

Indian Valley Trail Reroute

TPS# 67940

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project will create a new alignment for the Indian Valley Trail in Chugach State Park according to sustainable trail principles, moving it to higher ground with better drainage and trail grades to restore year-round access to a large portion of the southern reaches of Chugach State Park.

The Indian Valley Trail (identified in the Chugach State Park Trail Management Plan (TMP) as trail ID #509a) is a 5+ mile trail which begins at the Upper Indian Creek Trailhead at the end of Boretide Road in the community of Indian. This trail provides access to the alpine environment of Indian Pass, the upper Ship Creek drainage, can be used to connect to the Glen Alps and Prospect Heights trailheads via Ship Pass, and is a critical five miles of the popular 21-mile Arctic to Indian Traverse.

The current trail is poorly aligned, staying near the creek where the ground is wet and unstable, with dense brush and frequent creek crossings. The best solution is to re-align the trail according to sustainable trail principles, moving it to higher ground with better drainage and trail grades, resulting in a higher quality trail at a lower cost than “fixing” the existing trail. The new trail will be approximately 7 miles long and climb approximately 2000 feet from Boretide Road to Indian Pass. At least 5 bridges will be required. The trail will be 4 ft wide with a clearing width of 8 ft high and 8 ft wide, adhering to Alaska State Parks Handbook standards for a Class III Trail.

BENEFITS AND NEED

This project will improve the experience of hikers, equestrians and skiers who utilize the Indian Valley Trail year-round. In addition to improvements to the Indian Valley Trail, this project will improve the gravel parking lot that serves the trail, the Upper Indian Creek Trailhead.

Rebuilding the Indian Valley Trail with a sustainable alignment also sets the stage for the next step in the development of the Arctic to Indian summer trail as identified in the TMP. Currently the Arctic to Indian corridor is largely impassable in summer due to numerous creek crossings, dense vegetation and challenging tread. A future iteration of the trail will connect the new Muktuk Marston Trail, which departs from Arctic Valley Ski Area to Indian Pass.

PROJECT LEAD AND PARTNERS: Alaska Trails, Chugach State Park

USE: non-motorized: hiking, skiing, equestrian

ESTIMATED COST:

Reconnaissance, Design and Layout - \$60,000

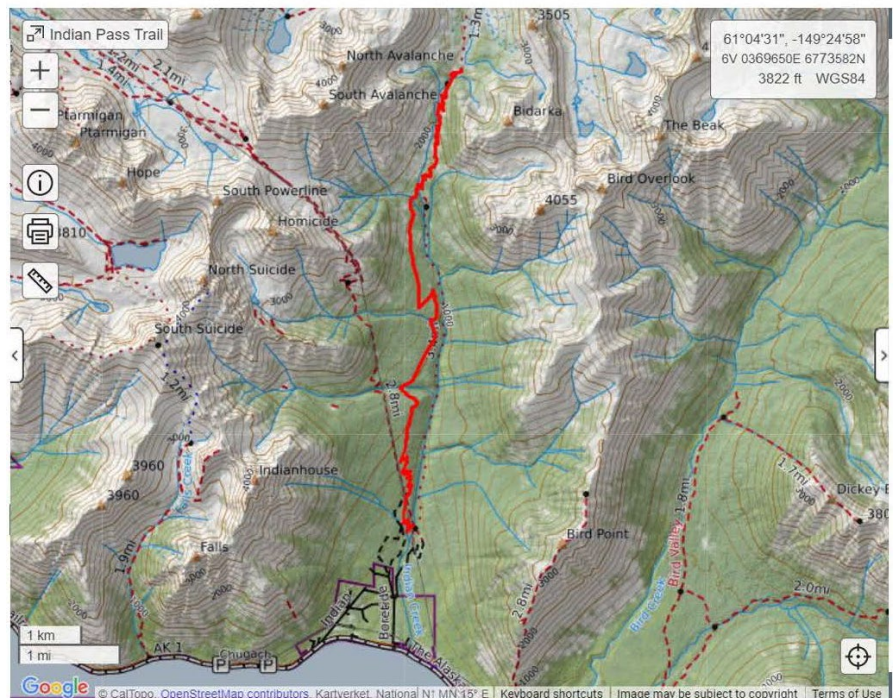
Project Management - \$40,000

Construction costs (trail - \$100,000 per mile) - \$700,000

Construction Costs (3 bridges) - \$300,000

TOTAL: \$1,100,000

Alaska Long Trail - Indian Valley Trail Reroute



Note: The red line is a preliminary route, to be determined during the proposed project

Eklutna Lakeside Trail Improvements

TPS# 67954

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Portions of the popular Eklutna Lakeside Trail have collapsed and eroded into the waters of Eklutna Lake. This project would help to realign the trail along this popular, family-friendly four-season multi-use corridor. This trail is a high priority for the Chugach State Park due to high use both for nonmotorized and motorized recreation. Erosion is a critical issue for parts of the trail, as well as blocked ditches and culverts. Improved drainage is necessary to keep the trail accessible.

The Eklutna Lakeside Trail improvement project will realign and rebuild sections of the Eklutna Lakeside Trail where the trail has collapsed and eroded into Eklutna Lake. In some locations the bike trail may be moved higher to avoid erosion along the lakeshore. In other locations, drainage needs will be addressed through culverts and/or rocky swales.

BENEFITS AND NEED

- The project will repair sections of the trail that have collapsed and created dangerous and unpassable situations for trail users.
- Some sections of the trail will be moved to a higher ground, creating a sustainable solution to combat trail erosion.
- Completion of this project will lead to a safer, more enjoyable Eklutna Lakeside Trail for all users - ATVs, snowmachines, skiers, bikes, and hikers.

PROJECT LEAD AND PARTNERS: Alaska Trails, Chugach State Park

USE: Multi-use: motorized/non-motorized

ESTIMATED COST:

Trail work could commence and be completed in summer 2023. A single field season should be sufficient to repair and rebuild the damaged section of trail. Expenditures are expected to be as follows:

Layout and design = \$18,600

Repairs to 6 miles of single-track trail (biker and hiker) @ \$8,000/mile = \$48,000

Repairs to 12 miles of multi-use trail (ATV and snowmachine) @ \$12,000 = \$144,000

Project management = 23,400

TOTAL: \$234,000



Ram Valley, Reestablishing Access

TPS# 67910

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project will produce a feasibility study to examine several options to restore access to Ram Valley, a popular Chugach State Park high alpine destination. The outcome of the study will be a recommendation made to Chugach State Park to provide feasible and legal access to Ram Valley.

Ram Valley is a popular corner of Chugach State Park, located north of Eagle River and south of Eklutna Lake. The area has historically been popular with hunters, hikers, backpackers, skiers and climbers. Since 2020, access to Ram Valley has been effectively eliminated when the prior existing access, through private property at the discretion of the landowner, was revoked due to conflicts over parking and trespassing. Since then, Ram Valley and the surrounding environs have only been accessible by especially long and arduous routes - unsuitable for most users.

BENEFITS AND NEED

Providing access to Alaska's park lands is a central tenet of the Department of Parks and Outdoor Recreation and the Alaska State Park system. Losing access to a large swathe of Chugach State Park, Alaska's most visited public land, disenfranchises Alaskans. However, restoring access needs to be done in a thoughtful, deliberate way which is inclusive of community perspectives. Alaska Trails, a statewide non-profit based in Anchorage, will work in collaboration with Chugach State Park and other stakeholders to produce a feasibility study that will examine access options to this valuable outdoor recreation destination. The study will ensure that community voices are heard, incorporated and respected so that Chugach State Park access is compatible with neighborhood values and private landowner rights. The final outcome of the project will be a recommendation to Chugach State Park on the best access options and a feasible trail layout to Ram Valley.

PROJECT LEAD AND PARTNERS: Alaska Trails, Chugach State Park, Chugach State Park Citizens' Advisory Board

PROJECT STATUS

The project has gone through a public review process. The trail which was formerly used to access Ram Valley was included in the Chugach State Park Trail Management Plan (TMP) as trail ID# 209 and thus was a part of the public review process associated with the crafting of that document prior to its adoption. Additionally, the Chugach State Park Citizens' Advisory Board formed an ad-hoc Ram Valley Access Committee in early 2023 to assist in the resolution of the access issue in this section of Chugach State Park.

USE: non-motorized

ESTIMATED COST:

- Real Estate and Land Use Research - \$20,000
- Community Outreach - \$30,000
- GIS Mapping - \$20,000
- Rough Layout of Options - \$30,000
- Total: \$100,000**

