The AK Trails **Initiative: Who,** What, and You! From Good Ideas to **Action:** Strategies for **Building Better Trail** Systems in Alaska

Alaska **Trails** Initiative

Alaska Trails **Initiative Partners** 









## From Good Ideas to Action: Strategies for Building Better Trails in Alaska AGENDA

- Overview of Trails Initiative
- Overview of "Work in Progress" Trails Initiative Report
- Partner Panel
  - Alaska Business
  - Health, Community Connections
  - Confluence/Outdoor Recreation Lee Hart
- Panel and Audience Discussion
  - What Initiative strategies will get the most near term traction?
  - How best to expand the partnerships needed for broader political impact?
  - Strategies to get the work done: fundraising for a paid position to build on our momentum
- Wrap Up

- Dan McDonough Beth Nordlund
  - Lee Hart

## **Trails Initiative Origination Story**

## **Starting Point – two widely shared views:**

- Alaska has barely tapped our state's remarkable outdoor resources.
- Because of this chronic under-investment, we are missing our chance to build a stronger, more durable AK economy.

## From this came a resolve for action. Steps along the way

- Coalescence; initial seed funding from Alaska Venture Fund
- Initial gathering of partners, initial Trails Initiative goals and work plan
- Fundraising for a Fellow: partners raised \$20K
- 10 months of hard work, accretion of information, strategies, partners, advocacy presentations...
- April 18, 2019 Release of "work in progress" draft

## How to get there... Trails Initiative Overview

## **Products and Actions**

- The Pitch: economic impacts
- Practical Investments: trail inventory; select "Feature Projects"
- Advocacy: for funding and land management strategies
- A Growing Coalition: users & user groups "registry" - agencies, businesses, organizations

## When Will It Be Done?

- A continuing, open ended process
- Initial draft product April 2019







## What Kinds of Users? "Big Tent" – Non Denominational



## Who's Involved? A Growing Band of Partners

## **Today's Core Team**

- Steve Cleary Alaska Trails
- Erik Boraas Juneau Trail Mix
- Erin Kirkland author, industry rep
- Mix Pat Pourchot AK Long Trails
  - Wendy Sailors Alaska State Parks

• Lynne Brandon – Sitka Trail Works

- Wes Hoskins Mat Su Trails Foundation Stuart Leidner– Alaska State Parks
- Lee Hart Confluence/Valdez Adventure Alliance
- Jessica Szelag Kenai Mountains Turnagain Arm Nat'l Heritage Area
- Paul Clark NPS Rivers Trails Conservation Assistance
- Meredith Gutierrez; Beth Nordlund Alaska Park Foundation
- Chris Beck Alaska Trails/Agnew::Beck Consulting

Paid Assistance: Meg Pritchard – all star! Alaska Fellow/Trails Initiative Fellow

## Working with

- Federal, state, local gov'ts
- Major land owners
- Native Corporations, Tribes
- Tourism organizations
- Non-profit foundations

- Diverse outdoor recreation user groups
- Economic development organizations
- Health organizations
- And others... (you!)

## What's Needed? New Policies & Investments

## Trails, huts, cabins/comfort

- "Missing middle" accessible adventure
- Handful of long trails

**Marketing** More robust, more helpful descriptions of AK trail opportunities

Information Radical ideas like trail signs

## Land management

- "Curating" outdoor recreation resources
- Stewarding our attractions, maintaining what makes Alaska <u>Alaska</u>





## TRAIL INITIATIVE STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS ADVOCACY AND IMPLEMENTATION

- **1. Make the economic case** details in 10:30 session
- 2. "Feature Trails" & better information 1:00 session
- 3. More trails/outdoor recreation funding
- 4. Better land & resource management
  - "Curate" public land outdoor recreation opportunities
  - Integrated information and marketing strategies
  - Stronger state outdoor recreation leadership\*
  - Simplify process for reserving trails on State land\*
  - Promote "working landscapes"
  - Growth and stewardship: Keep Alaska Alaska

## 5. Build a stronger coalition

\*focus points for Confluence

## STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS FEATURE TRAILS ADVOCACY



P.O. BOX 100627, ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99510 (907) 334 - 8049 OFFICE@ALASKA-TRAILS.ORG

www.alaska-trails.org

John MacKinnon, Commissioner Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities P.O. Box 112500 3132 Channel Drive Juneau, AK 99811-2500

Dear Commissioner MacKinnon,

Alaska Trails is spearheading the *Alaska Statewide Trails I* land managers, non-profit organizations, businesses and i working to grow a stronger, more durable Alaskan econor to outdoor recreation and trails. Alaska has remarkable o resources, but we have underinvested in the infrastructur economic value from these unique assets. One example: if visitors who currently engage in outdoor recreation spent would generate at least \$63M in additional annual spendir Center for Economic Development.

I urge the Alaska Department of Transportation & Public F this effort as part of two road projects currently in progres The Alaska Statewide Trails Initiative has identified a hand statewide that would bring greatest economic benefits, wi build from established but incomplete trail systems. The A is one of these projects, where filling gaps to provide one c more out-of-state visitors and provide additional economi along the way.

One critical gap is the 3.7 miles between the terminus of the MP 106.7 and the terminus of the "Bird to Gird" paved mul The Windy Corner project (MP 105-107) and the Seward H

April 15th, 2019

Katie Sechrist Access Defense Program Alaska Department of Fish and Game Division of Wildlife Conservation 333 Raspberry Road Anchorage, AK 99518

Dear Ms. Sechrist,

I am writing today to encourage support for the application by Chugach State Park for funding to improve the Crow Pass trail. This trail provides access to extraordinary terrain just a short distance from Alaska's most prominent visitor destinations and largest population centers. Proposed improvements are needed so this strategically located trail can support more use by Alaska hunters, hikers and other users, and bring more benefits to the Alaska economy.



View east from Crow Pass

I am writing on behalf of the *Alaska Statewide Trails Initiative*, a coalition of land managers, non-profit organizations, businesses and individual Alaskans working to grow a stronger, more durable Alaskan economy through improving trails and expanding outdoor recreation. The *Trails Initiative* has identified a handful of projects statewide that would bring greatest

## **STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS** *Working Landscapes: Bend OR* Mountain Bike Trails/Active USFS Timber Harvest Area



## **STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS** *DESTINATION TOWNS*

Places like Whitehorse Yukon and Sitka, Alaska are consciously building robust year-round economies, driven by a simple formula:



3. Strong O.R. marketing promoting active recreation destinations & experiences 1. A concentrated, walkable center with lodging, food, bars, rentals, other services





2. Investments in OR infrastructure: trails, walkways and transit that link the core to surrounding recreation places



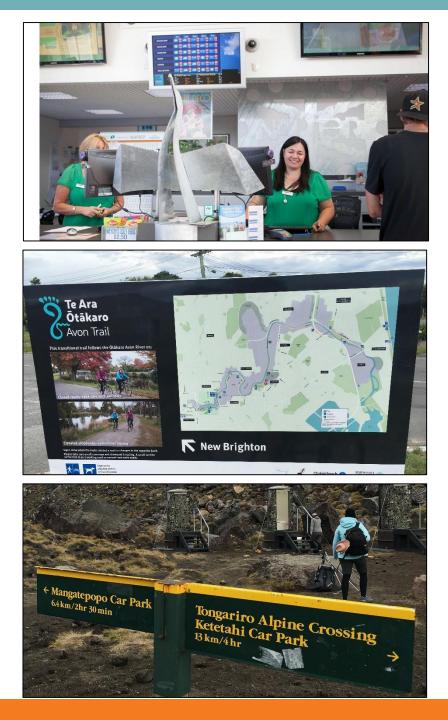
4. Great outdoor recreation events, that draw in new users, drive spending



## **STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS** *INTEGRATED INFORMATION* & MARKETING STRATEGIES

Tongarario Alpine Crossing, North Island New Zealand

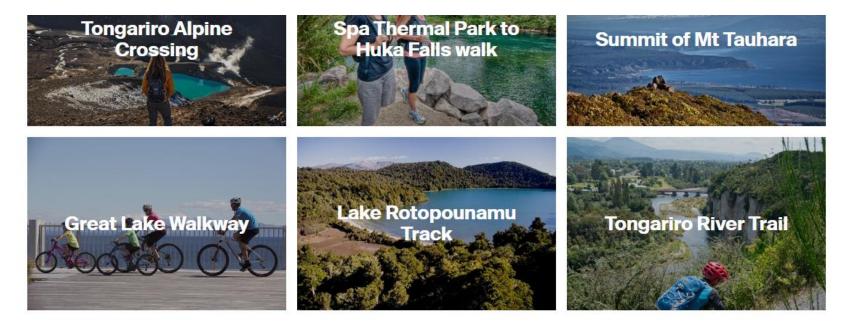
- Online marketing "experience focused"
- 2. Superior online trail information
- 3. I-Site staff
  - Know trails
  - Linked to shuttles
- 4. Hardcopy & on-trail guides, maps
- 5. Smart trail signage



## Love nature Love Taupō

## Walking & hiking

Nothing brings you closer to Taupo's unforgettable wilderness than walking through it.



Walking and hiking tours and guides

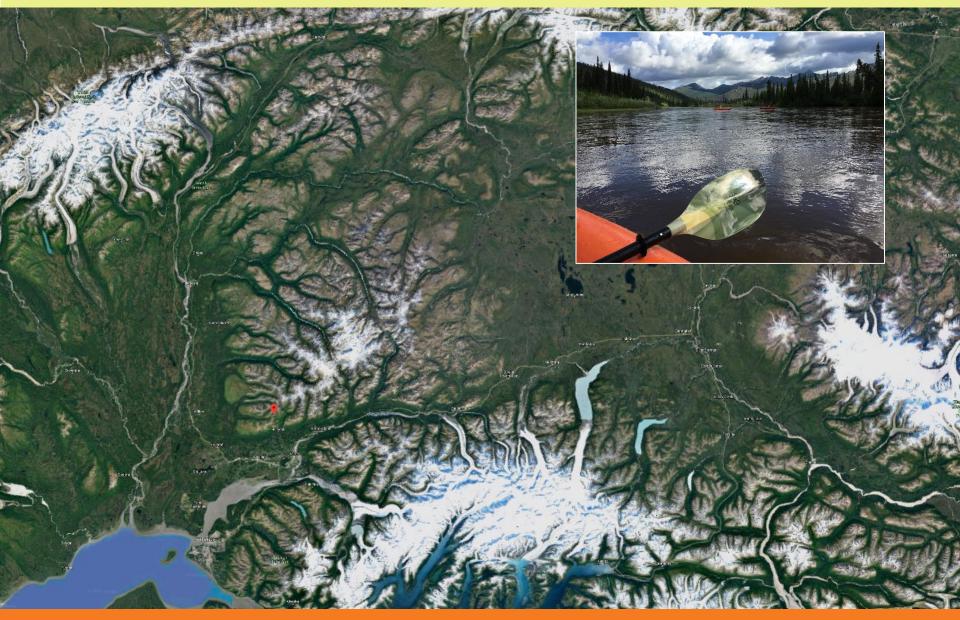


## **Curate our Outdoor Resources/Keep Alaska Alaska** Quality High Volume Destinations



Orakei Korako Geothermal Park & Cave

## **Curate our Outdoor Resources/Keep Alaska Alaska** Wild Places – Share a few, don't market the rest



## SUMMARY REPORT

WORK-IN-PROGRESS: INITIAL FINDINGS



Prepared by Alaska Trails Initiative April 2019

WWW.ALASKA-TRAILS.ORG/ALASKA-TRAILS-INITIATIVE.HTML

# The Report

- A first stab at addressing these conversations around trails
- A large, collaborative group effort from dozens of partners across the state
- Still very much a work-in-progress
- Seeking new partners, new ideas, new voices, and new trails

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# Some Caveats

- Still reaching out across the state
- Need more representation from nonurban areas
- Need more representation in motorized and hunting groups
- Trying to find a balance between development and sustainability that can cross party lines

# Six Major Parts

- 1. Policies
- 2. Economics
- 3. Featured Trails
- 4. Potential Stakeholders
- 5. Projects Summary
- 6. Trails Inventory

# Six Major Parts

- 1. Policies Covered by Chris
- 2. Economics Covered in 10:30 session
- 3. Featured Trails Covered in 1:00 session
- 4. Potential Stakeholders
- 5. Projects Summary
- 6. Trails Inventory

# Economic Value of Trails

[10:30 Session]

## TRENDS IN OUTDOOR RECREATION AND MARKETS

Outdoor recreation is a more complex economic category than it might initially appear. Covering a wide range of direct, indirect, and induced jobs and touching upon industries as diverse as manufacturing, marketing, retail, travel, and healthcare, outdoor recreation has enormous growth potential in the national and local economy.

This chapter includes the following sections:

The Outdoor Recreation Industry - What Is Outdoor Recreation?

Outdoor Recreation Spectrum of Benefits -From Direct Spending to Workforce Retention

Economic Benefits Today - A Quick Look at National Data

Economic Benefits Today - Alaska

**Potential for Expanded Benefits** 

These portions cover the broad potential of outdoor recreation, economic components, the current state of outdoor recreation's contributions to the national economy, and a brief summary of the state of Alaska built from extrapolation from smaller studies. Finally, a section on potential identifies areas where growth could have the highest impact.

Source: BLM. Vanessa Rathbun



## IN SUMMARY

Outdoor recreation is the "sleeping giant" of the American economy, providing 2.2% of the total US GDP, about

412 BILLION

The economic impacts of outdoor recreation in Alaska are \$3.2 billion in annual participant spending and

38,100 JOBS

One More Day: if half of current AK out-of-state visitors spent one more day in Alaska it would generate

> 137 MILLION <sup>[3]</sup> in additional annual spending

ALASKA TRAILS INITIATVE

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New Zealand offers an abundance of world class day hikes. Most renowned is the Tongariro Alpine Crossing, a 20K trail with trail signs, restrooms, and convenient shuttle service. The route is followed by as many as 1,000 people a day, leaving other routes quiet and peaceful

New Zealand is the global laboratory and success story demonstrating how trails and related outdoor recreation investments can attract visitors, please residents, and generate dramatic economic benefits. The two destinations are not explicitly similar, but both New Zealand and Alaska are long-haul destinations with outdoor environments as the primary attractions. While not all growth in New Zealand travel is tied to trails, experiences in that country provide valuable learning opportunities for Alaska.

A much longer report would be needed to unpack all of the factors behind New Zealand's growth and examine their applicability to Alaska's future plan for sustainable development. As a start it is important to note there are significant differences in the two destinations.

In the last 20 years, international travel to New Zealand has grown from just over 5 billion to over 14 billion annual visits. Figures below for the year ended March 2018 [9] and are represented in New Zealand dollars, which are equal to approximately \$0.67 USD. International tourism expenditure increased
9.6% to a total of \$16.2 billion and contributed
20.6% of New Zealand's total export of goods
and services

- Domestic tourism expenditure increased 6.5% to \$23.0 billion

- Tourism generated a direct contribution to GDP of \$15.9 billion, or 6.1% of the total

- Backpackers account for over 159,000 visitors to New Zealand each year, with an average stay of 31 days compared to the average of 19 days for non-backpackers. Their average spending is over \$3,700, a full \$900 more than the average for other visitors.

- Between 2016-2017, New Zealand saw total visitor arrivals increase by 10%, significantly faster than global tourism trends which fell at 3.9% in 2016 and 6% in the first half of 2017 (UNWTO World Tourism Barometer)

[9] New Zealand Tourism, Tourism in New Zealand on the Up and Up, https://www.tourismnewzealand.com/news/tourism-in-newzealand-on-the-up-and-up/

# **Featured Trails**

[1:00 Session]



Crow Pass Trail. Source. Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance, Jacob Torres

## FEATURED TRAILS

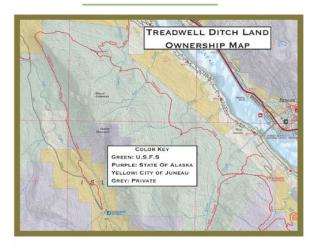
These featured trail projects represent the diversity of the Alaska Trails Initative's coalition base. Ranging geographically from metropolitan hubs to rural communities and in user type from daytrippers to backcountry hikers to subsistence hunters to motorized users, these trails showcase just a sampling of the potential available in Alaska's trails.

To qualify as a featured trail, the project had to have a clear champion, public support, and a detailed plan that was close to if not completely shovel-ready. Once a trail was identified in a geographic region, the trail sponsor would provide detailed information about the trail, the investments, and the community support and benefit that project would provide. Maps and photos were also requested. The information was then consolidated by the Alaska Trails Fellow into two-page handouts that would provide the sponsor with a graphic and compelling narrative to help promote the trail.

Those two-page handouts were adapted for this report.

## FEATURED TRAIL PROJECT TREADWELL **DITCH TRAIL**

VISION: Improve one of the most-loved trails in Juneau by installing and replacing bridges and culverts and hardening muddy areas



### **Project Summary**

The Treadwell Ditch Trail was built in the late part of the 19th century as an aqueduct to carry water 16 miles at a 1% grade along Douglas Island to the Treadwell Mining District, which at the time was the largest gold mine in the world. Many of the dams, caretaker cabins, and other historic structures are still in evidence along the trail. The actual path is the maintenance trail built alongside the ditch. It is for the most part in excellent shape despite indifferent maintenance over the last century. However there are washouts, missing bridges, and failing culverts that render portions of the trail nearly impassible.

### **Project Benefits**

The Treadwell Ditch Trail is one of the most-loved trails in Juneau. In 2018 there were more than 2.000 volunteer hours logged on the trail. The local distillerv hosted a celebration of the Treadwell Ditch Trail in the fall of 2018. By completing the missing connections along the Treadwell Ditch Trail, the trail would enjoy even more use than it currently does. The trail would provide a long, low-angled trail in a community where such trails are rare. This would provide additional accessibility for the community.



MAKES THIS TRAIL EASILY

PROJECT PARTNERS

Businesses





### **TREADWELL DITCH TRAIL**



Current Investments

of Juneau.

Program (RTP) funds.

Plans since 1976.

new access trails.

Needed Investments

For More Information

Currently, there is \$110,000 from the Federal Land Access

Program invested in the project. There is also \$880,000 from Pittman-Robertson Funds and \$24,000 from the City and Borough

In the last ten years, the project has received \$250,000 from Secure Rural Schools, \$250,000 from the City and Borough of

Juneau, and \$90,000 from the State of Alaska Recreational Trails

The project is shovel-ready. NEPA and engineering are completed

The trail has tremendous public support. With many access points and a negligible grade, the Treadwell Ditch is popular with a wide range of users. Through the year you can see runners, mountain

bikers, cross-country skilers, snowmobilers (on portions open to motorized use) and people pushing strollers. There has already

The trail has also been listed as a top priority on all Juneau Trail

This project needs additional money for tread repair and to create

To learn more about this project, contact Erik Boraas of Trail Mix,

been a substantial amount of work on the trail.

Inc. at erik@trailmixinc.org or 907-790-6406

for most of the trail. The rest should be completed by 2021.

### **ONLY WITH YOUR HELP!**

The Initiative's vision will only become reality through an expanding, diverse, and dedicated group of partners. Join us to help invest in our trails for this and future generations.



BOTH MOTORIZED AND NON-MOTORIZED USERS SERVED BY THESE PROJECTS



OF POTENTIAL NEW GROOMED TRAIL IN VALDEZ CREEK ROAD

GEOGRAPHIC NAMED Denali Highway is one of the TOP 10 MOST SCENIC DRIVES IN THE WORLD



### PROJECT PARTNERS

Land Managers

Denali Borough, Mat-Su Borough, State of Alaska

Businesses Denali Snowcat, Maclaren River Lodge, Backwoods Lodge, Clearwater Mountain Lodge, Alpine Creek Lodge

## DENALI HWY & CANTWELL WINTER

VISION: An expansion of winter recreation options in the popular Denali Highway/Cantwell area would provide new options for multi-use and non-motorized local and visiting users



### **Project Summary**

The Denali Highway/Cantwell area is already a popular winter recreation destination. This spectacular region stretches out along the southern edge of the Alaska Range, at the meeting place of the Denali and Matanuska-Susitna Boroughs. Zack Russell with Denali Snowcat is grooming the west half of the Denali Highway with funding from the State of Alaska Snow Trac funds. Alan Echols with Maclaren River Lodge is grooming the east half of the Denali Highway, meeting in the middle. He also grooms a 30-mile loop and a 10-mile loop off the highway. The result is a wintertime route through striking wilderness terrain, open to snowmachiners, dog mushers, skiers, fat tire bikers, and other outdoor enthusiasts. In addition to great snowpack and impressive scenery, there are lodges along the route such as Backwoods Lodge, Clearwater Mountain Lodge, Alpine Creek Lodge, and McLaren River Lodge.

A list of potential project ideas follows on the next page. These projects would embrace motorized and non-motorized users and encourage both locals and visitors to recreate more frequently in the area. By taking advantage of the already-great resources in the area, these projects could make the area the go-to winter destination for outdoor recreation, bringing jobs to the area while enhancing local and visitor recreation experiences.

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### DENALI HWY & CANTWELL WINTER



### **Current Options**

Current options to sustain and expand the existing winter recreation opportunities in the Denali Highway/Cantwell area:

- Continuing the funding that supports the grooming of the Denali Highway. The Snow Trac funding that pays for this grooming is proposed to be eliminated in the Governor's budget - Expanding the number of areas that are groomed - the Valdez Creek Road would be ideal track to send a Snowcat groomer along. This road, which leaves the Denali Highway at MP 79.0, leads to the abandoned mining camp of Denali. Originally developed in 1903, the area was worked extensively until 1995. There are still current mining operations that are active in the summer months. The existing road runs approximately 17 miles to Roosevelt Lake and would open up an attractive new option for a range of users looking to play in the Clearwater Mountains.

- Coordinating with the community of Cantwell to establish it as a gateway for a range of winter recreation activities.

- Developing an integrated trails information and marketing plan, working with land owners, residents, community organizers, local businesses, and boroughs. Aiming to integrate marketing and trail information to better describe the area. Resources would include online information about winter experiences, hardcopy "collateral material" like maps and advice for safe travel, trail signage at the entrances to the Denali Highway winter recreation area, and connections to local businesses or public information places.

### For More Information

To learn more about this project, contact Mayor Clay Walker of the Denali Borough at cwalker@denaliborough.com or Zack Russell of Zack's Towing/Denali Snowcat Services at zackrussel@denalilsnowcat.com

### HOW WILL WE DO IT? ONLY WITH YOUR HELP!

The Initiative's vision will only become reality through an expanding, diverse, and dedicated group of partners. Join us to help invest in our trails for this and future generations.









Continuing Snow Trac funding and expanding groomed areas

Coordinating public support from Cantwell community

Integrated marketing/information plan



### FEATURED TRAIL PROJECT

## LUCKY CHANCE MINE

VISION: A new loop trail would connect two existing historic trails and the Sitka road system in a spectacularly scenic route



### Project Summary

This project is a critical link in the Sitka Trail System. It connects the Sitka road system (Municipal lands) with the old corduroy road system created by Alaska's first gold miners at the Lucky Chance mine (National Forest Lands). This project would create a loop trail from two existing historic trails: the Lucky Chance Mine and the Salmon Lake trails. Hikers would be able to see historic remnants first-hand as they follow the same route used by miners who hauled ore from the first major hard rock mine in Alaska. The Lucky Chance claims were the first major hard-rock mines developed in the state. The scenery along the route is spectacular, with superb old-growth forests, alpine lakes, muskegs and narrow gorges with waterfalls. The trip would be a two or three-day hike with stops at proposed alpine camping hut or existing Forest Service Cabin.

### **Project Benefits**

This trail will provide a number of public benefits. Recent planning shows demonstrated strong support for trails and trails with historical content. An additional advantage is that this trail would be accessible to the Green Lake road. One Forest Service cabin would become accessible to the road system. It would serve as a year-round trail. Development of this trail will create family wage jobs building the trails, provide new small business opportunities, and create new recreation infrastructure. The 2006 McDowell Group tourism study found that 25% of visitors surveyed at the Sitka Airport enjoyed area trails during their visit.





WHEN VISITING SITKA

### PROJECT PARTNERS

Land Manager

USFS - Tongass National Fores City and Borough of Sitka, Federal Energy Regulatory Commision

> Non-Profit Partners Sitka Trail Works

### LUCKY CHANCE MINE









11 miles of new trail construction, 3 miles old trail construction, 3 proposed huts one large bridge over Green Lake Outfall

Projected cost \$4.476 N



### **Current Investments**

Sitka Trail Works has pursued various funding opportunities, including state legislative and federal funding efforts. It is a project goal of the Sitka Trail Plan and the 2011 Sitka Sustainable Outdoor Recreation plan. The 3 miles of Salmon Lake trail is a maintained section and portions of the Lucky Chance Mine trail exist as a result of informal use. Traces of the 1872 mine still exist including shafts, glory hole, the stamp mill, and aerial tram. Most of the hikers start from the other end of the trail, from the beach across from the Green Lake dam powerhouse. Since the trail isn't formalized it only gets sporadic use by adventurous hikers when the weather is good.

### **Needed Investments**

The project is still in the planning phase. The trail receives informal use since sections are existing as a part of the old mining effort, making the probable route easily identifiable. The US Forest Service and City and Borough of Sitka, Sitka Trail Works, and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission would be involved.

The project is spearheaded by the 501(c)(3) non-profit organization Sitka Trail Works. Development of the Trail System is being guided by the 2003 Sitka Trail Plan. Trail projects that are developed on lands belonging to a single land owner are straightforward in how they are developed and funded. When the proposed trail system involves multiple land owners, as in the case of the Lucky Chance Mine Historic Trail, project development becomes very complex. Multiple sources of funding are required, and a high degree of partnership coordination is needed. Eleven miles need to be constructed to an unpaved hiking trail standard. At least three large bridges will be needed, one major stream crossing at the Green Lake river outfall. Two huts are proposed for the trail loop. Investments in a conceptual design and cost estimate will be needed. Bridge locations, design and cost mentions needed.

### For More Information

To learn more about this project, contact Lynne Brandon of Sitka Trail Works at trail@sitkatrailworks.org or 907-747-7244.

### HOW WILL WE DO IT?

### **ONLY WITH YOUR HELP!**

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# Potential Stakeholders

### LAND MANAGERS

Ahtna, Inc.

Alaska Department of Fish & Game Alaska Department of Transportation Alaska Mental Health Land Trust The Aleut Corporation Arctic Slope Regional Corporation Bering Straits Native Corporation Bristol Bay Native Corporation Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Anchorage District Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Anchorage Field Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Arctic District Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Barrow Field Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Central Yukon Field Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Eastern Interior Field Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Fairbanks District Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Glenallen Field Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Nome Field Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Recreation Division Calista Corporation Chugach Alaska Corporation Chugach State Park Cook Inlet Region, Inc. Department of Natural Resources, Division of Parks and Recreation Doyon Limited Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Konaig Incorporated NANA Regional Corporation National Parks Service Ounalashka Corporation Sealaska Corporation State Parks - Chugach State Parks - Kenai Peninsula / Prince William Sound State Parks - Kodiak State Parks - Mat-Su / Copper Basin State Parks - Northern State Parks - Southeast University of Alaska

US Fish and Wildlife Service US Forest Service Region 10 USFS Chugach National Forest USFS Tongass National Forest

### NON-PROFITS

Alaska Chapter National Recreation and Parks Association Alaska Dog Mushers Association Alaska Huts Alaska Long Trails Alaska Outdoor Access Alliance Alaska Outdoor Council Alaska Skijoring and Pulk Association Alaska Trails Anchorage Park Foundation **Bethel Trails Committee Big Lake Trails** Bike Anchorage Chugach Park Fund Delta Junction Trails Association Friends of Eagle River Nature Center Friends of Kachemak Bay State Park Friends of Kodiak State Parks Friends of State Parks, Mat-Su Girdwood Trails Committee Great Land Trust Interior Alaska Land Trust Island Trails Network Kachemak Heritage Land Trust Kenai Mountains/Turnagain Arm National Heritage Area Levitation 49/Confluence Mat-Su Health Foundation Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation Rasmuson Foundation Singletrack Advocates Sitka Trail Works Trail Mix, Inc. Tsalteshi Trails Association Willow Trails Committee

### CLUBS

Alaska ATV Club Alaska Extreme Fourwheelers Alaska Mountain Runners Anchorage Skijor Club Anchorage Snowmobile Club Aurora Dog Mushers Caribou Cabin Hoppers Snowmachine Club Chugach Mountain Bike Riders Curry Ridge Riders Denali Nordic Ski Club Fairbanks Area Hiking Club Fairbanks Snow Traveler Girdwood Mountain Bike Alliance Girdwood Nordic Ski Club Homer Cycling Club Kachemak Nordic Ski Club Mat-Su Sled Dog Council Mat-Su Valley ATV Club Nordic Skiing Association of Anchorage Snomads Snowmachine Club Valdez Nordic Ski Club Valdez Snowmachine Club Valley Mountain Bikers and Hikers Willow Dog Mushers

### OUTDOOR RECREATION BUSINESSES

Above and Beyond Alaska Agnew: Beck Consulting Alaska Alpine Adventures Alaska Nature Guides Alaska Wild Guides Alaska Wildlife Guide Alaska Wildland Adventures Alaska ATV Adventures Alaska Mountaineering and Hiking (AMH) Alaska Tours Alaska Wilderness 4-Wheeler Tours Alyeska Resort Denali Mountain Works Downtown Bicycle Renta Exit Glacier Guides Flattop Mountain Shuttle Hoarding Marmot MICA Guides Nugget Alaskan Outfitter REI Anchorage **REI** Fairbanks Rod's Alaskan Guide Service Sasquatch Alaska Adventure Co. Seaman's Eco Tour Adventures St. Elias Alpine Guides Talkeetna ATV Tours

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Anchorage Parks & Rec City of Berkh – Parks and Facilities Denail Borough Fairbanks North Star Borough Fairbanks Parks and Recreation Juneau Parks and Recreation Kenail Borough - North Peninsula Recreation Mai-Sta Borough Northwest Arctic Borough

### ALASKA TRAILS INITIATIVE

Alaska's lands are managed by a wide variety of organizations and agencies. The State of Alaska owns about 12% of the state's land, while the federal government owns about 59% and 1% is privately owned. Alaska Native Corporations also own a significant portion of land-- up to about 28%. This diversity of land managers and agents can lead to complicated interactions between organizations at dividing lines between ownership.

The non-profits listed here are specifically trail- or outdoor recreation-focused. These groups range from Friends groups to trail advocacy organizations to outdoor and park groups. All of the organizations have an interest in trails and most have a strong interest in advocacy and community action.

Clubs are similar to non-profits, and many could fit in both categories. For this purpose, clubs are primarily recreation-focused and may or may not engage in trail advocacy. These clubs include motorized and non-motorized trail use, and may include organizations that use trails for recreational hunting. This category also represents groups of community members who use trails recreationally.

The business category is less clear. Generally speaking, these businesses were chosen for this list if their success or profits depended on the use of trails. This list thus includes gear stores which may outfit locals or visitors, companies which provide guide services or tours, and lodges or resorts which actively promote and provide access to trails as a main attraction.

Local governments often include Parks & Recreation departments and local boroughs which may own some land and manage city parks and trails. These governments may not entirely focus on trails, but trail use, development, and management are all a part of their operations and a vital contributor to local public health and vitality.



c Eugecumbe mail, sitka, source: baiwn s

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### LEGISLATIVE

Office of Governor Mike Dunleavy

Office of Representative Adam Wool Office of Representative Andrea Story Office of Representative Andy Josephson Office of Representative Barton Lebon Office of Representative Benjamin Carpenter Office of Representative Bryce Edgmon Office of Representative Cathy Tilton Office of Representative Charles Kopp Office of Representative Chris Tuck Office of Representative Colleen Sullivan-Leonard Office of Representative Daniel Ortiz Office of Representative David Eastman Office of Representative David Talerico Office of Representative DeLena Johnson Office of Representative Gabrielle LeDeaux Office of Representative Gary Knopp Office of Representative George Rauscher Office of Representative Geran Tarr Office of Representative Grier Hopkins Office of Representative Harriet Drummond

Office of Representative Ivy Spohnholz Office of Representative Jennifer Johnston Office of Representative John Lincoln Office of Representative Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins Office of Representative Josh Revak Office of Representative Kelly Merrick Office of Representative Laddie Shaw Office of Representative Lance Pruitt Office of Representative Louise Stutes Office of Representative Mark Neuman Office of Representative Matt Claman Office of Representative Nancy Dahlstrom Office of Representative Neal Foster Office of Representative Sara Hannan Office of Representative Sara Rasmussen Office of Representative Sarah Vance Office of Representative Steve Thompson Office of Representative Tammie Wilson Office of Representative Tiffany Zulkosky Office of Representative William Fields Office of Senator Bert Stedman Office of Senator Bill Wielechowski

Office of Senator Cathy Giessel Office of Senator Chris Birch Office of Senator Click Bishop Office of Senator David Wilson Office of Senator Donny Olsen Office of Senator Elvi Gray-Jackson Office of Senator Gary Stevens Office of Senator Jesse Kiehl Office of Senator John Coghill Office of Senator Laura Reinbold Office of Senator Lyman Hoffman Office of Senator Mia Costello Office of Senator Mike Shower Office of Senator Natasha Von Imhof Office of Senator Pete Kelly Office of Senator Peter Micciche Office of Senator Shelly Hughes Office of Senator Tom Begich Office of US Representative Don Young Office of US Senator Dan Sullivan Office of US Senator Lisa Murkowski

Legislators are perhaps the most indirect of entities on this list, and yet they are the most essential for longterm, large-scale efforts to support trails across the state. With legislative backers, the power of pro-trail organizations and community members across the state can be turned into law and policy that permanently supports trail maintenance, development, and stewardship.



Alaska RTCA at Diamond Creek. Source: NPS

ALASKA TRAILS INITIATIVE

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# **Projects Summary**

## PART VI PROJECTS SUMMARY

If the trails inventory is the big-picture, widereaching attempt to understand the state of trails across Alaska today, the projects summary is a closer look at trail development in the state today.

This list of projects, organized loosely by area and region, is an overview of a few choice projects from mostly metropolitan areas.



Anchorage Projects

LOCATION	LAND OWNER	TRAIL	CONDITION	NEEDED INVESTMENTS							
SOUTHCENTRAL - Anchorage											
Anchorage/Chugach State Park	AK State Parks	Arctic to Indian	Partial existing summer trail	Upgrade winter route, realign							
Anchorage/Chugach State Park	AK State Parks	Crow Pass	Existing trail, signage	Maintenance, bridge crossing							
Anchorage/Chugach State Park	Private, MOA, USFS	Community Trails	Varies	Committee working now							
Anchorage/Chugach State Park	AK State Parks	Turnagain Arm Trail	Missing segment	Fill gap where trail ends							
Anchorage/Chugach State Park	Private, MOA, State Parks	Connections from town to Chugach	Varies	Highlight connections, build trail							
Anchorage Bowl	Military, State Parks	Ship Creek extension	Existing paved trail to Mtn View	Option to continue to Seward Hwy							
Anchorage Bowl	orage Bowl Mixed		Varies	Work with APF							
Anchorage Bowl	nchorage Bowl Mixed		Varies	State Parks access plan has details							
Anchorage Bowl	Private, ADF&G	South Coastal Trail	Continuation of existing trail	Link existing trail with Turnagain Arm							
Anchorage/Chugach State Park	AK State Parks		Existing trails and signage	Sustainable rerouting, education							
ALASKA TRAILS	INITIATIVE			PAGE 32							

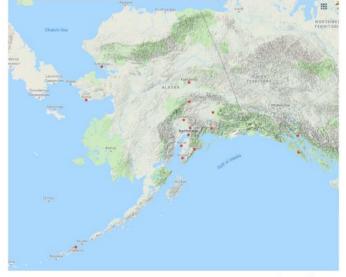
LOCATION LAND OWNER		TRAIL CONDITION		NEEDED INVESTMENTS	
SOUTHCENTRAL	Mat-Su Borough				
Denali State Park	Mat-Su Trails & Parks Foundation, AK State Parks	Curry Ridge Trail	Slated for Pittman Robertson funding		
Denali State Park	AK State Parks	Backcountry Trails	Trail blowouts, several problem areas	Funding needed	
Denali State Park Independence	AK State Parks	Public Use Cabins	Increasing PUCs	3 new PUCs at Kesugi Ken, 3 new PUCs Kesugi Ridg and Curry Ridge	
Mine State Historical Park/East HP Management Area	AK State Parks	Reeds Lake Trailhead	Needs design & construction docs	Relocate TH befor bridge, larger lot. Needs funding	
Nancy Lake State Recreation Areas	AK State Parks	Public Use Cabins	Replace aging PUCs	Replace 5 PUCs, need funding	
Nancy Lake State Recreation Areas	AK State Parks	Canoe Loop Water Trail	Need to remove old bridges and reroute portions	Multi-year, \$300K project funding needed	
SOUTHCENTRAL	- Kenai Peninsula Bo	orough			
Spencer Glacier	USFS	Hut	Portions of trail built, one USFS cabin	Project in process USFS and Huts	
SOUTHEAST - Sit	ka				
Sitka	itka Tongass National Forest		Partial existing through informal use	Critical link, would create loop	
Sitka	CBS	Cross Trail Connector (Jarvis St)	Existing 5 miles, another 2.6 shovel ready	2.6 miles to be completed 2019-20	
Sitka	Tongass National Forest	Gavan Harbor Mtn Trail reroute	Design narrative complete, NEPA in 2019	Needs funding, important part of Recreation area	

ALASKA TRAILS INITIATIVE

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LOCATION	LAND OWNER	TRAIL	CONDITION	NEEDED INVESTMENTS							
SOUTHEAST - Juneau											
Juneau Forest, City & Borough of Juneau, DNR		Treadwell Ditch Trail		Varies							
INTERIOR - Denali Borough											
Healy/Denali NP Parks Hwy	Mixed Mixed	Bison Trail Parks Hwy Bike Trail	Some trail, lot on wrong side Varies	New parking lot, trail development Develop bike trail							

# Statewide Trails Inventory



Areas currently represented in the trail inventory

Trail inventories exist in many agencies around Alaska. The novelty of this attempt is in bringing together many of the resources of different groups to create a single unified list. This inventory includes submissions from the USFS Tongass National Forest and Chugach National Forest branches, Alaska State Parks, University of Alaska, Municipality of Anchorage, Alaska Parks, Alaska Parks, Bare Parks & Rec, Mat-Su Borough, Kachemak Nordic Ski Club, Sheep Mountain Lodge, Tsalteshi Trails, Sitka Trail Works, Bureau of Land Management, NPS, Kenai Peninsula Borough, Bering Straits Native Corporation, AKDF&G, Northwest Arctic Borough, and Ounalashka Corporation.

As a resource for the future, this list provides a centralized database from which to launch outreach efforts, as well as providing a massive resource of agency-led, reputable trail information for Alaska. Additionally, analysis of this database can provide valuable information that can drive trail development efforts in different regions of Alaska by providing a clear understanding of the current trails in the state.

Region	CityPart	Organization(s Access	Trail	Langt	h (n Pannat	P.OvertilUse Existing or Pr Stat	us Cre Description	Notes 1:	Submitted By
Nathers -	Kotzebue Region	Northwest Arcti	Kiveline to Nostak	40	One-Way	Snouts-U Existing	Weder Trail		
Nothern	Kotzebue Region	Northwest Arcti	Kvalna to Kolzebue	75	One Way	Should U Existing	Winter Trail		
Nothern	Kotzebue Region	Northwest Arcti	Nostak to Kotzebue	55	One-Way	Grouti-U Existing	Winder Trail		
Nothern	Kotzebue Region	Northwest Arcti	Kolzebue to Riey Wreck	15	One-Way	Snouth-U Existing	Winter Trail		
Nothern	Kotzebuse Region	Northwest Andi	Hiley Wreck to Aukluk	5	One-Way	Secult-Li Existing	Winter Trail		
Nothern	Kotzebue Region	Northwest Arcti	Auxiuk to Callahan	29	One-Way	Snouth-U Existing	Winter Ital		
Nothern	Kotzebue Region	Northwest Arcti	Kotzebue to Noorvik	50	One-Way	Snould-Li Exeting	Winter Trail		
Northern	Kotzebue Region	Northwest Arcti	Noorvik to Kiana	25	One-Way	Shouth-U Exeting	Weter Trail		
Nothern	Kotzebue Region	Northwest Arcli	Noonvik to Singsuruk	20	One-Way	Snouto-U Existing	Winter Trail		
Noten	Notzebue Region	Nothwest Arcti	Singauruk to Selavik	8	One-Way	Snouto-U Existing	Water Trail		
Nothern	Notzebue Region	Northwest Arcti	Kiana to Spud Farm	20	One-Way	Broult-Li Existing	Writer Trail		
Nothern	Kotzebue Region	Northwest Arcli	Soud Farm to Selawik	10	One-Way	Should-U Existing	Winter Trail		
Nothern	Kotzebue Region	Northwest Arcti	Selawik to Selawik Lake	25	One-Way	Snouti-U Existing	Winter Trail		
Nothern	Kotzebue Region	Northwest Arcti	Solawik Lake to Kouh R	5	One Way	Shoulti-U Existing	Water Trail		
Nothern	<b>Kotzebue Region</b>	Northwest Arcti	Callahan to Kauk River	20	One-Way	Snoulti-U Exeting	Winter Trail		
Nothern	Kotzebue Region	Northwest Arcti	Deering to Candle	90	One-Way	Should U Exeting	Winter Trail		
Northern	Kotzebue Region	Northwest Arcti	Candle to Bucktand	25	One-Way	Snouts-U Exeting	Winter Trail		
Nothern	Kotzebue Region	Northwest Arcti	Buckland to Kauk River	25	Dne-Way	Shoutti-U Existing	Weter Inai		
Northern	Kotzebue Region	Northwest Arcti	Calishan to Buckland	25	One-Way	Snould-Li Exeting	Winter Inst		
Nothern	Kützebue Region	Northwest Arcti	Selawik to Panipsigvik	40	One-Way	Shouth-U Existing	Weter Ital		
Nothern	Kotzebue Region	Northwest Arcti	Parsigsigs/k to Antoler	55	One-Way	Shouts-U Existing	Winder That		
Nothern	Notzebue Region	Northwest Arcti	Kana to IAN-ABL	50	One-Way	Should-U Existing	Writer Trail		
Nothern	Kotzebue Region	Northwest Arcti	IAN-ABL to Ambler	50	One-Way	Bhould-U Existing	Winter Trail		
Nothern	Kotzebue Region	Northwest Arcti	Paniqsignik to Rabbit Ce	43	One-Way	Snouhl-U Existing	Winter Trail		
Nothern	Kotzebue Region	Northwest Arcli	Ambler to Shungnak	25	One-Way	Brould-U Existing	Weter Trail		
Nothern	Kotzebue Region	Northwest Arcti	Rabbit Creek to Shungh	40	One-Way	Shouts-U Existing	Winter Trail		
Nothern	Kotzebue Region	Northwest Arcti	Shungnak to Kobuk	5	One-Titlay	Sna/5-U Exeting	Winter Trail		

4487.81 MILES

TRAIL RECORDED IN INVENTORY

1329 TRAILS

13.6 MILES AVERAGE LENGTH OF MULTI-USE TRAILS

23 LAND MANAGERS

INCLUDED IN THIS INVENTORY

3.4 MILES AVERACE LENGTH OF NON-MOTORIZED TRAILS



OF TRAILS REPORTED ARE LOOPS, NOT ONE-WAY

# 4487.81 MILES

TRAIL RECORDED IN INVENTORY

LOGGED FROM ALL OVER ALASKA

13.6 MILES AVERAGE LENGTH OF

MULTI-USE TRAILS

MILES AVERAGE LENGTH OF NON-MOTORIZED TRAILS

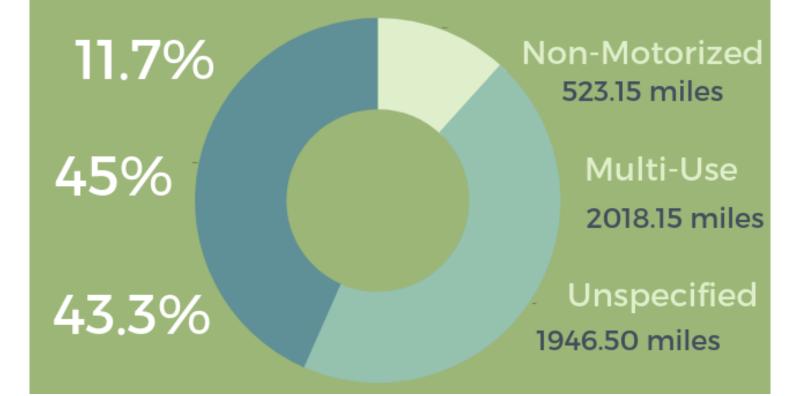
1329 23 TRAILS FROM TRAILS MANAGERS

INCLUDED IN THIS INVENTORY

7.0 PERCENT

OF TRAILS REPORTED ARE LOOPS, NOT ONE-WAY

Region	City/Park	Organization(s Access	Trail	Length	(n Format	PiOwnfallse Existing or Pr Status	Cre Description	Notes 1:	Submitted By
Southcentral	Anchorage Hillside	Alaska State Pi Prospect Heigh	Wolverine Peak Trail	4.7	One-Way	Non-Mote Existing	3500 ft elevati	on gain. Moderate	difficulty. Mountain summit with v
Southcentral	Anchorage Hillside	Alaska State Pr Glen Alps or P	Williwaw Lakes Trail	5.9	One-Way	Non-Mote Existing	800 ft elevation	a gain from GA; 10	500 ft (and 7.4 mi) from Prospect I
Southcentral	Anchorage Hillside	Alaska State Pi Prospect Heigh	Near Point Trail	3.7	One-Way	Non-Mote Existing	2100 ft elevation	on gain. Moderate	difficulty. Hiking and some biking
Southcentral	Seward Hwy Trails	Alaska State Pr Bird Ridge Trai	Bird Ridge Trail	2.5	One-Way	Non-Mote Existing	3400 ft elevati	on gain. Moderate	to difficult difficulty. Begins as a s
Southcentral	Seward Hwy Trails	Alaska State Pr Bird Valley Tra	Bird Creek Trails	13.2	One-Way	Multi-U Existing	Easy difficulty.	Hike, bike, ski, ho	rseback, atv, snowmobile (down r
Southcentral	Seward Hwy Trails	Alaska State Pr Bird Valley Tra	Bird Creek Valley to Bird	10	One-Way	Non-Mote Existing	1900 ft to Bird	Creek pass. Mode	erate to difficult. Wide trail continu
Southcentral	Seward Hwy Trails	Alaska State Pi 0.5 mile from E	Penguin Peak Trail	2	One-Way	Non-Mote Existing	3200 ft elevati	on gain. Difficult. S	hort but steep. This less develop-
Southcentral	Eagle River Nature	Alaska State P: Eagle River Na	Crow Pass Trail	21	One-Way	Non-Mote Existing	2100 ft elevati	on gain from CC T	H, 3100 ft from ER Nature Center
Southcentral	Eagle River Nature	Alaska State Pi Eagle River Na	Rodak Nature Loop	0.7	Loop	Non-Mote Existing	100 ft elevation	n gain, easy. Inter;	pretive loop trail with salmon and t
Southcentral	Eagle River Nature	Alaska State Pi Eagle River Na	Albert Loop Trail	2.8	Loop	Non-Mote Existing	100 ft elevation	n gain, easy. Road	thes banks of Eagle River. Eagle I
Southcentral	Eagle River Nature	Alaska State P: Crow Pass Tra	Dew Mound Trail	3	One-Way	Non-Mote Existing	300 ft elevation	n gain, easy to mo	derate. Access to Dew Mound (a



# The Report

- A first stab at addressing these conversations around trails
- A large, collaborative group effort from dozens of partners across the state
- Still very much a work-in-progress
- Seeking new partners, new ideas, new voices, and new trails

# We are seeking your ideas, feedback, thoughts, and voice. This is a first draft— and we want you to get involved!

## From Good Ideas to Action: **Strategies for Building Better Trails in Alaska** AGENDA

- **Overview of Trails Initiative**
- **Overview of "Work in Progress" Trails Initiative Report**
- **Partner Panel** 
  - Alaska Business
  - Health, Community Connections
  - Confluence/Outdoor Recreation Lee Hart
- Panel and Audience Discussion
  - What Initiative strategies will get the most near term traction?
  - How best to expand the partnerships needed for broader political impact?
  - Strategies to get the work done: fundraising for a paid position to build on our momentum
- Wrap Up

- Dan McDonough Beth Nordlund