

**Agency: Department of Natural Resources****Project Title:****Project Type:** Equipment and Materials

# Eagle Beach Snow Grooming Equipment

**State Funding Requested:** \$14,200  
One-Time Need**House District:** Juneau Areawide (3-4)**Brief Project Description:**

Purchase snow grooming equipment for trails in Eagle Beach State Recreation Area and nearby trails to facilitate skiing and hiking.
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**Funding Plan:**

Total Project Cost:	\$14,200
Funding Already Secured:	(\$0)
FY2012 State Funding Request:	<u>(\$14,200)</u>
Project Deficit:	\$0

*Funding Details:*

n/a

**Detailed Project Description and Justification:**

CIP Request: Eagle Beach Snow Grooming Equipment

## History and Statement of Need

Snow grooming equipment will help transform Eagle Beach State Recreation Area into a year-round recreation area. Enhanced recreational opportunities at Eagle Beach have been requested by the public since the 1980's, when the property was transferred to the State of Alaska from the Federal government.

The first major upgrades at Eagle Beach took place in 2002 under grants from the Federal Department of Transportation. Parking was improved, campsites and park ranger facilities were developed, picnic shelters were added, and trails were upgraded. The results were overwhelmingly positive. Under state management, Eagle Beach was transformed from a much abused pull-out party spot along the Glacier Highway into a State Park jewel that receives a high amount of recreational use.

More recently, State Parks took advantage of construction on the Glacier Highway to improve some of the campground roads and fill in the remains of an old gravel pit (these improvements were done at no cost to State Parks). As soon as next spring, construction will begin on fully accessible public use cabins.

One of the most important remaining pieces that will move Eagle Beach toward 4-season use is effective and consistent snow grooming. There are miles of trails and roads that could be packed and groomed for wintertime use. Grooming will enhance Eagle Beach use not only for skiers but hikers as well. A comparable model is the US Forest Service's Mendenhall Campground. Because the Mendenhall Campground roads are groomed throughout the winter, it is one of the

most heavily used recreational areas in Juneau.

On occasion, park rangers attempt to groom the trails at Eagle Beach, but they are hampered by their equipment. With limited budgets, their tools have been a succession of highly worn donations. The current equipment is a good example: the Department's snow machine was donated to them from the Juneau Nordic Ski Club when the club discarded it to upgrade their own equipment. The machine is currently not functioning due to a mechanical breakdown. The Department's roller/compacter is a vintage unit given to DNR by the Forest Service over 20 years ago; it is also in disrepair. The ski track setter is functioning, but just barely - it too is over 20 years old.

Eagle Beach has a caretaker; one of his duties is to plow the campground parking lot. With functioning equipment, Southeast Regional Parks Supervisor Mike Eberhardt has indicated that an additional caretaker duty will include trail grooming. Park rangers will also assist in grooming as time allows. A substantial number of citizen volunteers have expressed interest in helping and will be encouraged to participate as well.

The following is recommended equipment suitable for grooming the trails and roads at Eagle Beach:

Equipment Cost (estimates include shipping costs)

Ski-doo Skandic SWT wide-track snow machine \$11,500

YTS Roller / Compacter \$2,120

YTS Lightweight Track Setter \$530

YTS snowmobile hitch \$48

Total \$ 14,200

### Project Timeline:

Expenditures will occur in early FY12 if funds are available, to be ready for using the equipment winter of 2011-2012.

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

Division of State Parks and Outdoor Recreation.

### Grant Recipient Contact Information:

Name: Mike Eberhardt  
 Title: Park Superintendent  
 Address: 400 Willoughby St.  
 Juneau, Alaska 99811  
 Phone Number: 465-2481  
 Email: mike.eberhardt@alaska.gov

Has this project been through a public review process at the local level and is it a community priority?  Yes  No