

Agency: Commerce, Community and Economic Development

Grants to Municipalities (AS 37.05.315)

Grant Recipient: Anchorage

Federal Tax ID: 92-0059987

Project Title:

Project Type: Maintenance and Repairs

Anchorage - Alaska Long Trail - Girdwood Middle Iditarod National Historic Trail Improvements

State Funding Requested: \$179,745

House District: 9 / E

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

Funding Details:
 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

For use by Co-chair Staff Only:

\$179,745
 Approved

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:

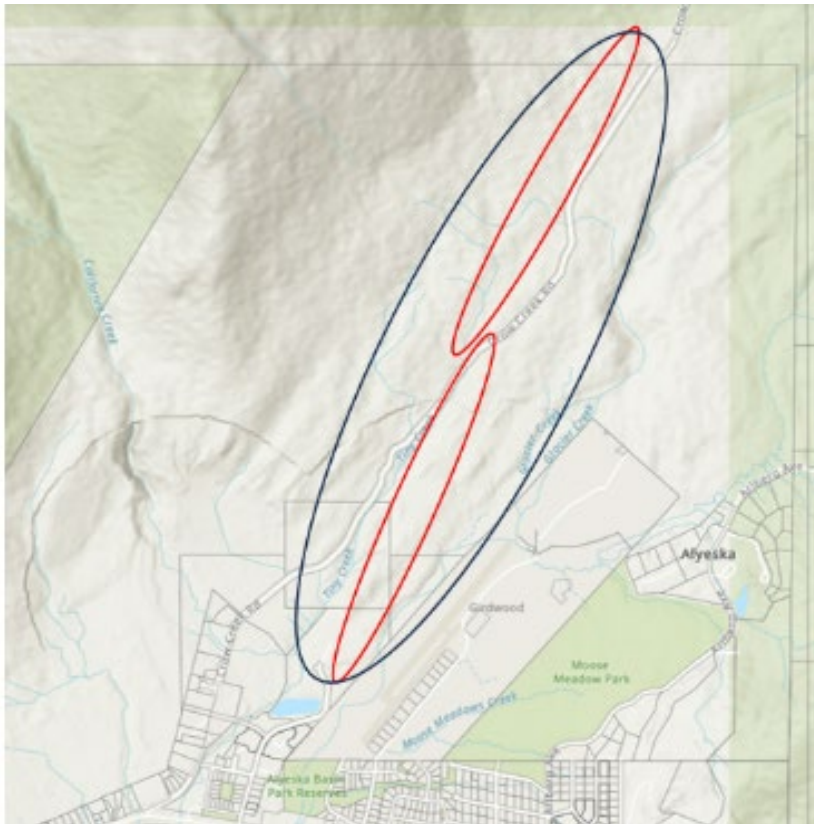
Name: Kyle Kelley
 Title: Municipal Liaison
 Address: PO Box 390
 Girdwood, Alaska 99587
 Phone Number: (907)343-8374
 Email: kyle.kelley@anchorageak.gov

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

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12:20 PM 6/14/2024

Girdwood Middle Iditarod National Historic Trail

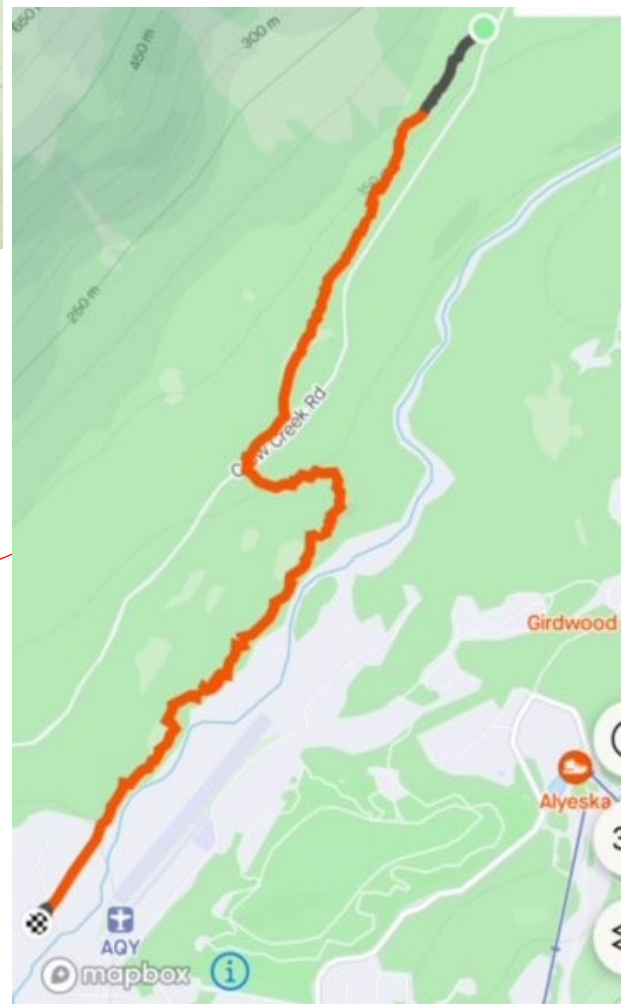


US Forest Service boundary

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.





Dear Alaska Legislators:

2/15/2024

Alaska Trails, the statewide non-profit, is writing on behalf of the Alaska Long Trail Coalition to request the inclusion of the Seward-to-Fairbanks [Alaska Long Trail](#) projects (submitted into CAPSIS) into FY2025 State's capital budget. The specific request is for **\$18.8 Million for 21 projects** to fill key shovel-ready and planning-ready gaps along the length of the planned route. Many of these projects have federal and local matching funds already secured, and some projects build on the funding received through the state capital budget over the past two years (**thank you!**).

The Alaska Long Trail, when complete, will become a world-class trail system connecting 500+ miles of Alaska's iconic terrain and diverse communities from Seward to Fairbanks, embracing the many ways (motorized and non-motorized) Alaskans recreate outdoors and bolstering the Alaska economy by attracting visitors from all over the world.

Specific benefits include:

- **Economic Impact** – Outdoor recreation infrastructure *is essential* infrastructure, building on Alaska's global competitive advantage, and supporting local jobs, business opportunities, and a stronger, more durable AK economy. If typical year's out-of-state travelers had reasons to spend one more day in Alaska, the result would be an additional \$250M in annual spending in our state.
- **Health Benefits** – Long Trails have an ability to inspire use, even if for a single day. The Long Trail will make it inviting and easier for a larger portion of Alaskans to be active, healthy, and happy outside.
- **Projects are Action-Ready** – Funding these investments will create much needed construction jobs in the near term and build skills that will be in demand continuing into the future.
- **Multi-Use** – The Long Trail will be an *Alaska* long trail; a braided, four-season trail system designed for hikers, bikers, skiers, ATV's, snowmachines, for both day and multi-day use.

We ask that you support the inclusion of the Alaska Long Trail projects, submitted into CAPSIS, in the FY2025 state capital budget.

Please call or write if you have questions. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Steve Cleary, Alaska Trails Executive Director

steve.cleary@alaska-trails.org

PO Box 100627
Anchorage, AK 99510
office@alaska-trails.org
907-334-8049

www.alaska-trails.org

ALASKA LONG TRAIL - CAPSIS FY2025

Alaska Trails and partners identified 21 high-priority shovel-ready and planning-ready projects along the length of the [Alaska Long Trail](#) proposed route. These projects have been submitted to the legislature for the FY2025 state capital budget. The table on the following page provides the summary of the projects and their locations are shown on the map below. "Multi-use" refers to both motorized and non-motorized uses.

PROJECTS INCLUDE:

- Building and improving non-motorized trails (#1, 2, 7, 10-12, 15-20)
- Planning studies to develop trail connections (#4, 13, 14)
- Improving trail access and parking (#6, 8, 10, 16)
- Multi-use trail improvements (#9)
- Wayfinding and cultural heritage (#3, 5)
- Separated highway paths for safe non-motorized travel (#21)

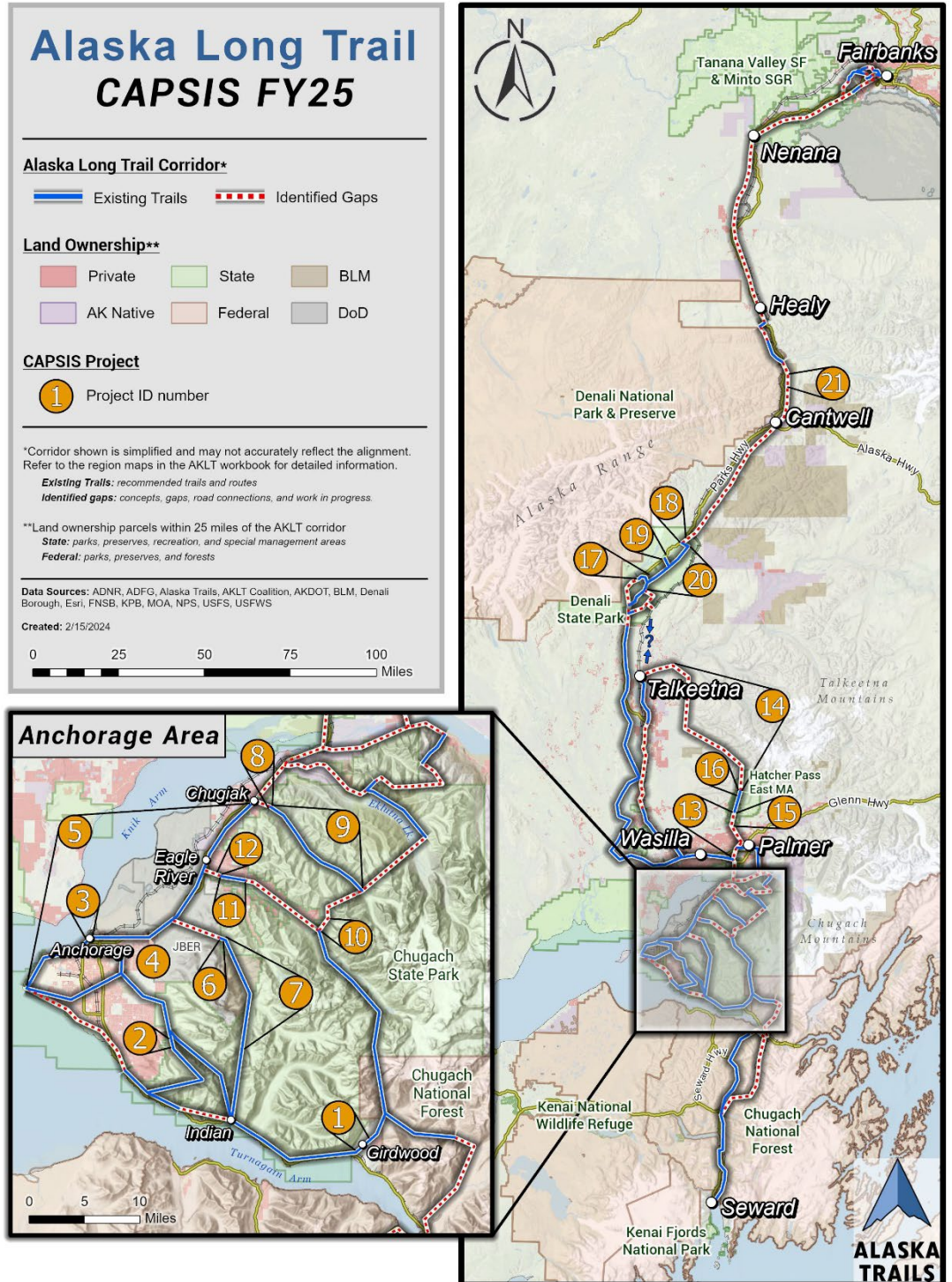
WHO IS DOING IT?

[Alaska Trails](#), a statewide non-profit, is coordinating this ambitious project. Partners in this CAPSIS request include Denali Borough, Muni of Anchorage, Alaska State Parks, and trails organizations.

CONTACTS:

Mariyam Medovaya
 AKLT Project Coordinator
mariyam.medovaya@alaska-trails.org
 907-360-9950

Haley Johnston
 Alaska Trails Deputy Director
haley.johnston@alaska-trails.org
 907-444-5766



ALASKA LONG TRAIL - CAPSIS FY2025 PROJECTS

TPS #	Number on map	Project	Use	Amount	Recipient	Land Manager/Area	Districts	Previously Submitted?	Planning, New construction, Repairs/Improvements	Mileage
68768	1	Girdwood Middle Iditarod National Historic Trail Improvements	non-motorized	\$179,745	Muni of Anchorage	Turnagain Arm - Girdwood	9-E	NO	Repairs/Improvements	2.4
67983	2	Flattop Safety Realignment	non-motorized	\$2,700,000	DNR DPOR	Chugach State Park	9-E	YES	New construction	3
66549	3	Indigenous Gateway Downtown Anchorage	non-motorized	\$300,000	Anchorage Park Foundation	Municipality of Anchorage	17-I, 18-I	NO	New construction	N/A
68890	4	Glenn Highway to Far North Bicentennial Park	non-motorized	\$110,000	Anchorage Park Foundation	Municipality of Anchorage	21-K, 22-K	NO	Planning	5
66548	5	Wayfinding In Anchorage & Chugiak-Eagle River	non-motorized	\$300,000	Anchorage Park Foundation	Municipality of Anchorage	21-K, 22-K, 23-L	YES	Repairs/Improvements	N/A
67994	6	Arctic Valley Trailhead Parking Expansion	non-motorized	\$175,000	DNR DPOR	Chugach State Park	23-L	YES	Planning	N/A
68770	7	Ship Creek Trail "Arctic to Indian"	non-motorized	\$3,000,000	Alaska Trails	Chugach State Park	23-L	NO	New construction	13.5
68009	8	Peters Creek Trailhead Parking Survey and Design	multi-use	\$100,000	DNR DPOR	Chugach State Park	24-L	YES	Planning	N/A
68011	9	Peters Creek Trails Assessment and Design Prescription	multi-use	\$60,000	Chugach Mountain Bike Riders (CMBR)	Chugach State Park	24-L	YES	Planning	9.5
68845	10	Ram Valley Access Trail and Trailhead Parking Lot	non-motorized	\$1,000,000	Alaska Trails	Chugach State Park	23-L	NO	New construction	4
68012	11	Lower Eagle River Trail Boardwalk Replacement	non-motorized	\$500,000	DNR DPOR	Chugach State Park	23-L	YES	Repairs/Improvements	2
68868	12	Lower Eagle River Trail - Connecting Gruening Middle School to the Glenn Hwy	non-motorized	\$141,596	Chugach Mountain Bike Riders (CMBR)	Chugach State Park	23-L	NO	New construction	1
67978	13	Alaska Long Trail Core Mat-Su Corridor Planning	non-motorized	\$100,000	Alaska Trails	Mat-Su Borough	27-N, 28-N, 26-M, 25-M	YES	Planning	20
68766	14	Alaska Long Trail Talkeetna Mountains Planning	non-motorized	\$500,000	Alaska Trails	Mat-Su Borough & AK DMLW	30-O, 29-O	NO	Planning	85
66755	15	GPRA Traverse and Little Susitna Loop	non-motorized	\$2,500,000	Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation	Mat-Su Borough & AK DNR DMLW	29-O	YES	New construction	12
68765	16	Reed Lakes Trail and Trailhead Improvements	non-motorized	\$1,800,000	DNR DPOR	Hatcher Pass State Management Area	29-O	NO	Repairs/Improvements	6
68761	17	Byers Lake Loop Trail and Outlet Bridge	non-motorized	\$1,000,000	DNR DPOR	Denali State Park	30-O	NO	Repairs/Improvements	5
68764	18	Little Coal Creek Trail Upgrades	non-motorized	\$300,000	DNR DPOR	Denali State Park	30-O	NO	Repairs/Improvements	5
68762	19	Ermine Hill Trail Upgrades	non-motorized	\$250,000	DNR DPOR	Denali State Park	30-O	NO	Repairs/Improvements	5
68763	20	Kesugi Ridge Trail Upgrades	non-motorized	\$300,000	DNR DPOR	Denali State Park	30-O	NO	Repairs/Improvements	22
66753	21	Carlo Creek to Crabbies Crossing Separated Path	non-motorized	\$3,500,000	Denali Borough	Denali Borough	30-O	YES	New construction	7
TOTAL \$18,816,341									TOTAL MILES	207.4
									TOTAL NEW CONSTRUCTION MILES	40.5
									TOTAL REPAIRS MILES	47.4
									TOTAL PLANNING MILES	119.5

RESOLUTIONS AND LETTERS OF SUPPORT

Numerous organizations, agencies, local governments, and individuals expressed support for the Alaska Long Trail over 2021 - 2024. Below is the list of organizations, agencies, and local governments that have sent letters of support and passed resolutions in support of the project.

Alaska Travel Industry Association (ATIA)	statewide
National Park Service	statewide
Alaska Huts Association (AHA)	statewide
Alaska Trails	statewide
Alaska Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects	statewide
Alaska Chapter of Backcountry Hunters and Anglers	statewide
Mountaineering Club of Alaska	statewide
Mat-Su Borough Assembly	Mat-Su
City of Palmer	Mat-Su
Mat-Su Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB)	Mat-Su
Mat-Su Health Foundation	Mat-Su
Skeetawk, Hatcher Alpine Xperience	Mat-Su
Alaska State Parks - Mat-Su/Copper Basin Regional Office	Mat-Su
City of Seward	Kenai
Kenai Mountains – Turnagain Arm National Heritage Area (KMTA)	Kenai
Kenai Backcountry Horsemen	Kenai
Fairbanks North Star Borough Assembly	Interior
Denali Borough Assembly	Interior
Explore Fairbanks	Interior
Interior Trails Quarterly	Interior
Fairbanks Cycle Club	Interior
Nordic Ski Club Fairbanks	Interior
Interior Trails Preservation Coalition	Interior
Anchorage Assembly	Anchorage
Chugach State Park Citizens Advisory Board	Anchorage
Chugach Mountain Bike Riders	Anchorage
Eklutna Valley Community Council	Anchorage
Eagle River Valley Community Council	Anchorage
Anchorage Ski Club	Anchorage
Girdwood Board of Supervisors	Anchorage
Girdwood Trails Committee	Anchorage
Latitude 61 Girdwood	Anchorage
Anchorage Park Foundation	Anchorage
Single Track Advocates, Anchorage	Anchorage
Roadmap to a Vital and Safe Anchorage	Anchorage
Anchorage Trails	Anchorage



**Municipality
of
Anchorage**



*P.O. Box 390
Girdwood, Alaska 99587
<http://www.muni.org/gbos>*

David Bronson, Mayor

*GIRDWOOD VALLEY SERVICE AREA BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
Briana Sullivan and Jennifer Wingard, Co-Chairs
Mike Edgington, Amanda Sassi, Guy Wade*

**Resolution 2023-18
Of the Girdwood Board of Supervisors**

RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR REHABILITATION OF THE GIRDWOOD MIDDLE IDITAROD NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL (INHT), FROM GIRDWOOD K-8 SCHOOL TO THE US FOREST SERVICE BOUNDARY

WHEREAS, the Girdwood Board of Supervisors has supported the Girdwood Iditarod National Historic Trail through Resolutions and Letters of Non-Objection since 2002, including: GBOS Resolution 2019-17 Resolution of Support for Phase 2 of the Girdwood INHT from Girdwood Industrial park to Karolius Road; GBOS Resolution 2018-13 Resolution of Support for Continuation of Construction of the Girdwood Iditarod National Historic Trail; 2017-12 Resolution of Support for Construction of the Girdwood Iditarod National Historic Trail; 2016- 05 Continuing Support for construction and dedication of the INHT alignment in Girdwood; GBOS Resolution 2014-04 Supporting the preliminary plat of the Girdwood Industrial Park and Dedication of the Iditarod National Historic Trail therein; GBOS Resolution 2007-02 supporting a proposal by the US Forest Service to construct and maintain the Iditarod National Historic Trail across municipal land in Girdwood; and GBOS Resolution 2002-16 supporting routing of the Iditarod National Historic Trail through the Girdwood Valley and extension of the Upper Winner Creek Trail into Twentymile River Area to become part of the Iditarod National Historic Trail; and

WHEREAS, Girdwood Trails Committee applied for, received funding and completed all of the projects to create and improve the Lower Girdwood Iditarod National Historic Trail in 3 achievable segments and with various project partners, including Recreation Trails Program Grants, Anchorage Park Foundation, Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm National Heritage Area, with excellent result, creating a trail that is well-used and appreciated by the community; and

WHEREAS, the Girdwood Middle Iditarod National Historic Trail is a significant part of Girdwood's history, and we eagerly anticipate increased ability for all trail users to connecting the Girdwood Town Sites with other trails, creating miles of consistent trail tread within Girdwood that can be used to explore miles of valley trails with minimal exposure to vehicle traffic, including the Winner Creek Trail, Alaska Traverse (formerly the Alaska Long Trail), the greater Iditarod National Historic Trail system; and

WHEREAS, the Girdwood Iditarod National Historic Trail represents a multi-agency partnership among the US Forest Service, Chugach State Parks, the Alaska Railroad Corporation, the Alaska Department of Transportation, the Iditarod National Historic Trail Alliance, the Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm National Heritage Area, Anchorage Water and Wastewater Utility (AWWU), Heritage Land Bank (HLB), and the community of Girdwood; and

WHEREAS, support for this project has been provided by the Girdwood Trails Committee by a unanimous vote at their October 3 2023 regular meeting and is also supported by the draft Girdwood Trails Plan, which is currently under review through the Municipal system for adoption and the Girdwood Trails Management Plan;

THEREFORE, the Girdwood Board of Supervisors resolves continued support of the Girdwood Iditarod National Historic Trail with this work on the Middle Iditarod section of trail and supports the Recreational Trails Program grant application.

PASSED AND APPROVED by a vote of 5 in favor and 0 opposed this 16th day of October 2023.

guy wade

Guy Wade
GBOS Parks and Recreation Supervisor

Margaret Tyler

Attest



**GIRDWOOD TRAILS
ALASKA**

February 7, 2024

Senator Cathy Giessel; Senator.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov

Representative Laddie Shaw; Representative.Laddie.Shaw@akleg.gov

State Finance Committee; senate.finance@akleg.gov

House Finance Committee; house.finance@akleg.gov

Dear Alaska State Legislators and Finance Committee members,

The Girdwood Trails Committee seeks your support for the [Alaska Long Trail](#) (AKLT) projects submitted for inclusion in the FY2025 state capital budget. These 24 projects, totaling \$23 million, are shovel-ready or planning-ready. They are designed to fill gaps along the length of the planned route. One of the projects involves the Iditarod National Historic Trail in Girdwood.

ALASKA LONG TRAIL IN GIRDWOOD

Girdwood has submitted a request for funding of the Girdwood Middle Iditarod National Historic Trail. This trail is both part of the Alaska Long Trail Iditarod National Historic Trail Network and provides connectivity to and from the larger trail systems and the town itself. Our project is to rebuild bridges, improve trail tread and drainage to bring this section of trail to the USFS Class 3 level. It will restore an historic section of trail that is, in some locations, very tricky for many trail users to navigate currently.

This local project has broad support of the USFS Glacier Ranger District, the Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance, Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm National Heritage Area, and from the community as expressed by the Girdwood Board of Supervisors and Girdwood Nordic Ski Club as well as from the Girdwood Trails Committee. We have authorization from the Heritage Land Bank, which is the land manager for these lands. The trail work is included in the Girdwood Trails Plan, which is awaiting adoption by the Anchorage Assembly and was included in the Girdwood Iditarod Trail Route Study, which was adopted by the Anchorage Assembly in 1995. In short, this is a well-studied, well-supported longstanding project for the community and visitors of Girdwood.

Girdwood has self-funded and fundraised for significant work on the Girdwood Lower Iditarod National Historic Trail, which was in similar disrepair when we began working on it in 2019. The lower section connects the old and new townsites and is now a well-used recreational and transportation corridor in the community. We are confident that restoration of the Middle section of trail will be similarly well utilized and appreciated.

BENEFITS OF THE ALASKA LONG TRAIL

The Alaska Long Trail, when complete, will become a world-class trail system connecting 500+ miles of Alaska's iconic terrain and diverse communities from Seward to Fairbanks. It is designed to be a braided, four-season trail system for hikers, bikers, skiers, ATV's, snowmachines, for both day and multi-day use. Some segments may include the Alaska Railroad or, like in Nenana Canyon, with a local rafting guide company. Similar trails, such as the Pacific Crest Trail and the Appalachian Trail attract visitors from all over the world.

Goals and outcomes of building the trail include:

Economic Development: Long trails are 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 communities along the route and statewide. In 2022, the Outdoor Recreation industry in Alaska generated \$2.6 billion in economic output, supported more than 20,000 jobs and accounted for 4 percent of the state's economy.

- Growth in Alaska's outdoor recreation economy between 2021 and 2022 was second fastest in the U.S. (after Hawaii) and outpaced the rate of growth of both the state and national economies.
- Total visits to some Alaska State Parks increased 50% from 2019 to 2022.
- Hiking is the fastest growing activity for both air and cruise visitors to Alaska.
- Visitors would spend an additional \$250 million in Alaska if they stayed "One More Day".
- Three million visitors a year hike a portion of the Appalachian Trail - a huge potential market for Alaska.

Access to Public Lands: "On/off-ramps" to the Alaska Long Trail will help Alaska residents access public lands for a variety of uses. Existing access opportunities are insufficient to satisfy the growing demand in outdoor recreation, whether it is motorized and nonmotorized.

Reducing the Backlog of Maintenance: Alaska State Parks has a large and growing backlog of maintenance. Funding for Alaska Long Trail projects has focused on improving existing trails first - reducing this backlog.

We thank the State Legislature for securing funding for [10 Alaska Long Trail projects in FY2023 and FY2024 state capital budgets](#), totaling \$5.6 Million, including funding to assist with construction of a suspension bridge in Girdwood to reconnect the Winner Creek Trail.

We ask that you support the inclusion of the Alaska Long Trail projects, submitted into CAPSIS, in the FY2025 state capital budget.

Please call or write if you have questions. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Barbara Crews

Barbara Crews, Chair
Girdwood Trails Committee

Cc: Alaska Trails; steve.cleary@alaska-trails.org



The Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance

PO Box 2323

Seward, Alaska 99664

E-mail: IditarodHTA@gmail.com

www.iditarod100.org

February 15, 2024

Re: Support for funding of the Girdwood Middle Iditarod Historic Trail Improvements Project

Dear Senator Giessel and Representative Shaw:

This letter is written to express the Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance's (IHTA) support for the Girdwood Middle Iditarod Historic Trail Improvements project, which was submitted into CAPSIS for 2025 funding. This trail segment, approximately 2.4 miles long, begins at the Girdwood K-8 school, travels along the edge of Glacier Creek, crosses Crow Creek Road, and ends at the Forest Service boundary.

Chartered in 1998, the non-profit IHTA supports the establishment of a connected Iditarod Trail from Seward to Nome. As stewards of the Iditarod National Historic Trail, the IHTA works statewide to encourage local trail groups and land managers to improve and maintain the Iditarod National Historic Trail in their community.

Construction and repair of this trail will provide high quality access to the rest of the Iditarod National Historic Trail in Girdwood. Additionally, this trail will connect to a network of other existing trails and extend the corridor between the old and new Girdwood townsites. Finally, there is strong local support for this project.

The IHTA supports the inclusion of this project, submitted into CAPSIS, in the FY2025 state capital budget.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Thank you,

Jonathan Sewall

IHTA Vice President

Email: IditarodHTA@gmail.com

Municipal Clerk's Office
Approved
Date: **March 15, 2022**

Submitted by: Assembly Chair LaFrance,
Assembly Vice Chair Constant,
Assembly Members Dunbar,
Petersen, Quinn-Davidson,
Rivera, Weddleton, and Zaletel
Reviewed by: Assembly Counsel
For reading: March 15, 2022

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA
AR No. 2022-90

1 **A RESOLUTION OF THE ANCHORAGE ASSEMBLY SUPPORTING THE**
2 **ALASKA LONG TRAIL.**
3

4 **WHEREAS**, the vision for the Alaska Long Trail is a world-class trail system
5 connecting 500+ miles of Alaska's iconic terrain and diverse communities from the
6 Pacific to the Interior, embracing the many ways Alaskans recreate outdoors and
7 bolstering the Alaska economy by attracting visitors from all over the world; and
8

9 **WHEREAS**, with some of the world's most stunning wild places, Alaska is overdue
10 in creating a connected trail system with goals to improve access, build a stronger,
11 more durable economy, improve quality of life, encourage healthy lifestyles,
12 celebrate heritage and sustain what makes Alaska unique; and
13

14 **WHEREAS**, the Alaska Long Trail route from Seward to Fairbanks, where a
15 substantial portion of public land trails already exist, has strong bipartisan support
16 from local, state and national elected officials, businesses and organizations; and
17

18 **WHEREAS**, as Alaska's largest city and airport hub, Anchorage would connect to
19 the Alaska Long Trail through a braided trail system from the Moose Loop trails in
20 Anchorage north to Palmer and the Mat-Su, along the spectacular Tikahtnu-Cook
21 Inlet and Knik River valleys and south along the breathtaking, awe-inspiring
22 Turnagain Arm to Girdwood; and
23

24 **WHEREAS**, the Alaska Long Trail braid from Anchorage to the south needs
25 improved, safe, bicycle and pedestrian access along the Seward Highway from
26 Potter Marsh to Indian, connecting to the Bird to Gird trail and into Girdwood, then
27 connecting south into Chugach National Forest and looping back north over Crow
28 Pass to Eagle River; and
29

30 **WHEREAS**, the Alaska Long Trail braid from Anchorage to the north needs
31 improved, safe and attractive multi-use access along the Glenn Highway Trail from
32 Anchorage to the communities of Chugiak, Eagle River, Eklutna and beyond to the
33 Mat-Su, where the trail would continue north to Fairbanks; and
34

35 **WHEREAS**, the Appalachian, Pacific Crest and other Long Trails are hugely popular
36 attractions and economic drivers; for example, the Appalachian Trail attracts 3
37 million visitors each year to shop, dine, stay and hike a portion of the 2000+ mile
38 trail; and
39

1 **WHEREAS**, Anchorage residents support trails through annual voter-approved
2 bonds, and the Alaska Long Trail stands to leverage the value of Anchorage's
3 existing trail system, bringing major recreation and economic benefits to Anchorage
4 and Alaska by attracting a range of travelers from around the world to shop, dine,
5 stay and recreate; and
6

7 **WHEREAS**, now is the time to invest in the future of Anchorage and Alaska's
8 outdoor recreation, tourism and small business economies by supporting the
9 development of an iconic trail that will stand alongside the other grand trails of the
10 nation.
11

12 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE ANCHORAGE ASSEMBLY**
13 **SUPPORTS THE ALASKA LONG TRAIL AND ENCOURAGES INVESTMENT AT**
14 **THE LOCAL, STATE AND NATIONAL LEVEL.**
15

16
17 PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Assembly this 15th day of March,
18 2022.
19

20
21 

22
23 _____
Chair

24 ATTEST:

25
26
27 

28 _____
29 Municipal Clerk



February 14, 2023

Honorable Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801

Re: Support for Alaska Long Trail Investments in our Economic Future

Dear Alaska Legislators,

The Anchorage Trails Initiative started in 2011, part of the Anchorage Economic Development Corporation's Live.Work.Play strategy to attract and retain a quality workforce to Anchorage. We are a coalition of businesses, government agencies and advocates supporting trails as an economic driver to entice independent travelers, both in-state and out-of-state, to stay one more day in our region and support Anchorage's services industry.

The Anchorage Trails Coalition is united in strong support of the Alaska Long Trail, a vision for a multi-braid trail system connecting Seward to Fairbanks, incorporating a variety of year-round uses (motorized and nonmotorized) along different braids. The first 500-mile segment could ultimately expand into a 2000+ mile trail extending north from Fairbanks to the Brooks Range and the North Slope, and south to a future SE Long Trail, offering an alluring mix of trails and ferry rides. Many sections of the proposed trail already exist or are currently planned, and the route is almost entirely on public lands, reducing the complexity and cost.

Anchorage is the "urban braid" of the Alaska Long Trail. Our trail system is the Moose Loop, a 32-mile paved multi use path in the shape of a moose. It connects to the Glenn Highway Trail in the north, and the dream is to connect it to Girdwood along the Seward Highway in the south.

We strongly support ALL of the Alaska Long Trail projects and urge you to support them as a package as you did in 2022. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Diana Rhoades, Organizer
Anchorage Trails Coalition
907.249.6652



February 15, 2024

Honorable Alaska State Legislators:

Thank you for supporting the Alaska Long Trail (AKLT). Investing in outdoor recreation infrastructure keeps Alaskans healthy and connected and will put Alaska on the map as the outdoor epicenter of the world.

The 21 AKLT projects submitted to CAPIS cost approximately \$19 million. These investments leverage millions in local and federal funding and will have a resounding positive impact on Alaska communities. They create jobs, they support the stories that bind us together, and they help facilitate a wide variety of quality-of-life activities from hiking, biking, snowmachining, hunting and fishing to travel and tourism. They are supported by a growing coalition of business leaders, public land agencies, local governments, neighborhoods, and Alaska Native leaders.

We support all of the AKLT projects from our coalition partners and want to highlight the Anchorage projects we submitted - wayfinding from Chugiak Eagle River to Anchorage (CAPSIS 66548), connecting the Glenn Highway Trail to Far North Bicentennial Park (CAPSIS 68890), and building an Indigenous Gateway Plaza to launch the AKLT in Downtown Anchorage (CAPSIS 66549).

More than 1.5 million visitors will land in Anchorage in 2024, and they will know they are on part of the Alaska Long Trail thanks to your investment in wayfinding in Anchorage. Education about the proposed 500 mile trail encourages people to come back to Alaska communities again and again to complete new segments. For more information about these projects, please contact me at beth@anchorageparkfoundation.org or 907.274.1004.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Beth Nordlund". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Beth Nordlund, Executive Director
Anchorage Park Foundation