

# Project Title: Anchorage - Alaska Long Trail - Girdwood Middle Iditarod National Historic Trail Improvements

**TPS Number:** 68768

**Priority:** 6

**Agency:** Commerce, Community and Economic Development  
Grants to Municipalities (AS 37.05.315)

**Grant Recipient:** Anchorage

**FY2025 State Funding Request:** \$179,745

One-Time Need

## Brief Project Description:

The project will improve 2.4 miles of trail to meet USFS Class 3 standards and create a vital connector from upper valley to lower valley trail systems.

## Funding Plan:

Total Project Cost:	\$199,715
Funding Already Secured:	(\$19,970)
FY2025 State Funding Request:	(\$179,745)
Project Deficit:	\$0

## Explanation of Other Funds:

Funding plan includes 10% match from the Girdwood Valley Service Area.

## Detailed Project Description and Justification:

This project will rehabilitate the Girdwood Middle Iditarod National Historic Trail, from the Girdwood K-8 School to the US Forest Service boundary 2.4 miles up Crow Creek Road. This is also a key segment of the Alaska Long Trail going through the Girdwood Valley.

The Girdwood Middle INHT trail winds through forest along the edge of Glacier Creek. After about a mile, the trail heads back uphill, crossing Crow Creek Road, where there is a small trailhead parking area, and continues at the foot of the mountains and adjacent but out of view of Crow Creek Road. There are several interesting spurs from the trail, including one that accesses Ragged Top Mtn and one that terminates at a small waterfall. Many enjoy walking the boardwalk through a meadow to the Northwest of the Crow Creek Road crossing. Throughout the trail, there are many small creeks and drainages that contribute to Glacier Creek.

The condition of the existing trail varies from Class 1 to Class 3, depending upon the drainage, bridging, and overall use. Close to the school, where the trail is heavily used, the overall condition is Class 3, farther out and between missing drainage crossings, the condition deteriorates dramatically to Class 1. Overall projects on the trail are to bring the condition throughout the segment to Class 3 standards, replacing slippery or deteriorating trail tread with turnpike and gravel, adding fish netting to boardwalks, fixing drainage and replacing creek and larger drainage crossings with new bridges.

Approximately 500' of trail that has been previously recommended to be moved from its current alignment to avoid conflict with future development. These conversations and recommendations occurred between the US Forest Service and the Heritage Land Bank. We intend to follow their guidance to create a sustainable trail alignment for future generations. We are committed to following best practices related to the existing trail tread and artifacts that may be discovered in the process of the trail project. The Girdwood Middle Iditarod NHT is included in the Girdwood Trails Management Plan. In accordance with those plans, the trail is to be improved past Class 3 standards, allowing for a playful route and natural surface and surroundings. It is our intent to maintain the current atmosphere and trail experience. The trail will be brushed, trail tread improved by adding material to raise the grade in low spots, trench and drain the trail, and add new wood crossings where needed.

The result will be rehabilitation of the Class 3 trail: clearing width of 36-60", finished trail 12-24" wide and sitting 3-12" above grade with

locally sourced gravel or native turf tread. Bridges will be wood, culverts will be plastic. This no-fee, multi-use, year-round trail will be used by all: walkers, bicyclists, hikers, joggers, skijorers, mountain bikers, dog walkers, and cross country skiers. The rehabilitated trail will connect trails of the lower valley to trails up-valley, providing access that is currently not easily available to miles of trail interconnectivity.

Girdwood continues to evolve into a popular year-round recreation destination for Alaskans, out-of-state visitors, international travelers, as well as local residents. All of these groups will benefit from this rehabilitated trail.

Partners in the project include Chugach National Forest, Municipality of Anchorage, Heritage Land Bank, Girdwood Trails Committee, Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm National Heritage Area, and many others.

The project carries strong local public support. It has been identified as a priority of the Girdwood Trails Committee and has received various Resolutions of Support from the Girdwood Board of Supervisors since 1995. This project and specifications have been discussed by the GTC and the Girdwood Board of Supervisors, and both bodies have approved this project.

**Project Timeline:**

Update permits, secure building/contractor for the project -- summer/fall 2024.  
Expenses will begin with purchase of materials, hiring of a trail crew, starting in summer/fall 2024.  
Completion of trail work -- summer 2025.

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

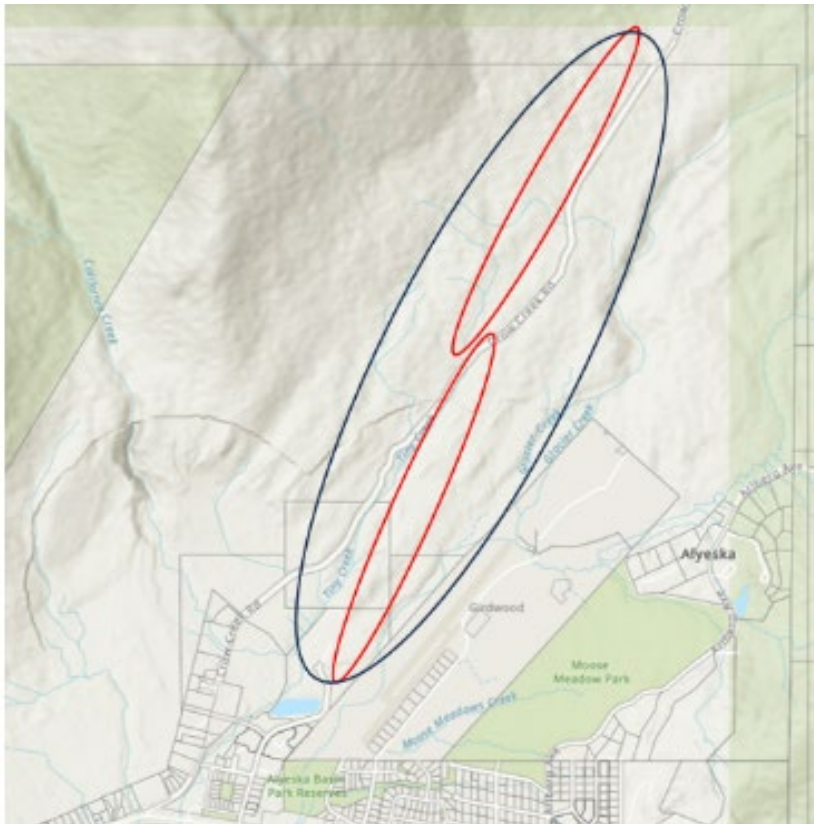
Girdwood Valley Service Area/MOA

**Grant Recipient Contact Information:**

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

# Girdwood Middle Iditarod National Historic Trail

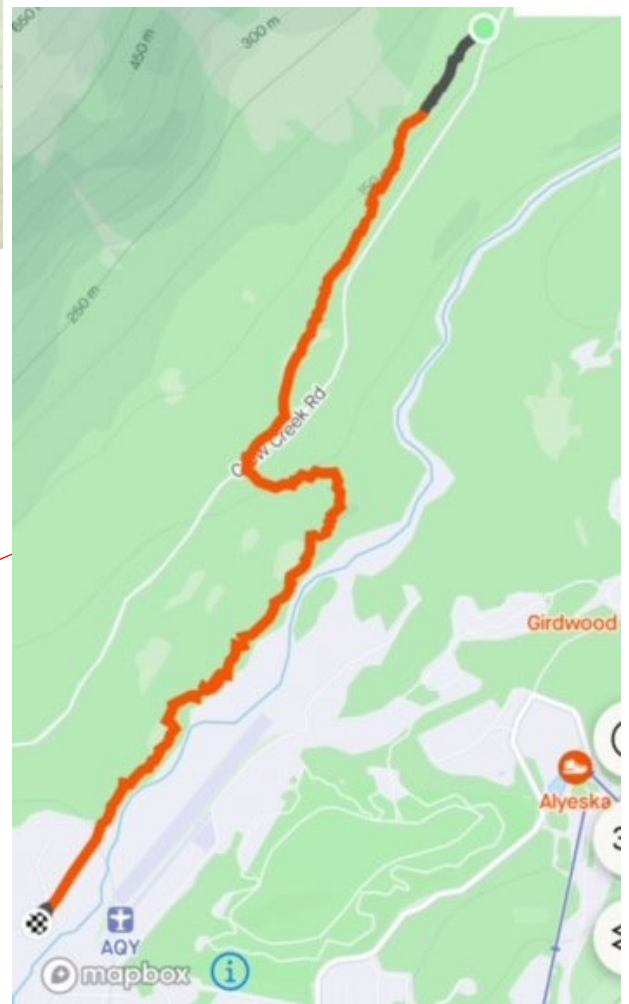


US Forest Service boundary

Heritage Land Bank (MOA) managed land

Middle Iditarod National Historic Trail Project Area

Current Middle INHT trail alignment





Girdwood Middle Iditarod National Historic Trail - Photos of Trail Issues

- Broken/unsteady bridges and boardwalk and slippery wood surfaces



- Muddy trail needing ditching, drainage and tread improvements



- Streams and drainages missing crossings.

