

Project Title: Little Coal Creek Trail Upgrades

TPS Number: 68764

Priority: 9

Agency: Natural Resources

FY2026 State Funding Request: \$450,000

One-Time Need

Brief Project Description:

Upgrade and repair degraded sections of Little Coal Creek Trail in Denali State Park to DPOR standards.

Funding Plan:

Total Project Cost: \$450,000

Funding Already Secured: (\$0)

FY2026 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:

The Little Coal Creek Trail was originally established in the late seventies. It is what would be characterized as a "fall line" trail. These types of 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.

Little Coal Creek 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.

We 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 (2025-2027).

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

DNR-DPOR

Grant Recipient Contact Information:

Name: Stuart Leidner

Address: 7278 East Bogard Road
Wasilla, AK 99654

Phone Number: (907)745-3975

Email: stuart.leidner@alaska.gov

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



Dear Alaska Legislators:

2/19/2025

Alaska Trails, the statewide non-profit, is writing on behalf of the Alaska Long Trail Coalition to request the inclusion of the Seward-to-Fairbanks [Alaska Long Trail](#) projects (submitted into CAPSIS) into FY2026 State's capital budget. The specific request is for **13 projects** to fill key shovel-ready and planning-ready gaps along the length of the planned route. Some of these projects have federal/local matching funds or complimentary funds already secured, and some projects build on the funding received through the state capital budget over the past three years (**thank you!**).

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 (motorized and non-motorized) 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 typical year's out-of-state travelers had reasons to spend one more day in Alaska, the result would be an additional \$250M 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, and happy outside.
- **Projects are Action-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.

We ask that you support the inclusion of the Alaska Long Trail projects, submitted into CAPSIS, in the FY2026 state capital budget.

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

Sincerely,

Steve Cleary, Alaska Trails Executive Director

steve.cleary@alaska-trails.org

PO Box 100627
Anchorage, AK 99510
office@alaska-trails.org
907-334-8049

www.alaska-trails.org

ALASKA LONG TRAIL - CAPSIS FY2026 PROJECTS

TPS #	Project	Amount	Match funds secured	Recipient	Land Manager/Area	Districts	Previously Submitted?	Planning, New construction, Repairs/Improvements	Mileage
68890	Glenn Highway To Far North Bicentennial Park	\$110,000		Anchorage Park Foundation	Municipality of Anchorage	21-K, 22-K	YES	Planning	5
68868	Chugach Mountain Bike Riders - Connect Gruening Middle School to Chugach State Park - Lower Eagle River Trail	\$169,916		Chugach Mountain Bike Riders (CMBR)	Chugach State Park	23-L	YES	New construction	1
69711	Crow Pass Trail Realignment - Priority 3 - Eagle River Crossing to Heidi's Knob	\$196,001	Supported by FY23 Planning Funds	DNR DPOR	Chugach State Park	23-L	NO	Repairs/Improvements	1.1
68766	Alaska Long Trail Talkeetna Mountains Planning	\$300,000	\$200,000	Alaska Trails	Mat-Su Borough & AK DMLW	30-O, 29-O	NO	Planning	85
68764	Little Coal Creek Trail Upgrades	\$450,000		DNR DPOR	Denali State Park	30-O	NO	Repairs/Improvements	5
68762	Ermine Hill Trail Upgrades	\$450,000		DNR DPOR	Denali State Park	30-O	NO	Repairs/Improvements	5
68012	Failed Boardwalk Replacement - Lower Eagle River Trail	\$500,000		DNR DPOR	Chugach State Park	23-L	YES	Repairs/Improvements	2
69712	Crow Pass Improvements Park Priority #2 - Raven Creek Gorge Bridge and Clear Creek Bridge	\$788,987	Supported by FY23 Planning Funds	DNR DPOR	Chugach State Park	23-L	NO	Repairs/Improvements	0.4
68845	Ram Valley Access Trail and Trailhead Parking Lot	\$1,000,000		Alaska Trails	Chugach State Park	23-L	YES	New construction	4
69713	Crow Pass Trail Realignment - Priority 1 - Icicle Creek Reroute & Bridge	\$1,115,000	Supported by FY23 Planning Funds	DNR DPOR	Chugach State Park	23-L	NO	Repairs/Improvements	2
69702	Anchorage - Iditarod Trail Construction Connecting Chugiak High School to Cook Inlet	\$1,500,000		Muni of Anchorage	Muni of Anchorage	23-L	NO	Repairs/Improvements	1.5
66755	GPRA Traverse and Little Susitna Loop	\$2,250,000	\$250,000	Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation	Mat-Su Borough & AK DNR DPOR	29-O	YES	New construction	12
68770	Ship Creek Trail "Arctic to Indian"	\$3,000,000		Alaska Trails	Chugach State Park	23-L	YES	New construction	13.5

TOTAL

\$11,829,904

TOTAL MILES 137.5

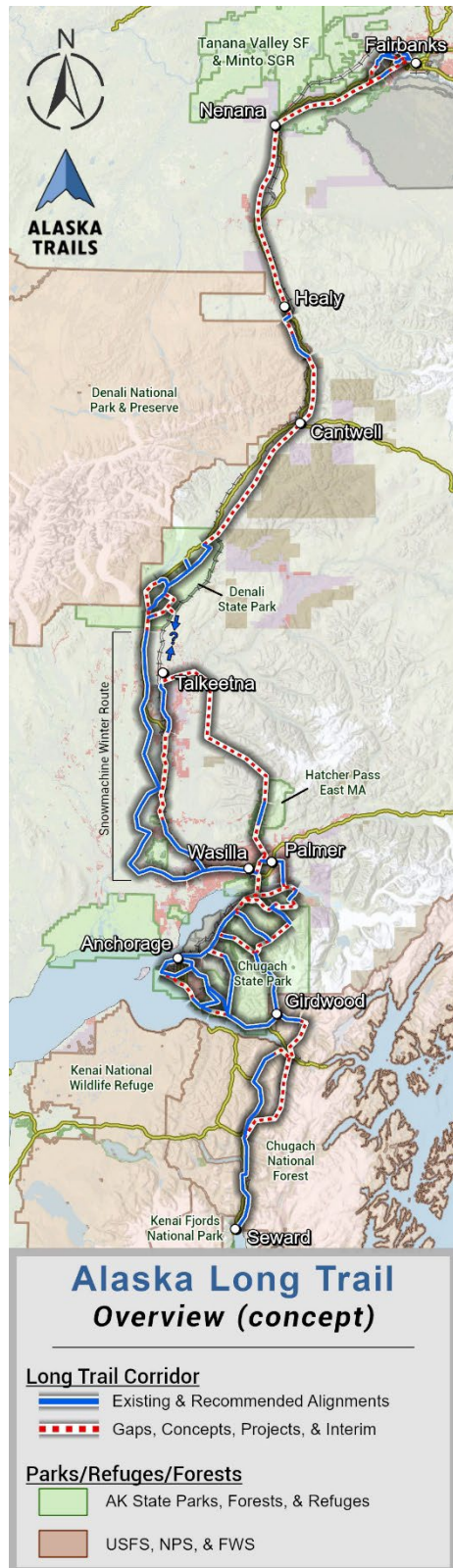
TOTAL NEW CONSTRUCTION MILES 30.5

TOTAL REPAIRS MILES 17

TOTAL PLANNING MILES 90

RESOLUTIONS AND LETTERS OF SUPPORT

Numerous organizations, agencies, local governments, and individuals expressed support for the Alaska Long Trail over 2021 - 2025. Below is the list of organizations, agencies, and local governments that have sent letters of support and passed resolutions in support of the project.



Alaska Travel Industry Association (ATIA)	statewide
National Park Service	statewide
Alaska Huts Association (AHA)	statewide
Alaska Trails	statewide
Alaska Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects	statewide
Alaska Chapter of Backcountry Hunters and Anglers	statewide
Mountaineering Club of Alaska	statewide
Mat-Su Borough Assembly	Mat-Su
City of Palmer	Mat-Su
Mat-Su Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB)	Mat-Su
Mat-Su Health Foundation	Mat-Su
Skeetawk, Hatcher Alpine Xperience	Mat-Su
Alaska State Parks - Mat-Su/Copper Basin Regional Office	Mat-Su
City of Seward	Kenai
Kenai Mountains – Turnagain Arm National Heritage Area (KMTA)	Kenai
Kenai Backcountry Horsemen	Kenai
Fairbanks North Star Borough Assembly	Interior
Denali Borough Assembly	Interior
Explore Fairbanks	Interior
Interior Trails Quarterly	Interior
Fairbanks Cycle Club	Interior
Nordic Ski Club Fairbanks	Interior
Interior Trails Preservation Coalition	Interior
Anchorage Assembly	Anchorage
Chugach State Park Citizens Advisory Board	Anchorage
Chugach Mountain Bike Riders	Anchorage
Eklutna Valley Community Council	Anchorage
Eagle River Valley Community Council	Anchorage
Anchorage Ski Club	Anchorage
Girdwood Board of Supervisors	Anchorage
Girdwood Trails Committee	Anchorage
Latitude 61 Girdwood	Anchorage
Anchorage Park Foundation	Anchorage
Single Track Advocates, Anchorage	Anchorage
Roadmap to a Vital and Safe Anchorage	Anchorage
Anchorage Trails	Anchorage



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

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:


~~to~~ LONNIE R. McKECHNIE, CMC, Borough Clerk

(SEAL)

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



February 15, 2024

To Whom It May Concern;

The Mat-Su Convention & Visitors Bureau and its Board of Directors asks for your support in funding for trail infrastructure, for both Alaska State Parks and the Alaska Long Trail. The projects submitted into CAPSIS for the FY2025 state capital budget come from recommendations from a broad group of partners working together.

Trails, including the Alaska Long Trail project, provide economic, health and community benefits. The Alaska Long Trail will be a world-class system connecting communities from Seward to Fairbanks, and will provide year-round access to both motorized and non-motorized users along different braids.

Trails provide economic development to Alaska, and the Alaska Long Trail would increase the time and money spent by visitors in our state. If we can get visitors to stay just one more day in Alaska, it would generate an estimated \$250 million in annual spending. In addition to the economic development trails have on our state, they also contribute to a better quality of life for our residents by providing outdoor recreation opportunities.

Specifically, we ask for your support in funding Alaska Long Trail projects including:

- GPRA Traverse (building 12 miles of hiking and mountain bike trail between GPRA, Skeetawk, and the 16 Mile Parking Lot in Hatcher Pass for the Alaska Long Trail) \$2.5 million
- Montana Creek Bike Path (adding 2.5 miles of separated pathway bike path connecting Montana Creek State Recreation Area with the Talkeetna Spur Bike Path) - \$3 million
- Talkeetna Mountains Planning (plotting trail alignment for the Long Trail between Hatcher Pass and Talkeetna) \$500,000
- Core Mat-Su Corridor Planning (\$100,000)

Along with Mat-Su State Parks Alaska Long Trail projects including:

- Byers Lake Loop Trail Upgrades (\$1 million)
- Ermine Hill Trail repair (\$250,000)
- Reed Lakes Trail & Trailhead (\$1.8 million)
- Coal Creek Trail repair (\$300,000)
- Kesugi Ridge Trail repair and signage (\$300,000)

Your support for trails and outdoor recreation projects is an investment in our communities and our economy.

Respectfully,

Casey Ressler
Mat-Su CVB President & CEO

Friends of State Parks, Mat-Su



"Enhancing our parks and recreational resources"

1150 S. Colony Way Suite #3 PMB 323, Palmer, AK 99645 <https://fospmatsu.org>

February 10th, 2024

RE: 2024 Alaska Long Trail Projects

To Whom It May Concern,

Friends of State Parks, Mat-Su (FoSP) is a non-profit organization formed to enhance our State Parks and recreation resources in the Mat Su Valley. We are writing to you to give our full and enthusiastic support for funding of the five Alaska Long Trail projects and their submission into the CAPSIS FY2025 state capital budget.

Each year, thousands of Alaskans and tourists hike, backpack, and ski the trails in Denali State Park (DSP) trails, trails which traverse birch/spruce forests and alpine tundra and offer panoramic views of Mt. McKinley and its glaciers. The four DSP trails plus Reed Lake Trail in the Hatcher Pass Management Unit are some of the most popular trails in the Mat-Su Borough. They were initially constructed in the 1970's when trail construction standards were often overlooked for expedience sake. They need to be brought up to world class standards.

The popularity and location of these trails makes them key components of the Alaska Long Trail Project. The goal of the project is to provide a multi-use, four season continuous trail between Seward and Fairbanks, similar to the Appalachian Trail and the Pacific Crest Trail. These long

distance trails have become models for how each state can celebrate the heritage, improve residents health and wellness and become a tremendous economic generator. The Alaska Long Trail Project could become one of the three iconic recreational trails in our nation.

Friends of State Parks, Mat-Su strongly encourages you to support these five Alaska Long Trail projects to be included in the FY2025 state capital budget. Our State would reap the economic and health benefits and will celebrate the States "last frontier" tradition.

Sincerely,

Steve Charles, Vice President
Friends of State Parks, Mat-Su



February 8th, 2024

Re: Support for FY 2025 CAPSIS Little Coal Creek Trail Upgrades Project

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my strong support for FY 2025 CAPSIS funding for the Little Coal Creek Trail Upgrades project as part of the Alaska Long Trail project. As an integral access point to the Kesugi Ridge Trail, the Little Coal Creek Trail serves as a gateway for hikers, backpackers, and outdoor enthusiasts seeking to explore Alaska's breathtaking wilderness. However, the trail's current condition, characterized by erosion and unsustainable trail tread, poses significant challenges to both visitors and the environment.

The proposed upgrades, including trail tread repairs and rerouting where feasible, are essential to ensure the long-term sustainability of the Little Coal Creek Trail. By hiring contractors to complete all phases of the work, they can address erosion issues, improve trail gradients, and enhance the overall trail experience for users.

Moreover, investing in the Little Coal Creek Trail Upgrades project aligns perfectly with the overarching goals of the Alaska Long Trail, including improving access to outdoor recreation, promoting healthy lifestyles, and celebrating Alaska's rich cultural heritage. By bolstering outdoor recreation infrastructure, we can strengthen Alaska's economy, create jobs, and attract visitors from around the world.

This project is part of the Denali State Park Management Plan which went through the State of Alaska's public process for adoption. Due to the need, and community support for this project I urge you support the inclusion of the Little Coal Creek Trail Upgrades project in the FY2025 CAPSIS Funding.

Thank you for your dedication to enhancing outdoor recreation opportunities in the Mat-Su. If you require any further information or assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me. I look forward to updates on the progress of this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Taylor Raftery".

Taylor Raftery
Executive Director
Mat-Su Trails & Parks Foundation

Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation | www.matsutrails.org | EIN# 90-0699180

PO Box 652 Palmer, AK 99645 | Phone: 907-746-8757 | info@matsutrails.org

Board of Directors: George Hoden, *Chair* | Kathryn Swartz, *Vice-Chair* | Lorraine Cordova, *Treasurer* | Chelsea Hedrick, *Secretary*

Bob Charles | Brian Winnestaffer | Ryan Mollnow | Susie Lemons | Josh Leutzinger



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2/19/2025

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Sincerely,

Steve Cleary, Alaska Trails Executive Director

steve.cleary@alaska-trails.org

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ALASKA LONG TRAIL - CAPSIS FY2026 PROJECTS

ID #	TPS #	Project	Amount	Match funds secured	Recipient	Land Manager/Area	Districts	Previously Submitted?	Planning, New construction, Repairs/Improvements	Mileage
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TOTAL

\$11,829,904

TOTAL MILES 137.5

TOTAL NEW

CONSTRUCTION MILES 30.5

TOTAL REPAIRS MILES 17

TOTAL PLANNING MILES 90

Alaska Long Trail CAPSIS FY26

Alaska Long Trail Corridor*

-  Existing Trails
-  Identified Gaps
-  Water Route

Land Ownership**

-  Private
-  State
-  BLM
-  AK Native
-  Federal
-  DoD

CAPSIS Project

-  Project ID number

*Corridor shown is simplified and may not accurately reflect the alignment. Refer to the region maps in the AKLT workbook for detailed information.

Existing Trails: recommended trails and routes

Identified gaps: concepts, gaps, road connections, and work in progress.

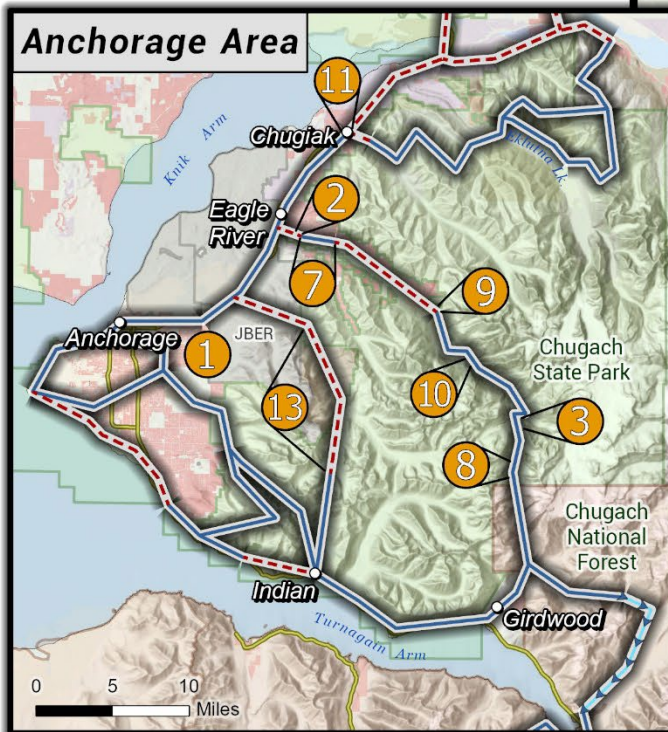
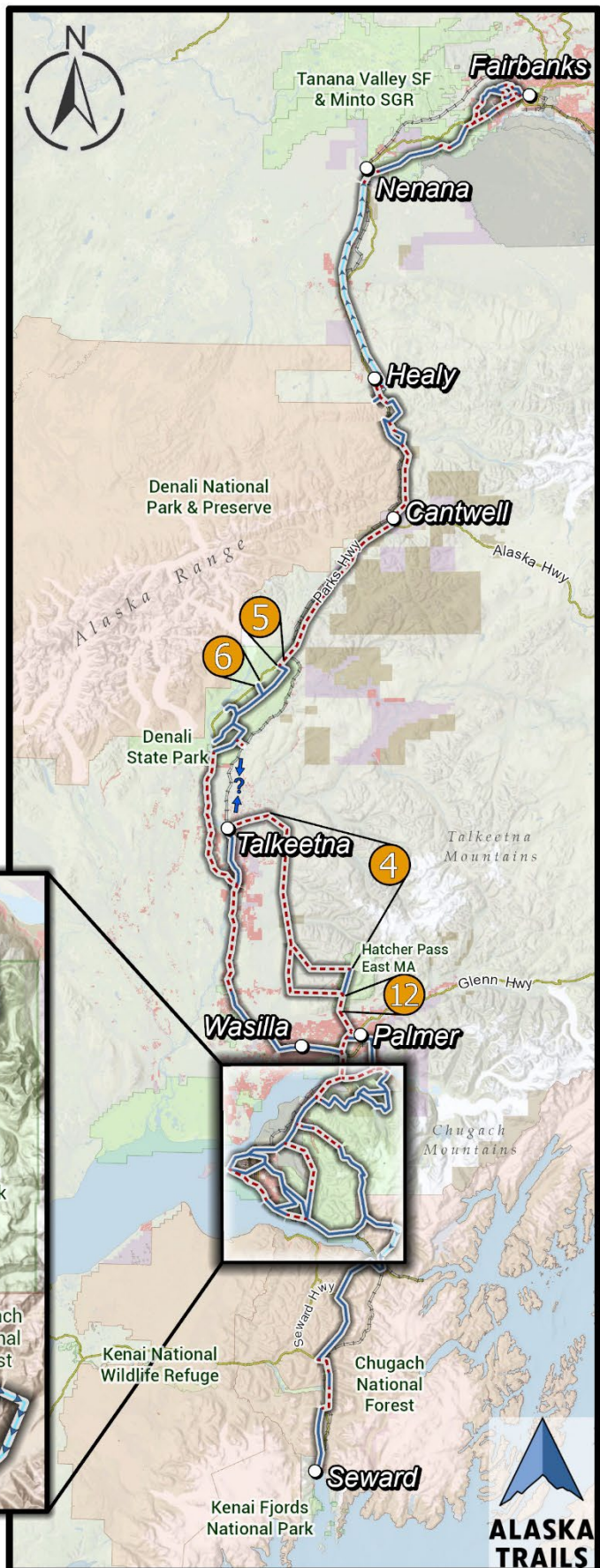
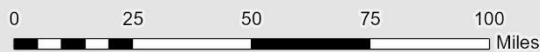
**Land ownership parcels within 25 miles of the AKLT corridor

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

Federal: parks, preserves, and forests

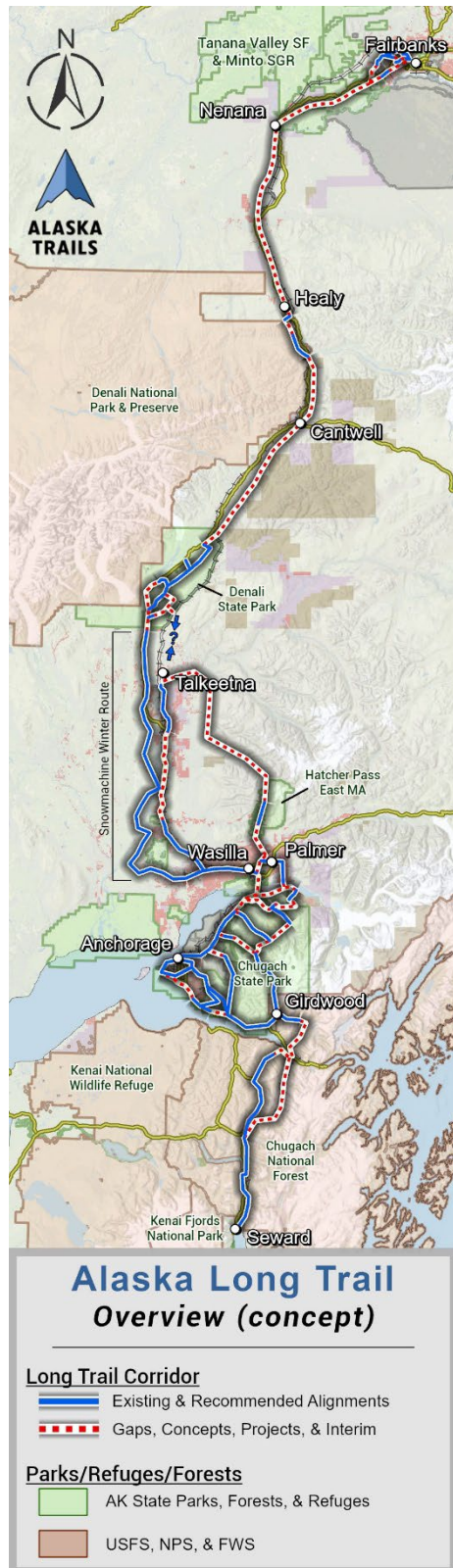
Data Sources: ADNRR, ADFG, Alaska Trails, AKLT Coalition, AKDOT, BLM, Denali Borough, Esri, FNSB, KPB, MOA, NPS, USFS, USFWS

Created: 2/21/2025



RESOLUTIONS AND LETTERS OF SUPPORT

Numerous organizations, agencies, local governments, and individuals expressed support for the Alaska Long Trail over 2021 - 2025. Below is the list of organizations, agencies, and local governments that have sent letters of support and passed resolutions in support of the project.



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Single Track Advocates, Anchorage	Anchorage
Roadmap to a Vital and Safe Anchorage	Anchorage
Anchorage Trails	Anchorage



February 18, 2025

Honorable Alaska State Legislators:

Re: Support for Alaska Long Trail Capital Improvement Projects

Thank you for supporting the Alaska Long Trail (AKLT). Investing in outdoor recreation infrastructure keeps Alaskans healthy and connected and will put Alaska on the map as the outdoor epicenter of the world.

The 13 AKLT projects submitted to CAPSIS would invest approximately \$12 million to build or improve 138 miles. These investments leverage local and federal funding and will have a resounding positive impact on Alaska communities. They create jobs, they support the stories that bind us together, and they help facilitate a wide variety of quality-of-life 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, neighborhoods, and Alaska Native leaders.

We support all of the AKLT projects from our coalition partners across the state, including seven projects in Chugach State Park, two projects in Chugiak Eagle River, two in the Mat-Su Borough and two in Denali State Park. In addition, we want to highlight the Anchorage project we submitted to CAPSIS, to build a safe non-motorized connection from the Glenn Highway Trail to the newly completed Chugach Foothills trail in Far North Bicentennial Park.

Thanks for your past support for the AKLT. Your investments in new trail segments and wayfinding will help more than 1.5 million visitors to Anchorage learn about the Alaska Long Trail and want to come back to Alaska communities again and again to complete new segments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Beth Nordlund". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Beth" and last name "Nordlund" clearly distinguishable.

Beth Nordlund, Executive Director
Anchorage Park Foundation