

THE ALASKA LONG TRAIL

A PATH FOR A STRONGER ALASKA ECONOMY

VISION: A world-class trail system connecting 500+ miles of Alaska's iconic terrain and diverse communities from the Pacific to the Interior, embracing the many ways Alaskans recreate outdoors and bolstering the Alaska economy by attracting visitors from all over the world.

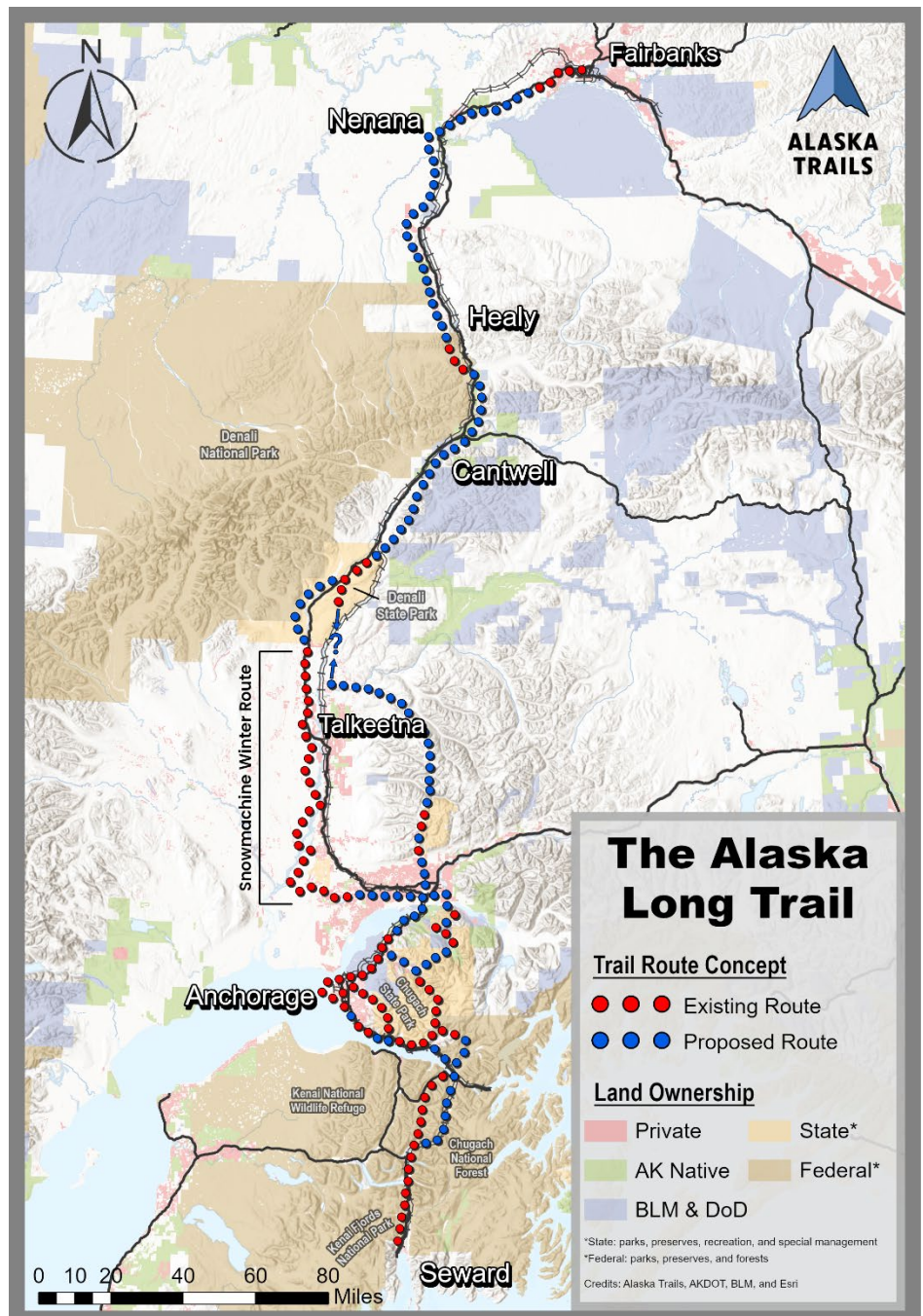
GOALS AND BENEFITS

With some of the world's most stunning wild places, Alaska is overdue in creating a world-class, long trail system of its own. Goals and outcomes of building the trail include:

- **Improve Access** – Expand year-round non-motorized, motorized, and multi-modal outdoor recreation access; increase the supply of outdoor recreation opportunities which has fallen behind demand.
- **Build a Stronger, More Durable Economy** – Long trails are potent, proven attractions that will increase the time and money travelers spend in Alaska, growing jobs for residents, spawning business opportunities, and invigorating the economies of trail towns and communities along the route and statewide.
- **Enhance Alaskans' Quality of Life** – Make Alaska an even more attractive place to live for current and prospective residents.
- **Encourage Healthy Lives** – Make it easier and more inviting to be active and healthy outside.
- **Celebrate Heritage** – Support, preserve, and celebrate Alaska's vibrant traditional cultures and ways of life.
- **Sustain what Makes Alaska Unique** – Be good stewards of outdoor recreation resources: our wild spaces and healthy ecosystems, lively communities, and access to abundant, diverse recreational experiences.

WHY FAIRBANKS TO SEWARD?

- **Momentum and Landowner Support:** largely on public land, a substantial portion (25%) already exists
- **Manageable Costs:** buildable terrain, good access
- **Community Connections:** more jobs, businesses, tax revenues
- **"Goldilocks Factor":** Wild, but not too wild; manageable logistics in this most populous area of Alaska for both residents and visitors
- **Multi-Season/Multi-modal:** options for summer and winter; options for river and train-based connections
- **Wow Factor:** mountains, glaciers, wildlife, honoring and celebrating the long, diverse history of these lands



USE & USERS The trail aims to support diverse trail users. Uses on specific trail segments will be determined by the realities of terrain and the management policies of individual landowners and agencies. Existing agency policies regarding motorized/non-motorized use for any given trail will not be changed. The ultimate goal is a network of routes accommodating a variety of uses, including some braids open to motorized use, and others for non-motorized hiking, biking and skiing. Some segments may include the option to travel on the Alaska Railroad or, like in Nenana Canyon, with a local rafting guide company.

WHO IS MAKING IT HAPPEN? [Alaska Trails](#), a statewide non-profit, is coordinating this ambitious project, working with the Long Trail Coalition (representative from each region along the route) and Regional Working Groups bringing in local trail users, landowners and communities. In addition to determining preferred routes and uses, these groups will explore the best long-term solutions for trail maintenance and management. Options will include a consortium of landowners and agencies along the trail system, perhaps with a dedicated non-profit comparable to the Appalachian Trail Coalition.

LEVERAGE & MATCHING FUNDS: Requested state capital dollars can be used to leverage additional, larger sums of federal LWCF, FLAP, and RTP funds.

PHASING AND NEXT STEPS The Appalachian Trail celebrates its 100-year anniversary in 2025, and that trail is still a work in progress. We are not that patient but know creating the trail will not happen overnight. The Long Trail Coalition is actively working to identify gaps that bring the most near-term value, make progress incrementally, and through that process build support and momentum. Success will require a mixture of funding from state and federal sources, often leveraged by local sources. And as has been the case with other long trails, support by individuals, businesses and non-profits will also be essential.

Now is the time for Alaska to invest in its future by creating a route to stand with the other great long trails of the world.

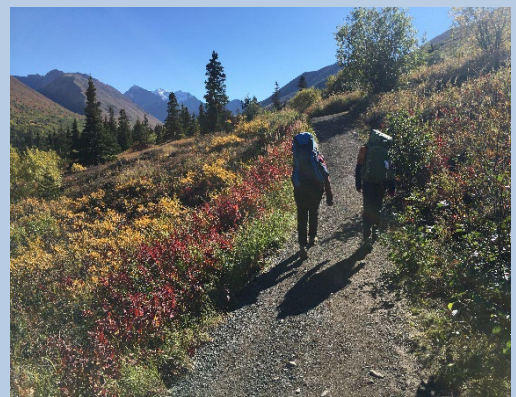


Visit Alaska Trails for more information
www.alaska-trails.org/the-alaska-long-trail

GLOBAL POPULARITY:

- **120,000 people** walked New Zealand's "Great Walks"; 50,000 more than a decade ago.
- Interest in Spain's 500-mile Camino de Santiago is steadily increasing, now exceeding **300,000 people** a year.
- Just **20,000 people** have walked the 2,184 miles of Appalachian Trail since 1936, but **3 million people** hike a portion of the trail annually.

(2017 data each of the above)



IN ALASKA:

- **\$137 Million** increase in annual spending if just half of typical year out-of-state visitors added "One More Day" to their AK trip.
- **Trail Users Stay Longer, Spend More** New Zealand's generous trail system is a big reason why NZ's average stay is 19 days vs. Alaska's average of 9 days.
- **Growing Demand for Hiking:** the fastest growing activity for both air and cruise out-of-state Alaska visitors 2011-2016.

