

TRAILS INITIATIVE

More and better trails!

The **Trails Initiative** works to:

- create more & better trails in AK
- strengthen Alaska's economy
- expand opportunities for *everyone* to be active, healthy and happy outdoors



The Trails Initiative collaborates with a growing group of statewide partners including:

Sitka Trail Works | Trail Mix, Inc | Alaska Outdoor Alliance
Anchorage Park Foundation | Mat-Su Trails and Parks
Foundation | National Park Service Rivers, Trails, and
Conservation Assistance | Chugach State Park | Kenai
Mountains-Turnagain Arm National Heritage Area |
United States Forest Service | Denali Borough

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**ALASKA
TRAILS**

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Why Invest in Trails?

- **Outdoor recreation (OR) is an important economic sector:** in Alaska OR contributes 3.6% of GDP, the 4th highest in the nation
- **OR jobs are increasing:** up 18.4% in AK in 2021, the 3rd highest rate of growth in the nation
- **Trails and other OR infrastructure help mitigate outmigration:** 6 in 10 Alaskans live here because of outdoor recreation
- **Trails are good investments:** for every \$1 spent on public open space there is a \$5.31 return on investment



- **Trail users spend more:** hikers and walkers spend 29% more than other types of visitors
- **Hiking/Nature Walks are in demand:** these are the fastest growing activities among visitors

Five Goals to Achieve our Mission:

1. Educate decision makers and the public about the value of trails
2. Expand the base of resources to sustain and grow Alaska's trails
3. Champion specific trail projects
4. Support trails planning at local, regional and statewide levels
5. Build a strong statewide coalition advocating for more and better trails



RECENT TRAIL FUNDING, POLICY AND PLANNING WINS

- ★ \$1.42 million for trail projects in the FY2024 State of Alaska Capital Budget
- ★ Development of the Tongass Sustainable Trails Strategy, a multi-year, community planning effort
- ★ Creation of the Chugach State Park Access Service Area via the 2023 Municipality of Anchorage election
- ★ \$5.53 million for trail and planning projects via FY2023 Congressionally Designated Spending
- ★ \$4.22 million for trail projects in the FY2023 State of Alaska Capital Budget
- ★ \$5.77 million for trail projects via FY2022 Congressionally Designated Spending
- ★ \$500,000 Federal Lands Access Program grant for Bison Gulch Trail in Denali Borough
- ★ \$566,000 of Federal Cares Act funds for trail projects in Southcentral AK during the COVID-19 pandemic