

Project Title: Alaska Long Trail - Ermine Hill Trail Upgrades

TPS Number: 68762

Priority: 10

Agency: Natural Resources

FY2025 State Funding Request: \$450,000

One-Time Need

Brief Project Description:

Upgrade and repair degraded sections of Ermine Hill Trail to DPOR standards.

Funding Plan:

Total Project Cost: \$450,000

Funding Already Secured: (\$0)

FY2025 State Funding Request: (\$450,000)

Project Deficit: \$0

Explanation of Other Funds:

Funds have been used to clear the trail over the years, but no trail tread work has been completed.

Detailed Project Description and Justification:

Ermine Hill trail was originally established in the late seventies. It is what would be characterized as a "fall line" trail. These trails are prone to degradation due to erosion. They were never designed in what we would define as a sustainable approach. They were punched in at the time when considerations for proper trail design simply didn't happen.

Ermine Hill is one of three primary access trails to the Kesugi Ridge Trail and a key connector in the Alaska Long Trail (AKLT) system, providing access to the Denali State Park segment of the AKLT. The purpose of this funding request is to make trail tread repairs within the trail corridor, reroute the trail as much as possible where feasible, to improve trail tread gradients that better align with our trail standards.

DNR DPOR will hire contractors to complete all phases of the work required including but not limited to trail assessment, planning, clearing, and trail construction.

All trails within Denali State Park are incorporated in the Denali State Park Management Plan. The planning process included extensive public input. Trail reconstruction is a consideration in management recommendations to improve public access.

Project Timeline:

Depending on the availability of trail contractors, funding would be spent over the course of two seasons between 2024-2026.

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

DNR-DPOR

Grant Recipient Contact Information:

Name: Stuart Leidner

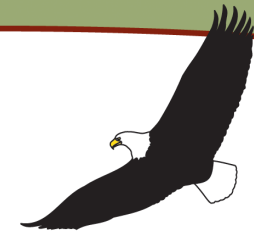
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Wasilla, AK 99654

Phone Number: (907)745-3975

Email: stuart.leidner@alaska.gov

Guide to

K'esugi Ridge Trail System South



in Denali State Park

Ermine Hill Trail:

Allowable Uses: Hiking

Distance: 3.7 miles

Elevation Gain: 1300 feet

Difficulty: Moderate

K'esugi Ridge Trail:

(Ermine Hill Trail jct. to Cascade Trail jct.)

Allowable Uses: Hiking

Distance: 11.2 miles

Elevation Gain: 2000 feet (north to south)

Difficulty: Moderate to Difficult

Cascade Trail:

Allowable Uses: Hiking

Distance: 2 miles

Elevation Gain: 1800 feet from Byers Lake

Difficulty: Difficult

Byers Lake Trail:

Allowable Uses: Hiking, Biking, Skiing

Distance: 5.3 miles

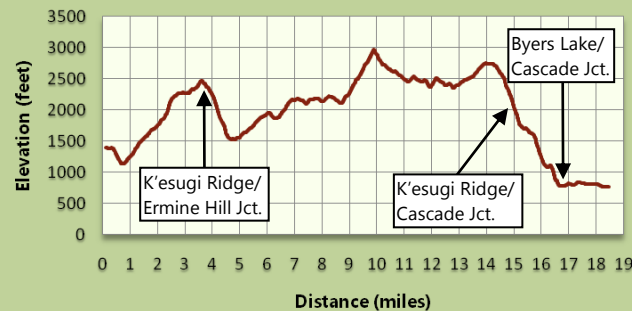
Elevation Gain: Less than 100 feet

Difficulty: Easy

Connecting the Trails:

18.5 mile traverse from Ermine Hill Trailhead to Byers Lake Campground. 26.6 mile traverse from Ermine Hill Trailhead to Upper Troublesome Creek Trailhead.

K'esugi Ridge Trail System South



Special Features:

This trail system offers popular multi-day backpacking trips in south-central Alaska. Hiking is through rolling alpine and sub-alpine terrain with outstanding views of Denali, and numerous small glacially scoured lakes. Lower elevations are forested.

Planning Your Route:

Most people hike from north to south because of less total elevation gain. Hikers can start from the Little Coal Creek Trailhead or Ermine Hill Trailhead and finish at Byers Lake Campground or Upper Troublesome Creek Trailhead (See Guide to K'esugi Ridge Trail System North & Guide to Upper Troublesome Creek Trail for more information). These are all one-way trips, so pick-up or drop-off arrangements must be made prior to departure. Day-hikes to timberline and around Byers Lake are also popular.



Safety and Considerations:

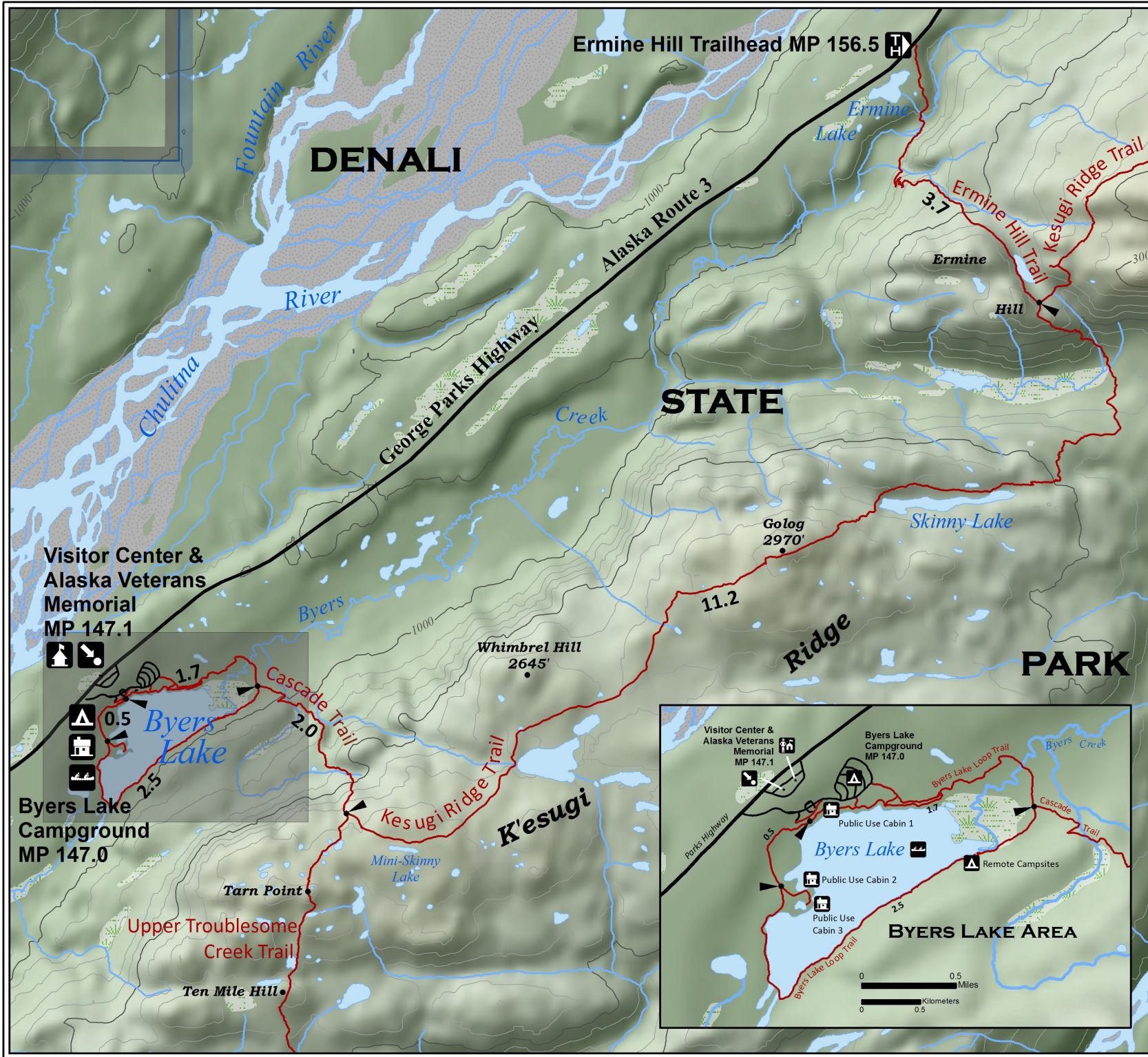
Weather on K'esugi Ridge can change fast. Be prepared with proper clothing and navigation tools in case low clouds move in. Some trails may experience seasonal closures due to high bear concentrations. Please respect closures and always be bear aware while traveling Denali's trails.

Park Rules:

Open fires are prohibited, please use designated fire rings or a camp stove. Pets must be on a leash while in the trailhead parking lot, and under voice control on trails or in the backcountry. For more information, please contact the Mat-Su Area Parks Office at (907) 745-3975, or visit the following web address:

<http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/units/denali1.htm>





Denali State Park

K'esugi Ridge Trail System South



Legend

- ▬ Denali State Park Boundary
- ▬ State Recreation Areas
- ▬ Denali National Park Boundary
- ▬ Trails
- ▬ Roads
- + Railroads
- ▬ Rivers/Lakes
- ▬ Gravel Bars
- ▬ Streams
- ▬ Wetlands
- ▲ Trailhead
- ▲ Campground
- ▲ Interest Point
- ▲ Visitor Center
- ▲ Public Use Cabins
- ▲ Non-Motorized Boating

Scale

0 0.5 1 Miles

0 0.5 1 Kilometers

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This map represents differential GPS data collected during the Alaska State Parks Trail Inventory Project that was conducted in conjunction with National Park Service (NPS) Rivers and Trails Conservation Assistance (RTCA) program, Alaska Department of Natural Resources (ADNR) Land Record Information Service (LRIS), Department of Parks and Outdoor Recreation (DPOR), and Denali State Park.

Denali State Park: (907) 745-3975. Fax: (907) 745-0938. Alaska State Parks: www.dnr.state.ak.us/parks. Emergency: 911.

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