

Project Title: Alaska Long Trail - Reed Lakes Trail and Trailhead Improvements

TPS Number: 68765

Priority: 9

Agency: Natural Resources

FY2025 State Funding Request: \$1,800,000

One-Time Need

Brief Project Description:

This project will conduct extensive upgrades to improve the Reed Lakes Trailhead and Reed Lakes trails located in the Hatcher Pass East Management Area: upgrade trails to division standards, improve trailhead, install a vaulted toilet and fee stations.

Funding Plan:

Total Project Cost:	\$1,800,000
Funding Already Secured:	(\$0)
FY2025 State Funding Request:	(\$1,800,000)
Project Deficit:	\$0

Detailed Project Description and Justification:

The Matanuska Susitna Borough is the fastest growing borough in Alaska. As more residents and tourists discover the vast recreation activities available in the Hatcher Pass East Management Area (HPEMA), the impact on park resources continues to be a top concern. Within HPEMA, the Archangel Valley and Reed Lakes trails are one of the most frequented destinations for hikers, backcountry enthusiasts, and berry pickers.

Currently, there are two small parking areas around the trailhead at the end of Archangel Road that overflow nearly every weekend from spring till it snows. Visitors park along the road, at times making passage through nearly impossible. Emergency response vehicles would find navigating the road difficult if needing to access the area if someone has a medical emergency.

In addition, there are no permanent restroom (latrines) facilities at this location. State Parks pays to have a porta potty near the main parking area, but it too can be overwhelmed with an influx of visitors on weekends. As a result, we are also seeing an increase in human waste along the trail corridor.

All trails within the Hatcher Pass East Management Area were vetted through the public process when the plan was adopted in 2012. The plan calls for trail upgrades throughout the unit as funds become available.

The trail to Reed Lakes is extremely popular and as a result we are seeing degradation of natural resources. There are several social trails and sections that become so muddy during the rainy season (which was all summer in FY23), that it degrades to a point where erosion has impacted several sections.

The project has multiple aspects that will vastly improve the visitor experience, provide improved access, and provide additional restroom facilities.

1. Parking Area: Consolidate, harden, and create one larger parking area to accommodate up to 200 vehicles. Raze old site on other side of bridge. Install new double vaulted CXT restroom latrine. Reconfigure trailhead access route. Install fee stations, increasing DPOR parking receipts.

2. Reed Lakes Trail: Resurface the trail tread in the lower valley section, reroute and rebuild sections impacted by erosion. Repairs to bring Reed Lakes Trail to Class II (moderately developed) sustainable trail state park standards.

Project Timeline:

The project will take three seasons to complete (2024-2026).

First season: Trail assessment, and pin flagging trail reroute. Finalize engineering plans for park and trailhead construction.

Second season: Trail tread repairs and upgrades lower valley. Complete parking area construction.

Third season: Finish trail realignment in upper section, trail tread repairs completed.

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
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Email: stuart.leidner@alaska.gov

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

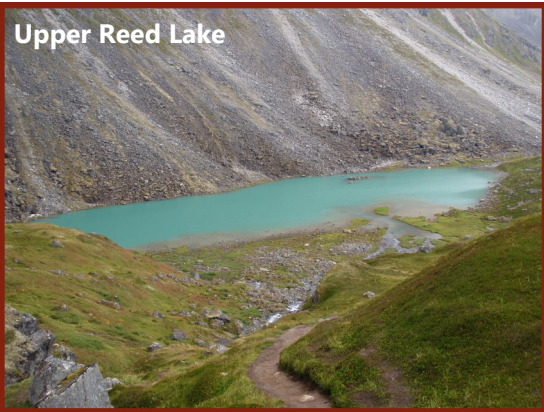
Guide to

Reed Lakes Trail & Gold Mint Trail

in Hatcher Pass State Management Area



Upper Reed Lake



Little Susitna River



Reed Lakes Trail:

Trail Access: Mile 2.5 Archangel Road via Palmer-Fishook Road

Allowable Uses: Biking & Hiking to mile 1.5; Hiking-only after

Distance: 4.3 miles one-way

Elevation Gain: 2000 feet

Difficulty: Moderate

Gold Mint Trail:

Trail Access: Mile 14 Palmer-Fishook Rd.

Allowable Uses: Hiking, Skiing

Distance: 7.8 miles one-way

Elevation Gain: 1500 feet

Difficulty: Easy to Moderate

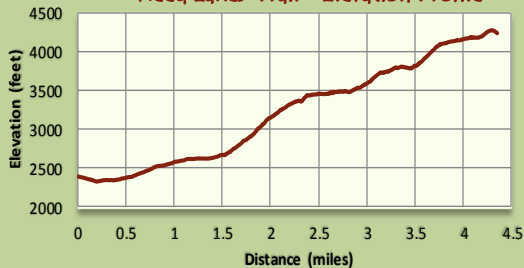
Reed Lakes Trail:

This popular day-hike initially follows an old roadbed through mining remains (please do not disturb artifacts), then climbs moderately steep slopes to a boulder field (be careful with your footing and with pets). A trail emerges from the boulders in beautiful alpine terrain. As you climb higher you will encounter streams and small ponds, before emerging above Lower Reed Lake. Following the trail further will lead to a waterfall and the trail-end at Upper Reed Lake, an alpine lake at just over 4000 feet in elevation. The entire route is above timberline.

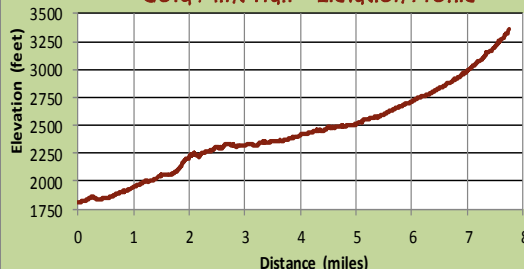
Gold Mint Trail:

This trail is popular for day-hiking and cross-country skiing. The trail gradually gains elevation as it stays near the valley bottom. The further you get from the trailhead, the narrower it gets. There are mountain views and glimpses of Little Susitna River. Near the head of the valley the trail becomes less defined, and it eventually peters out. Most of the route is above timberline.

Reed Lakes Trail - Elevation Profile



Gold Mint Trail - Elevation Profile



Other Information:

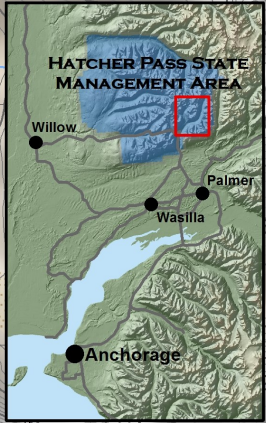
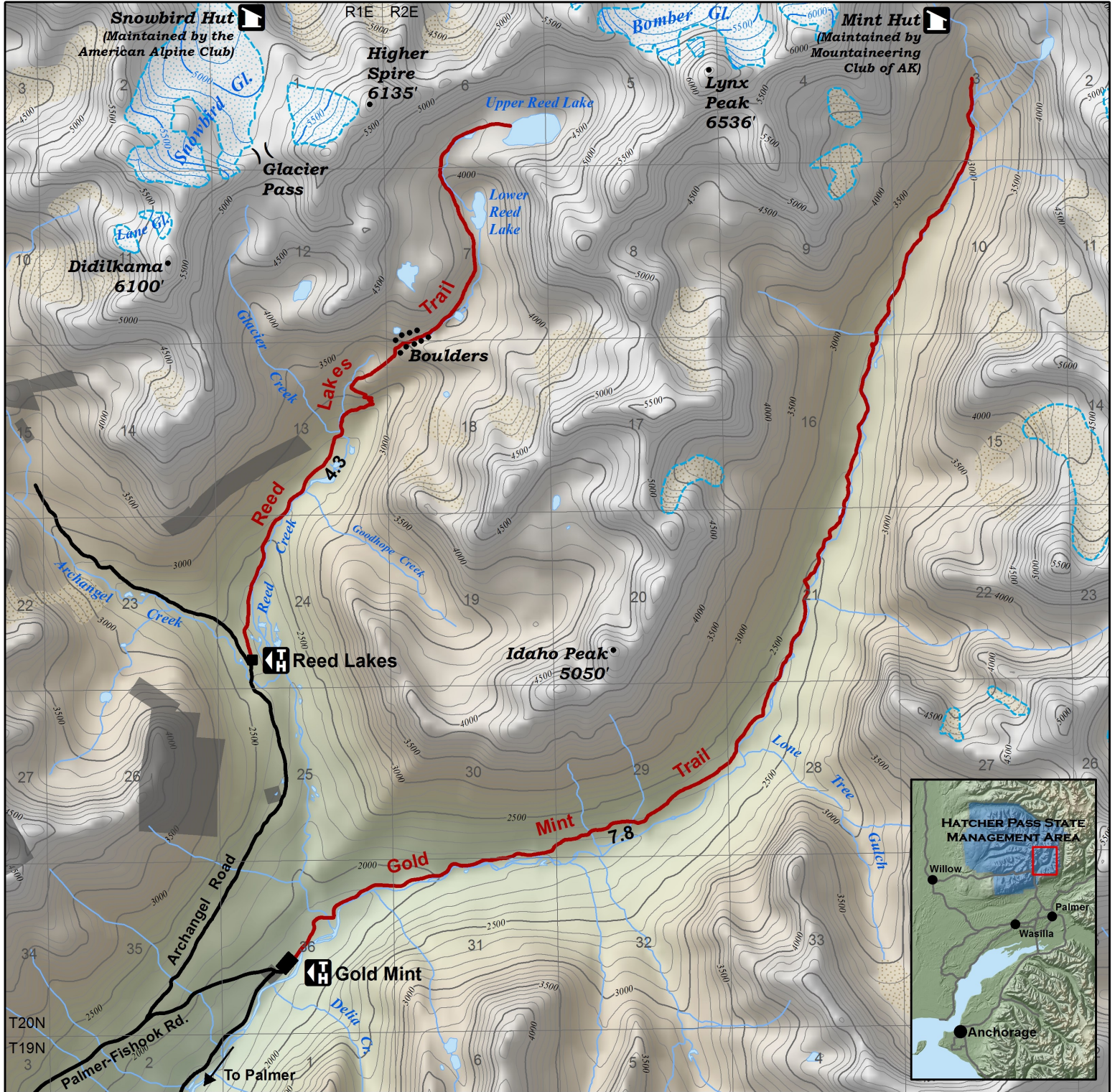
For more information about Hatcher Pass State Management Area, please call the Mat-Su Area Parks Office at (907) 745-3975, or visit the following web address:

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





Hatcher Pass State Management Area Reed Lakes Trail & Gold Mint Trail



Projected Coordinate System:
NAD 83, State Plane Alaska, Zone 4
Contour Interval: 100 Feet,
1:32,000

0 0.25 0.5 Miles
0 0.25 0.5 Kilometers

	Trailhead		Mountaineering Hut		Private Property
	Lake/River		Glacier		Moraine
	Trail/Mileage		Stream		Road
	Mountain Pass		Mountain Summit		Boulders

Produced by: Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation.
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This map represents differential GPS data collected during the Alaska State Parks Trail Inventory Project that was started in conjunction with National Park Service (NPS) Rivers and Trails Conservation Assistance (RTCA) program and Alaska Department of Natural Resources (ADNR) Information Resources Management (IRM). Trail Data was gathered with the assistance from Mat-Su Alaska State Parks staff.

Mat-Su Area Office: (907) 745-3975. Alaska State Parks: www.dnr.state.ak.us/parks. Emergency: 911.

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