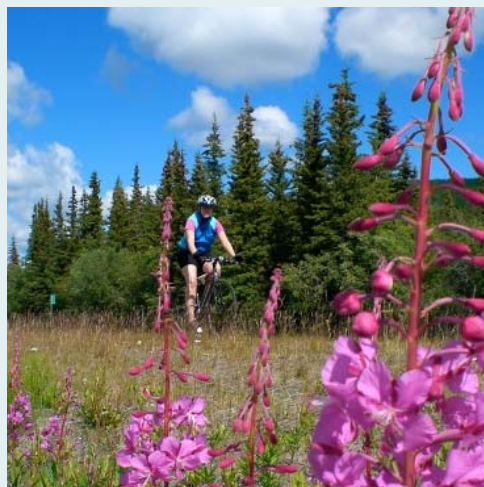




TRAILS AND PARKS MASTER PLAN FOR THE MAT-SU AREA

JULY 2013



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AK-DNR	Alaska Department of Natural Resources
AK-DOT/PF	Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
AMHTA	Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority
ARR	Alaska Railroad
ATV	All-Terrain Vehicle
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
CIP	Capital Improvement Program
CIRI	Cook Inlet Regional, Inc.
IMBA	International Mountain Biking Association
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
GPS	Global Positioning System
MSHF	Mat-Su Health Foundation
MSTPF	Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation
MSB	Matanuska-Susitna Borough
OHV	Off-Highway Vehicle
ROW	Right-of-Way
RTP	Recreational Trails Program
SPUD	Special Use District
SnowTRAC	Snowmobile Trails Advisory Council
TMOs	Trail Management Objectives



INTRODUCTION

WHO IS THE MAT-SU TRAILS AND PARKS FOUNDATION?

The Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation (“MSTPF” or “Foundation”) works closely with trail organizations and regional partners to support trail development, maintenance and user education. The 501(c)(3) accredited Foundation was established in 2011. The Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation’s priorities include:

- Develop an integrated system of trails and parks throughout the Mat-Su Borough.
- Support the development and implementation of a formalized trail management plan that engages user groups to understand user requirements.
- Promote the basic values that trails and parks provide to the community including health, economic, community and environment.
- Develop sustainable resources to support the above goals Borough-wide.

The Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation mission is to build quality trails and parks. As one of the first steps in fulfilling this mission, the MSTPF has initiated and funded the preparation of this document, the **Trails and Parks Master Plan for the Mat-Su Area** (“Plan”).

HOW THE FOUNDATION ASSISTS INDIVIDUALS, COMMUNITIES AND THE REGION

The Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation supports grassroots efforts to build and maintain trails and parks. The Mat-Su Borough (MSB) contains remarkable natural landscapes and a diverse assortment of motivated user groups and trail organizations. The Foundation seeks to help these groups collaborate and move forward toward a sustainable trail network that supports residents and visitors alike. The Foundation is well-positioned to offer technical assistance, support and funding to assist these various organizations, with the goal of increasing the number, quality and connectivity of Borough trails, increasing trail usage, and reducing user group conflicts. Through these efforts, the Foundation can enhance the quality of life, health, and economy of the Borough.

HOW THE FOUNDATION WILL WORK WITH THEIR PARTNERS

The 15 million acre Mat-Su Borough has over two thousand miles of trails, 24 state park units and more than 20 public campgrounds. A number of agencies oversee these trails, including the Alaska Department of Natural Resources (AK-DNR), the Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARR), the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (AK-DOT/PF), the Matanuska-Susitna Borough and the cities of Palmer and Wasilla. Any progress toward regional trail development goals must necessarily involve all these partners in order to be successful. Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation is actively working to collaborate with, and in some cases, to coordinate the efforts of these partners.

Two clear illustrations of how the MSTPF is currently partnering with other Mat-Su entities and residents are evident in the work they have done in partnership with the Mat-Su Health Foundation (MSHF) and the Mat-Su Borough.

- The Mat-Su Health Foundation recognizes the important role of outdoor recreation in supporting healthy lifestyles. They are pleased to be working with an organization that can help them direct funding to most effectively support trails and parks projects in the Mat-Su. The MSHF has funded a number of Trails and Parks Foundation-led trail improvement projects, and they contributed much of the original seed funding to help start the Foundation.
- The Mat-Su Borough also contributed start-up funding for the Trails and Parks Foundation. The Foundation can work hand-in-hand to support and add capacity to the Borough's Community and Economic Development staff. Together the two organizations can better coordinate existing community, organizational and regional trails and parks efforts. The Foundation is already playing that role through this master planning effort, working as a liaison between regional organizations and individual trail groups to encourage collaboration, eliminate duplicity and confront some of the larger challenges related to trail development and management.



SUCCESSSES TO DATE

The Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation supported a number of successful collaborations during their first year as an organization. They include:

- Trail-hardening efforts to create sustainable All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) trails in Willow.
- Helped complete the trail sign program within the popular Matanuska Greenbelt.
- Helped complete the roof at the new Snowbird Hut.

The Foundation hopes to continue working closely with these and other trails groups to further improve trail and park opportunities around the Borough.

PURPOSE, PROCESS AND CONTENTS OF THE PLAN

WHY CREATE A TRAILS AND PARKS MASTER PLAN FOR THE MAT-SU AREA?

A commendable amount of work has been done over the years to develop, maintain and document trails in the Mat-Su Borough. These efforts have been spearheaded by a variety of organizations and trail user groups. However, despite these efforts, there are still significant challenges on the horizon. The Mat-Su Borough, as the fastest growing region of Alaska, is quickly losing opportunities to develop and secure trail connections both legally and permanently. Many traditional trail routes cross private lands and are no longer open for public use. Additionally, funding at the local, state and federal levels is limited and is likely to further decline. Through this Plan, the Foundation can work strategically with their partners to leverage limited resources to better support Mat-Su Borough trails and parks. Specifically, the Foundation can work from the framework established in this Plan that includes:

- A process for synthesizing past and existing plans with community feedback on the trails and parks into a **“comprehensive list of community and region-wide projects”**;
- A process and set of selection criteria for prioritizing the comprehensive project list into a subset of **“regional trails and parks project priorities”** that provide a framework for an **“annual work plan of immediate actions”** (e.g., trail development, maintenance and management) to be completed over the next year.

- A process for synthesizing past and existing plans with community feedback on the challenges and opportunities of trail development and management in the Mat-Su Borough into a comprehensive **“Trails Toolbox”** that includes regionally-applicable tools for identifying, planning, reserving, funding, building, maintaining and managing trails in the Mat-Su;
- A process for prioritizing the comprehensive list of tools in the Trails Toolbox into a subset of **“regional tool priorities”**. This Plan also helps set the stage for future trails planning and prioritization in the Mat-Su Borough.

The content of the Plan and the process for arriving at the regional comprehensive and priority lists provides a potential model and prescribed methodology for the Borough. This is of particular interest to the Mat-Su Borough Parks, Recreation and Trails Board.

HOW WILL THE FOUNDATION USE THE PLAN?

The *Trails and Parks Master Plan for the Mat-Su Area* is an internal tool for the MSTPF. It will act as a guiding document for the Foundation’s Board of Directors and Staff as they determine:

- How best to work with community, regional, state and federal partners;
- Identify, help plan, and support specific future projects;
- Address reoccurring local and regional trail development challenges;
- For the organization itself, and for regional trail partners, identify and ultimately, secure and allocate parks and trail funding or other support.

The Plan highlights the biggest challenges and needs from communities and trail organizations so the Foundation can proceed in a thoughtful, deliberate way. The Plan is also a critical and required tool for acquiring funding from outside organizations. Prospective funders will ask for evidence of broad support for proposed projects; this Plan and the process that was used for its preparation documents community and regional support for “region-wide priority projects”.

The 2013 Plan is intended to be a long-term (10-15 year) planning document. Over the next five years, the Foundation will focus their efforts on the priority projects and tools identified in this Plan. The Foundation Board will use the annual work plan of action items to guide their daily work and to track progress made on regional priorities. Working with Mat-Su communities and trails and parks user groups, the Foundation will also conduct regular reviews of the comprehensive list of projects, ensuring this list is kept current. After the five years, the Foundation will revisit the project lists and toolbox components to make any necessary refinements. For example, the Board may conduct a work session/prioritization process to move projects from



the comprehensive list to the priorities list. Other projects may come off either list completely. After the 10-15 year period, the Foundation will revisit the Plan in its entirety.

HOW WAS THE PLAN DEVELOPED?

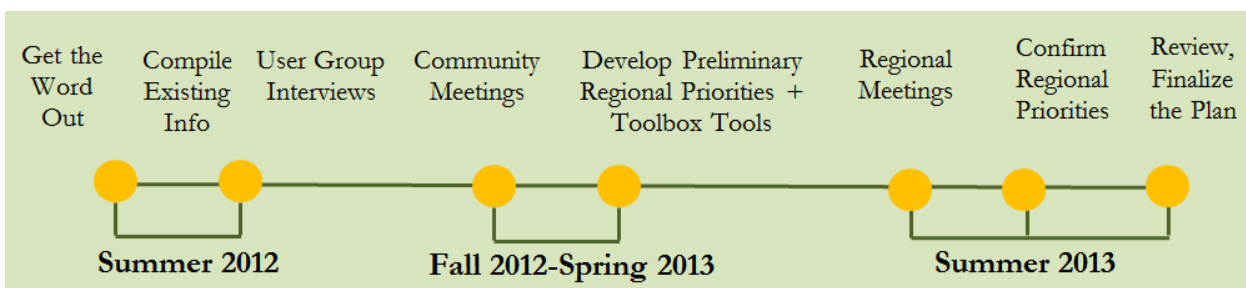
The Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation developed this Plan with the assistance of Agnew::Beck Consulting and USKH. The Plan is built upon past community, regional and user group planning efforts and capitalizes on community feedback and local knowledge. The planning process began during the summer of 2012 with a review of almost 30 previous plans to help better understand key issues, opportunities, community priorities and preliminary regional project ideas. Working with the



Meeting at Sutton Public Library

Foundation Board and Staff, Agnew::Beck conducted ten user group meetings around the region with individuals, small groups and entities representing a diverse range of motorized and nonmotorized trail users throughout the Mat-Su Borough. These informal work sessions brought together knowledgeable local stakeholders and trail experts to gain additional insight into existing challenges and future opportunities. The planning effort culminated in a round of nine well-attended community meetings in key

locations throughout the Borough including: Knik Elementary School, Butte Fire Station, Wasilla Senior Center, Willow Community Center, Big Lake Faith Bible Fellowship Center, Palmer High School, Glacier View Bible Church, Sutton Public Library and the Fire Hall at Y (Station 11-2).



At these community meetings, the Foundation presented preliminary results and priority evaluation criteria and collected feedback on priority needs and issues. Feedback was also collected through comments submitted by mail, email and through an online form. These meetings provided the project team with thoughtful, helpful and comprehensive feedback. The meetings were also a valuable opportunity for the Foundation to open up communications more broadly with borough residents and user groups and to develop partnering relationships.

The project team compiled the results from these meetings and worked with the Foundation Board to conduct a project prioritization process using the evaluation criteria and feedback from the community meetings. The project team simultaneously completed the framework for a “toolbox” of user needs and challenges. A draft copy of the Plan was shared online and at two borough-wide meetings on April 27, 2013. Based on community, Borough staff, and Foundation board member feedback, the Plan was revised and presented to the Mat-Su Borough Assembly in August 2013.

PLAN COMPONENTS

This Plan contains two primary components: a priority projects list and a trails toolbox. The priority projects list includes 23 projects that are considered high priorities. The Foundation would like to focus their efforts on these particular projects in the near term. The Plan also includes a lengthier list of other worthy projects identified through the planning process. The toolbox seeks to support broader needs having to do with topics such as education, technical resources and advocacy. The resources in the toolbox will be available for all individuals and organizations who would like to support trail and park efforts in the Mat-Su Borough.



The trails board and trail users around the Borough share a desire to build a trail system that provides regional connectivity. Connectivity includes trails that connect communities, and also trails that link individual communities to undeveloped public lands beyond community boundaries.

Over the course of this project the consulting team and community participants explored a number of options to improve regional connections. The recommended set of trail priorities includes a number of important regional connections:

- Trail connections leading out from Willow: east into the Hatcher Pass area, west and northerly into the broad Susitna Valley, and south towards Big Lake.
- Trail connection from the Meadow Lakes area north into the mountains and the Willow Creek drainage.
- Maintenance of the Big Lake trail system as it crosses west towards the Susitna River – the plan identifies the need to reserve these routes that could be blocked by plans for a railroad and/or new highway running north south through this area.
- A greenbelt and trail following Wasilla Creek, from the Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge into the State Moose Range in the southern Talkeetna Mountains. This route would provide access to open space for the urbanized areas along the route, including a connection into the Matanuska Greenbelt area.

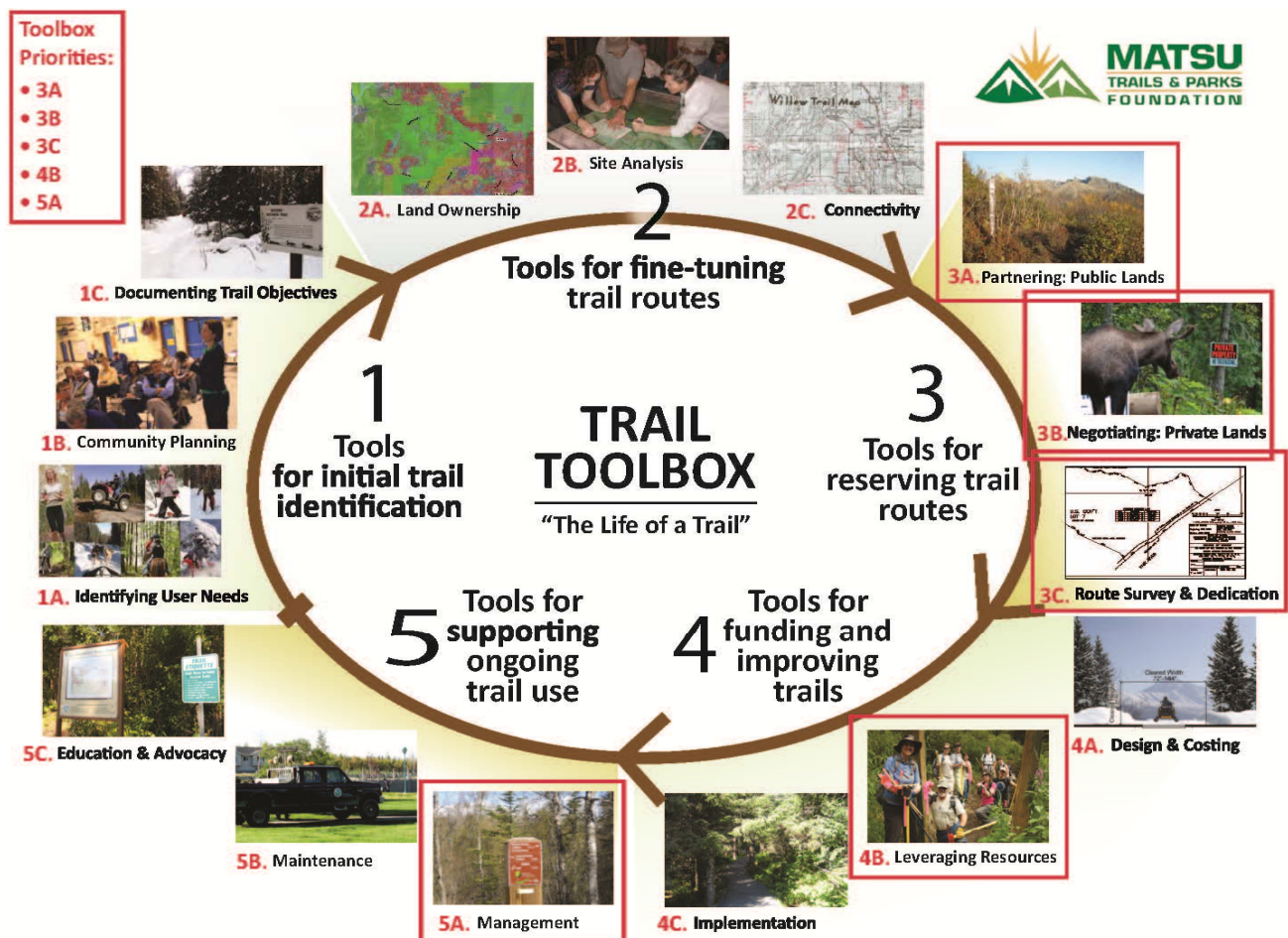
Several other regional connections were discussed by the public during the planning process but ultimately were not seen as practical priorities. One example was a proposed route along Cottonwood Creek between Wasilla and Big Lake. This route has been studied in the past. While it would provide a valuable trail, essentially all the land is private, much of the property is developed, and the conclusion was that the financial and political costs would be extraordinarily high.

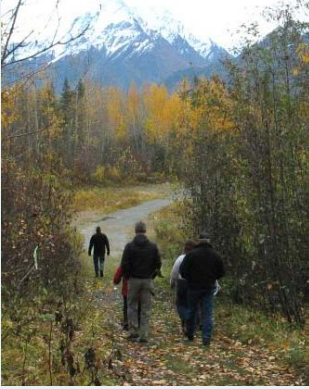
TRAIL TOOLBOX

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE TRAIL TOOLBOX?

While the Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation can only fund a limited number of projects each year, there are other ways they can support trail organizations in the Mat-Su Borough. During the master planning process, a number of trail development challenges were voiced by communities, regional entities and trail organizations. These challenges ranged from a need for trail design standards, to a lack of clarity and helpful guidance in the trail development process, to a need for better education about trail use and to mitigate user conflicts. The “trail toolbox”, including a subset of “priority tools” (see below) was developed in response to a shared set of non-project-specific needs. The trail toolbox provides the Foundation, Mat-Su residents, communities and organizations with resources to help move their trails projects forward. It will also help guide the Foundation’s advocacy and planning activities related to new trail projects, trail improvements, maintenance and management.

The “Life of a Trail” framework, shown below, identifies the necessary steps for successful trail development. Using this framework, the 2013 Plan includes a detailed set of priority trail toolbox tools. The complete or more comprehensive list of toolbox ideas is shown in Appendix B.





TOOL 3A. PARTNERING WITH PUBLIC LANDOWNERS

The Mat-Su region has vast reserves of public land, including thousands of acres that are dedicated to, or are compatible with public recreation and trails. That said, public lands have varying degrees of accessibility and suitability for trails, and public landowners have different policies and internal capacities that govern their ability to allow or provide trails (often tied to their funding and staffing levels). The table below highlights Mat-Su's main public landowners and key policies governing trail projects specific to their lands.

Level	Public Landowners	Key Policies
City ¹	City of Wasilla Public Works Department www.cityofwasilla.com Archie Giddings (907) 373-9010	Municipal Code (Chapter 5) City of Wasilla Comprehensive Plan (2011, see Chapter 6) Wasilla Trails Plan (1999)
	City of Palmer Community Development www.cityofpalmer.org Sandra Garley (907) 745-3709	Municipal Code (Chapter 3.20) City of Palmer Comprehensive Plan (2006, see Chapter 8) City of Palmer Parks, Trails & Recreational Fields Master Plan (2011)
Borough	Matanuska Susitna Borough Department of Community Development, Land & Resource Management www.matsugov.us Eric Phillips (907) 745-9869	Borough Code: Title 1.10: Borough Powers; Title 23.10 Real Property Management Title 2.85 Parks Recreation and Trail System Borough-Wide Comprehensive Plan (2005) Borough Long Range Transportation Plan (2007, see Chapter 5) Matanuska-Susitna Borough Recreational Trails Plan (2008) Other Borough Adopted Plans (community plans, master plans, etc.)
State	State of Alaska Division of Parks & Outdoor Recreation Wayne Biessel (907) 745-3975	Alaska Code: Title 38 Public Land Title 41.21. Parks and Recreational Facilities (.850 Article 8. Trails) Title 11 Natural Resources, Chapter 12 Public Use Title 11 Natural Resources, Chapter 18 (4) Special Park Use Permits Title 11 Natural Resources, Chapter 20 State Park Land & Water (see also http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/regstatu/statutes.htm)

¹ Note that in the Mat-Su Borough, only the Cities of Palmer and Wasilla have been delegated parks and recreational powers (Title: 1.10.121-2).

Level	Public Landowners	Key Policies
	State of Alaska Division of Mining Land & Water Clark Cox (907) 269-8565	Alaska Code: Title 38 Public Land Title 38.05.300 Special Use Designated Lands 11 AAC 96.020(a) Generally Allowed Uses
	State of Alaska Department of Transportation Allen Kemplen (907) 269-0513	Alaska Code: Title 41.21.866. Paths and trails along highways 13 AAC 02.430-455 ATV/Snowmobile operation on highways
	“Quasi- Public” Alaska Mental Health Trust Alaska Railroad Corporation University of Alaska	These publically-owned landholding entities were created under targeted enabling legislation. Given their specialized land interests, approach these entities as you would private landowners.
Federal	Denali National Park & Preserve www.nps.gov (907) 683-2294	U.S. Code: 36 CFR part 13 Consolidated General Management Plan (2006, page 65) Denali Backcountry Plan
Private	Cook Inlet Regional, Inc. (CIRI) CIRI Land and Resources Department (907) 263-5140 or (907) 274-8638	Links to popular lands areas, denoting Village and CIRI Land Ownership within the Mat-Su Borough: Kashwitna: http://www.ciri.com/Media/home/kashwitna.jpg Talkeenta Mountains: http://www.ciri.com/content/community/documents/Talkeenta_Mts_CIRILandStatus_24x36reduced.pdf Glenn Highway – Chickaloon: http://www.ciri.com/Media/home/chickaloon.jpg Point MacKenzie – Chickaloon to Wasilla (no map)

STEPS IN THE PROCESS

Rather than present formal procedures specific for every public landowner, general strategies are presented for effectively working within the policy framework that governs actions specific to public land. The one exception is the process for reserving Borough trails, which is outlined generally at the end of this section.

Do your homework: Public land managers oversee thousands of acres of land, often with few staff. When proposing a project or seeking to work with a public entity, do basic research on the land’s status, enabling legislation, and applicable adopted plans before approaching the land manager. This makes best use of staff’s limited time and indicates respect for the legalities governing public lands.

Build public support: Public processes favor broad-based coalitions with grassroots constituencies. Build a case for a project that demonstrates strong public support and outcomes compatible with a parcel's legislated purposes. Showing that the project is included in an approved local or regional plan is one good way to make this case.

Accept shared responsibility for costs and outcomes: Landowners are more receptive to projects when partners are willing to share costs, bring in funding from outside sources, and enter into maintenance agreements. This approach is especially warranted where new access is likely to result in new management issues and demands for new public services.

Be patient but persistent: With public lands, required legal and administrative procedures can take months and even years. When a project is a low priority, it can take much longer. Thus, exercise patience, but to also be willing to be a squeaky wheel if projects appear to be stalled.

REGIONAL COLLABORATION

There are many possible ways that different entities can enhance their success when partnering with public landowners on trail-related efforts:

Trail User's/Advocate's Role:

- Understand how government works and participate in civic processes that support trails.
- Advocate for public funding to support public landowners' and agencies' trail-related efforts.
- Be polite and respectful when interacting with public servants on trail-related issues.
- Be willing to pay user fees and make tangible contributions to improving and maintaining public lands.

Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation's Role:

- Build positive working relationships with the region's landowners and managers.
- Take an active role in local, state and federal agency planning processes, to ensure the interests of trail users are well represented when decisions are made affecting current or possible future trails.
- Work with the Borough, State and Federal agencies to secure funding to support trails on public land and for their ongoing maintenance and management.
- Help public landowners communicate with trail users, and vice-versa, by keeping up-to-date contact lists and helping facilitate the regular flow of pertinent information (e.g., public comment period notices).
- Help orchestrate and prioritize requests for local funding from state and borough sources and assist community trail users and trail organizations in submitting requests to the Borough and the State.

Borough/Agency/Landowner's Role:

- Help trail users and the public understand applicable policies and procedures, and expected timelines.
- Help implement specific trail projects on public lands that are aligned with legislative intent, that are consistent with and that support broad public goals (e.g., diverse outdoor recreation opportunities, healthy residents, community pride, economic development, expanded transportation options).
- Seek resources in annual budget cycles to support consistent trail-related progress.

MAT-SU BOROUGH TRAIL RESERVATION PROCESS

Nominate **primitive, backcountry and recreational** trails through the [Mat-Su Borough Recreational Trails Plan](#). Work with the MSB Community Development Department to complete an [MSB Trail Nomination Form](#) that will classify a trail (as Regionally Significant, or Locally Significant) and seek adoption in the Mat-Su Borough Recreational Trails Plan.

Nominate **separated paths** through the Borough's annual [Capital Improvement Program \(CIP\)](#). Work with your Road Service Area or City on the CIP nomination.



TOOL 3B*. NEGOTIATING WITH PRIVATE LANDOWNERS

At times, public trail routes are desired that cross one or multiple privately-owned parcels. A delicate, but critical step in the life of this trail is formally negotiating with the private landowner to secure public access. Below are a range of legal access options that can be considered during negotiations, along with pros and cons.

Legal Tool	Pros	Cons
Alaska Statute (AS) 11.46.350(3)(b) allows informal recreational use of “unimproved and apparently unused” private land.	Public access is typically allowed and no permission is required from landowners on “unimproved and apparently unused” land unless notice against trespass is clearly posted. Prescriptive rights are generally not established by this type of use. Landowners are generally covered by legal protections against liability associated with this use. For more specific guidelines, please see, for example, AS 09.65.200.	No continuing public access is assured. At any time, the property owner has the right to develop the site, fence off or inhibit access, and/or post “no trespassing,” signs, and to prosecute trespassers. Users may not modify, maintain, or improve access.
Private land lease	Public access is achieved on a fixed-term basis. A public agency or private non-profit is given the right to use, improve, and manage a trail in return for a fee, often for a multi-year period.	This is not a permanent protection. Accepting compensation also removes landowner protection from liability under state law, so insurance and liability agreements and costs are required.
Trail easement crossing private property	Permanent trail access is achieved, binding successive landowners. Compared with other legal protections (see below), easements are cheaper to achieve, and allow more flexible legal arrangement based on written contracts between a landowner and grantee. Landowners may be covered by legal protections against liability associated with this use (for example, AS 34.17.055).	This approach requires landowner good-will, and a willingness on their part to give up the future use of a portion of their private parcel. Formal relationships must be codified between the landowner, public, and a grantee on access, maintenance, construction, and liability insurance issues.
Private land deed restrictions and covenants (land remains private, but uses are restricted)	Permanent trail access is achieved, binding successive landowners. Moreover, as this tool is typically used to conserve a parcel’s natural habitat and restrict development, it protects a trail corridor’s natural and scenic features. Landowner may receive income and property tax benefits.	Similar to trail easements, this tool requires landowner good-will, and formal legal proceedings. In most cases a community will also need to raise funds to compensate landowners for voluntarily restricting development options on their parcel.

Legal Tool	Pros	Cons
Private land title acquisition by right of first refusal, fee simple purchase, donation, or exchange.	Permanent trail access is achieved, binding successive landowners. The public now owns the access route or parcel, inferring broad flexibility on trail-related access and improvements.	Similar to trail easements, this tool requires landowner good-will, and formal legal proceedings. It also can be expensive or cost prohibitive, particularly where trail routes cross multiple private parcels.
Dedicated public rights-of-way	Trail routes may be located along section lines or within public rights of way. Where these do not exist, when land is subdivided through the platting process, permanent protection of a dedicated right of way can be requested or required to serve public interest needs.	Although permanent access may be secured, an owner and/or developer may successfully fight the transaction as a “public taking.” The resulting trail is often a sidewalk or a narrow utility corridor that allows public access.

*NOTE: This Tool is not intended or offered as legal advice. These materials have been prepared for educational and information purposes only. They are not legal advice or legal opinions on any specific matters. The Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation does not endorse trespassing or any other unlawful behavior.

STEPS IN THE PROCESS

Note - Only initiate this process when Step 2 due diligence is complete (e.g., know who owns the land, and ensure that there are not more easily achieved trail routes).

Step 1 – Respect private property rights. View a possible trail crossing from the property owner’s point of view. Anticipate their concerns. Try to understand why they own their parcel and how it is used, so you can anticipate their needs and present the most appropriate options. Has the property been in their family for a few generations? This could indicate an unwillingness to part with the land—or a strong willingness to donate land trail corridor as a legacy. How might the addition of a trail on this property reduce or add value to future uses of the property? Are there trail or section line easements in the vicinity of the property that provide a starting point for examining trail options? Only when you understand and respect the property owner’s rights and are able to demonstrate awareness and sensitivity to their situation and needs, move to step 2.

Step 2 – Be flexible. Recognize that the ultimate objective is allowing trail users to get safely, and it is hoped, enjoyably, from point A to point B. In order to meet land owner needs, this might require deviating from a historic route, or accepting that the character of a trail may need to change.

Step 3 – Be prepared to put some skin into the game. Don’t go into negotiations expecting something for nothing. Even if you think a property owner is willing to donate land or grant a trail easement, are you prepared to cover the costs of finalizing all of the legal transactions? Or if a property owner is willing to trade for public land, does the public landowner have the willingness to trade and/or the authority or capacity to follow through? Recognizing that different landowners

have differing financial stakes in their property, do not assume that a trail route can be reserved without some form of compensation.

Step 4 – Approach negotiations as a soft sell, with a long term view. Begin landowner negotiations in a careful, relationship-building approach. Communicate the public value of your proposal and present the trail as an opportunity. Ask the landowner to “think about your proposal” and offer technical support, so that realistic options can be explored that will meet their specific needs. Any other approach will often result in a simple (and sometimes final) “no.” Anticipate that unless development is imminent, negotiations may need to be sustained over years, so build a positive relationship with the landowner; even if they say “no,” circumstances may change. Finally, if informal trails currently cross private lands, bend over backward to ensure that trail users respect private property, and do not advertise this trail (e.g., online maps) without the owner’s permission.

REGIONAL COLLABORATION

The table below anticipates the challenges inherent in this process and outlines possible ways different entities can support moving this stage of the process forward:

Trail User’s/Advocate’s Role: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support fundraising for property acquisition and/or transaction fees.• On existing trails, advocate for users to respect private property and owners’ privacy.
Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation’s Role: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish term contracts with real estate legal professionals, and organizations like the Great Land Trust, to create efficiencies in obtaining needed, ongoing professional technical support.• Educate trail users so they are respectful in the use of trails that pass through or near private lands.• Educate land owners about the value that can be added to their properties through proximity to well-designed, maintained and managed trails (in tandem with supporting better trail design and management in the region).• Seek funds and support for regionally supported, prioritized acquisition projects.
Borough/Agency Role: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Willingly accept acquired parcels and legal rights, and provide technical support for land transactions.• Focus resources and institutional will in support of prioritized acquisition projects.• During land adjudications (platting, requests to vacate section lines, right-of-way development), seek to retain or create public access where trails exist or future routes may be anticipated.

What can I do when someone takes actions to limit use of a legal public trail?

The Mat Su Borough has authority to take an escalating set of steps to enforce legality of public use of public land. This requires resolve on the part of the Borough, and its elected officials to take such actions.



TOOL 3C. TRAIL ROUTE SURVEY & DEDICATION

Once the trail route is finalized and property owners' agreements are secured, legally-binding recognition for the trail is sought. Formal route survey and dedication is the most permanent legal tool for protecting a trail route, an approach often used to secure trails which cross large blocks of undeveloped public lands. A range of options for securing public trail access, along with some pros and cons, are listed in the following table.

Legal Tool	Pros	Cons
Trail Route Survey & Dedication	State law and property records formally reserve a trail and will protect a permanent trail interest if/when a dispute arises. Once this level of legal protection is achieved, it is easier to obtain funding and permission to invest in improvements.	Legal formalities require money and time. A registered land surveyor and land recording professionals are required, as well as administrative staff time for public land entities. Because of the large investment required, this approach is most often used to dedicate one route over public lands, not a trail network.
Legal Trail Easement (a written contract between a landowner and grantee)	Obtaining an easement for a public trail binds successors and is a faster, cheaper, and more flexible legal arrangement (in contrast to dedication). The organization/entity that holds the interest in the property enforces the agreement.	This approach requires more attention to retaining a positive relationship between the landowner, the public, and the grantee, and ensuring that trail maintenance, construction, and liability insurance issues are worked out in the agreement.
By Right Public Access (some section lines, land grant provisions, state statutes, easements, etc.)	State and other government entities often reserve public access rights, for example along most section lines. Where public access is reserved legal routes through otherwise private lands can be established.	Users have the right to 'pass and repass' (i.e., to come and go), but in general no other rights. Public access rights, in particular section line easements, may or may not coincide with terrain that is suitable for trails. Section line and right-of-way easements often host roads and utilities.
Trail within a Public Right-of-Way (e.g., section line, dedicated/platted public access. Note: <u>utility lines</u> do <u>not</u> fit in this category)	Legal public access is allowed by right where these are physically present and/or dedicated.	Users have the right to 'pass and repass' (i.e., to come and go), but in general no other rights. Trails can be displaced, or moved and formalized (e.g., sidewalk) as roads or other right-of-way uses expand.

Legal Tool	Pros	Cons
Land Classification	On public lands, classifying parcels for recreation and open space can create a legal protection for trails, but often it must be aligned with the adopting policy (see tool 3A).	If the region's economic and political will shifts, there is a possibility that land can be easily reclassified, displacing trails and past community investment. Not all types of trails or trail locations may be deemed appropriate (e.g., critical habitat areas may limit public access due to wildlife impacts).

STEPS IN THE PROCESS

The first step in the formal dedication process often depends on the landowner. On Borough lands, Titles 15 and 23.10.110 governs the procedures for negotiating a trail dedication. On State of Alaska lands, notice is usually required prior to a dedication (AAC 38.05.850.c), as once a trail is dedicated it will not be functionally revocable. On lands owned by public entities such as the University of Alaska and Alaska Mental Health Trust, complex enabling legislation and agency missions may conflict with permanent public trail dedication. Once the landowner has authorized the dedication, the process order depends on whether the trail exists or is a new, unconstructed trail:

- **Existing trail with a defined physical location** – A registered land surveyor is hired to create a certified survey of the trail route. The survey is then recorded at a State of Alaska, Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Recording Office (Anchorage and Palmer). DNR then indexes, and archives all of the documents that create the Official Public Record of the State of Alaska.²
- **New-unconstructed trails** – Permission is generally granted to first construct, and *then* survey and record the trail. This helps a surveyor define the route and more importantly, it anticipates the need for routing adjustments made in the field during construction based on site conditions.

REGIONAL COLLABORATION

In the Mat-Su Borough there are currently 2,092 miles of formally-dedicated trails. Despite strong public support for dedicating trails, progress is very slow because of the investment and time required to complete the process, and also because trails cross different jurisdictions with different dedication requirements. The table below anticipates the challenges inherent in this process and outlines possible ways different entities can support moving this stage of the process forward:

<p>Trail User's/Advocate's Role:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing public support, political will, and Borough/Agency/Landowner budgets to support staff time are critical (also see tool 4B Leverage Resources). • It is important that users understand the administrative processes and challenges each landowner faces during the dedication process (also see tool 3A, Partnering – Public Lands).
<p>Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation's Role:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish term contracts with reputable land surveyors and real estate legal professionals, to create efficiencies and support trail dedication for high-priority regional projects. • Lobby to support public agency staff positions and funding for moving forward with trail dedications.

² Previously dedicated trail records are available through State Recording offices, or can be researched at: <http://dnr.alaska.gov/ssd/recoff/searchRO.cfm>

- Support for landowners, including coordination, seeking grants and donations, etc.
- Educate trail users, so they are respectful in the use of trails that pass through or near private lands.
- Convene a technical-legal working group to determine if trained volunteers, using rigorous standards, new measuring technology, and high resolution aerials, could complete the legal survey work at less cost than other alternatives.
- Work with the Borough and State to formalize land use regulations so that trails are identified and reserved when private land is subdivided, roads rights of way are reserved, or public land is sold.

Borough/Agency/Landowner's Role:

- Develop a priority list of trail dedications to move forward, as resources are available.
- Focus resources and institutional will in support of ongoing trail dedication work.
- During land adjudications (subdivision platting, requests to vacate section lines, right-of-way development) seek to retain or create public access where trails exist or future routes may be anticipated.



TOOL 4B. LEVERAGING RESOURCES

Finding funding for a project can be a challenging endeavor. However, there are a number of different resources available at the local, state, and national level. It is important to identify funding source(s) that best align with the unique needs and objectives of a particular project.

CAPITAL RESOURCES:

Before backing a project, potential funders like to know that appropriate steps have been taken to ensure the project's success. The exact requirements will vary greatly depending on the funder but almost all successful capital funding applications include:

- A trail project work plan.
- Site control (evidence the project is supported by the landowners along the trail).
- Maintenance agreements in conjunction with key stakeholders.
- Evidence of public support (e.g., inclusion in a community and/or regional plan; local contributions towards trail development costs, such as money, tools, land, labor).
- Partners (evidence of support by other entities, organizations, agencies, etc.).
- Credibility (evidence of past successes).
- Local group or organization that will lead the project to its completion.

OPERATIONAL RESOURCES:

While funding discussions tend to focus on initial capital construction costs, at least as important is the need to reserve resources for ongoing trail maintenance and management. Ongoing operations resources – volunteer and paid trail maintenance time, maintenance equipment, upkeep of signage and trail heads, managing trail use, etc. – are all necessary to ensure a park or trail continues to provide a quality experience. The table below includes options for both capital and operations.

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

Click on web links for additional details.

Capital Funding: Local	
Mat-Su Borough – Capital Improvement Program (CIP)	Each year the borough updates a six-year CIP list that includes priority trail projects over \$50,000 (it excludes maintenance items). Borough funding is often directed toward the selected projects. A project must be nominated, and after a thorough review, the list is finalized (no later than December 1st of every year). http://www.matsugov.us/planning/cip
Mat-Su Health Foundation	Offers Target Wellness Grants (up to \$15,000) and Healthy Impact Grant Program (over \$15,000). http://www.matsuhealthfoundation.org/grants.php
Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation	Offers grants and limited funding to trail and park projects around the Borough. http://www.matsutrails.org/
Private funders	Businesses are often looking for ways to contribute to the local community. In particular, companies working on large development and infrastructure projects are often willing to support local recreation efforts and can be great partners.
Recreational Trails Program (RTP)	These reimbursable, matching funds are available to develop and maintain recreational trails and related facilities. Applications are reviewed by the state's Outdoor Recreation and Trails Advisory Board and the Alaska Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation. http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/grants/trails.htm
Su- Knik Mitigation Bank	The Su-Knik Mitigation Bank was established to support local aquatic resources through concerted preservation and protection efforts. Most nonmotorized recreation is considered a compatible use. http://www.matsugov.us/communitydevelopment/su-knik-mitigation-bank
Capital Funding: State	
Alaska Dept. of Transportation – Safe Routes to School	These reimbursable grants are meant to support planning and improvement efforts that enable children to walk and bike to school safely. These can include trail and pathway improvements in areas immediately adjacent to schools. http://www.dot.state.ak.us/stwdplng/saferoutes/grants.shtml
Community Revenue Sharing	The State of Alaska provides communities with general funds to use as they see fit. The revenue sharing fund comes from money received by the State; the Legislature can choose to appropriate up to 20 percent toward the fund each fiscal year. These funds may be used at the community's discretion, including funding recreational uses such as trails and parks. http://www.commerce.state.ak.us/dca/pub/Community_Revenue_Sharing.pdf

Snowmobile Trail Grant Program	<p>These grants support snowmobile trail development, maintenance and education programs. The statewide Snowmobile Trails Advisory Council (SnowTRAC) distributes the funds, which come from state snowmobile registration fees. SnowTRAC also has a separate pool of funds to support snowmachine grooming around the state.</p> <p>http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/grants/snowmotr.htm http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/grants/groompl.htm</p>
State Transportation Funds	<p>This is applicable to trail funding more broadly. Work with the State Legislature to revise the formula allocating annual federal transportation funds so that a higher percentage of the funding goes to trail-related projects. Alaska currently allocates a much smaller percentage of these annual federal dollars to trail projects than most states.</p>
Capital Funding: National	
The Conservation Fund	<p>This organization provides technical assistance in fundraising, legal matters, real estate, and more to help communities conserve outdoor spaces.</p> <p>http://www.conservationfund.org/</p>
Federal Highway Administration	<p>The Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) funds a variety of transportation enhancement projects, including bike and pedestrian programs and projects, including the Alaska Federal Lands Access Program. These funds are managed through Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT/PF).</p> <p>http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation_enhancements/ The Alaska Federal Lands Access Program: http://www.wfl.fhwa.dot.gov/programs/flap/ak/index.htm</p>
Kodak American Greenways Grant Program	<p>Kodak provides grants for communities working to improve environments and the quality of life in communities around the country. They often partner with The Conservation Fund and National Geographic to fund projects.</p> <p>http://www.kodak.com/eknec/PageQuerier.jhtml?pq-path=2300595/2300598/2300617&pq-locale=en_US</p>
Land and Conservation Fund	<p>This National Park Service funding is administered through Alaska Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Division of Parks & Outdoor Recreation. It can provide up to 50 percent matching grants to state, regional, or local governments for land acquisition and the development of public outdoor recreational facilities. http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/grants/lwcf.htm</p>
Preserve America Federal Preservation Grants	<p>These grants are designed to support the use of historic properties for tourism, economic, educational and recreation purposes.</p> <p>http://www.preserveamerica.gov/federalsupport.html</p>

Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program	<p>This program, funded by the National Park Service, provides technical assistance to support community-led natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation initiatives. It does not provide monetary funding.</p> <p>http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/rtca/contactus/cu_apply.html</p> <p>To contact the Alaska office:</p> <p>http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/rtca/contactus/regions/alaska.html</p>
Tread Lightly - Restoration for Recreation	<p>This organization's Restoration for Recreation program helps supply matching funds to repair damaged recreation areas and improve them for future recreational use. http://treadlightly.org/programs/restoration-for-recreation/</p>
Tread Lightly Stewardship Grants	<p>This program provides small (up to \$1,000) grants to individuals and organizations engaging in small clean-up and maintenance projects.</p> <p>http://treadlightly.org/programs/stewardship-grants/</p>
Equipment and Materials	
Alaska Trails	<p>This statewide organization has a variety of trailbuilding resources, including a "tool trailer" that is available free of charge for volunteer trail construction and improvement projects.</p> <p>http://www.alaska-trails.org/resources/trailer.shtml</p>
IMBA Trail Care Crew	<p>International Mountain Biking Association (IMBA) program supports trail-building efforts around the country, particularly those geared toward biking.</p> <p>http://www.imba.com/tcc</p>
Mat-Su Borough's Trail Care Program	<p>This adopt-a-trail program provides volunteers with training in trail building and maintenance as well as hand tools, signage, and other equipment.</p> <p>http://www.matsugov.us/communitydevelopment/trails/trail-projects-a-programs</p>
Labor (in addition to volunteers)	
Alaska Job Corps	<p>This program supports people ages 16 through 24 through education and career technical training. http://alaska.jobcorps.gov/home.aspx</p>
Alaska State Parks	<p>The Conservation Corps program has a seasonal paid trail crew.</p> <p>http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/aktrails/index.htm</p>
AmeriCorps	<p>This program provides Americans with opportunities to serve their communities, either through a one-year program or through short term service projects. http://www.americorps.gov/</p>
American Hiking Society	<p>Volunteer Vacations. Crews consist of 6-15 volunteers and a crew leader. Tools and supervision are provided by the host agency or organization:</p> <p>http://www.americanhiking.org/volunteer-vacations/</p>
Mat-Su Borough	<p>The Mat-Su Borough has a paid trail crew. Please contact the Mat-Su Borough for more information.</p>

Mat-Su Correctional Center Institutions	Goose Creek Correctional Center: http://www.correct.state.ak.us/institutions/goose-creek Palmer Correctional Center: http://www.correct.state.ak.us/institutions/palmer
National Park Service	The National Park Service has a paid trail crew. Please contact the Alaska Regional Office for more information.
Other Resources	
User Fees	User fees can include charging for pins, stickers, parking passes, and memberships. One option, suggested by the public during the preparation of this Plan, was to increase existing user license fees, and use this money for improving and maintaining trails.
Fundraising Efforts	Fundraising efforts can include everything from donation bins to events such as banquets, races, or festivals.
Private Contractors	There are a number of firms that specialize in trail planning, design, layout and construction. These firms can provide useful assistance and support on trail projects.

In addition to the list above, the following sites offer an evolving list of additional resources and tips for securing project funds:

<http://www.imba.com/resources/grants>

<http://www.americantrails.org/resources/funding/index.html>

<http://www.americantrails.org/resources/fedfund/index.html>

http://www.lib.umn.edu/cgi-bin/forestry/index.cgi?page=search_trls



TOOL 5A. TRAIL MANAGEMENT

Trails require management on many levels to ensure safe, enjoyable, and continuous use by the public, and to protect community investment. Management activities (see table below) typically focus on:

TRAIL QUALITY

The quality of a trail depends on many things, including the quality of its original design and construction, its levels of use, the nature and regularity of maintenance, and the extent and effectiveness of trail management. Trail management is a tool to maintain both a positive, enjoyable trail user experience and the character and quality of the surrounding environment. Management strategies can include regular maintenance, use guidelines (e.g., closing trails during muddy conditions, signage, informational kiosks), and even design and material choices.

TRAIL USERS' EXPERIENCE

Different trail users have different expectations, needs, and even different design requirements for safety. Some trails can be comfortably used by a range of users; in other instances there is a need to manage trail use to serve only part of the spectrum of users (e.g., motorized, nonmotorized, equestrian, hiking). Management strategies can include providing trail etiquette and user information that minimizes conflict, such as establishing different trails or areas for different users, and even setting rules and schedules (e.g., Eklutna Lake trail's alternative day schedule).

PRE-CONDITIONS FOR SUCCESSFUL TRAIL MANAGEMENT

The majority of trails in the Borough today are multiple use trails – trails open to motorized and non-motorized use, and to a wide range of trail users, from hikers, to bikers, skiers, dog mushers, 4 wheelers, snowmachines and equestrians. Many local trail users strongly favor continuation of this multi-use focus, but many people also point out that some uses are incompatible and therefore some trails may need to be managed to support a narrower range of users, for example, trails primarily used for dog-sledding, or for nonmotorized uses. Successfully creating such trails typically requires four conditions:

- ***Trails for every user*** – Initial agreement that different trail users have different needs, and that these needs are valid and deserve to be met.

- **Wide agreement on a set of reasonable management rules** – A public process that allows different trail users to work together and reach a general agreement on management of specific trails.
- **Education** – A public education process, so everybody understands the rules.
- **Enforcement** – The capacity to enforce the rules, so that there are incentives to follow the agreed upon rules.

Trail Management Activities

Management supports ongoing trail use and preserves the quality of the user experience:

Management makes a significant difference in the day-to-day, season-to-season trail users' experience. This includes if and how the user learns about the trail (signs, maps, trail guides or online information); the conditions users find when they arrive (trailhead access, signage, site upkeep and sanitation, available amenities); and users' experiences on the trail (way finding, compatibility among users, trail grooming and tread conditions, and overall safety and enjoyment of the outdoor recreational opportunity).

Management protects public resources and limits risks: Ways to accomplish this can include developing and enforcing policies and rules; direct oversight of public lands, facilities, and finances; retaining and making available strategic data (maps, visitation levels, trail conditions); and providing stewardship, including the regular maintenance needed to protect initial investments.

Management helps gain the trust and cooperation of private land owners: Many traditional trails in the Borough cross private land. Private landowners' support is only likely if trail use is managed to minimize impacts.

Management promotes economic and community development goals: Trails are an economic attraction when they meet the needs and expectations of users. Management can help make trails a popular source of outdoor recreation, a source of community pride, ensure that public land uses are assets to surrounding areas, and at a broader level help create the quality attractions that become economic generators (not directly through fees, typically, but rather through visitor expenditure, stable property values, and local support for parks and trails).

STEPS IN THE PROCESS

Enhanced trail management in the Mat-Su region requires sustained, multi-step action coordinated among multiple entities. Essential, ongoing efforts include:

Clarify who is managing what – Looking to the Mat-Su trail assets that have been effectively managed over decades (The Aurora Dog Musers Club provides a great example), they all have in common clearly defined management roles, responsibilities, and accountability.

Build capacity – Cost-effective trail management occurs in a context where solid working relationships, refined knowledge and best practices, and ample resources are applied.

Educate – Bring together diverse trail users, work to understand one another’s needs and perspectives; out of these discussions, build relationships and understanding that can benefit all types of trail users.

Funding – Trails need routine improvements and maintenance. There are many diverse funding sources available for these efforts – see Tool 4B for more information. Volunteers can help offset the costs associated with ongoing trail upkeep.

Maintenance – All projects should come with a clear maintenance plan. A maintenance plan should identify:

- Who will lead the work (the “champion”) that not only advocates for the project, but ensures the project is well maintained.
- Who will actually do the work, whether the “champion,” a group of volunteers, or some other designated entity that ensures that all aspects of a given trail are well maintained.
- How the work will be funded. As state funding for trail grooming decreases, what funding is required to ensure regular trail maintenance? The trail “champion” could help identify new, creative funding sources, including: user fees, “trail angels”, volunteers, etc.

REGIONAL COLLABORATION

In the Mat-Su there are many miles of trails and numerous facilities, such as trailheads, that would benefit from enhanced, coordinated management. Recommended roles and tasks follow:

Trail User’s/Advocate’s Role:

- Individuals and user groups volunteer their labor for specific maintenance and management tasks.
- Non-profits, user groups, and communities play a role in direct trail management as a partner to public landowners. Because of fiscal and risk factors, this requires formal management and maintenance agreements, compliance with landowner policies, and accountability (e.g., annual reporting, inspections, insurance). Users support sustained management that directly benefits them through contributions, (e.g., Mat-Su Ski Club user pin fees, membership donations, tax-deductible donations, volunteering).
- Users build political will for funding and implementation of management activities at the Borough/Agency/Landowner level (also see tool 4B Leverage Resources).

Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation’s Role:

- Work with trail user organizations to educate and facilitate discussions on Trail Management Objectives (TMOs). The development and adoption of Mat-Su appropriate and specific TMOs will help to ensure project definition and positive outcomes and help to define regularly scheduled maintenance. Sample TMOs can be found online here:
 - USDA Forest Service,

http://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb5341754.pdf

- Alaska State Parks, http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/plans/denali/tmo_form.pdf.
- Guide a regional working group, in partnership with the Borough and other public landowners, that explores ways to refine and implement Mat-Su region appropriate management tools and procedures:
 1. Mat-Su Trail Management Objectives (TMO), to include a form and a planning/adoption process that covers both general provisions and facilitates/encourages tailoring the goals and objectives to the specific circumstances of the park or trail.
 2. Consistent trail use etiquette language and educational products (starting from Alaska Trails and the Mat-Su Borough's past work, but making it easier to read at a glance).
 3. Refined application of trail sign standards appropriate to the trail or park (reference the 2008 Mat-Su Borough Trails Plan).
 4. Develop forums for discussion and resolution of trail management issues.
 5. Develop and widely share educational materials that identify trail locations and permitted uses, including maps, websites, on-the-ground maps and signage.
- Coordinated and consistent GIS/GPS mapping approaches and standards, to include strategies for better delivery of quality online and published trail information.
- Mat-Su trail and park enforcement mechanisms to better protect public investments and safety and ensure the quality of the user experience.
- Support capacity building and provide resources for non-profits, groups of users, and communities that are seeking to play a role in direct trail management. This can include creating checklists and forms, giving direct technical support (accounting/reporting, legal management agreements, insurance, best maintenance tools and practices), and finally, providing funds to support entities that are taking on this role (e.g., liability insurance, trail management related training, tool caches, maintenance supplies).
- Help minimize user conflicts by working with users and the public at large on several levels:
 1. Engage trail superstars and athletes (e.g., Martin Buser) in developing public service announcements and in talking at schools and regional events about trail etiquette and respecting each other on the trail.
 2. In a neutral, facilitating role, support all of the region's trail users and user groups in articulating, documenting, and making progress on meeting their specific technical, functional, and experiential trail needs. Trail user conflict management, at its root, requires a move away from the shared, multi-use, one-size-fits all trails. Solutions depend on every trail group understanding and meeting their specialized location, design, construction, and management needs, with separation for incompatible uses.
 3. Create common experiences and a shared understanding to help bridge "us versus them" mentalities between users in the region. Shared work events, barbecues, and "spotlights" on favorite user experiences help bridge relationships with trails as a common cause.

Borough/Agency/Landowner's Role:

- In areas accessible to staff and crews, physically maintain and manage trails on a sustained basis.
- Establish the capacity to enforce agreed-upon trail management rules.
- Lead and partner management efforts with a focus on achieving the benefits associated

with trail management (see page one) and sustaining efforts that are cost-effective and that build capacity.

TRAIL CONDITION REPORT METHODOLOGY

Trail management needs to occur at several geographic scales. The focus of this project has been understanding and prioritizing trails at a regional and community scale. Over time, the trails foundation will also want to carry out further work at the scale of individual trails, documenting trail conditions, ownership, intended use, and other detailed trail attributes.

Public land managing agencies, such as the United States Forest Service (USFS), have created full systems for management of individual trails. These agencies have the resources and management authority to assign and evaluate:

- Trail Type (land, water, winter).
- Trail Class (from minimally to fully developed).
- Managed Use (mode of travel that is allowed and appropriate on a trail, based on its design and management).
- Designed Use (use for which trail is physically suited, considering attributes such as width, slopes, surface materials, sensitivity of surface and surrounding environment. Examples include: hike, pack and saddle, bike, 4-wheeler, snowmachine).
- Design Parameters (technical guidelines for the survey, design, construction, maintenance, and assessment of a trail, based on its Designed Use and Trail Class. Examples include design tread width, surface, grade, and cross slope).

Collectively, this set of information is referred to as Trail Management Objectives (“TMO’s”). The details of the TMO system developed by the United State Forest Service works well in the context when most land is in public ownership, and the agency has the resources and authority for active trail construction, maintenance and management. As time goes on, the Borough and the Trails Foundation are likely to have growing capacity for detailed management on at least some trails. In the meantime it is still valuable to set up a more modest system for describing trail characteristics and trail management goals.

Working with a small technical team including trail users, Trails and Parks Foundation board members, Borough staff and the planning project team, a basic template for trail management at a level appropriate for the Mat-Su Borough at this time was developed and is presented below. The goal of this template is to provide an initial tool for trail users, communities, and the Trails Foundation to begin the systematic documentation of trail characteristics that will serve the dual purpose of establishing a baseline for all trails and a longer-term system for consistent, standardized assessment of Mat-Su trails. Over time, the hope is that these groups will have greater capacity to construct, maintain and ultimately manage trails. As these capacities grow, the basic template can evolve to a system more like the detailed system employed by groups like the US Forest Service.

Mat-Su Trails + Parks Foundation – Basic Trail Condition Report Template						
Trail Name (and reference number if a designated MSB and/or Trails Foundation trail)	General Trail Location + Ownership (with GPS coordinates, if applicable)	Trail Type (land, water, snow, summer, winter)	Primary Uses (e.g., equestrian, biking, running, ATV, snowmachine, mushing)	Trail Conditions (poor, fair, good, excellent)	Community Assigned “Grade” (“A” – “F”)	Notes on needed actions or “fix-it tasks”
Trail XYZ	Central Valley	Summer	Hiking/Running	Good	C	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improve trailhead signage. 2. Improve trail signage with mile markers.

The idea behind this initial template is to start and build upon an easy-to-use mechanism, much like the Anchorage Park Foundation Park Report Cards system, <http://anchorageparkfoundation.org/programs/neighborhood-parks/park-report-cards/>, that provides the Trails Foundation and their project partners, including the Mat-Su Borough, trails users and residents, with a tool for evaluating the Mat-Su trail system. In the Anchorage Park Foundation example, the Foundation worked with local volunteers to complete over 1,000 “report cards” of over 100 Anchorage parks. The result was a better connection between the Anchorage Foundation and the Anchorage community, a heightened sense of community ownership over its system of parks, and a prioritized list of community-supported projects. The Anchorage Parks Foundation continues to use these report cards and the associated “Fix-It Lists” to allocate and advocate for project dollars. Developing a similar system for Mat-Su trails would contribute to increased awareness of the Trails and Parks Foundation and add to the more rigorous system for prioritizing projects outlined in the next section of this plan.

As a first step in learning more and conducting a more rigorous inventorying and prioritization among the current trails and parks priority projects presented in this plan, the Mat-Su Trails & Parks Foundation can use the template above, as well as the Anchorage Park Foundation Report Card model, to work with local city and community councils, trail user groups, the Mat-Su Borough, and other regional entities to organize a summer of “trail inventorying and reporting” to develop “Trail Report Cards” for each priority project in this Master Plan. Fleshing out the template above, the report cards could include information such as:

- Trail Name
- Trail Location + Land Ownership
- Trail History, Type + Primary Uses
- Neighborhood Statistics
- Trail Facilities
- Community Representatives
- Trail Findings and “Fix It Lists”
- Overall Grade – Could include user group, trail user, volunteer responses to the following survey questions (NOTE: This is a sample only and should be modified and adapted to adequately meet the needs of the Mat-Su Trails & Parks Foundation and their project partners).

MAT-SU TRAILS & PARKS FOUNDATION – SAMPLE TRAIL REPORT CARD (survey/assessment tool)

NOTE: For use by trail user groups, trail users, community/Mat-Su Borough residents, in assisting the Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation and their partners with assessing the status of trails and parks in the Mat-Su.

INSTRUCTIONS: To the best of your ability, please complete the following survey for the trail/park listed above. If possible, include photos, videos of the trail you are assessing. Send the packet of information to the designated contact.

BASIC INFORMATION

Date: ____ (year) / ____ (month) / ____ (day)

Trail/Park Name: _____

Trail/Park Location: _____

Trail GPS Coordinates: _____

Completed/Submitted By: _____

Contact Info – Email, Phone: _____

Assessment Team Leader (note: the person organizing this event and/or person you are submitting the completed form to): _____

ASSESSMENT

Signage (30 points):

1. This trail is adequately marked on approaching local (neighborhood, community), Borough, State roads. There are signs within five, three, one miles of the trail and, if applicable, a sign indicating trailhead parking.

Scale of 0-10: ____ Include documented photos/videos if you have them! matsutrails@gmail.com

2. This trail has adequate trailhead signage. Signage includes basic information regarding trail name, allowable uses, basic route map, contact information at two levels including: 1) emergencies; and 2) trail management, including contact numbers for reporting trail conditions, concerns, etc.

Scale of 0-10: ____ Include documented photos/videos if you have them! matsutrails@gmail.com

3. This trail has adequate trail markers. Trail markers include important trail data such as the following: regulatory signs (e.g., speed limits, stop signs); warning (e.g., “stop sign ahead” or “junction ahead”); reassurance (painted, reflective trail markers); identifier (types of trail use and/or difficulty rating – this info could also be posted on trailhead signage); and, information (direction, distance, location). *Adapted from “Guidelines for Marking Trails: Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources” (July, 2008).*

Scale of 0-10: ____ Include documented photos/videos if you have them! matsutrails@gmail.com

Have ideas for improving **signage** for this trail? List them in the space provided below:

Additional **signage** comments: _____

Access + Connectivity (30 points):

4. This trail has adequate access from local (neighborhood, community), Borough, and/or State-maintained roads.

Scale of 0-10: ____ Include documented photos/videos if you have them! matsutrails@gmail.com

5. This trail has adequate parking. The parking lot is not regularly full or over capacity. Even on busy days, most trail users can find a place to park.

Scale of 0-10: ____ Include documented photos/videos if you have them! matsutrails@gmail.com

6. This trail is well-connected to nearby communities (e.g., connects to community facilities such as local residences, housing developments, schools, libraries, trails, parks, etc.)

Scale of 0-10: ____ Include documented photos/videos if you have them! matsutrails@gmail.com

*Have ideas for improving **access and connectivity** for this trail? List them in the space provided below:*

*Additional **access + connectivity** comments:* _____

Condition, Maintenance + User Compatibility (40 points):

7. The trail design – length (5 pts), width (5 pts), slope (5 pts), surface (5 pts) – is adequate for primary trail users.

Scale of 0-20: ____ Include documented photos/videos if you have them! matsutrails@gmail.com

8. The trail and associated facilities including parking areas and facilities, trailhead signs, trail markers and trail design (see above) are well maintained.

Scale of 0-10: ____ Include documented photos/videos if you have them! matsutrails@gmail.com

9. Existing trail uses are compatible and trail users conflicts are minimal to none.

Scale of 0-10: ____ Include documented photos/videos if you have them! matsutrails@gmail.com

*Have ideas for improving **the condition, maintenance, compatibility** for this trail? List them in the space provided below:*

*Additional **condition, maintenance, compatibility** comments:* _____

SCORE:

- Signage (out of 30) _____
- Access + Connectivity (out of 30) _____
- Condition, Maintenance, Compatibility (out of 40) _____

TOTAL (out of 100): _____

GRADE (A – F, see scale below): _____

90-100 = A

80-89 = B

70-79 = C

60-69 = D

0-59 = F

*NOTE: This is a very basic idea of what the “overall grade” and/or a potential survey to trail user groups could include

Thank you for completing this survey and for helping to make Mat-Su trails and parks great!

May we add you to our contact list and send you updates on Mat-Su Trails and Parks

Foundation events (e.g., upcoming community trails/parks projects, volunteer opportunities, funding opportunities and much more!)? *(please check one)*

_____ Yes, please.

_____ No, thank you.

The MSTPF could play a significant role in organizing a team of trail experts and representatives (i.e., “Trails Technical Team”) that would take ownership of the report card process, from development of the reporting tool (i.e., refining the sample tool above), to recruiting, training and supervising a set of community volunteers (e.g., subregional groups that have “assessment or report card leads”) that would help distribute, collect, input, analyze and market priority project surveys and/or report cards. The survey information, housed as a database with the Trails and Parks Foundation, Borough, and/or other regional/appropriate entity, would be the starting point for a “Mat-Su Trails and Parks Inventory”.

The Trail Technical Team could work with user groups and residents to ensure the reliability and validity of the more technical/legal information that would eventually become a part of the database (e.g., survey components including trail width, length, GPS coordinates, slope, land ownership, etc.). The database could be added to and updated in order of priority projects and/or as resources become available. For example, any trail user group in the Mat-Su may already have information to add to a baseline trail inventory, as achieved by the survey above, or may have additional, more detailed information.

By developing and supporting a process as described above, the Trails and Parks Foundation would also help to build the necessary network of trail supporters and advocates that would feel invested in their local trails and parks. As evidenced by the successes of the Anchorage Park Foundation, this would increase the chances of getting the right local and regional endorsement necessary when advocating and fundraising for trails projects.

PRIORITY PROJECTS

WHAT ARE THESE PROJECTS AND HOW WERE THEY SELECTED?

The Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation identified a list of 22 projects that are considered high-priority needs. These are the projects that the Foundation would like to focus on in the near-term. The starting point for this list came from multiple sources: project suggestions from stakeholder interviews, community meetings, the Borough Assembly, the Mat-Su Borough's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) list, and from almost 30 previous community and regional plans. Projects that were mentioned across more than one of these sources were assembled in an initial comprehensive list of important trail projects. This full list is presented in Appendix A. This list was then narrowed using additional community feedback and the selection criteria presented below.

It is important to note that the Mat-Su Borough is a trail-rich area. These top priorities are by no means the only important projects in the region; however, some structure for setting priorities is required for the Foundation and funders to make progress. Through this careful Master Plan process this subset emerged as key projects the Foundation will push forward over the coming years. As these projects are completed and as new issues and opportunities emerge the list will continue to evolve. And again, all the trails listed in Appendix A are valuable, and communities and user groups should freely reference this list as they use this Master Plan with funders and others to work on any given project.



SELECTION CRITERIA

Selecting priorities required looking at projects from multiple perspectives, including impact, cost, risks, etc. Working with communities, an extended criteria list was developed to help frame thinking about which projects should “make the cut.” These criteria are a key element of the Master Plan, intended to provide ongoing overarching and specific guidance for project selection. The criteria were used at community meetings to encourage participants to think broadly about what might be considered a priority.

To further narrow down the project list, the project team focused on what emerged as “meta-criteria” – the subset determined to be the most important for this project. The final project priority list includes a diverse set of projects, each of which meets a number of these criteria. The meta-criteria include:

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

- Is there a local leader or group championing the project?
- Does the project enjoy broad-based community support, as evidenced by, for example, inclusion in a community or trails plan, community council action, etc.?

CONNECTION

- If appropriate, does the project connect trail systems or communities?

VERY HIGH LOCAL AND REGIONAL COMMUNITY VALUE

- Is the project particularly important locally and also have important regional value?

“LOW-HANGING FRUIT”

- Is the project an easy win?
- Does the project improve materially upon what we already have?
- Is the project realistic and manageable?

USER & GEOGRAPHIC DIVERSITY

- Does the project contribute to a package of priorities that together serves a diverse range of user groups?
- Does the project contribute to a package of priorities that together provides opportunities across different parts of the Mat-Su Borough?

NEAR-TERM VULNERABILITY

- Is this trail at risk of being lost, or converted, to an unrelated (i.e., non-trail, recreation) future use?

HIGH ECONOMIC IMPACT

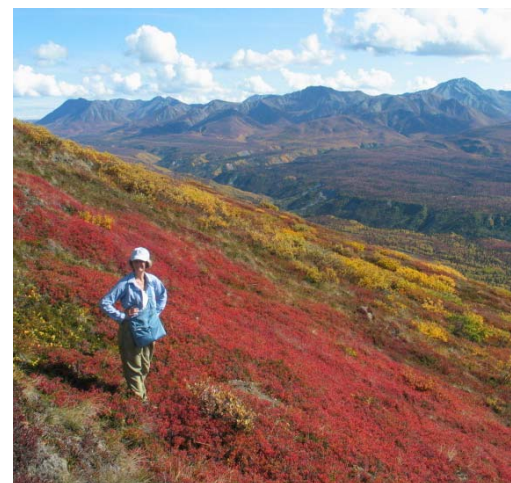
- Will the project generate local revenue, jobs and business opportunities by attracting out-of-town visitors, including Alaska, Lower 48 and international groups?
- Does the project benefit multiple borough communities, residents, and user groups?
- Does the project build on our strengths and provide high value for the required investment?

PARTNERSHIPS

- Is there a clear leader or champion for the project?
- Does the project create valuable new partnerships for the Foundation?

PROJECT LIST

- Aurora Dog Trails (Big Lake)
- Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina Historic Trail
- Connector Trail near Proposed Visitor Center
- Designated OHV/ATV playground
- Eastside Loop Trail
- Eska Falls Trail
- Eska Falls, Knob Hill Management Plan
- Government Peak - Lighted Ski Trails + Other Improved Facilities
- Historical Trails in Eureka Mining Area
- Houston High School Cross-Country Ski Trails
- Iditarod Trail Improvements
- Jordan Lake Park (Big Lake)
- Matanuska Greenbelt External & Internal Connectivity
- Matanuska River Railroad Right-of-Way
- Pinochle Trail / Hicks Creek Trail
- Port MacKenzie Railroad Impacts
- Purinton Creek Trailhead
- Ridge Trail Recreation Area
- Sutton, Chickaloon, Glacier View/Eureka Trails
- Trunk Rd Roadside Trail
- Wasilla Creek Connector
- Willow-Big Lake Connection





Our Mission

The Mat-Su Trails & Parks Foundation strives to develop and maintain a quality trails and park system, which promotes healthy lifestyles, enriches our residents' quality of life, and provides economic value by enhancing recreation, tourism, and business opportunities for all.

Trails and Parks Master Plan for the Mat-Su Area East Valley Priority Projects

The projects that follow meet criteria as regionally-important priorities for the Foundation to support; many are currently adopted in community/regional plans:

Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina Historic Trail:

Work to connect a legal, regional trail route that incorporates historic segments and creates a unique trail experience (ID #24).

Connector Trail Near Proposed Visitor Center:

Link the new Mat-Su Convention and Visitor Center as a hub with improved trails connecting to natural and historical features (flats, river trails) and nearby open space and trail destinations such as Crevasse-Moraine, Glenn Highway multi-use pathways, and Matanuska Lake State Recreation Area (ID# 1d).

Designated OHV/ATV playground:

Dedicate a motorized park for ATV/OHV users where they can “play” without doing damage to trails. Designated sites could be in the Knik River, Jim Creek area, South of KGB/Point Mac area, and/or in west Hatcher Pass (ID #44).

Eska Falls, Knob Hill Management Plan:

Develop management solutions to sustain safe and legal public land access, and protect trail investments (ID #22b).

Eska Falls Trail:

Construct motorized and non-motorized trails in the Knob Hill area to include survey work, easement acquisition, and trail signage (ID #22a).

Historic Trails in Eureka Mining Area:

Retain historic trails for continued mining use, especially in the Boulder Creek area (ID #39).

Matanuska Greenbelt External and Internal Connectivity:

Formalize and enhance trail linkages between the Crevasse-Moraine system, surrounding areas, and the Matanuska Lakes State Recreation Area (ID #1a).

Matanuska River Railroad Right-of-Way:

Seek to connect Palmer and its riverfront with trails that extend north to the Moose Creek Campground. Seek routing options with railroad rights-of-way, public lands, and connections that offer trailhead opportunities and long term solutions given riverbank erosion and unstable bluffs (ID #31).

Pinochle Trail/Hicks Creek Trail:

Seek permanent legal access solutions that support long-term use and protection of this historic trail (ID #104).

Purinton Creek Trailhead:

Improve to sustain heavy use, and find routing and trailhead access solutions (ID #102).

Sutton, Chickaloon, Glacier/Eureka Trails:

Support local efforts to maintain safe, quality trail experiences through the region, using partnership approaches and management agreements where needed (ID #28).

East Valley Snapshot:

Boundaries:

Wasilla Creek east to Knik Glacier
and Lake Louise

(Partially shown on map, below)

East Valley dedicated trail mileage (approximate) as of 2013: 511 miles

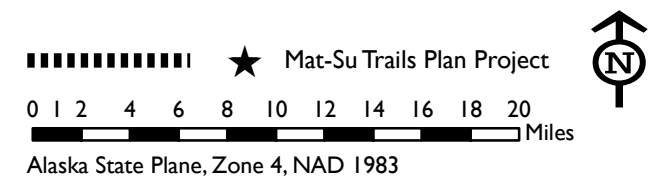
East Hatcher Pass Area	72
Palmer Area	97
Sutton Area	18
Glenn Highway Area	105
Eureka-Lake Louise Area	219

Source: Matanuska-Susitna Borough Public Use Trails Summary, 6/29/2011.

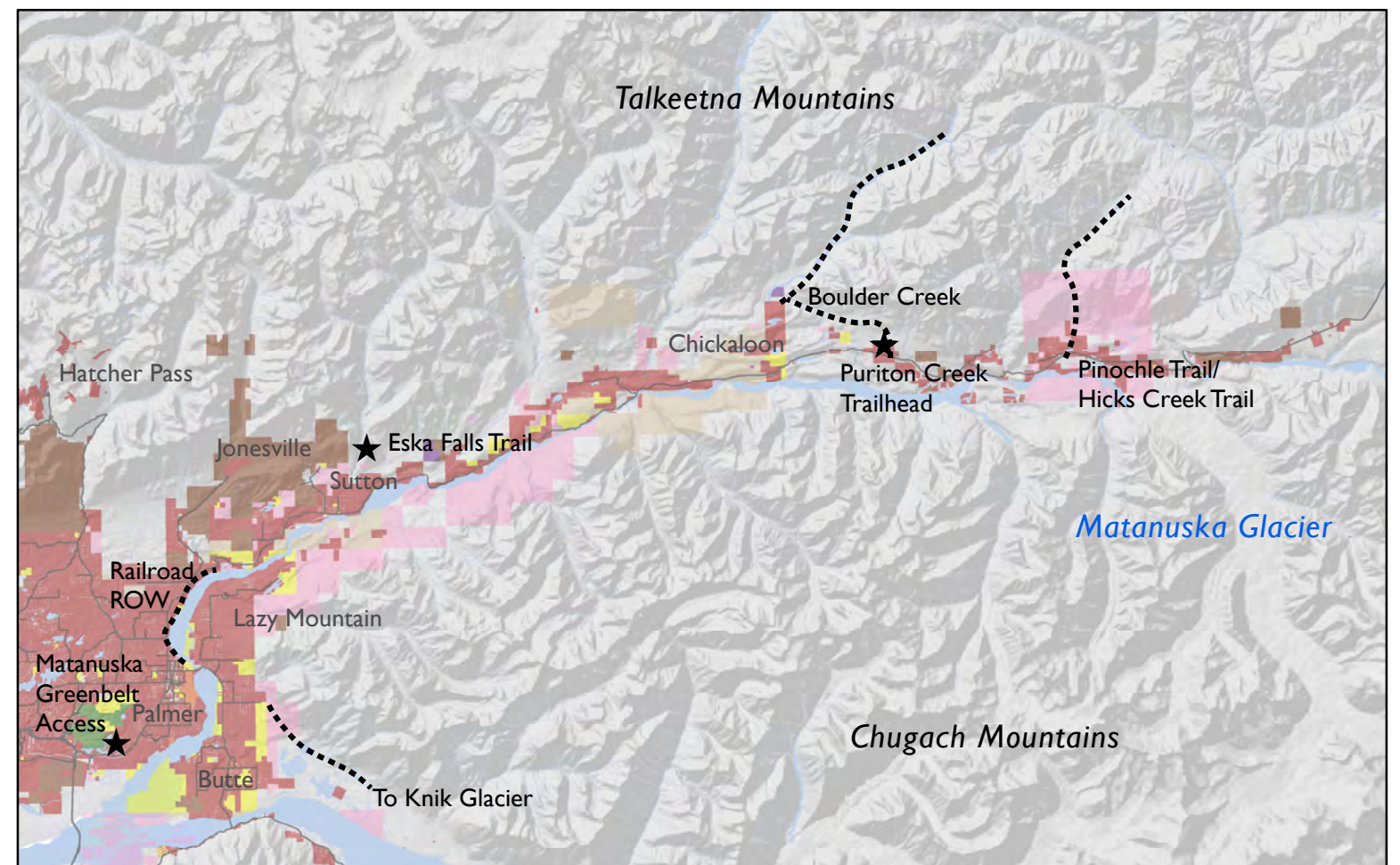
Approximate population:
28,295 (2010 U.S. Census)

Land Ownership Status

Private	State	Native Corporation
City	Mental Health Trust	Federal
Borough	University of Alaska	



Map compiled for Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation by Agnew::Beck 7.12.2013.
Data source: U.S.G.S. and D.O.T.; 2010 U.S. Census; Mat-Su Hydro, current as of 2008 was originally obtained from the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Office of Information Technology, and was used to create this product. The Matanuska-Susitna Borough assumes no responsibility for the completeness or accuracy of the data contained within. Land ownership and Mat-Su borough boundary source unknown.





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The projects that follow meet criteria as regionally-important priorities for the Foundation to support; many are currently adopted in community/regional plans:

Eastside Loop Trail:

Acquire a new six mile route working across private land (CIRI) that resolves access issues, provides connectivity for residents and visitors to downtown Talkeetna, and offers scenic view opportunities. (ID #38)

Ridge Trail Recreation Area

Protect and expand the popular Ridge Trail. This would yield a year-round permanent multi-use trail that would be accesible from town via the Eastside Loop trail, and itself link to other outlying trails. (#203, #204)

Trails and Parks Master Plan
for the Mat-Su Area
Upper Valley Priority Projects

Upper Valley Snapshot:

Boundaries:
Denali Highway south to Willow
(Partially shown on map, right)

Upper Valley dedicated trail mileage (approximate) as of 2013: 1,015 miles

Denali Highway Area	210
Denali State Park	45
West Petersville	216
Petersville-Trapper Creek	119
Talkeetna	192
Trapper Lake-Amber Lake	81
Kashwitna-Montana Creek	69
Willow Area	58

Source: Matanuska-Susitna Borough Public Use Trails Summary, 6/29/2011.

Approximate population:
4,906 (2010 U.S. Census)

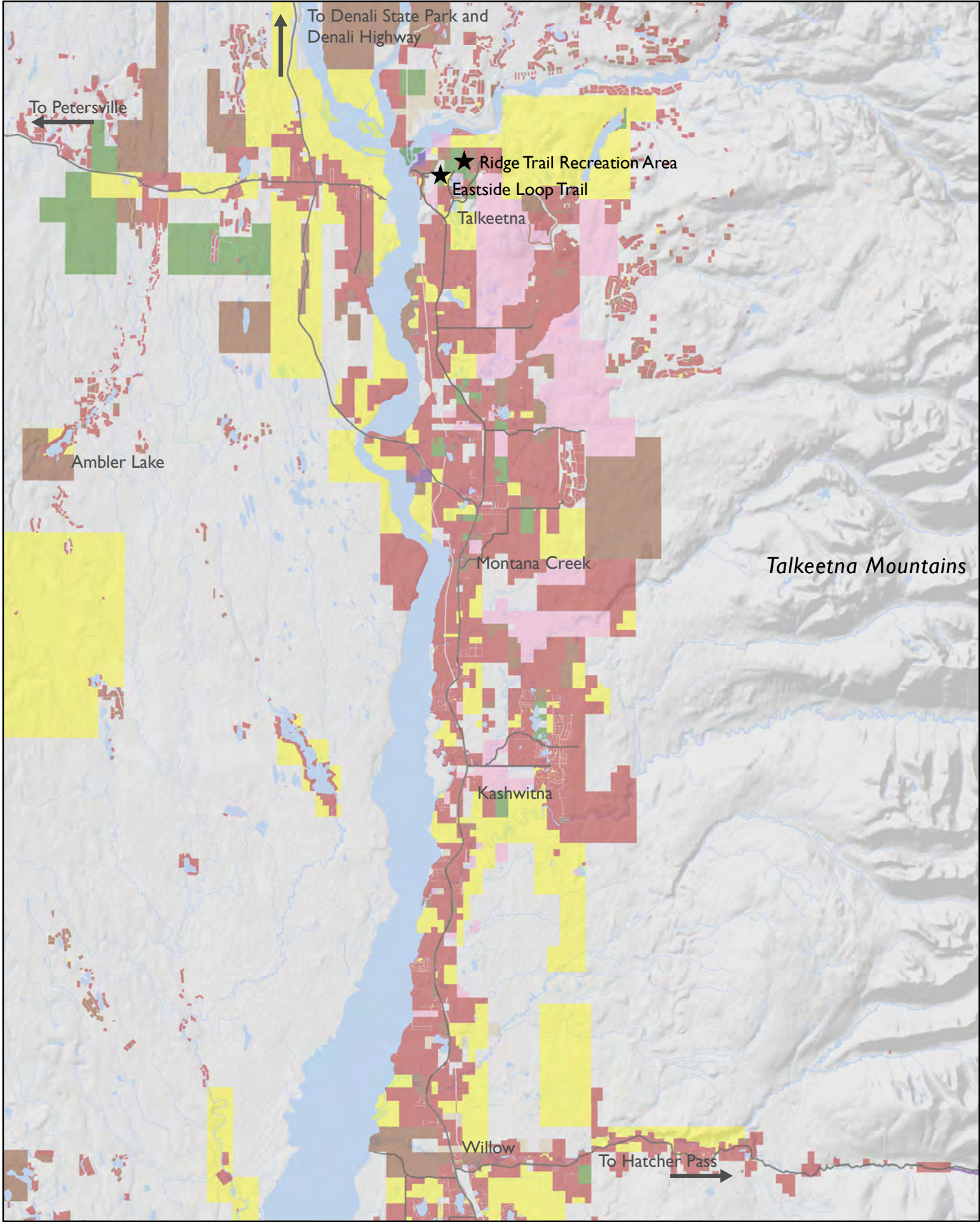
Land Ownership Status

Private	State	Native Corporation
City	Mental Health Trust	Federal
Borough	University of Alaska	

Mat-Su Trails Plan Project

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 Miles

Alaska State Plane, Zone 4, NAD 1983
Map compiled for Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation by Agnew::Beck 7.13.2013
Data source: U.S.G.S. and D.O.T.; 2010 U.S. Census; Mat-Su Hydro, current as of 2008 was originally obtained from the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Office of Information Technology, and was used to create this product. The Matanuska-Susitna Borough assumes no responsibility for the completeness or accuracy of the data contained within. Land ownership and Mat-Su borough boundary source unknown.





Our Mission

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The projects that follow meet criteria as regionally-important priorities for the Foundation to support; many are currently adopted in community/regional plans:

Aurora Dog Trails (Big Lake):

Survey/dedicate regionally significant mushing trails (ID #45).

Designated OHV/ATV playground:

Dedicate a motorized park for OHV/ATV users where they can "play" without doing damage to trails. Designated sites could be in the Knik River, Jim Creek area, South of KGB/Point Mac area, and/or in west Hatcher Pass (ID #44).

Government Peak Lighted Trails and Other Improvements:

Enhance with ski trail lighting and improved facilities (ID# 2e).

Houston High School Cross Country Ski Trails:

Establish a non-motorized system, potentially linked to Rocky Lake and/or Hawk Road (ID# 13).

Iditarod Trail Improvements

Upgrade a five-mile segment of the historic trail between the Historic Knik Townsite and Fish Creek (ID# 43).

Jordan Lake Park (Big Lake):

Enhance trail system and increase public use (ID #47).

Port MacKenzie Railroad Impacts:

Protect regional trail connectivity, to include an Iditarod Trail railroad bridge and safe crossings (ID #41).

Trunk Road Roadside Trail:

Establish multi-use roadside trail along Trunk Rd between the Palmer-Wasilla Hwy and Palmer Fishhook Rd. (ID#1c).

Wasilla Creek Connector:

Seek a route to connect the Moose Range to the Palmer Hay Flats. Use a combination of routes adjacent to highways and river routes that cross private land and protect the anadromous stream (ID# 5A).

Willow-Big Lake Connection:

Create legal trail connections to connect 4-wheeler, snowmachine, dog mushing, and multi-use trails (ID# 11).

Trails and Parks Master Plan for the Mat-Su Area Central Valley Priority Projects

Central Valley Snapshot:

Boundaries:

Nancy Lake south to Point MacKenzie, Susitna Flats east to Wasilla Creek and the Palmer Hay Flats.

(Partially shown on map, right)

Central Valley dedicated trail mileage (approximate) as of 2013: 591 miles

Nancy Lake SRA	28
West Hatcher Pass	128
Big Lake Area	49
Wasilla Area	10
Knik-Susitna River Area	376

Source: Matanuska-Susitna Borough Public Use Trails Summary, 6/29/2011.

Approximate population:
55,794 (2010 U.S. Census)

Land Ownership Status

Private	State	Native Corporation
City	Mental Health Trust	Federal
Borough	University of Alaska	

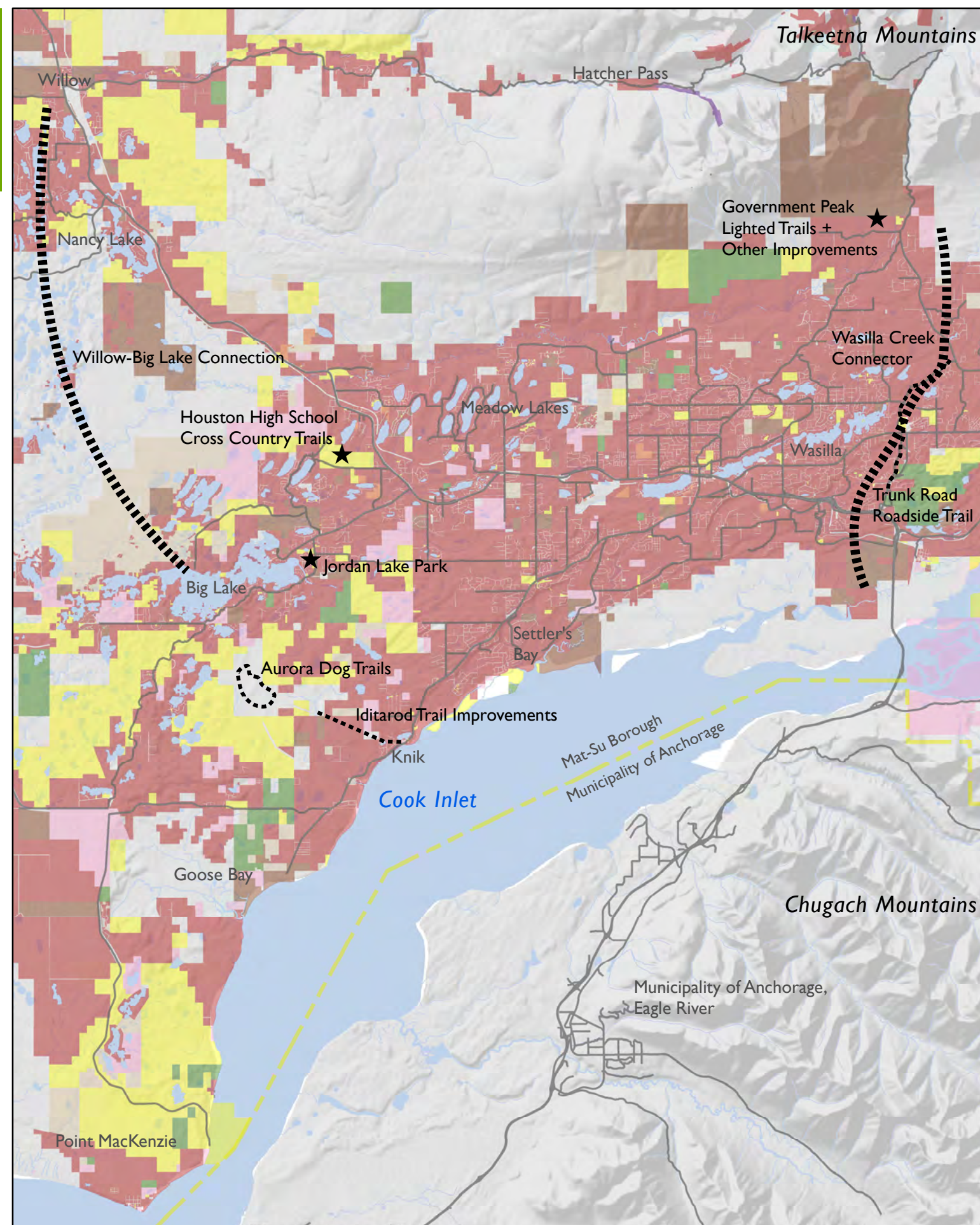
■■■■■■■■■■ ★ Mat-Su Trails Plan Project

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 Miles



Alaska State Plane, Zone 4, NAD 1983

Map compiled for Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation by Agnew::Beck. 7.12.2013
Data source: U.S.G.S. and D.O.T.; 2010 U.S. Census; Mat-Su Hydro, current as of 2008 was originally obtained from the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Office of Information Technology, and was used to create this product. The Matanuska-Susitna Borough assumes no responsibility for the completeness or accuracy of the data contained within. Land ownership and Mat-Su borough boundary source unknown.



DETAILED PROJECT PRIORITY LIST

For each of these projects the following information is provided.

1. Project Name
2. Project Type
3. Trail Identification #, Location
4. Description
5. Rationale
6. Immediate Action Steps

AURORA DOG TRAILS

Project Type: Secure Easements

Trail #45

Location: Big Lake

Description: This trail system is one of only two established dog mushing trails in the area. There is significant community support. The trails are situated primarily on state land and some private. In the system, there is one multi-use trail, the "straightaway". The remaining trails are dogs-only. The trail was surveyed in April 2013 and Aurora Dog Musers have filed an easement application with DNR. This project requires Borough designation as a Borough recognized trail.

This project is supported by: the Mat-Su Borough's regionally significant trails list and community meetings.

CHICKALOON-KNIK-NELCHINA HISTORIC TRAIL

Project Type: Connection

Trail #24

Location: Chickaloon, Knik, Nelchina

Description: This scenic trail is an established historical route but not designated. It needs maintenance. The trail connects many existing popular trails and would help educate visitors and residents about the mining history in the area. Most of the trail is on private land. Many segments are protected/used, e.g., King River (#23), Boulder Creek (#103), Caribou Creek (#105), Squaw Creek (#106), Alfred Creek (#110), Crooked Creek (#112) and more. The National Park Service was once approached about getting a historical designation, but they did the Chickaloon trail instead.

This project is supported by: the Mat-Su Borough's regionally significant trails list; the draft Matanuska River Watershed Recreation and Trails Plan and community meetings.

CONNECTOR TRAIL NEAR PROPOSED VISITOR CENTER

Project Type: Connection

Trail #1

Location: Adjacent to proposed Mat-Su Visitor Center by Glenn Highway

Description: This project is adjacent to the proposed Mat-Su Visitor center and would transform the visitor center from a static place to pick up brochures into a recreational destination; a place for a cup of cocoa or a beer after fishing or at the end of a ride, ski or walk. The route could follow a historic trail that travels between the railroad and the edge of the wetland area; part of it could follow the river. In conjunction with the visitor center, the trail would help attract out-of-town visitors to Mat-Su. The trails could also extend to floodplain trails, to the Matanuska Greenbelt and to the Old Matanuska and Fishhook trail systems. This project would also bring new partners (specifically the business community) to the Foundation.

This project is supported by: community meetings.

DESIGNATED OHV/ATV PLAYGROUND

Project Type: New Park

Project #44

Location: South of KGB/Point MacKenzie Area, or Knik River, Jim Creek

Description: Residents would like to see a dedicated motorized park for ATV/Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) users where they can "go wild" without doing damage to trails. This would alleviate some of the user conflicts on other Borough trails and would provide a more controlled environment for motorized users who want to develop their skills. The Borough Assembly already set aside an area for this use: 320 acres of Borough land at Point MacKenzie that was formerly a gravel site. There is some concern that the Point MacKenzie area is not big enough and that alternately there may be space on the western side of Hatcher Pass. Knik River Flats is also a possibility. This could be an ideal location for heavy use/heavy impact motorized recreation. Regardless of location this action requires a management plan which could include a concession operator. Alternative possible areas typically back onto established residential areas.

This project is supported by: community meetings.

EASTSIDE LOOP TRAIL

Project Type: Improvements

Trail 38

Location: Talkeetna

Description: This trail would begin in Talkeetna and provide an enjoyable, scenic route through lands surrounding the town. This trail has broad community support as well as high recreational value and economic potential. However, it also has near term vulnerability given its location and land ownership status. It lies on a combination of state, private, CIRI and borough land. The trail is not advertised for this reason but if the route was made legal, it could be promoted, creating a

significant attraction for Talkeetna's tourism based economy. This trail is also a vital link from the town to outlying trails, and provides an attractive partnership opportunity with CIRP's Talkeetna Alaskan Lodge.

The Talkeetna Parks Advisory Committee is solidly behind the project and working with the Borough for assistance in obtaining the required easements. Routing this trail along the lower bluff below the lodge and then connecting to existing trail systems, including the Ridge Trail, at "Four Corners", would provide a key segment of the loop and also resolve a long standing and difficult trail conflict issue associated with Old Lake Road. Securing a trail easement that would allow this trail to connect from the scenic overview parking area at mile 13 on the Talkeetna Spur Road along the east side of the Twister Creek lowlands to the River and Ridge Trail and back to Talkeetna is very important. The trail could also connect to existing trails at the end of Christiansen Lake Road. However, there are some land ownership and topographic challenges associated with this project.

This project is supported by: community meetings, the Talkeetna Parks Advisory Committee, the community Special Use District (SPUD) and the Talkeetna Tourism Plan.

ESKA FALLS TRAIL

Project Type: Trail Improvements

Trail #22

Location: Sutton Area

Description: This is a regionally important connection into the Talkeetna Mountains backcountry. While the project is in the Sutton area, many Borough residents use these popular trails to access the backcountry. Motorized and nonmotorized users both enjoy the trail system frequently. Mat-Su Borough trail crews completed various improvements on the new nonmotorized trail portion during the summer of 2013.

This project is supported by: the Mat-Su Borough's CIP list; the Mat-Su Borough's regionally significant trails list; the draft Matanuska River Watershed Recreation and Trails Plan; the Sutton Comprehensive Plan, and many user groups and communities throughout the borough.

ESKA FALLS, KNOB HILL MANAGEMENT PLAN

Project Type: Management

Trail #22

Location: Sutton area

Description: This popular area is seeing increasing trail use and user conflict. Trails and fish streams in this area are being damaged, and there is virtually no enforcement. This popular area needs additional management in order to sustain continued levels of use.

This project is supported by: the Mat-Su Borough's CIP list; Mat-Su Borough's regionally significant trails list; the draft Matanuska River Watershed Recreation and Trails Plan; the Sutton Comprehensive Plan and community meetings.

GOVERNMENT PEAK - LIGHTED SKI TRAILS + OTHER IMPROVED FACILITIES

Project Type: Improvements

Trail #2

Location: Hatcher Pass

Description: This priority endorses an effort in progress to create a four-season, trail-focused destination resort on the south facing slope below Government Peak. The Borough is leading this project as part of a planning process underway for more than 10 years. This project addresses many of the unmet needs for a diverse set of users in the area. The recently approved Government Peak-Hatcher Pass Asset Management Plan outlines the intentions for this area, which include further expanding and adding lighting to cross-country ski trails; adding summer hiking, biking and equestrian trails; and developing a community center, housing and limited commercial uses. Planning for this collection of uses is one part of the broader planning for the Hatcher Pass area. The ultimate goal in the Government Peak subunit is a set of facilities serving a wide range of users, including competitive cross country races and casual recreational hikers and strollers, bikers, equestrians and skiers.

This project is supported by: Hatcher Pass Management Plan and community meetings.

HISTORICAL TRAILS IN EUREKA MINING AREA

Project Type: Management

Trail #39

Location: Sutton/Chickaloon/Eureka area

Description: These trails are widely used. Preserving trails and future trail opportunities is seen by local residents as one of the most important issues in the Glacier View/Eureka area. Residents indicated that historically mining trails should remain open for mining. Many of these claims are located at Boulder Creek and accessed through a network of trails. There is widespread local support to protect mining access, although many trail users from other parts of the Mat-Su Borough indicated that they would like to see mining phased out.

This project is supported by: the Mat-Su Borough's regionally significant trails list and community meetings.

HOUSTON HIGH SCHOOL CROSS-COUNTRY SKI TRAILS

Project Type: Connection

Trail #13

Location: Big Lake to Houston

Description: Houston is the only Mat-Su Borough high school without ready access to cross-country ski trails. The proposed route is largely on private land. This trail could also be a possible link to the proposed Rocky Lake trail system. Improvements could be tied to the proposed upgrade of Hawk Road. The site is appropriate for year-round trails. Trail construction and management plans should

consider how to limit motorized access on the groomed ski trails, which has been an issue in other parts of the Mat-Su Borough.

This project is supported by: community meetings.

IDITAROD TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS

Project Type: Trail Improvements

Project #43

Location: Knik

Description: The Iditarod Trail is one of only 18 designated National Historic Trails in the U.S. and the only designated trail in Alaska. The trail creates year-round multi-use access for residents and visitors alike and helps preserve the history and encourage stewardship of the area. There are current plans to make upgrades to a segment of the trail between the Historic Knik Town site and Fish Creek. These upgrades take place over five miles of the Historic Iditarod Trail, beginning at Mile 1 at the Historic Knik Town site. The segment culminates with a proposed loop on Mat-Su Borough land on the north side of Fish Creek. These upgrades meander over both private and public lands. The connection will link the Historic Town-site of Knik and the onsite Museum with the Vi Redington Memorial Bridge at Fish Creek. Interpretive trail panels and tripods will help year-round visitors appreciate the rich history of Alaska and times of a bygone era, while educating them on trail etiquette, soils, water quality and the local habitat.

This project is supported by: Bureau of Land Management, community meetings, Mat-Su Resource Conservation & Development, Inc. and Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge.

JORDAN LAKE PARK

Project Type: New Park

Project #47

Location: Big Lake

Description: This project, centrally located in Big Lake, would contribute to the community's long-term vision for developing the "downtown Big Lake" town center. It is a potentially low cost, low controversy project. It has a combination of nonmotorized park and walking trails, including ideas for looped summer and winter trails. It could include a frisbee golf course. The existing trails needs to be redone. There is an existing master plan for the project, but it needs to be updated. Using the older master plan, the community has completed three phases of the project. Phase 4 will include a parking lot upgrade. Phase 5 will be a boardwalk around west side of the lake (1/2 mile of raised, light-penetrating walkway). The project is located on primarily borough land with some private to the north. There is also a possible link to the proposed trail system at the elementary school.

This project is supported by: the Mat-Su Borough's CIP list, the Big Lake Community Council Area Comprehensive Plan and community meetings.

MATANUSKA GREENBELT EXTERNAL & INTERNAL CONNECTIVITY

Project Type: Connection

Trail #1

Location: Palmer/Wasilla

Description: Located in the core area between Palmer and Wasilla, this is a very popular recreation area. Residents would like to see it connected to nearby parks, trails and other central community locations. A number of potential connecting routes have already been identified. Many trails within the Greenbelt need conservation easements and other improvements. This project would be a great opportunity to work with a variety of different partners including the Great Land Trust as well as adjacent subdivision developers to preserve mutually beneficial access into the trail system. The Mat-Su Borough plans to complete some trail improvements during summer 2013, including tread work, drainage improvements and installing signage. The Borough is also hoping to construct 4 miles of new trails (likely single track) to replace trails being lost to the landfill expansion.

This project is supported by: the Mat-Su Borough's regionally significant trails list and community meetings.

MATANUSKA RIVER RAILROAD RIGHT-OF-WAY

Project Type: Improvements

Trail #31

Location: Palmer to Moose Creek

Description: This is a great route, scenic and historical, connecting to downtown Palmer. It is largely on public land. It starts at the base of the bluff along the north/west side of Matanuska River. The hillside location presents physical design challenges due to ongoing erosion and the fact that it crosses a half dozen rock landslides (HDL studies). It could create access into the heart of Palmer. It has a designated nonmotorized trail easement with the Borough. The City of Palmer has plans for a trailhead off Eagle Avenue in Palmer. The Chickaloon Village Tribal Council would like to improve the trail from the Moose Creek end.

This project is supported by: the Mat-Su Borough's regionally significant trails list and community meetings.

PINOCHLE TRAIL / HICKS CREEK TRAIL

Project Type: Trailhead Improvements

Trail #104

Location: Glacier View

Description: This popular trail is at risk of being lost because the trailhead is located on private property. The trailhead connects to numerous other trails in the Eureka area and goes all the way to Caribou. The Pinochle Trail also provides access to the Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina Trail. The route has a RS2477 designation. The current landowner is eager to work out an access plan that preserves the trail but is worried about liability.

This project is supported by: the Mat-Su Borough's regionally significant trails list and community meetings.

PORT MACKENZIE RAILROAD IMPACTS

Project Type: Management

Trail #41

Location: Point Mackenzie to Houston

Description: There are valuable, popular trails along the new Alaska Railroad (ARR) route that are vulnerable and could be lost due to rerouting associated with the Port MacKenzie railroad extension. There is concern that ARR will block existing trails. Trail users shared widespread concern and frustration with the rerouting efforts, and have asked for help with advocacy, dedication and protection of popular routes. The trails are on a mix of public and private land.

This project is supported by: community meetings.

PURINTON CREEK TRAILHEAD

Project Type: Trailhead

Trail #102

Location: Chickaloon area

Description: This trailhead provides an important access point to a large area that is frequented by many users. The parking area is much too small given the heavy use of the area. In fact, on busy weekends neighbors report over 80 cars at the trailhead. There are no amenities at the trailhead, no trail information, no map and no guidelines. Some of the trails in the area are dangerous and should be marked as such. Neighbors report frequent problems resulting from this heavy use. In May 2013, the Alaska Department of Natural Resources decided to restrict access to the trail in order to halt the escalating damage of heavy trail use and to implement a long-term management strategy for area trails.

This project is supported by: the Mat-Su Borough's CIP list; the Matanuska River Watershed Recreation and Trails Plan and community meetings.

RIDGE TRAIL RECREATION AREA

Project Type: New Park

Trail #203 and #204

Location: Talkeetna

Description: Establishing a “Ridge Trail Recreation Area” would be an excellent way to protect and expand the Ridge Trail, a popular multi-use trail system that is used both for recreation and transportation. This area has varied topography that is suitable for different user groups. These trails are widely used for recreation and transportation but are in danger of being lost. This broadly-supported project is included in multiple community plans. It would yield a year-round permanent multi-use trail that would be accessible from town via the Eastside Loop trail, and itself link to other outlying trails. This project would also provide an opportunity to meet the needs of user groups not met elsewhere. The trail system enjoys broad community support: on May 6, 2013, the Talkeetna Community Council voted unanimously to send a letter to the Borough requesting that it reclassify the Ridge Trail lands as Public Recreation and develop a Recreation Management plan for the area. Talkeetna Parks Advisory Committee and others are actively working to make this happen.

This project is supported by: community meetings, Talkeetna Parks Advisory Committee, the Talkeetna Community Council, the Mat-Su Borough’s regionally significant trails list and the Talkeetna Comprehensive Plan.

SUTTON, CHICKALOON, GLACIER VIEW/EUREKA TRAILS

Project Type: Improvements

Trail #23

Location: Sutton, Chickaloon, Eureka

Description: In general, the trails in this area are in bad shape. Locals are worried about the legality of doing trail maintenance, but they do it anyway for safety reasons. They prefer safe trails. This “low-hanging fruit”/inexpensive project would be good opportunity to establish partnerships with local user groups to support and empower their trail improvement efforts. Most of the trails are on state land. There are a number of different methods to support this type work including: instituting user fees/parking fees, grants, adopt-a-trail program with small budget and geo-blocking potential to reduce maintenance needs. Locals don’t mind maintaining the trails but would like some support.

This project is supported by: the Mat-Su Borough’s regionally significant trails list and community meetings.

TRUNK RD ROADSIDE TRAIL

Project Type: Road-Separated

Trail #1

Location: Between Palmer-Wasilla Hwy and Palmer Fishhook Rd

Description: Residents would like to see a roadside trail alongside the Trunk Road corridor between the Palmer-Wasilla Hwy and the Palmer Fishhook Road. The resulting corridor would connect to

Pioneer Peak Elementary School as well as the Palmer-Wasilla Highway and the Matanuska Greenbelt system. The trail should be designed for ATVs to preserve the area wetlands while still allowing for multi-use.

This project is supported by: community meetings and Gateway Community Council.

WASILLA CREEK CONNECTOR

Project Type: Connection

Trail #5

Location: From Moose Range to Palmer Hay Flats

Description: This project proposes creating a greenbelt trail system generally following Wasilla Creek, from the Moose Range on the north to the creek's outlet on Palmer Hay Flats. The route could potentially end or pass through the Hay Flats at Snowshoe Rd. or via Rabbit Slough, or travel along the salt flats. Almost all the land along this ambitious route is private. Consequently this project must be seen as a possibility to be explored, working with local land owners, the City of Wasilla, the Borough, the State and other parties. The route, if it can be reserved, will likely require stitching together paths along the creek as well as routes adjoining adjacent highways. This project might be able to tap into resources for restoration of anadromous streams, which opens up funding options beyond those linked only to trails or parks. If developed, this greenbelt system could provide a range of regional and local benefits, including providing for drainage and water quality protection, creation of a green corridor for wildlife movements, as well as creation of a trails system linking to public lands at Moose Range, the Hay Flats and, to the east, the Matanuska Greenbelt. This trail would increase local land and home values. It could be the 'mini Coastal Trail' of the valley.

This project is supported by: the Mat-Su Borough's CIP list; the Mat-Su Borough's Parks, Recreation and Trails Plan; the Matanuska River Watershed Recreation and Trails Plan; the Meadow Lakes Comprehensive Plan and community meetings.

WILLOW-BIG LAKE CONNECTION

Project Type: Connection

Trail #11

Location: Between Willow and points south

Description: This trail creates a link between Willow and the public lands/trails south of Willow and would benefit many motorized and nonmotorized users. The trail requires resolving issues of motorized access through a corner of the Nancy Lakes State Recreation Area, private property, wetlands and other constraints.

This project is supported by: the Mat-Su Borough's regionally significant trails list, the City of Houston Comprehensive Plan, Willow area trails plans and community meetings.

APPENDIX

- A COMPREHENSIVE LIST OF PROJECTS
- B COMPREHENSIVE LIST OF TRAIL TOOLBOX STRATEGIES
- C EXISTING PLANS + LINKS

APPENDIX A. COMPREHENSIVE LIST OF PROJECTS (priority projects in **bold print**)

PROJECT	LOCATION	SUMMARY
CONNECTIONS		
Access trail points through Hatcher Pass from the west	Hatcher Pass	There is a need to identify an alternate corridor for motorized users to access Hatcher Pass, possibly from Schrock Road. Look at developing an East/West winter motorized connector from Chickaloon to Wasilla Creek headwaters and then connect to Houston with access to Sitze and Zero Lake trailheads. Summer use would require extensive trail hardening measures in order to be sustainable.
Big Lake-Wasilla Connection	Big Lake, Meadow Lakes, Wasilla	This connector trail would be a means for Wasilla residents to get into western public open space, e.g., by snow machine.
Butte-Chickaloon connection	Butte-Palmer-Chickaloon	For this desired connection it would be possible to utilize existing trails for certain segments (Plumley Maud, Morgan Horse, Lazy Mountain, Mat. River Park).
Carpenter Creek to Knik Glacier	Butte	This is a potential traverse/destination trail. Carpenter Creek offers easy access into the alpine country south of the Matanuska and would be a great place for huts. It could also connect Rippy Trail, Morgan Horse trail, etc.
Connection between Burnt Butte and Butte	Butte	A possible route would be along Caudill from Sullivan to Plumley. This would tie surrounding trails into the Jim Creek trails.
Connector Trail near Proposed Visitor Center	Adjacent to proposed Mat-Su Visitor Center by Glenn Hwy	This trail would connect the Mat Greenbelt to planned visitor center, transforming the visitor center from a static place to pick up brochures into a recreational destination, a place for a cup of cocoa or a beer after fishing or at the end of a ride, ski or walk. It would follow a historic trail.
Cottonwood Creek (Wasilla Connector)	Wasilla	The City of Wasilla is negotiating access to open up this creekside greenbelt connector, which connects park and rec lands around town.
Hatcher Pass –motorized access from the South	Meadow Lakes, Wasilla	This need was identified but never resolved in multiple plans (including Hatcher Pass Management Plan) and mentioned at many user group and community meetings.
Houston High School Cross-Country Ski Trails	Big Lake-Houston	Houston is the only Mat-Su Borough high school without ready access to cross-country ski trails. This project offers an easy win/"low-hanging fruit."

PROJECT	LOCATION	SUMMARY
Little Su Bridge	Meadow Lakes	This project will construct a trail bridge across the Little Susitna River. Both approaches to the bridge have been prepared + the lower portion has been surveyed. The bridge will connect state land to Bench Lake Rec Area + Willow trails.
Matanuska Greenbelt and Hatcher Pass connection	Palmer-Wasilla area	The linkage would connect two large, popular recreation areas. The best access would be from Mat-Su Campus area (a paved trail is already in place along new Trunk Rd.). Perhaps convert the abandoned old Trunk Rd. segment to a bike trail. When they redo Palmer- Wasilla Highway to add lanes, consider adding an overpass/underpass across the road and connect it to Palmer Fishhook. Additionally, support paved bike path/lane into Hatcher Pass from Fishhook.
Matanuska Greenbelt Internal and External Connectivity	Central trail system in the core area	Adds value to centrally located, popular regional open space park, in center of otherwise developed core area; popular but not protected; opportunity to partner with Great Land Trust and other supporters.
Matanuska River Flood Plain trails	Along southern and eastern boundaries of Palmer	The floodplain would be great for durable trail surfaces. The railroad trail, currently for non-motorized use, could connect to Moose Creek campground. There is good potential for a hillside bench trail along bluff below Palmer Airport and golf course. Also, a trail below Palmer Airport is probably within city a limit, which currently does not allow motorized use.
Eastern Moose Range to Buffalo Mine	Chickaloon/Sutton	Moose Range extends from Upper Wasilla Creek headwaters to the Jonesville, Sutton and beyond areas and includes the area from Wendt Road east to Buffalo Mine Road, adjacent to Moose Creek. It will be important to ensure that trail users are involved in the conversation when the management plan for this area is revised. Among other things, Moose Creek needs a new bridge (DOT), and general trail reconstruction and trailhead amenities are needed. The Moose Creek Bridge is needed for connectivity from Sutton et al. to Buffalo Mine Road.
Willow-Big Lake Connection	Between Willow and points south	This trail creates a link between Willow and public lands/trails south of Willow and would benefit many motorized and nonmotorized users. The trail requires resolving issues of motorized access through a corner of the Nancy Lakes State Recreation Area, private property, wetlands and other constraints.
Palmer Hayflats / Hatcher Pass connection	Palmer/Wasilla	This would connect two popular recreation areas and provide better linkages within the core area. The Great Land Trust is actively looking into this project.
Rippy Trail improvements and extension (MSB #7)	Butte/Eklutna/Lazy Mountain	This established trail needs an upgrade. It might already have an RS2477. This trail is mostly motorized use.
Sheep Mountain Lodge Trails	Sheep Mtn. Lodge	These trails are on state land. The nearby lodge owners applied for easements in 2011 although current reservation status is unknown. Support continued maintenance and grooming by nearby lodge.

PROJECT	LOCATION	SUMMARY
Su Valley Winter Trail System	West of the Susitna River	This trail system would supplement the multi-use Susitna Valley Winter Trail that extends from Big Lake to Denali State Park by extending trails westward to Lake Creek, Neil, Parker and Amber Lakes and Oil Well Road.
Town to Mountains Twin Access Trails	Talkeetna	A motorized & nonmotorized couplet, providing visitors and residents legal routes into the open space east of Talkeetna. The two trails would not necessarily take the same route or have the same destination A solution would be a landmark accomplishment requiring extensive diplomacy, but well worth the effort, yielding significant recreational opportunities to a variety of user groups along with associated economic benefit.
Visnaw Lake to Little Susitna	Meadow Lakes	This trail could tie into an East-West motorized connector. It is a mix of public and private land. Money was once set aside for the project by the State and the Borough but it may no longer be available.
Wasilla Creek Connector	Moose Range to Palmer Hay Flats	This project has both regional and local benefits. The trail would provide access to public land in Moose Range at north and Hay Flats to the south and provide a link into Mat Greenbelt.
Willow to Hatcher Pass	Willow, Houston, Meadow Lakes	This trail would provide great access to Baldy Ridge and the alpine areas. Access is currently available from the Houston-Willow Creek Trailhead in Houston and Trailheads along upper Willow Fishhook Rd. Other access is possible via Bench Lake in Meadow Lakes. This trail has the potential to extend east to Wasilla Creek and Chickaloon.
IMPROVEMENTS		
Amber Lake Trail and Trailhead (MSB #64)	west from Parks Hwy to Amber Lake	Conduct a comprehensive trail assessment to determine trail condition and need for trail repairs, re-routing, trail marking and trailhead development. This trail has already been surveyed and a public recreation trail easement reserved.
Austin Helmers Trail (Pioneer Ridge Trail) (#83)	Butte	Continue maintenance and improvements on this trail. The Mat-Su Borough will be doing some maintenance in the summer of 2013, including brushing, logging out, drainage improvements and tread restoration.
Canoe Trails in Jim Swan wetlands	Knik River Public Use Area	Improve and protect these trails.

PROJECT	LOCATION	SUMMARY
Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina Historic Trail	Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina	This is an established historical route that needs maintenance and dedication. The trail mining history to visitors and is scenic.
East-West Express (MSB #87)	along Parks Hwy near Petersville	This is a multi-use winter only trail that runs from a trailhead on the Parks Highway to the Deep Creek Trail. It intersects several trails to the south. The area needs a comprehensive trail assessment to determine trail condition and need for trail repairs, re-routing, trail marking and trailhead development.
Eastside Loop Trail	Talkeetna	This trail has near term vulnerability plus high recreational and economic value. It would be accessible from town, features spectacular scenery, and would function as a vital trail link to outlying trails. This would provide significant local recreational opportunities and create more reasons for visitors to spend time and money in Talkeetna, the Borough's most visited tourist destination.
Emil Stancec System	Willow	This is a multi-use winter trail system managed with an emphasis on dog mushing. Further improvements would include completing easement acquisition, posting signage and provide safety and trailhead improvements. Logging roads within the Kashwitna Management Area nearby have high potential for all season multi-use trail development.
Eska Falls Trail	Sutton area	This is a regionally important connection into the Talkeetna Mountains backcountry.
Government Peak - Lighted Ski Trails + Other Improved Facilities	Gov't Peak/ Hatcher Pass	Currently there are very few lit trails in the Borough. These improvements would serve many users, making this newly established area a better year-round resource and place for hosting races.
Haessler/Norris trail system	Willow east of Parks Hwy	This is a multi-use winter trail system managed with an emphasis on dog mushing. The historic Houston-Willow Creek Sled Trail within this system provides access to Baldy Ridge and Hatcher Pass from the City of Houston. Further improvements would include completing easement acquisition, posting signage and safety and trailhead improvements.
Hicks Creek bridge	Glacier View	DOT needs to make repairs to this bridge (close a large gap) in order to use it to safely access the trail.
Iditarod Trail Improvements	Knik	The trail creates year-round multi-use access for residents and visitors alike and helps preserve the history and encourage stewardship of the area. There are current plans to make upgrades to a segment of the trail between the Historic Knik Town site and Fish Creek.

PROJECT	LOCATION	SUMMARY
Matanuska Peak Trail (MSB #5)	Butte	[from MSB 2008 Trails Plan]: This is a pedestrian year round trail maintained by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough. MSB fees are collected for parking at trailhead located at the east end of Smith Road. Would be good to conduct a comprehensive trail assessment to determine trail condition and need for trail repairs, re-routing, trail marking and trailhead development. The Mat-Su Borough has plans to do some minor improvements during Summer 2013, including blocking ATV/snowmachine access from trailhead and side trails and replacing weathered/damaged signage.
Matanuska River Railroad Right-of-Way trail	Palmer - Moose Ck	This would be costly to solve due to unstable hillside location, but a great route, scenic & historical, and connects to downtown Palmer.
Mizuma Creek trail	Starts in Glacier View, heads all the way to Denali State Park/Little Nelchina	This is a historical connector trail covering a large area with multi-season and multi-use potential. It starts in Glacier View and heads all the way to Denali State Park.
Montana Creek dog-mushing trails	North of Willow; Montana Creek	This is one of only two established dog-mushing trails in the area; these trails are winter use only. Continue to improve and protect the trail system.
Morgan Horse Trails (MSB #126)	Lazy Mtn. Park	These trails could use design improvements (esp. hardening) as well as lighting. Any trail improvements should take into consideration different user groups and desired, appropriate trail design. For example, the usual improvements for such trails may include hardening techniques that are not appropriate for users that frequent these trails, especially equestrian groups.
new route: Gov't Peak, up and over to Hatcher Pass	Hatcher Pass (starts on Old Govt Peak Rd #216, aka Carle Wagon Rd)	It would be nice to see this extended (up to 30 mi) – it could also connect to businesses on the other side. This is a historical mining trail that is a great connection and is already being used by equestrian groups. It could also support single-track biking and hikers. This would be a great trail up into Hatcher Pass from South side.
Permanente Trail (aka Castle Mtn.) (MSB #25)	Moose Range	[from MSB 2008 Trails Plan]: A multi-use year round trail with limited roadside parking off the Glenn Highway. Survey location and acquire public use easement where necessary. Coordinate with the DNR/Division of Mining, Land and Water to improve trail and recreation opportunities in this area.
Safari Lake Trail (MSB #86)	Petersville	[from MSB 2008 Trails Plan]: Multi-use winter only trail that begins at the Kroto Creek trailhead on Petersville Road and heads north to connect with the East-West Express Trail and others north of Safari Lake. Recommendation: Conduct a comprehensive trail assessment to determine trail condition and need for trail repairs, re-routing, trail marking and trailhead development
Ski trail improvements	Talkeetna	There is a need for more illuminated trails in the Talkeetna area. Work with the community to identify which ones would be most beneficial (potentially school loop and community park).
Sports complex trail	Wasilla	This trail needs repairs - it was put in but has since been torn up by heavy motorized use.

PROJECT	LOCATION	SUMMARY
Sutton/Chickaloon/Glacier View/Eureka Trails	Sutton/Chickaloon/Eureka area	These trails are in bad shape, and locals are worried about legality of maintenance (but they do it anyway for safety reasons). This can be considered "low-hanging fruit"/inexpensive, and would be good opportunity to establish partnership with local user groups.
Trails west of the Big Susitna (MSB #88)	Petersville	These winter trails could connect trails south of Petersville Road to the winter trail system north of Petersville Road.
West Gateway Winter trail system	Willow, west of Parks Hwy	This is a heavily used multi-use winter trail system west of Willow. The groomed trails provide access to Nancy Lake State Recreation Area, Big Lake and west to the Yentna and Deshka River drainages. Future improvements include minimizing private property impacts, post signage and provide for safety and trailhead improvements.
Westside Riverfront Trail	Talkeetna	This trail runs from the old depot to the trestle, starting at the end of Main St. out to the river and back to the airstrip.
MANAGEMENT		
Eska Falls, Knob Hill Management Plan	Sutton area	Trails and fish streams in this area are being damaged, and there is virtually no enforcement. This popular area needs management to sustain continued levels of use.
Historical Trails in Eureka Mining Area	Sutton, Chickaloon	These trails are widely used. Residents would like to preserve trails. According to local residents, this is one of the most important issues in the Glacier View/Eureka area.
Hunters inundating trails in the Eureka area	Eureka	Due to changes in Fish & Game moose tagging system, trails are being overwhelmed during hunting season and trails are becoming dangerously crowded and damaged. Perhaps Fish & Game can support trail infrastructure?
Jim Creek Master Plan – support implementation	Butte	Support the implementation of the master plan, including trail improvements and focused efforts on mitigating user conflict.
Moose Range - Wasilla Creek Headwaters Area	Moose Range	This area should be designated for public recreation and managed as such. The trails provide connections but need management to avoid conflict.
Port MacKenzie Railroad Impacts	Pt. McK to Houston	These existing valuable, popular trails cross route of proposed railroad, and could be lost if road/railroad is built.
Update Susitna Area Plan	Susitna area	Specifically, update Lake Louise and northern Talkeetna Mountains regions components of the plan.

PROJECT	LOCATION	SUMMARY
West Bodenbug Butte (MSB #11)	Butte	[from MSB 2008 Trails Plan]: A pedestrian year round trail maintained by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough for hiking. This trail was built by the Borough in 2002 to replace the privately owned trail on the southeast side of the butte. The trail is on AMHTA lands and the Borough is negotiating a permit or easement. The trail needs stairs, trail hardening and signage. Recommendation: Create a plan for the trail and recreation land that includes development, expansion and management goals.
Wishbone Hill/Wishbone Lake	Sutton area	Work with Usibelli Mine to create/reclaim mining roads as trails as a part of their reclamation plan.
NEW PARKS		
Dedicating/maintaining abandoned lots in subdivisions as parks	Borough-wide	Set aside abandoned lots (esp. those unsuitable for building) to be restored and reserved as community park areas. For example Meadow Lakes has empty lots and there are some spots behind Colony HS.
Designated shooting area	Borough-wide	Users would like to see designated shooting ranges in the Mat-Su Borough. This would help redirect dangerous unauthorized shooting that happens throughout the Borough.
Frisbee Golf Course	Borough-wide	Users would like to see at least one course installed in the core area; could be placed in an existing park or along an existing trail
Jordan Lake Park	Big Lake	This is a central location in the developing “downtown Big Lake” town center. It is potentially a low cost, low controversy project.
Moose Range - proposed trail system on old logging lot at Went Rd intersection	Moose Range	This would make a great, small isolated trail system. The area is flat and could be handicap-accessible (for kids, for skiing or something similar). There are very few handicap-accessible trails in the area.
Ridge Trail Recreation Area	Talkeetna	Establishing a “Ridge Trail Recreation Area” would be an excellent way to protect and expand the Ridge Trail, a popular multi-use trail system that is used both for recreation and transportation This area, described also under “River and Ridge Trail MSB 204,” has varied topography that is suitable for different user groups These trails are widely used for recreation and transportation, but are in danger of being lost. This broadly-supported project is included in multiple community plans. It would yield a year-round permanent multi-use trail that would be accessible from town via the Eastside Loop trail, and itself link to other outlying trails.

PROJECT	LOCATION	SUMMARY
Rocky Lake Area - State Rec Land cross-country trails	Big Lake-Houston	This would be a good site for nonmotorized winter trails, esp. groomed cross-country ski trails. It is one possible link to the proposed Houston High School trail system. This project is supported by private landowners in the area.
Willow Park	Willow	Located adjacent to the Willow Creek State Recreation Area, this 40 acre parcel has been ceded to the community but has yet to be developed. It has high potential for an all season trailhead, picnic area, interpretive trails and other outdoor uses. A design plan should be initiated prior to development that identifies user needs and phases of construction.
NEW TRAILS		
Crooked Lake Trail (MSB #46)	Near Big Lake	Crooked Lake Trail is a regionally significant multi-use winter trail which currently has limited parking off of Papoose Twins Road. This project will construct a trailhead on Borough property at Crooked Lake during the upgrade of Papoose Twins Road. The project will provide trail access to the west Susitna basin.
Designated OHV/ATV playground	One option: south of Knik-Goosebay Rd	This could be an ideal location for heavy use/heavy impact motorized recreation. The Borough Assembly already set aside this area for this use.
Knik River Area	East of Butte	Users recommend a trail to viewpoint at Wolf Point (on north side of Knik). This would require extensive new trail construction.
Lucille Creek	Wasilla, Big Lake	This trail could serve as a Big Lake-Wasilla connector. Most of land is private/residential.
Moose Creek bike path	Trapper Creek	Residents would like to see this bike path in their community.
Middle Creek trail	Trapper Creek	This trail goes down to the headwaters of Coal Creek. It would probably be a foot trail.
Murphy Rd to Gold Mint Trail	North of Buffalo Soapstone	This would be a really nice traverse trail along Arkose Ridge.
North-South road/railroad project trails	Point MacKenzie to Houston	Residents would like to see trails built adjacent to future road and railroad projects in the area. These could be located within the public right-of-way.
Rails to Trails potential along realigned RR corridor	Wasilla and other parts of the Mat-Su Borough	This project is near Wasilla Creek - there is a loop that will eventually be abandoned as they straighten the corridor and it would make a great trail.

PROJECT	LOCATION	SUMMARY
Rush/Bonnie Lake access	Sutton/Chickaloon area	The only access trail to Bonnie Lake currently available requires looping around Purinton Creek. There's a possibility of having improved access off the highway but it's mostly private and AMHTA lands.
Talkeetna Town Trail	Talkeetna	This would be part of the Eastside Loop trail from downtown it would head in a southerly direction and would provide a route between the downtown and CIRI's Talkeetna Alaskan Lodge. It would be great for visitors and locals alike. Residents recommended including a boardwalk through the wetlands.
Upper Little Susitna River	Meadow Lakes, Wasilla, Fishhook	This would be a greenbelt trail along the river. The area is mostly private/residential land.
Baldy Ridge Trail	Willow	This 35 mile alpine trail would be a unique tourist attraction similar to the Kesugi Ridge Trail. It would extend along Baldy Ridge from Willow to April Bowl and Independence Mine State Historical Park and possibly farther to and along the Arkose Ridge.
Winter trail system on Moose Range	Moose Range northeast of Sutton	There are many trails in the area but none are secured. This could connect to the Fishhook Rd side and to the Buffalo Mine area.
ROAD-SEPARATED		
Bogard Rd - separated trail	Wasilla	Include separated trail when Bogard Rd is expanded.
Clark-Wolverine- Lazy Mountain Park connection	Lazy Mountain	This would be a valuable connection and could perhaps be accomplished using existing ROWs.
Connect Plumley-Maud and Sullivan Rd area trails	Butte/Palmer	One way of accomplishing this connection would be to use a trail easement along Caudill Rd.
Glenn Hwy upgrade: add separated path from Kings River to Hicks Creek	Glenn Hwy	Users would like to see either a separated path or a wider shoulder along this section of the Glenn. This would be easiest if it were incorporated into the road upgrade.
Huntley Rd roadside trail	Alongside Huntley Rd	This trail would connect Moose Creek area to Butte trails and would be a good connector to Lazy Mtn. and Morgan Horse trail. The Borough owns a strip of land south of the road that could be used for part of it as a separated path.
Knik Goose Bay (KGB) Road roadside trail	Palmer-Wasilla area	The community would like to see a roadside trail added during the upcoming road expansion. This would provide a valuable intercommunity link.

PROJECT	LOCATION	SUMMARY
Long Lake Rd Ped/Bike Path Project	Willow	This project would connect residential areas with businesses and public facilities in Willow. It has been consistently submitted for inclusion in the Borough CIP list. The path could be a small part of a Willow to Houston multi-use trail, accessing through the Nancy Lake State Recreation Area.
Moose Creek Bridge	Between Palmer-Sutton	The road bottlenecks at this bridge and there is not enough space to ride a bike along and beyond the bridge. Would be nice for either a wider bridge/shoulder or a separate bike/pedestrian bridge.
Old Glenn Highway-Separated Trail	Along Old Glenn Hwy between Palmer and Knik River	This is in the state highway ROW.
Parks Highway separated trail - Willow to Talkeetna	Parks Hwy	This path would be alongside the Parks Highway between Willow and Talkeetna. There is considerable community support for this addition, and residents would like to see all updates to the Parks Hwy include the addition of a bike path.
Pedestrian byway along Wolverine Rd	Lazy Mountain	Add a byway for safer pedestrian travel.
Petersville Road-separated trail	Trapper Creek	Residents would like to see a bike trail along Petersville Road. Land ownership may be a challenge.
Pittman Rd highway-separated trail	Meadow Lakes	Residents would like to see a trail built alongside Pittman Rd.
Palmer-Hatcher Pass connection	Palmer/Hatcher Pass	Users would like to see either a road-separated path or simply a wider shoulder. This is a variation on several proposed north-south trail proposals linking developed areas with open space north and south. DOT originally funded a wider bike-friendly shoulder but then they striped it incorrectly so there's not enough space.
Seward Meridian roadside trail	Wasilla	Residents would like to see a separated path added during the construction phase. It would be easier to include it during initial road construction rather than retrofitting it in later.
Sheldon to Church Road trail	Meadow Lakes, Wasilla	This connection could be accomplished within the ROW. Users recommend that the trail be motorized in winter and nonmotorized in summer.
Talkeetna Spur Road Bike Path Extension	Talkeetna	This would extend the Talkeetna Spur Road bike path from 2nd Street to Main Street. This would be an important step toward increasing pedestrian safety around the center of town.

PROJECT	LOCATION	SUMMARY
Trail route over Matanuska River bridge	In Palmer near Matanuska River Park	This bridge provides an important connection, as current access over the bridge is dangerous. Easements could come from the school, or follow highway and power line right-of-ways.
Trunk Rd Roadside Trail	Between Palmer-Wasilla Hwy and Bogard Rd	Establish roadside trail along Trunk Rd between the Palmer-Wasilla Hwy and Palmer Fishhook Rd. The trail should be designed for ATV use to preserve the area wetlands and still allowing for multi-use.
Wasilla, Palmer Fishhook Road roadside trail	Wasilla, Palmer	For Wasilla Fishhook Rd, residents would like to see either a road-separated path or simply a wider shoulder. For Palmer Fishhook, residents would like to see a path between New Trunk Rd and Palmer Fishhook. This would create a loop with other existing trails.
SECURE EASEMENTS		
Aurora Dog Trails	Big Lake	These trails are of only two established dog mushing trails in area and they have significant community support.
Chulitna Bluff Trail and Trailhead (MSB #76)	Mile 122 of Parks Hwy	[from MSB 2008 Trails Plan]: This is a multi-use winter trail that begins on E. Susitna River Road. A trailhead at Mile 122 of the Parks Highway provides parking and access to the trail. Plans include extending the trail south from the trailhead to connect with Rabideux area. Recommendation: Survey location and acquire public recreation trail easement.
Figure 8 Trail and Trailhead Improvements (MSB #160)	west of Point MacKenzie	[from MSB 2008 Trails Plan]: This is a multi-use winter trail system west of the Point Mackenzie area. MSB fees collected for parking at maintained trailhead north of Point MacKenzie Road. Recommendation: Survey location and acquire public recreation trail easement.
Friday Creek	East of Butte, north of Lazy Mtn.	This historical trail travels up Friday Creek. The west side trail could become a hiking/equestrian trail.
Parker Lake (Neil Lake) Trail (MSB #59)	Susitna area	[from MSB 2008 Trails Plan]: This is a multi-use winter trail that provides access to Neil Lake from the Parker Lake Trail. It is accessible from the Susitna Landing from a privately run parking area on the Susitna River. Recommendation: Survey location and document or acquire public recreation trail easement if necessary.
Wolverine Lake Trail/Creek Trail (MSB #12)	Wolverine Creek MSB #12, NE of Lazy Mtn. to Carpenter Creek	This popular multi-use trail, which is NE of Lazy Mtn. and goes to Carpenter Creek, crosses BLM and private land. It has an RS2477 but BLM does not recognize RS2477s.
TRAILHEADS		

PROJECT	LOCATION	SUMMARY
Bald Mountain Trailhead Improvements	Trail #131	This project will provide access to the western side of Hatcher Pass including Baldy Ridge from the Dave Churchill Trail at mile 31 Willow Fishhook Rd. Currently there is only an undeveloped trailhead at the Willow Bridge near mile 34.
Crow Creek Parking Lot		This project will plan for trailhead access to Bald Mountain and facilitate an easier connection to the Willow Trail System.
King River Trail system	Sutton area	Establish a wayside at the King River trailhead (signs, restrooms, trash receptacles) and designate ski trails.
Pinochle Trail/Hicks Creek Trail	Glacier View	This popular trail is at risk of being lost due to private land at trailhead. However, landowner is eager to work out an access plan that preserves the trail but is worried about liability (= good candidate for easement).
Purinton Creek Trailhead	Chickaloon area	This area is becoming dangerous, overused, and is causing problems for nearby landowners. It is an important access point for a huge area used by many users but there is no trail info, no map, no guidelines. 80 cars in one weekend is not unusual.
Sexton Trail, Trail of Envy and Jim Creek Trailhead (MSB #10, 61, 128)	Butte	There is trailhead parking south of Sullivan Road near the corner of Caudill Road. A portion of this trail is located on Borough-owned land reserved for recreation Coordinate with DNR/Division of Mining Land and Water for funding to improve trail and trailhead and provide maintenance and management.
Susitna Bridge parking lot expansion	Mile 105/106 of Parks Hwy	Many users (both motorized and nonmotorized) use the trailhead and it needs to be expanded.
USER NEEDS		
Dog-friendly areas	Core Area (Palmer and Wasilla)	There is a shortage of places for dog owners to walk in the core area. Dog owners would like to see more dog-friendly trails or a designated dog park.
Equestrian trails	Knik River Public Use Area (including Pavilion off Fairview Rd, well, trail)	There is a shortage of equestrian trails in Mat-Su, particularly in winter. Knik River Public Use area has some opportunities – riders would need to define their grooming needs. Winter trails cannot be very steep (too icy for the horses). Riders prefer not to mess up ski trails, although multi-use groomed trails are sometimes okay. Horses should generally not share trails with other users in winter because they posthole, which is bad for many users but especially mushers (dog injuries, less control, etc.).

PROJECT	LOCATION	SUMMARY
Geocaching opportunities	Borough-wide	In order to geocache legally, participants have to know who owns the land and get permission when appropriate. Geocachers would like to see more signage on trails, and they prefer trails that are walkable and easily accessible.
Ice skating	Could be done at Jim Lake, Hay Flats	There are not many published opportunities to ice skate. It would be nice to have dedicated/supported locations and to support and advertise existing locations (e.g., Mat. River Park).
Single track biking	Borough-wide	Possible locations for single track include: around Palmer Airport and Golf Course along bluff over river; between Gold Mint trail Milepost 1.5 and Reed Lakes trail at Snowbird Village; from April Bowl to Hatcher Pass Lodge down Thousand Dollar Ridge; and from Fishhook Parking Lot to Independence Bowl Parking Lot and up to join up with Gold Cord Lake Trail.
Ski-joring - additional trails	Borough-wide	Currently, Archangel Trail and Moose Range area, Wendt Road to Murphy Road, are the only trails/areas where skijoring is acceptable.
Water trails -develop additional paddle opportunities	Borough-wide	The Mat-Su Borough could tap into the growing pack raft movement. This would require protecting existing water trails (e.g., reserving access). It could be big draw for visitors as well. One possible water route is Chickaloon to Talkeetna and there are also opportunities in Denali and the Talkeetna/Trapper Creek area.
Winter biking	Borough-wide	This is another activity that is growing in popularity and would be great to support. It is a unique trail experience and could attract additional visitors to the Mat-Su Borough.

APPENDIX B. COMPREHENSIVE LIST OF TRAIL TOOLBOX STRATEGIES



I. Tools for initial trail identification



Identifying User Needs

- Identify user-created and social trails
- Document the experiences diverse users are seeking:
 - Recreational and competitive users
 - Locals and tourists
 - Users of all ages and abilities
 - Winter/Summer users
- User group plans and proposed trails
- Trail user outreach and public processes
- User demand, population growth trends analysis
- Area-specific level of service studies



Community Planning

- The desire to formalize or create a trail is initiated in a public process:
 - Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation
 - Matanuska-Susitna Borough (regional and site specific)
 - Cities and Community Councils' adopted plans, project nominations, CIPs
 - Public agencies adopted plans, project nominations, CIPs
- Develop priority lists based on criteria.
- Maintain an existing and proposed trail inventory
- Make the case for trails: economic, environmental, quality of life goals



Documenting Trail Objectives

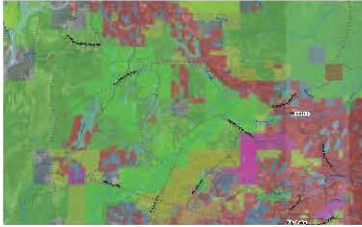
- Identify general trail parameters:
 - Trail Type - (Terra, Snow, or Water)
 - Trail Class - The prescribed scale of development and intended design and management standards.
 - Managed Use - Modes of travel that are appropriate, considering trail design and management.
 - Designed Use - The intended use that controls the design standards of the trail, and determines the maintenance requirements
- Document trail goals, benefits, partnerships and available resources



Our Mission

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2. Tools for fine-tuning trail routes



Land Ownership

- Trail route basics:
 - Public lands/ agency missions
 - Private lands
 - Easements
 - Rights-of-Way
 - Section Lines
- Understanding and addressing landowners' concerns.
- Trail route analysis using maps.
- Liability issues and solutions



Site Analysis

- Mapping physical characteristics:
 - Soils
 - Water
 - Slope
 - Sun aspect
- Truth testing on the ground to verify site conditions.
- Identify possible "fatal flaws" (e.g., extensive permit requirements, cost and safety concerns).
- Consider route impacts to adjacent areas and work with landowners.



Connectivity

- Existing trails
- User destinations
 - Parks
 - Schools
 - Local/regional public facilities
 - Cultural destinations
 - Scenic/recreational destinations
- Transportation and access
- Community context, adjacent land uses
- Green infrastructure (flood protection, streams, animal migration, etc).



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3. Tools for reserving trail routes



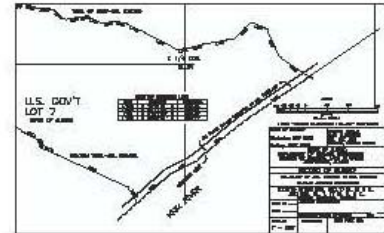
Partnering: Public Lands

- Partnerships with and between public land-owning entities:
 - Mat-Su Borough
 - State of Alaska
 - ~ State Parks
 - ~ Legislatively designated Public Use Areas
 - ~ General lands (subject to 11 AAC 96.020)
 - Federal
 - ~ National Parks Service
 - ~ BLM
- Public use easement/permit application
- Public notice process



Negotiating: Private Lands

- Private land title acquisition by purchase, donation, or exchange.
- Private land trail easement by purchase, donation, or exchange. Agreements should set forth rights, specific uses covered, maintenance responsibilities, etc.
- Private land lease. A public agency or private non-profit is given the right to use a trail in return for a fee, usually over a multi-year period. Insurance and liability agreements are often required.
- Private land deed restrictions and covenants convey legal rights for trail use binding present and future owners.



Route Survey & Dedication

- Final route mapped and/or flagged (although on some public lands if a trail permit is granted the trail is constructed first, and then surveyed and dedicated).
- Tips for GIS/GPS mapping; ways to ensure work done by user groups is acceptable by public entities.
- Professional survey (required in the State of Alaska).
- Legal route dedication (lengthy process - ask Bruce Paulson for more details).
- Records office legally dedicates trail.



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4. Tools for funding and improving trails



Design & Costing

- Once a legal route is finalized, reach agreement on trail use and design to include:
 - Publicly vetted trail objectives (e.g., seasonal designations, trail class, managed and designed uses).
 - Trail route and site due diligence.
 - Trail design standards for different trail types
 - Trail access, parking, and traffic circulation plans
 - Estimated project costs based on rules of thumb for trail construction costs.



Leveraging Resources

- Create a trail project work plan and maintenance agreements in conjunction with key stakeholders
- General strategies for fundraising
 - Borough and other public sources
 - Non-profit funding
 - Local contributions (labor, materials, professional services).
- Fundraising schedules; coordination with state and Borough annual budget processes.



Implementation

- Finalize work plan and schedule with partners and funders; notify nearby property owners.
- Seek media coverage and volunteers.
- Complete development phase.
- Celebrate positive outcomes and provide users with basic information (maps, signs, etc.).

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5. Tools for supporting ongoing trail use



Management

- Apply a coordinated regional trail management system (wayfinding, signage, online data/mapping, and etiquette/rules enforcement).
- Finalize trail mapping (using Borough GPS data standards) and input management and physical attributes into GIS system.
- Evaluate trail use periodically and seek to address issues proactively (within land managers' authority).
- Use the updated regional inventory to support future trail planning.



Maintenance

- Trail maintenance requirements and strategies:
 - Implement maintenance agreement.
 - Ongoing condition assessment.
 - User "trail watch" and reporting of problems.
 - Expand capacity for community maintenance (e.g., provide volunteers with materials and tools; find local trail sponsors).
- Make current trail conditions easily available to users.



Education & Advocacy

- Explore strategies to meet needs of all trail users, and minimize trail conflicts.
- Promote an ethic of respect among trail users.
- Advocate for the trail and the overall system by "Telling the Story."
 - Health benefits
 - Economic benefits
 - Community/quality of life benefits
 - Green infrastructure benefits



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APPENDIX C. EXISTING PLANS + LINKS

BOROUGH-WIDE PLANS

1. Mat-Su Borough Recreational Trails Plan (2008)
<http://www.matsugov.us/communitydevelopment/trails/trail-plan-a-topics>
2. Mat-Su Borough Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan (2001)
http://www.matsugov.us/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_view&gid=1875&..
3. Mat-Su Borough Tourism Infrastructure Needs Study (2008)
http://www.alaskavisit.com/includes/media/docs/Matsu_Tourism_Final.pdf

COMMUNITY PLANS

1. Big Lake Community Council Area Comprehensive Plan Update (2009)
<http://www.google.com/cse?cx=008898037672071434740%3Aybfwlyl1bi&ie=UTF-8&q=1.%09Big+Lake+Community+Council+Area+Comprehensive+Plan+Update+&sa=%3E#gsc.tab=0&gsc.q=1.%09Big%20Lake%20Community%20Council%20Area%20Comprehensive%20Plan%20Update&gsc.page=1>
2. Butte Asset Management Plan (2007)
http://www.matsugov.us/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_view&gid=1879&..
3. Chase Comprehensive Plan (1993)
www.matsugov.us/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_download&gid=903&Itemid=238
4. Chickaloon Comprehensive Plan (2008)
http://www.matsugov.us/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_download&gid=2889&Itemid=238
5. Glacier View Comprehensive Plan (2008)
www.matsugov.us/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_download&gid=2890&Itemid=238
6. Glacier View Comprehensive Plan – Sheep Mountain Sub-District (2006)
www.matsugov.us/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_download&gid=906&Itemid=238
7. Hatcher Pass Management Plan (2010)
<http://dnr.alaska.gov/mlw/planning/mgtplans/hatcher/index.cfm>
8. City of Houston Comprehensive Plan (2003)
www.matsugov.us/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_download&gid=916&Itemid=238
9. Knik-Fairview Comprehensive Plan (1997)
http://www.matsugov.us/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_download&gid=907&Itemid=238
10. Lake Louise Comprehensive Plan (1998)
http://www.matsugov.us/docman/doc_view/3742-lake-louise-comp-plan1?tmpl=component&format=raw
11. Lazy Mountain Comprehensive Plan (2007)
http://ww1.matsugov.us/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_download&gid=1929&Itemid=238

12. Matanuska River Watershed Recreation and Trails Plan (2012 Draft)
<http://chickaloon.org/wp-content/uploads/images/stories/environmental/documents/chickaloonrecandtrailsplandraft.pdf>
13. Meadow Lakes Comprehensive Plan (2005)
http://ww1.matsugov.us/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_view&gid=2935&tmpl=component&format=raw&Itemid=238
14. City of Palmer Parks, Trails, and Recreational Fields Master Plan (2011)
http://www.cityofpalmer.org/vertical/sites/%7BCEEE28AE-9003-4337-8BE2-A1961FF16E3D%7D/uploads/Jan_2012_Final_Plan.pdf
15. Point MacKenzie Community Comprehensive Plan (2011)
http://www.matsugov.us/docman/doc_view/3405-ptmacplanadopted?tmpl=component&format=raw
16. South Knik River Comprehensive Plan (2010 Draft)
http://ww1.matsugov.us/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_download&gid=2076&Itemid=238
17. Sutton Comprehensive Plan (2009)
http://www.matsugov.us/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_view&gid=2883&tmpl=component&format=raw&Itemid=238
18. Talkeetna Community/Tourism Plan (2003)
<http://www.tkacouncil.org/>
19. Talkeetna Comprehensive Plan (1999)
http://www.matsugov.us/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_download&gid=911&Itemid=238
20. Talkeetna Lakes Park Management Plan (2004)
http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&ved=0CC8QFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.matsugov.us%2Fdocman%2Fdoc_download%2F1876-talkeetna-lakes-park-plan&ei=2ljgUe-eJoTFiwKRslCYDg&usq=AFQjCNHwqXDh0dTiy3ELQzeUukPbg3XVPg&sig2=V8f8ksjyQ6S7hTTQeUSjXQ&bvm=bv.48705608,d.cGE
21. City of Wasilla Comprehensive Plan (2011)
<http://www.cityofwasilla.com/departments-divisions/planning-office/comprehensive-plan>
22. Willow Comprehensive Plan (2012 Draft)
<http://www.matsugov.us/planning/borough-plans/comprehensive-plans/211-willow-comprehensive-planning-effort>
23. Willow Area Trails Plan – Winter (2006)
<http://www.waco-ak.org/TrailsPlan.php>
24. Willow Summer Trails Master Plan (2011)
<http://www.waco-ak.org/PDF/Summer-Trails-June-2011.pdf>
25. Y (Susitna) Community Council Area Comprehensive Plan (2005)
http://www.matsugov.us/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_download&gid=913&Itemid=238