

Project Title: Alaska Long Trail - Carlo Creek to Crabbies Crossing Separated Path

TPS Number: 66753

Priority: 13

Agency: Transportation & Facilities

FY2025 State Funding Request: \$3,500,000

One-Time Need

Brief Project Description:

Parks Highway Carlo Creek to Crabbies Crossing Separated Path (MP 224 to 231) would produce design and engineering for an approximate 7-mile separated path along the east side of the Parks Highway from Carlo Creek to McKinley Village, connecting concentrations of commercial and residential uses along the Parks Hwy.

Funding Plan:

Total Project Cost:	\$3,500,000
Funding Already Secured:	(\$0)
FY2025 State Funding Request:	<u>(\$3,500,000)</u>
Project Deficit:	\$0

Detailed Project Description and Justification:

Parks Highway Carlo Creek to Crabbies Crossing Separated Path (MP 224 to 231) would create a design for an approximate 7-mile separated path along the east side of the Parks Highway from Carlo Creek to McKinley Village.

The DOT/PF Parks Highway PEL (Planning & Environmental Linkages) Study identified the need for and costs of developing roadside, separated trails in segments along the Parks Highway. This project aims to improve the central of the three segments, to benefit the tourism industry and residents. Currently there is no safe enjoyable way for to walk, bike or ski along this high-speed highway, which is interspersed with housing, lodges and restaurants.

This project is widely supported by residents and the tourism industry and would help further expand options for Denali "frontcountry" tourism, which is increasingly important as a way to accommodate tourism growth, as options within the mark are increasingly constrained. The Denali Borough, which derives close to 100% of its operating revenues from a Bed Tax, is likewise interested in this investment that will help support growth and provide more options for enjoyable, safe frontcountry visitor experiences. Work is in progress with DOT/PF, Borough and other partners find solutions for funding ongoing maintenance costs. This project would also help provide one braid of the Alaska Long Trail as it passes through the Denali Borough.

BENEFITS AND NEED

The construction of separated pathways in the Parks Highway corridor, including within communities and between communities, was an identified need and opportunity in the Parks Highway PEL (Planning & Environmental Linkages) Study draft. Specific benefits include:

- Improve safety
- Improve mobility for all transportation modes
- Balance the needs of all users (includes local residents, visitors/ tourists, through travelers, freight, non-motorized, and recreational uses)
- Separate motorized and non-motorized uses where reasonable
- Accommodate increased recreation and tourism demands, in turn to support the economic vitality of the region
- Provide connectivity to the pedestrian bridge to be constructed over the Nenana River at MP 231, which will add to and complement the safety and pedestrian enhancements for the ongoing AK DOT projects

PROJECT STATUS

The Parks Highway PEL (Planning & Environmental Linkages) Study draft recommended constructing five stand-alone separated pathways between communities along the Parks Highway corridor between mileposts (MP) 203 and 259 and identified the costs in segments. Carlo to Crabbies section is seen as a priority by Denali Borough at this time. Work is in progress with DOT/PF, Denali Borough and other partners to find solutions for funding ongoing maintenance costs. A qualitative assessment showed separated pathways would help achieve many of the PEL goals identified for the corridor.

Project Timeline:

2024-2025

Entity Responsible for the Ongoing Operation and Maintenance of this Project:

Denali Borough and AK DOT/PF

Grant Recipient Contact Information:

Name: Chis Noel
Address: PO Box 480
Healy, AK 99743
Phone Number: (907)683-1330
Email: cwalker@denaliborough.com

This project has been through a public review process at the local level and it is a community priority.