reconnaissance Study | non-motorized | \$300,000 | Anchorage Park Foundation | Anchorage - Eagle River - Chugach State Park - Mat-Su Borough |
| 9 | 66548 | Alaska Long Trail Urban Braid - Anchorage Moose Loop | non-motorized | \$800,000 | Anchorage Park Foundation | Anchorage |
| 10 | 66793 | Peters Creek Upper Trail & Bridge | non-motorized | \$30,000 | AK DNR Division of Outdoor Recreation | Anchorage (Eagle River/Chugach State Park) |
| 11 | 66797 | Arctic to Indian Phase 1 Trail Improvements | non-motorized | \$20,000 | AK DNR Division of Outdoor Recreation | Anchorage (Eagle River/Chugach State Park) |
| 12 | 66761 | Turnagain Arm Trail Maintenance and Extension | non-motorized | \$370,000 | AK DNR Division of Outdoor Recreation | Anchorage (South Anchorage) |
| 13 | 66792 | Crow Pass - Eagle River | non-motorized | \$1,500,000 | AK DNR DPOR and volunteers/nonprofits | Anchorage (Eagle River/Chugach State Park) |
| 14 | 66766 | Glacier Creek Bridge - replacement for hand tram | non-motorized | \$1,200,000 | Muni of Anchorage, USFS | Anchorage (Areawide) |
| 15 | 66801 | Glacier Discovery Hut-to-Hut System, Phase 1 | multi-use ¹ | \$690,000 | Alaska Huts Association | Kenai Peninsula Borough (North Kenai) |

TOTAL: \$14,750,000

¹ "Multi-use" refers to both motorized and non-motorized uses.

1. Isberg Recreation Area All Season Trail Connections

TPS# 66749

LEGISLATIVE DISTRICTS: 6C

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Isberg trails are a popular draw, especially in the winter. But the area is under-utilized in the summer due to the wet conditions. Recent grant-funded projects have hardened over a mile of previously mucky trails, but much more is needed. Roughly 3 miles of trail will be hardened and have drainage features added to facilitate year-round use. As developments continue to make this trail system more inviting, people from all over the community are coming to enjoy the trails, natural landscape, berry picking, and wildlife viewing. Becoming a launch-off hub for the Alaska Long Trail is another incentive for developing an all-season trail.

BENEFITS AND NEED

- Ultimate lowland connection for proposed Alaska Long Trail to Fairbanks communities.
- Year-round access to scenic spruce lowlands.
- Easy, short trail loops; Convenient day-use.
- High interpretive potential.
- Increase nearby residential property values.
- Reduce environmental impacts through wetlands.

PROJECT LEAD AND PARTNERS: Fairbanks North Star Borough Parks & Recreation

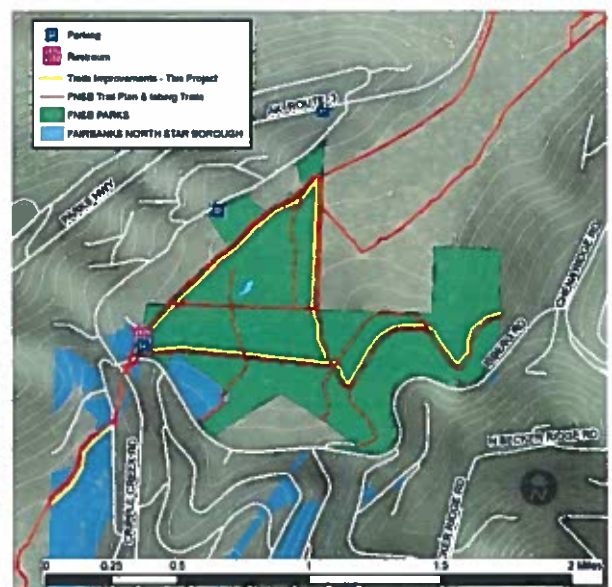
PROJECT STATUS

Trail connections to and through Isberg Rec Area were made a priority in the FNSB adopted 2006 Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan. In 2007 a Master Plan for the Isberg Rec Area was also adopted, specifically calling out the need to improve major trail connections. In 2019, the FNSB adopted a Capital Improvement Plan which prioritized the implementation of the Isberg master plan as a project for which to secure funding from FNSB and outside sources. Since 2007, trail connections in Isberg have been reconstructed using pass-through funds from multiple Recreational Trails Program grants. This project continues such work. The scope includes improving key sections within the Master Plan that must be developed to facilitate the Alaska Long Trail and finish the connection between Tanana Valley State Forest Land to the residential areas of Ester, Chena Ridge and West Fairbanks.

USE: Multi-use: motorized/non-motorized

ESTIMATED COST

- 3 miles of wet winter trails to be hardened for all-season use (class 3 ATV trail) x \$250,000 per mile = \$750,000
 - Adds a new trailhead (no restroom) = \$150,000
 - Project oversight and management (10%): \$90,000
- TOTAL: \$990K**



2. Nenana to Fairbanks Multi-Use Trails, Tanana Valley State Forest

TPS# 66750

LEGISLATIVE DISTRICTS: 6C

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project would connect Nenana and Fairbanks, passing through the Tanana Valley State Forest (TVSF), serving as a key component of the proposed Alaska Long Trail. This section takes advantage of many scenic miles of unpaved forestry roads that currently offer excellent year-round opportunities for both motorized and non-motorized recreationists. However, the roads are not continuous and do not provide a complete route from Fairbanks to Nenana. This project would build 18 miles of multi-use trails through the working State Forest, connecting about 35 miles of existing forestry road system. The project would also regrade and maintain inactive sections of forestry road along the route. This system would create a complete motorized/non-motorized trail link to the Parks Highway near Nenana.

BENEFITS AND NEED

The proposed connections and loops are desirable because they

- Complete the northern link of the Alaska Long Trail from Fairbanks to Nenana for use by Alaska residents and visitors, including directional signs, maps and information kiosks;
- Provide excellent recreation opportunities for day-trip recreationists who are returning to their starting point in Fairbanks or Nenana;
- Provide for maintenance on timber roads to support future timber harvest.

LAND OWNERSHIP

This proposed route remains entirely within the TVSF: heading west, it ends following the existing Maisch forestry road onto the Parks Highway about five miles north of Nenana.

PROJECT LEAD AND PARTNERS

Interior Alaska Trails and Parks Foundation (IATPF), DNR Division of Forestry; Happy Trails, Inc. If funded, IATPF will take the lead on this project, with some assistance and permits obtained from DNR Division of Forestry. Alaska Trails and the Fairbanks North Star Borough are active supporters of this project and will assist as needed.

PROJECT STATUS

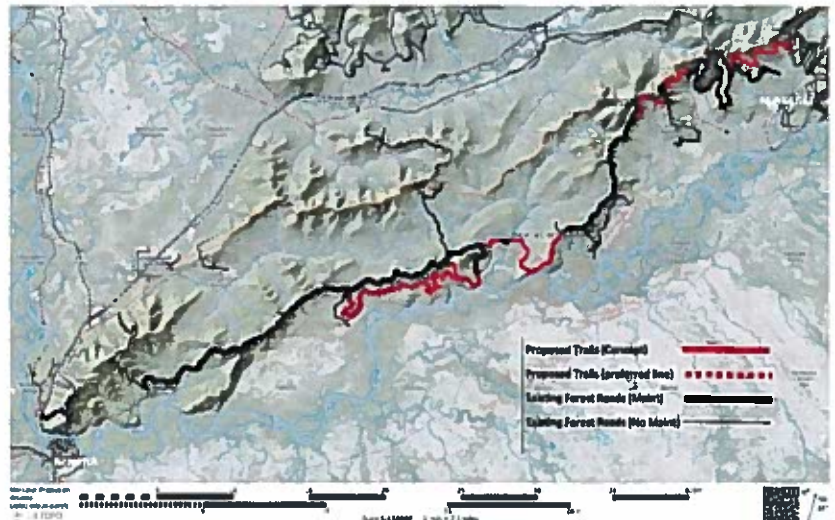
On the northern end of this TVSF multi-use segment, the Division of Forestry has already received a grant through federal Recreational Trails Program for recreational improvements to the existing Rosie Creek forestry road system. The project repairs the existing forestry road for recreational use, adds signage and GPS map links, and creates a large parking lot along the Parks Highway to provide a trailhead adequate for motorized and non-motorized use.

USE: Multi-use: motorized/non-motorized

ESTIMATED COST

- Build 18 miles of 7' wide multi-use trails at \$55,000 per mile = \$990,000
- Brushing, regrading, resurfacing, and repair of 35 miles of forestry roads: (12' wide, naturally surfaced, full bench, with 3% outslowing) x \$5,280 per mile = \$184,800
- Map kiosk, directional signs: \$30,000
- Bridge over Bonanza Creek: \$150,000
- Design and environmental review: \$100,000
- Project oversight and management (10%): \$140,520

TOTAL: \$1,595,320



Map Key. Solid Red: proposed trails; dashed Red – section to be added if additional \$500,000 was available; Black thick: forest roads, maintenance; Black

3. Equinox Marathon Trail – Parks Highway to Fairbanks via Ester Dome

TPS# 66751

LEGISLATIVE DISTRICTS: 6C

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Equinox Marathon Trail connects several of the most popular trail through the heart of Fairbanks: The Skarland Ski Trail, the UAF Campus trails, the Ester Dome Singletrack trail, and multiple trails on Ester Dome. The route is used for the popular race and for year-round recreation. Better access to and development of this trail route gives visitors the chance to explore several local trail systems, find impressive views, and traverse excellent single-track trail. The project will focus on securing easements, constructing a new section of trail on Ester Dome, and building trailheads. Ester Dome is the premier high point in Fairbanks. This project would also help connect the Alaska Long Trail to Fairbanks via Ester Dome and the Equinox Trail.

BENEFITS AND NEED

- This is the ultimate upland connection for Long Trail to Fairbanks communities.
- Creates a well-defined route suitable for hikers, bikers and skiers of all experience levels.
- Connects multiple trail systems, and some of Fairbanks' very best.
- Creates possibility for smaller, convenient loops.
- Ends at the University of Alaska Fairbanks Campus, home of the Museum of the North & the "Into the Wild" bus.
- Increased draw and economic impact potential for the Equinox Marathon event.

LAND OWNERSHIP

Fairbanks North Star Borough, Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, Alaska DNR ML&W, University of Alaska Fairbanks

PROJECT LEAD AND PARTNERS

Project lead: Fairbanks North Star Borough Parks & Recreation

Partners: FNSB Parks will work with AKMHTL and DNR to expand its existing easements on Ester Dome. Running Club north may also be a key project partner as the coordinator of the Equinox Marathon Race.

PROJECT STATUS

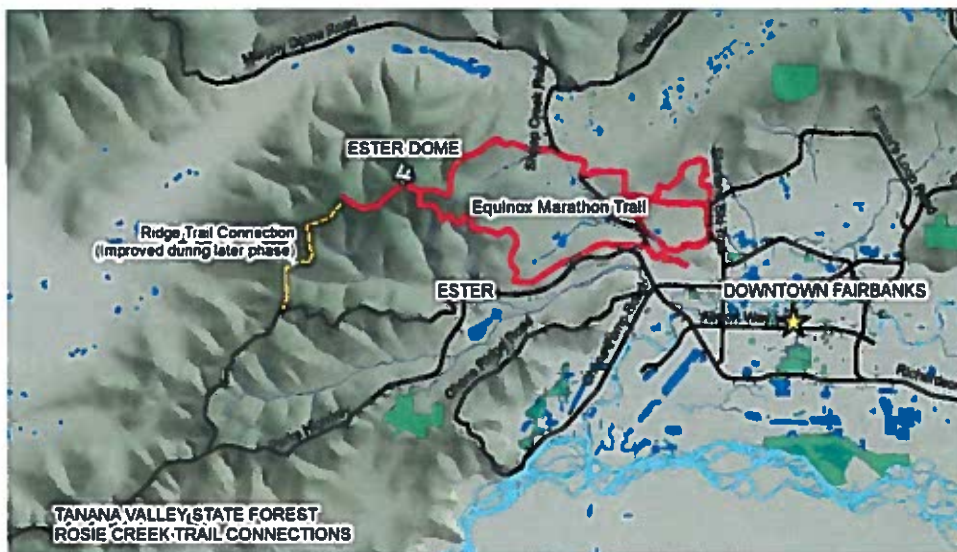
Nearly all this route exists, though some sections lack year-round access and a new trail section needs built. Funds will purchase access easements, construct new trail, repair some damaged sections of existing trail, and improve wayfinding and trailheads along the trail system.

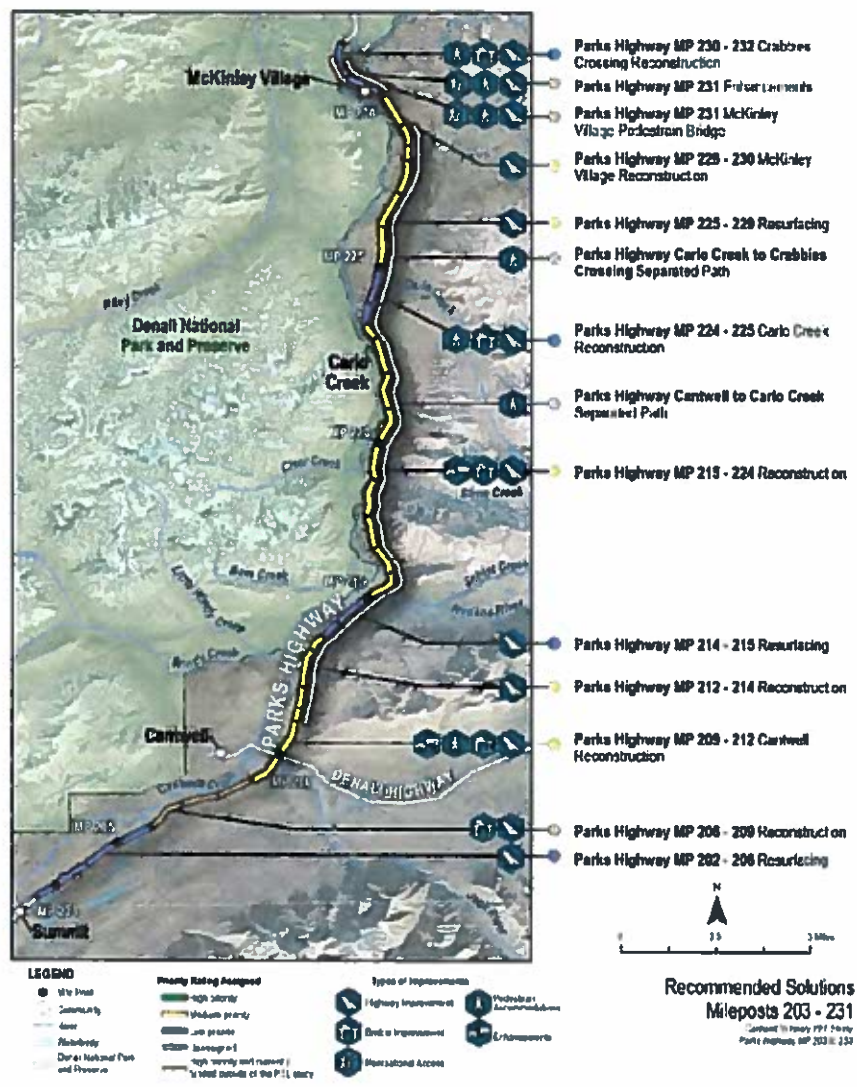
USE: Mixed: Mostly non-motorized, some multiple-use/motorized.

ESTIMATED COST

- Access/Easement expansion: \$250,000
- 1 mile of upland trail construction = \$150,000
- Trailheads & Restrooms, multiple locations = \$1,000,000
- Project oversight and management: \$50,000

Total: \$1,450,000





5. Susitna Valley Winter Trail

TPS# 67023

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project will help better connect and maintain a quality public motorized winter braid route for the Alaska Long Trail in Susitna Valley between Big Lake and Trapper Creek. As a result of hard work by underpaid local volunteer organizations, well-developed winter trail systems currently exist in Big Lake, Willow, and the Petersville Road area. Work has also been done to create a north-south route connecting these trail systems. Building on earlier planning work, funding for this project would bring together the users/user groups in this area to further improve these connections.

BENEFITS AND NEEDS

This project will help better connect and maintain a quality public WINTER trail in Susitna Valley between Big Lake and the Petersville Road/Trapper Creek area trail systems, providing improved options and expanded capacity for maintenance for snow season travel by snowmachine, dog sled, fat tire bike or skis.

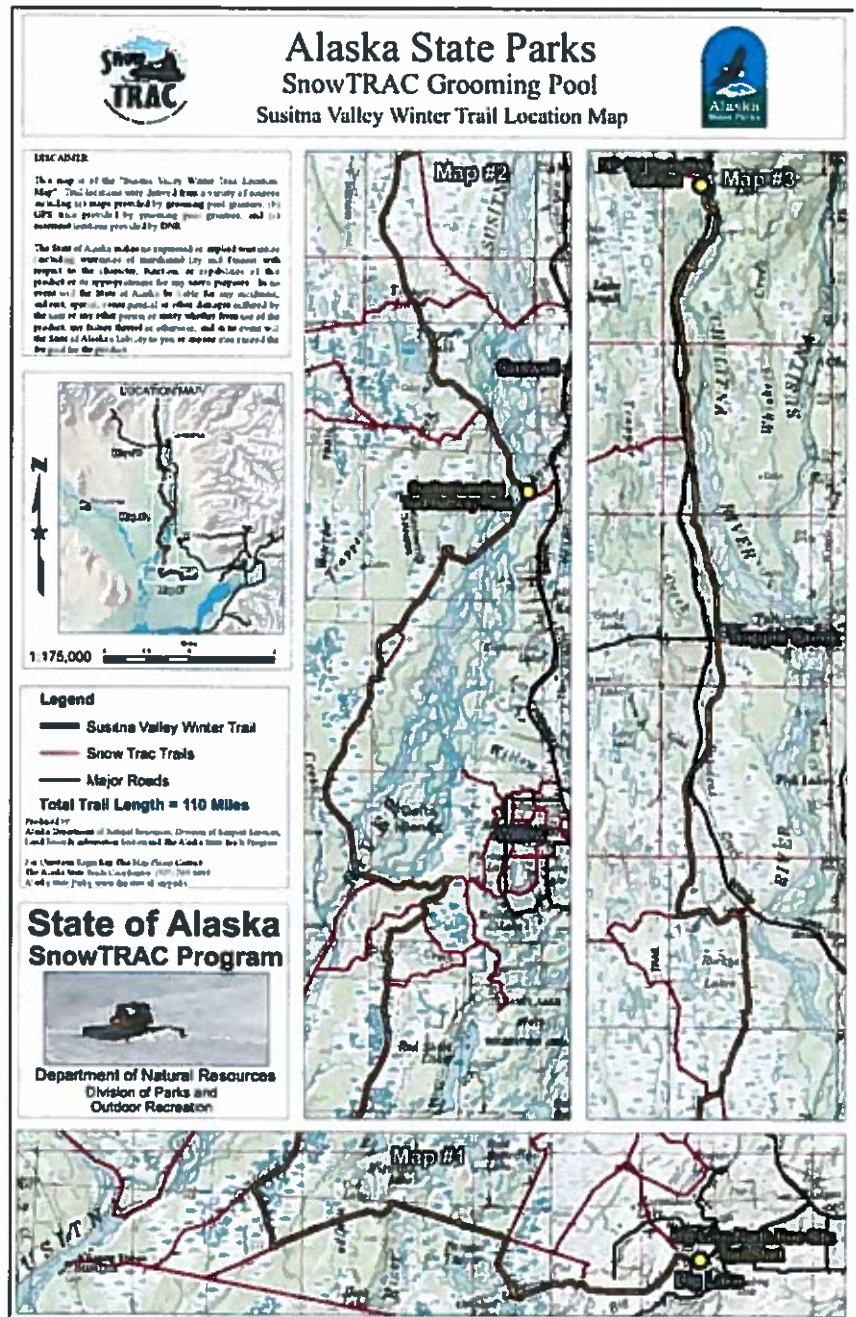
A primary goal will be to develop solutions to the currently limited capacity for trail maintenance and search and rescue activities. Current funding for these critical needs barely covers existing use, and needs are certain to grow with the continuing expansion of winter activities in Alaska. Solutions include a combination of physical improvements and equipment, education of users to help bring in more funding through the State's SnowTRAC program, and collaboration to maximize federal funds, for example the federal Recreational Trails Program. This project will set the stage for a quality, safe and well-maintained motorized winter braid route of the Alaska Long Trail in Susitna Valley on the west side of the Parks Highway between Big Lake and Trapper Creek.

PROJECT LEAD

Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation (MSTPF)

USE: motorized

ESTIMATED COST: \$100,000



6. GPRA Traverse and Little Susitna Loop

TPS# 66755

LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT(S): Mat-Su Borough; 9-E

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project will construct approximately 12 miles of new trails to connect two popular existing non-motorized trail systems and increase access to the alpine country east of Government Peak. At the south end, this new trail would connect to the Matanuska-Susitna Borough's Government Peak Recreation Area (GPRA) which currently boasts 22 miles of hiker, biker, skier, and equestrian trails. To the north, extending into the Hatcher Pass area would be connections to the Skeetawak Ski Area and the 16 Mile downhill mountain bike trail.

BENEFITS AND NEED

This highly used area will greatly benefit from increased trail connectivity. In addition to the four developed trailheads that will be connected by this project (GPRA, Skeetawak, Fishhook Creek and 16 Mile) the trail will link to the campground at Government Peak along the Little Susitna River. An additional benefit for safety and user experience will be a route for mountain bikers and hikers to return to the top of the 16 Mile trail without needing a vehicle shuttle. Visitation to this region is heavy throughout the year, especially in the summer months when this trail will be used the most. Providing this infrastructure will give users a dramatic increase in connectivity between the four trailheads that does not exist and will open up many more possibilities for outdoor recreation. Beyond the connection of Hatcher Pass and GPRA, two destination recreation areas, the Government Peak Traverse Trail linking Skeetawak with the Little Susitna Loop will create a world-class option for bikers to use Skeetawak in the summer.

LAND OWNERSHIP

Portions of the trail will be on land managed by Alaska State Parks, the Mat-Su Borough, and Skeetawak which leases land from the Mat-Su Borough.

PROJECT LEAD AND PARTNERS

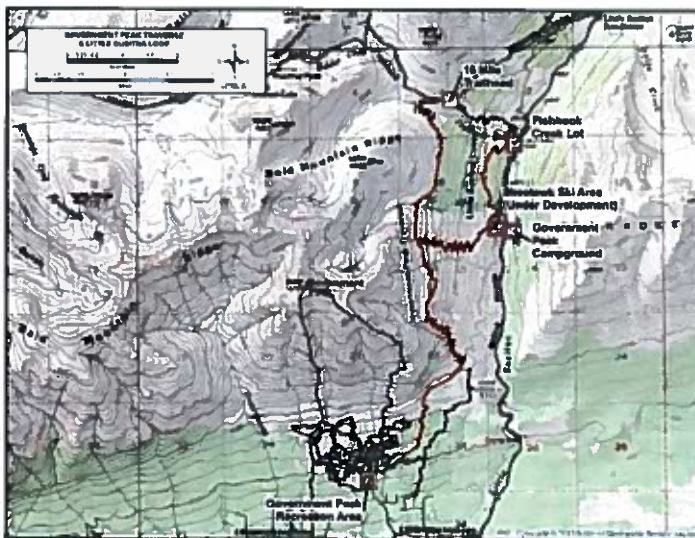
Project Lead: Land and Resource Management Division, Mat-Su Borough

Partners: Alaska State Parks; Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation; Hatcher Alpine Xperience (Skeetawak).

USE: The trail will most likely be 4-to-6-foot bench cut tread built for hiking and mountain biking. There may be an option in the future to connect the Carle Wagon Road Trail with the southern most section of the Government Peak Traverse.

ESTIMATED COST

Cost for the trail construction, trail easement survey, along with limited upgrades at the four trailheads is estimated at **\$1.9 million**.



7. Palmer Hay Flats Trail

TPS# 66756

LEGISLATIVE DISTRICTS: Mat-Su Borough

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Planning is needed for the Palmer Hay Flats (PHF) Coastal Trail, a proposed scenic route along the north side of the Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge. The result would make a major contribution to the recreation opportunities in the core area of the borough while providing for neighborhood connectivity. PHF incorporates these two trails from the 2016 MSB's Recreational Trails Plan (https://www.matsugov.us/docs/general/14086/trailplanupdate2016_final.pdf):

168. Knik-Fairview (proposed)

A proposed trail connecting the Fairview Loop Road area to the Knik Lake area. The Borough acquired easements over private land on portions of the trail, but key sections of the proposed route are through subdivisions.

248. Cottonwood Creek Wetlands Trail

Cottonwood Creek Wetlands Trail is located off Hayfield Road in the Knik-Fairview area. This trail is used in the winter by hikers, skiers, snowshoers and snowmobilers, and in the summer/fall by hikers, hunters and ATVs. Motorized use subject to seasonal conditions set forth by Alaska Department of Fish & Game.

BENEFITS AND NEED

- Neighborhood connectivity
- Outstanding recreational opportunity for a variety of users
- Filling the gap between existing trails

Furthermore, there is evidence that the Historic Iditarod Trail crossed the Palmer Hay Flats connecting Eklutna to the village of Knik (a portion is RS2477 Wet Gulch Trail RST 1710 and dog musher reports https://www.members.tripod.com/knik_alaska/id80.htm). Re-establishing the Historic Iditarod Trail in this area would support heritage preservation.

LAND OWNERSHIP: Mat-Su Borough and ADF&G

PROJECT LEAD AND

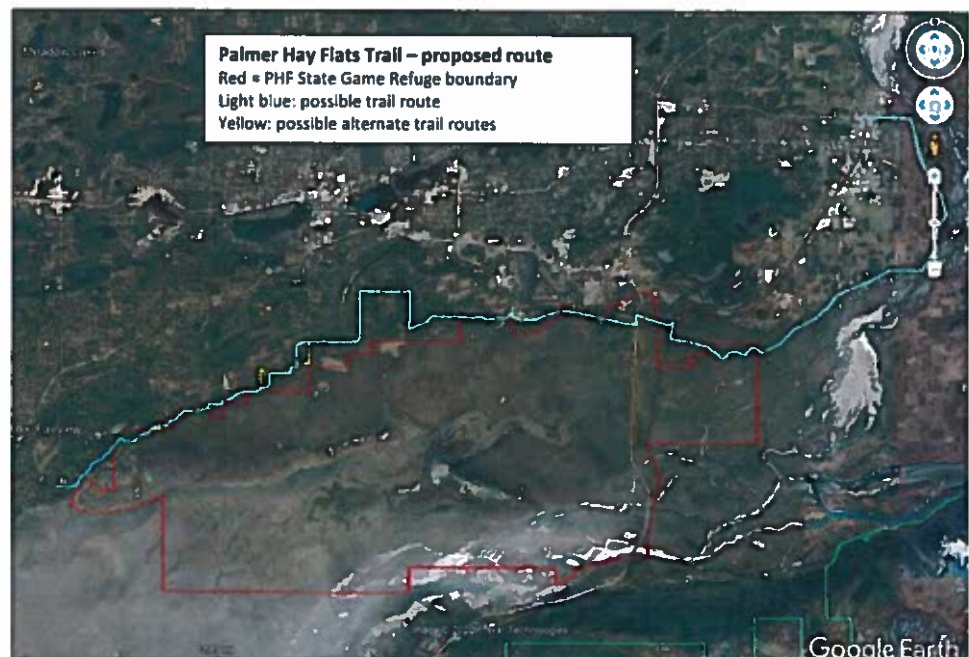
PARTNERS: Mat-Su Borough and ADF&G

PROJECT STATUS

Planning-ready, portions exist.

USE: multi-use

ESTIMATED COST: \$100,000



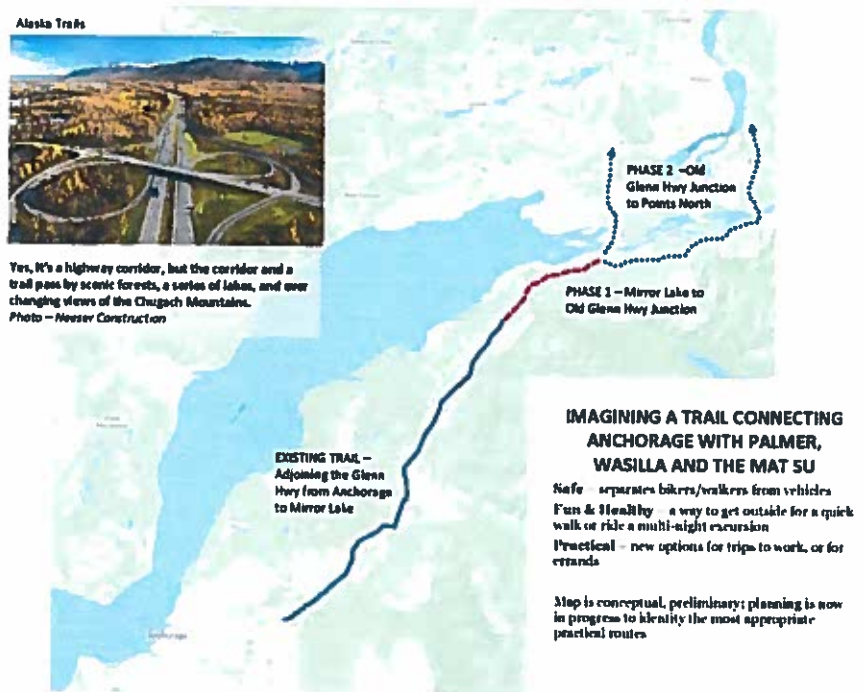
8. Alaska Long Trail Anchorage to Mat-Su Reconnaissance Study

TPS# 66550

LEGISLATIVE DISTRICTS: Anchorage and Mat-Su Borough

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project will conduct reconnaissance studies with AK Department of Transportation and Chugach State Park to Connect Anchorage to the Alaska Long Trail. There is currently no safe, enjoyable way for walkers and bikers to travel between Anchorage and the Mat Su Borough. Providing trail connections between these areas -- Alaska's two largest population centers -- would bring real benefits to residents and visitors in both locations as well as providing a key segment of the Alaska Long Trail, the proposed 500-mile trail connecting Seward and Fairbanks. This project will take the first step in making these connections, by bringing together landowners and stakeholders to investigate the benefits, costs and feasibility of different trail options. A leading candidate route would parallel the Glenn Highway, filling the 8-mile gap from where existing paved bike trail ends at Mirror Lake to northern boundary of the Municipality of Anchorage. The trail that ends at Mirror Lake is an extension of the Ship Creek Trail, which starts in Anchorage's downtown, passes through the Mountain View neighborhood, and then continues north along the Glenn Hwy through Eagle River. Because the Long Trail is planned to be a braided trail system, including hiking, biking and motorized segments, there may be alternative or additional other trail routes that could meet these trail connection goals. These options will also be investigated through this project, working with willing landowners and stakeholders.



BENEFITS AND NEEDS

This is a regional need and a recreation and tourism amenity that is embraced by the communities along the Alaska Long Trail. This critical reconnaissance study must be performed to DOT/PF standards to identify permits needed, a preferred route plan, and a clearer cost estimate for construction. The connection project is part of the Areawide Trails plan, the Metropolitan Transportation Plan and follows portions of the Iditarod National Historic Trail.

This trail project would also benefit two schools in the Anchorage School District. Chugiak Elementary School and Mirror Lake Middle School are the two schools that cannot participate in Bike to School Day (Alaska ranks sixth in the nation for the total number of participating schools per state). In addition to improving the connections between these north Anchorage communities, this trail could provide new ways to reach into Chugach State Park.

PROJECT LEAD AND PARTNERS:

Parties to involve in this process include, but are not limited to, Alaska Department of Transportation, Chugach State Park, Alaska Railroad, Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge managers, Eklutna, Inc., Native Village of Eklutna, Municipality of Anchorage Parks and Recreation, Mat-Su Parks and Recreation, the Matanuska Susitna Borough, and trail advocates like the Mat Su Trails and Anchorage Park Foundation. All have indicated a willingness to come together with engineers to map a path forward for this narrow gap connecting Alaska's two most populated areas, Anchorage and the Matanuska Susitna Valley. Working with communities and stakeholders in the area will be a very important part of this project. The Native Village of Eklutna is located within the boundaries of the Municipality of Anchorage but is not connected to Anchorage trails nor north to the Mat-Su. Neighborhoods in Chugiak are also not connected.

ESTIMATED COST: \$300,000

9. Alaska Long Trail Urban Braid - Anchorage Moose Loop

TPS# 66548

LEGISLATIVE DISTRICTS: Anchorage

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

One important urban braid of the Alaska Long Trail will pass through the Anchorage Bowl, taking advantage of the Anchorage "Moose Loop". Two segments of the Moose Loop -- the Coastal Trail on the south and west, and Ship Creek Trail on the north -- are planned as designated elements of the braided Long Trail system. These connections help make downtown Anchorage a Long Trail starting and stopping point. Other portions of the 33-mile Moose Loop provide key Long Trail "onramps", improving access for neighborhoods and visitors throughout the Anchorage Bowl. Funding through this project will provide for safer and more enjoyable connectivity within Anchorage and to communities to the north and south, to benefit residents, visitors and businesses. Anchorage's "destination trail" for residents and visitors is the 33-mile-long MOOSE LOOP - the Tony Knowles Coastal Trail, Campbell Creek Trail, Lanie Fleischer Chester Creek trail, and Ship Creek trail. The Coastal Trail (10 miles), starts downtown along Cook Inlet, heading west and south, with "Moose Ears" at mile 5 and its nose at mile 10. The hump of the Moose heads east from downtown along the Ship Creek Trail (2.5 miles) (which connects to an unfinished trail to Eagle River). The Chester Creek Trail (7.5 miles), is the spine, starting at Westchester Lagoon and connecting to the University/ Medical District (UMED). The Campbell Creek Trail (7.5 miles) is the body, linking the UMED to the South Anchorage shopping district. These trails connect to each other through city streets and through the three largest parks: Russian Jack, Far North Bicentennial and Kincaid.

BENEFITS AND NEED

Safety Improvements:

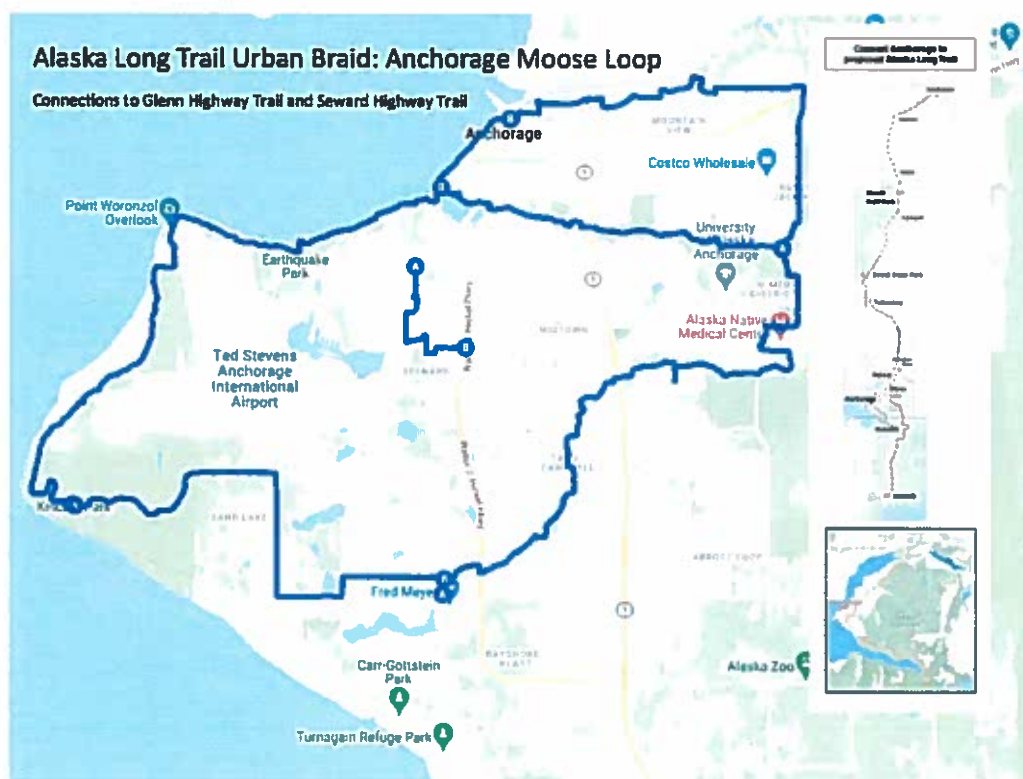
Erosion control is needed in multiple sections of the Moose Loop, particularly the Coastal Trail. Work is happening now to connect the Coastal Trail to Ship Creek, which connects to the Glenn Highway Trail.

Wayfinding: For experienced cyclists, the MOOSE LOOP can be enjoyed in its current form, but wayfinding signs and tools are needed for new users to navigate to the Alaska Long Trail. Half-mile marker signs with emergency locators were installed in 2019. A suite of wayfinding and interpretive signs has been developed and approved, awaiting funding.

PROJECT LEAD AND

PARTNERS: Anchorage Park Foundation, MOA

ESTIMATED COST: \$800,000



10. Peters Creek Upper Trail & Bridge

TPS# 66793

LEGISLATIVE DISTRICTS: Eagle River – Chugiak districts

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Brushing and a new pedestrian bridge to open up an improved trail for hiking and hunting access for Four-Mile Valley Creek Loop trail in Chugach State Park. The trail needs brushing, outside the scope of what Chugach State Park is able to fund with the Recreational Trails Program for the coming fiscal year (RTP is funding only motorized projects presently). The trail has high significance to local residents, as it provides pack and saddle access to equestrian travelers, hunters, and hikers.

BENEFITS AND NEED

- Pack and saddle access to equestrian travelers, hunters, and hikers
- High significance to local residents

PROJECT LEAD AND PARTNERS: Chugach State Park, AK DNR DPOR

USE: non-motorized, equestrian

ESTIMATED COST: \$30,000

11. Arctic to Indian Phase 1 Trail improvements

TPS# 66797

LEGISLATIVE DISTRICTS: Anchorage districts

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Phase 1 improvements would flag and brush a winter trail. This route is part of the system of winter trails connecting Anchorage to the Iditarod Historic Trail and is one braid of the proposed Alaska Long Trail.

BENEFITS AND NEED

Phase 1 improvements would flag and brush a winter trail, an important recreation route. This route is part of the system of winter trails connecting Anchorage to the Iditarod Historic Trail and is one braid of the proposed Alaska Long Trail.

PROJECT LEAD AND PARTNERS: Chugach State Park/ MOA (AWWU); JBER; Arctic Valley Ski Club

USE: Multi-use: motorized/non-motorized

ESTIMATED COST: \$20,000

12. Turnagain Arm Trail Maintenance and Extension

TPS# 66761

LEGISLATIVE DISTRICTS: 13-28 House / H-N Senate

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project will upgrade sections of degraded, very popular trail; one link on the Girdwood to Anchorage braid of Long Trail. The Turnagain Arm Trail follows a support route created during the 1910s to aid the construction of the Alaska Railroad. This trail meanders above the Seward Highway and offers sweeping views of Turnagain Arm. Thanks to its southern exposure, this is one of the first snow-free trails in the spring.

The Turnagain Arm Trail is 9.5 miles one way and accessed from several trailheads along the Seward Highway: Potter Creek, McHugh Creek, Rainbow Creek, and Windy Corner. Along its current course, the trail bridges several creeks, travels through eroded, muddy terrain, and continues along cliffs where landslides have been sloughing off sections of trail. A comprehensive list of maintenance needs exists for this popular year-round trail.

The Chugach State Park Trail Management Plan includes a roughly 1.5-mile extension of the southern terminus at Windy Corner to the Falls Creek Trailhead. This section of trail would switchback over a rocky ridge extending from South Suicide Peak to an elevation of approximately 500' ASL and offer immense views of the head of Turnagain Arm. This extension would tie into the existing Falls Creek Trailhead and terminate at the established trailhead there.

ESTIMATED COST

Maintenance Needs:

Boardwalk and tread materials: 50K

McHugh Creek Bridge resurfacing: 20K

Retaining structure improvements: 50K

Labor and dirt work: 100K

New trail segment: 150K

TOTAL: 370K



13. Crow Pass - Eagle River

TPS# 66792

LEGISLATIVE DISTRICTS: Anchorage – Eagle River districts, areawide and statewide significance

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This Alaska Long Trail project would upgrade the popular, spectacular but degrading Crow Pass Trail in Chugach State Park, which connects Girdwood and Eagle River. The 21-mile trail ascends from the Crow Creek Trailhead in Girdwood, through talus fields and mine ruins up to Crow Pass, near the toe of Raven Glacier. The trail descends from the snowfields and lakes at the pass, through alpine meadows and forests to a ford on Eagle River (no bridge yet). The route then trends west, paralleling Eagle River to the Eagle River Nature Center. This route is formally designated as a portion of the Iditarod National Historic Trail and is the premier overnight, point-to-point trail in Chugach State Park. Significant portions of the route need to be relocated and rebuilt. Chugach State Park staff and professional trail builders have done the in-field work needed to lay out the routes and estimate costs for this section needing substantial improvements.

Eagle River Valley: In much of this area the route runs right next to the actively eroding river. A steadily increasing percentage of the trail is disappearing into the river. This project would fund the critically needed trail reconstruction and reroute of about 5 miles of this 12-mile stretch of the trail, lifting the trail onto more stable and sustainable higher ground.

BENEFITS AND NEED

The project will significantly upgrade and reroute a high value, deteriorating trail, delivering the following benefits:

- Upgrade one critical link of the full Alaska Long Trail, and at the same time, provide a much improved day or short overnight recreation amenity, close to Alaska's largest city and most visited destination.
- Upgrade an important, historic section of the Iditarod supply route.
- Further expand options and opportunities on a trail important to local commercial outfitters and guides.
- Greatly improve safety of an increasingly hazardous trail, reducing regularly search and rescue costs to the state.
- Replace a near impossible-to-maintain social trail with a purpose-built, durable and sustainable trail.

LAND OWNERSHIP

The first 3 miles of the trail, from the Girdwood Trail head to Crow Pass crosses through Chugach National Forest. The remainder of the route, and all the projects outlined here, are entirely within Chugach State Park.

PROJECT LEAD AND PARTNERS

Project lead: DNR, Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, Chugach State Park

Partners: Alaska Trails' Trail Stewards Program (volunteer and paid trail crews)

PROJECT STATUS

This project is in the 2016 Chugach State Park Trail plan, and needs final route determination (design) and funds to carry out the needed improvements.

USE: nonmotorized

ESTIMATED COST:

Trail survey and design \$350,000; Eagle River Valley section \$900,000

Trail-side facilities to support and manage impacts of growing use including hardened campsites, restrooms, signage. \$150,000; Project oversight and management \$100,000

TOTAL: \$1,500,000

Crow Pass Trail



14. Glacier Creek Bridge - replacement for hand tram

TPS# 66766

LEGISLATIVE DISTRICTS: 13-28 House / H-N Senate, areawide and statewide significance

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The conceptual bridge design is meant to balance cost, function and aesthetics to provide Girdwood residents and its visitors with a long-lasting replacement for the crossing over Glacier Creek formerly served by the hand tram along popular Winner Creek Trail. The proposed solution is a pedestrian suspension bridge with a 5' wide walking surface. As conceived, the suspension bridge will be of galvanized steel. This material will provide superior life span and reflects a design vernacular seen elsewhere in Girdwood, primarily associated with ski lifts and other elements at the Alyeska Resort. Other considerations are fall protection on the bridge as well as at the approaches to the bridge.

BENEFITS AND NEED

Winner Creek Trail in Girdwood is one of the most popular trails in the state of Alaska among both visitors and locals. It's an easy 3-mile hike or bike ride on a wide, well-developed trail with a gentle elevation gain that winds through America's northernmost rainforest, crosses a wooden bridge over a thundering blue-water gorge. The trail begins at Alyeska Resort and connects to Crow Creek Rd via a now-defunct hand tram across Glacier Creek. The tram closed in 2019 after two people fell from the tram's platform in separate incidents, leaving one person dead and the other with serious injuries. A replacement bridge has been identified as a viable safe alternative, <https://www.adn.com/outdoors-adventure/2021/06/30/girdwoods-winner-creek-hand-tram-unlikely-to-return-officials-say/>

A replacement bridge would provide the following benefits:

- Safety for travelers along Winner Creek Trail
- Faster access from Crow Creek Rd to Winner Creek Trail for emergencies (shorter distance from Crow Creek Rd than from Alyeska Resort)
- Key connection for the planned Alaska Long Trail route in the Girdwood Valley – a link between Iditarod National Historic Trail (over Crow Pass) and Upper Winner Creek Trail (over Berry Pass into Twentymile River and Portage Valleys)
- Addressing demand for visitation on Winner Creek Trail

LAND OWNERSHIP:

Municipality of Anchorage

PROJECT LEAD AND PARTNERS

Municipality of Anchorage, US Forest Service, Alyeska Resort

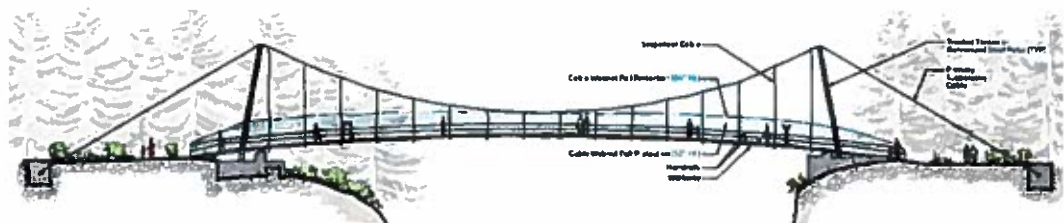
PROJECT STATUS

Design has been developed, MOA and partners are seeking funding for construction.

USE: nonmotorized

ESTIMATED COST:

Suspension Bridge
Construction - \$1.2 million



Conceptual Bridge Section
This is a conceptual drawing of the proposed suspension bridge. It shows the bridge structure, including the towers, cables, and deck. The drawing is intended to provide a visual representation of the bridge's design and scale.

15. Alaska Huts Association - Glacier Discovery Hut-to-Hut System, Phase 1

TPS# 66801

LEGISLATIVE DISTRICTS: Northeast Kenai

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Glacier Discovery Project is a linked three hut system along the Alaska Railroad's Whistle Stop corridor in the Kenai Mountains. In Phase I of the Glacier Discovery Project, Alaska Huts Association, an Anchorage-based 501(c)3 non-profit, will work in partnership with the Chugach National Forest and Alaska Railroad to build the 22-bed "Lars Spurkland Memorial Hut" overlooking Spencer Glacier. This strategic location will benefit from infrastructure already placed by the US Forest Service and independent tour operators, including whistle stops, shelters, toilet facilities, well established trails, and a fantastic pedestrian bridge across the Placer River. In Phase II of the Glacier Discovery Project, Alaska Huts will further develop plans to build two 8-10 bed huts, Bartlett Glacier Hut and Trail Glacier Hut, along the Alaska Railroad's Whistle Stop Corridor to complete a three-hut system. Bartlett and Trail Glacier Huts will be accessed via the Glacier Discovery Trail, a 30-mile US Forest Service trail currently under construction. Once complete, the trail will connect the Glacier Discovery Hut system and Spencer Glacier, Grandview and Trail Glacier Whistle Stops.

BENEFITS AND NEED

The Glacier Discovery Project will serve a diverse group of outdoor enthusiasts due to its unique location along the Alaska Railroad corridor. Visitors will be able to travel hut-to-hut by riding the train or by hiking the trail--or a mix of both--creating options for an exceptionally diverse group of users. By providing simple but key amenities like heat, cooking stoves, and mattresses, the huts will bring thousands of new visitors of varying backcountry experience into the Kenai Mountains from all over the world, while fostering camaraderie, wilderness education and environmental stewardship. Specific benefits:

- Provide access to backcountry to visitors of diverse abilities
- Benefit local outfitter businesses and Alaska Railroad
- Maximize on the appeal of railroad travel, ease of access, and Alaska's beautiful wilderness.
- Create multi-day hut-to-hut trail system

PROJECT LEAD AND PARTNERS: Alaska Huts Association, USFS and ARR

PROJECT STATUS:

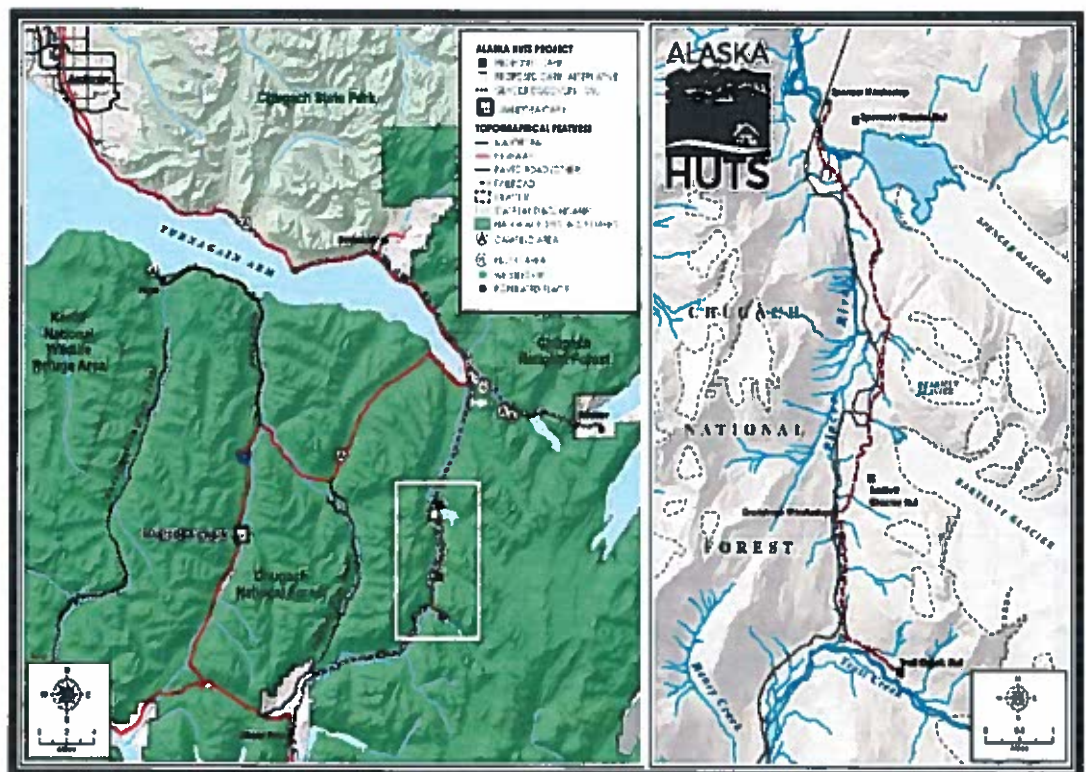
Design of the lodge is complete and \$460K is already secured for Phase 1 construction, project is shovel-ready.

USE: non-motorized

ESTIMATED COST:

Phase 1 (Lars Spurkland Memorial Hut):

\$1.15M (\$460,000 secured)





March 10, 2021

Dear Members of the Senate Transportation Committee,

The Alaska Long Trail for mountain bike use would be a huge economic driver for Alaska.

We ask for your support of the Alaska Long Trail (from Fairbanks to Seward) and that the trail is open for mountain bike use.

Mountain biking has become a major economic engine in Alaska, as well as throughout the entire country. Alaska is becoming a popular mountain biking destination and attracting high-spending bike tourists to our state, which stimulates our economy.

By allowing mountain bike use along the Alaska Long Trail, the economic development goal of the trail can be fully realized. However, as it stands now, there are many segments of the trail where biking is not allowed. With your help, we can have an amazing Alaska Long Trail for hiking, biking and skiing that will be a world class trail that creates jobs and stimulates our economy.

Please support the Alaska Long Trail in the Governor's GO Bond and allow access for biking, so that the trail can be a true economic success.

Singletrack Advocates is Anchorage's local trail non-profit that has built over 30 miles of mountain biking trails in our community. We have a strong base of over 1,000 members who support our mission, as well as social media reach of over 10,000 strong.

Thank you for your support,

Lee Bolling

Lee Bolling
President

**Singletrack Advocates is a Non-Profit 501(c)3 Organization
EIN: 26-1437999**

Michaela Anderson

From: Jacob Mannix [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 11, 2021 7:30 AM
To: Michaela Anderson
Subject: Alaska Long Trail Support

Dear Senate Transportation Committee,

The Alaska Chapter of Backcountry Hunters & Anglers is writing to ask for your support of the included \$13.2M in Governor Dunleavy's G.O. bond for the planned Fairbanks-to-Seward trail. Alaska BHA is dedicated to conserving our wild public lands, waters and wildlife and increasing sustainable access to hunting and fishing opportunities.

Nationwide, a lack of access is cited by sportsmen and women to be the primary reason why they stop pursuing their hunting and fishing passions. Alaskans have always been fortunate to have vast tracts of public land available to utilize for hunting, fishing and other outdoor recreation. However, access to much of that land can be difficult and costly, often barring many people from participating. The Alaska Long Trail presents a unique opportunity to develop multiple, diverse landscapes in Alaska that would present new opportunities for hunters and anglers seeking a backcountry experience.

Alaska BHA recognizes and values the benefits that come from developing infrastructure like the Alaska Long Trail. Outdoor recreation has long been a significant part of the Alaskan economy and culture, and the draw of hunting and fishing opportunities a large part of that. This project would create more opportunity for our hunting and fishing traditions and thereby create incentive for residents, businesses, and retirees to stay in or relocate to Alaska. Alaska BHA sees this as an opportunity to increase, long-term, the benefit that Alaskans get from their public land, both economically and culturally.

We ask for your support and help to keep the funding for the Alaska Long Trail in the G.O. bond and to work towards getting the measure passed. Thank you for continuing to work for Alaska.

Sincerely,

Alaska Backcountry Hunters & Anglers Chapter Board

Jacob Mannix
Alaska Chapter Coordinator
Backcountry Hunters & Anglers
[REDACTED]

Roadmap to a Vital and Safe Anchorage

[Roadmap to a Vital and Safe Anchorage - Anchorage Chamber](#)

February 14, 2022

To Whom it May Concern:

The Roadmap to a Vital and Safe Anchorage (RVSA) supports the Anchorage Park Foundation's three legislative funding proposals:

- **Tikahtnu-Cook Inlet National Heritage Area Feasibility Study**
- **Alaska Long Trail Anchorage to Mat-Su Reconnaissance Study**
- **Indigenous Place Name Project for Downtown Anchorage**

The Roadmap to a Vital and Safe Anchorage was born out of a need to make Anchorage more resilient and sustainable. Businesses, non-profit organizations, and industry leaders grabbed hold of this call to action and began the process of developing a plan focused on implementation, execution, and clearly defined results.

Throughout February 2021, over 110 business, non-profit, and organization leaders gathered four times to develop the Vision, Barriers, Strategic Actions and begin focused implementation of the Roadmap to a Vital and Safe Anchorage.

Our Vision is:

As a result of our actions, the Municipality of Anchorage's economy will be open, thriving, and diverse.

Our economy supports and is supported by capitalizing on our place, education and workforce development, government stability, and public/private partnerships. Our economy is underpinned by a focus on public welfare, access to housing and childcare, strong planning, and accessibility and equity for all.

As part of the planning process, the group identified the barriers to the established Vision. One of the primary barriers to the Vision identified was:

- Anchorage's lack of a strong identity and vibrant Downtown, and
- Neglecting to invest in the infrastructure needed for growth.

These three projects help Anchorage move toward the vision established by the participants of the RVSA so we ask that you please support all three funding requests. Together, they have a resounding positive impact.

The **Tikahtnu-Cook Inlet National Heritage Area Feasibility Study** is the first required step toward recognizing the Tikahtnu-Cook Inlet Area as Alaska's second National Heritage Area. Nation-wide NHA's have brought an impressive 5:1 return locally on the funds invested by the federal government. Those benefits flow directly to Alaska.

The Tikahtnu-Cook Inlet story begins with the Dena'ina Peoples, arcs through Captain Cook's exploration, Russian settlements, American expansion, construction of the Alaska Railroad, World War II, Aviation, the Cold War and Nike Missiles, Statehood, oil wealth transformation, and today's efforts toward honoring diversity and sustainability in thriving communities. Celebrating the land, resources, people, and history of the Tikahtnu-Cook Inlet area creates a strong sense of place, purpose, and pride for Alaska's 10,000-year history of resilient people and their passions as well as strengthens the economy by advocating tourism and discovery.

The Tikahtnu-Cook Inlet NHA Feasibility Study funding will be used to define the scope, boundaries, and local stories of national importance that need to be told. Once defined, a Tikahtnu-Cook Inlet NHA would be Congressionally established and locally managed, bringing to Alaska both national recognition and federal funding for local community-generated projects. The process does not involve any change to land ownerships, designations, or zoning. Planning and land use decisions remain fully under existing jurisdictions. State, local government, and private rights are not affected.

Please support a feasibility study for the Tikahtnu-Cook Inlet Area so that nationally Alaska can honor its past, enrich its future, and capture this important opportunity for economic development.

The Indigenous Place Name Project for Anchorage is a movement to bring Dena'ina culture to our built environment and place name signage. Alaska Natives, Anchorage business leaders and citizens agree that locals and visitors alike benefit from indigenous place name wayfinding and stories of our cultural heritage as seen through the Dena'ina language and history. Investment in Cultural Tourism infrastructure expands our heritage and enhances the resident and visitor experience in Anchorage, further encouraging economic development and exploration.

The Alaska Long Trail Anchorage to Mat-Su Reconnaissance Study will bring together landowners and stakeholders to investigate the benefits, costs and feasibility of different trail options. A leading candidate route would parallel the Glenn Highway, filling the 8-mile gap from where the existing paved bike trail ends. Because the Long Trail is planned to be a braided trail system, including hiking, biking and motorized segments, there may be alternative or additional other trail routes that could meet these trail connection goals. These options will also be investigated through this project, working with willing landowners and stakeholders including Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities, Chugach State Park, Alaska Railroad, Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge managers, Native Village of Eklutna, Eklutna, Inc., Municipality of Anchorage Parks and Recreation, trail advocates and the Matanuska Susitna Borough.

Please support this funding that will allow DOT/PF to direct the Reconnaissance Study that will identify the preferred route and permits that need to be obtained.

All three projects are deserving of your support. They are intended to share and enrich the cultural and historical ties that bind us, provide safe trail connectivity between Alaska residents, and importantly, provide economic development for the entire region. Please vote to fund the Tikahtnu-Cook Inlet National Heritage Area Feasibility Study, the Alaska Long Trail Anchorage to Mat-Su Reconnaissance Study and the Indigenous Place Names Project for Downtown Anchorage.

Sincerely,

RVSA Leadership Group

Bruce Bustamante, Anchorage Chamber of Commerce

Amanda Moser, Anchorage Downtown Partnership, Ltd.

Chris Anderson, Glacier BrewHouse/Orso

Debbie Rinckey, Chugiak Eagle River Chamber of Commerce

Julie Saupe, Visit Anchorage

Silvia Villamides, Alaska Hospitality Retailers

Bill Popp, Anchorage Economic Development Corporation

STATEMENTS OF SUPPORT FOR THE LONG TRAIL

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE – RE SB 75

Clay Walker, Mayor Denali Borough

Julie Saupe, ED – Visit Anchorage

Josh Verhagen, Mayor of City of Nenana

Tim Dillon, ED – Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District

Chris Beck, Alaska Trails, Trails Initiative Coordinator


Video Transcript linked here:



<https://www.akleg.gov/basis/Meeting/Detail?Meeting=STRA%202021-03-11%2013:30:00>

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Legislature(2021 - 2022)
03/11/2021 01:30 PM TRANSPORTATION

BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)



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| Audio | Topic | Schedule | Documents |
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| 01:34:18 PM | Start | | |
| 01:34:48 PM | SB74 | | |
| 01:56:58 PM | Adjourn | | |

-- [SB 74](#) G.O. BONDS: STATE INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS --
Heard & Held
-- Public Testimony --
Streamed live on AKLTV

* first hearing in first committee of referral
+ teleconferenced
= bill was previously heard/scheduled