

# Project Title: Alaska Trails - Alaska Long Trail - Talkeetna Mountains Planning

**TPS Number:** 68766

**Priority:** 8

**Agency:** Commerce, Community and Economic Development  
Grants to Named Recipient (AS 37.05.316)

**Federal Tax ID:** 73-1677483

**Grant Recipient:** Alaska Trails

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

One-Time Need

## Brief Project Description:

This project will plot the route of the Alaska Long Trail through the Talkeetna Mountains from Hatcher Pass towards Bald Mountain near Talkeetna, developing an alignment and creating actionable plans for future trail development.

## Funding Plan:

|                               |             |
|-------------------------------|-------------|
| Total Project Cost:           | \$500,000   |
| Funding Already Secured:      | (\$0)       |
| FY2025 State Funding Request: | (\$500,000) |
| Project Deficit:              | \$0         |

## Explanation of Other Funds:

Alaska Long Trail project has received \$5.6 million from the state capital budget and \$11.3 million from federal appropriations in the past three years to fill in key trail gaps on Chugach National Forest lands and address backlog of maintenance on state parks' lands. This is an ambitious project and requires more investments such as this proposal in planning and construction over the next decade.

## Detailed Project Description and Justification:

The Talkeetna Mountains are at the heart of outdoor recreation for many residents of Southcentral Alaska. Many hikers, snowmachiners, hunters, skiers, and climbers make use of the area, and data collected through the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) shows that use is increasing rapidly with the Mat-Su Borough's expanding population. The Alaska Long Trail (AKLT), a proposed 500-mile route from Seward to Fairbanks, is slated to pass through the western side of the Talkeetna Mountains on its path from Hatcher Pass to Talkeetna. This project would begin the process of creating a detailed route and trail alignment over that 85-mile stretch.

As much of the terrain is remote and many possible routes exist, careful planning is needed to identify the path that best serves existing and anticipated user needs. Alaska Trails will work with Mat-Su State Parks and Alaska DNR to chart a sustainable course for the Alaska Long Trail through the Talkeetnas that expands access for existing uses. A major component of this work will be scouting trails, RS2477s, and other existing trail infrastructure in the corridor that can be utilized as part of the route. By the end of this planning process, the Alaska Long Trail stretch between Hatcher Pass and Talkeetna will have an actionable plan and cost estimates for construction, with robust data and reconnaissance.

The Alaska Long Trail has been working generally south to north. As sections are completed between Seward and Anchorage, this planning funding will ensure that the Mat-Su is ready to continue the path on schedule as trail sections to the south are completed.

This section passes through the Mat-Su Borough and touches the communities of Palmer, Wasilla, Willow, and Talkeetna, among others. Support has been evident in resolutions and letters from Mat-Su governing bodies (Mat-Su Borough, City of Palmer), resolutions of support from Mat-Su business organizations (Greater Wasilla Chamber of Commerce, Greater Palmer Chamber of Commerce, Mat-Su Convention and Visitors Bureau), Mat-Su trails groups (Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation, Valley Mountain Bikers and Hikers) among others.

In advance of the public review process this study would include, support is already robust and wide for the Alaska Long Trail coming to the Mat-Su. A complete list of supporters for the project can be found at the project webpage: <https://www.alaska-trails.org/alaska-long-trail>

**Project Timeline:**

Alaska Trails, a statewide non-profit based in Anchorage, will facilitate the project and contract with a trails construction company to oversee this three year project.

The RFP and initial planning process - winter of 2024-2025

Field work and GIS mapping - summers 2025-2026

Stakeholder engagement and public review for the route - fall of 2025- spring of 2026

Recommended plan for alignment, project priorities, and funding - completed in 2027

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

As this is a planning study, it will not produce associated maintenance costs.

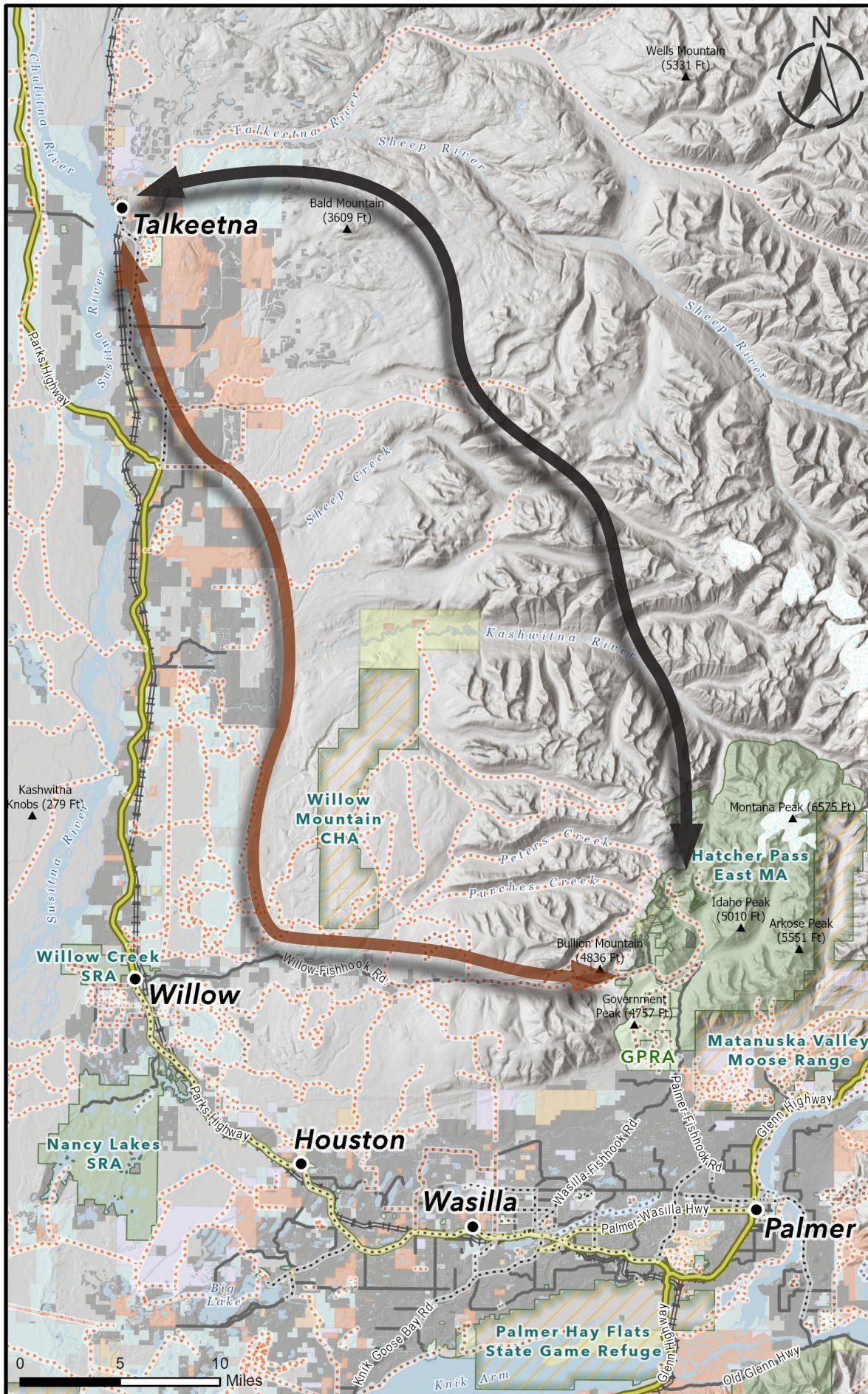
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**This project has been through a public review process at the local level and it is a community priority.**



# Alaska Long Trail: Talkeetna Mountains Planning



## Legend

### Trail Type\*

- Hiking Trail
- Bike Path
- Widetrack
- Water Trail

### Project Corridors

- Alpine Route
- Frontcountry Route

### Infrastructure

- Highway
- Road
- Railroad

### Land Ownership

- Private
- Alaska Native
- Local Park
- Local Government
- Mental Health Trust (ADNR)
- University of Alaska
- BLM

### Boundaries

- State Park (DPOR)
- SGR and Ranges (ADF&G)

### Point of Interest

- Mountain Peak

Created for Alaska Trails on 2/12/2024

*Notes: The trails depicted in this dataset have been compiled from multiple sources. Some trails may not exist.*

\* Hiking trail = standard terra/winter trail  
Widetrack = ATV, snowmachine, mushing trail

*Sources: ADF&G, ADNR, AKDOT, BLM, Esri, MSB, MST&PF*

