From: Assembly Member Cross

Subject: BIRCHWOOD COMMUNITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF ROUTING THE ALASKA LONG TRAIL (AKLT) SUCH THAT HIKERS MAY EASILY ACCESS AND PATRONIZE CHUGIAK-EAGLE RIVER BUSINESSES

Please see attached resolution from the Birchwood Community Council provided for your review and information:

Prepared by: Jasmine Acres, Deputy Municipal Clerk
Approved by: Jamie Heinz, Municipal Clerk
Respectfully submitted: Kevin Cross, Assembly Member
RESOLUTION #2024-02-01

RESOLUTION OF THE BIRCHWOOD COMMUNITY COUNCIL IN SUPPORT OF ROUTING THE ALASKA LONG TRAIL (AKLT) SUCH THAT HIKERS MAY EASILY ACCESS AND PATRONIZE CHUGIAK-EAGLE RIVER BUSINESSES

WHEREAS The currently proposed routing deters AKLT hikers from visiting Eagle River-Chugiak.

WHEREAS The currently proposed south to north routing between the Eagle River Nature Center and Eklutna Lake, connects a Ram Valley segment to the upper reaches of Peters Creek, descends a non-scenic section of that drainage on an existing trail to Four Mile Creek, and therefrom continues northerly to Eklutna Lake and beyond.

WHEREAS Without better access, AKLT Through and Section hikers will exclude visiting Eagle River-Chugiak while hike planning and will NOT visit those communities to re-supply, rest & relax, lodge, dine, bathe, wash laundry, complete shipping/receiving tasks, or otherwise patronize local businesses.

WHEREAS The vision statement on the AKLT webpage includes “...bolstering the Alaskan economy by attracting visitors from all over the world.”

WHEREAS The communities of Eagle River-Chugiak have much to offer to AKLT hikers and deserve an opportunity to benefit economically from the trail.

WHEREAS An alternate primary routing will encourage AKLT Through and Section hikers to patronize businesses in Eagle River-Chugiak.

WHEREAS A yet to be designed and constructed extension of the Ptarmigan Valley Trail (PVT) will facilitate such an alternate primary routing. It will extend northeasterly over a bridged Peters Creek and intersect with the Peters Creek Valley Trail (PCVT).

WHEREAS The creation of PVT extension to the PCVT would not only promote commerce in Birchwood, Chugiak, Peters Creek, it would also open more area of Chugach State Park for year round recreationist including snow machine riders, hunters, trappers, XC-skiers, BC-skiers, bikers, hikers, berry pickers, equestrians and others.

WHEREAS Increased use of PVT parking complex would help to lessen traffic to existing and conceptualized future parking at the PCVT thereby reducing hazards on winding mountain roads. Accelerated parking fee collection at that complex would be another benefit. Ease of
access to that location from the Old and “New” Glenn Highways make it an attractive alternative.

The Birchwood Community Council Resolves: To request Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Alaska Trails, Representative Jamie Allard, Senator Kelly Merrick, Representative Dan Saddler, Assemblyman Kevin Cross, and Assemblyman Scott Myers to act separately and collectively to holistically assess the routing of the AKLT in the Eagle River-Chugiak vicinity and effectuate a final routing decision that best benefits the community economically, in a manner that least disrupts residential neighborhood living, and to fund a 2024 design completion.

Debbie Ossiander
Co-Chair Debbie Ossiander

Matt Cruickshank
Co-Chair Matt Cruickshank
Advantages of Using Ptarmigan Valley Trailhead rather than Malcom Drive Trailhead and Vicinity

- Two Existing parking lots with immediate access from State of Alaska (SOA) Roadway, The Old Glenn Highway.
- Off-street, overflow, day parking directly across the street.
- Expands backcountry access for biking, hiking, hunting, trapping, X-Cc skiing, backcountry skiing, snowmobiling.
- Reduces traffic volume in residential neighborhoods and thusly reduces probability of mishaps.
- Easy access from Glen Highway for non-locals.
- **Promotes commerce in Chugiak.**
- All goods and services needed by Alaska Long Trail through and section Hikers within close proximity. Safe walking to the purveyors of goods and services on paved walk/cycle ways.
- Reduces demand for on-street parking at the current trail head location.
- **Reduces size requirements for any future parking lot(s) created in closer proximity to existing Peters Creek Valley trailhead.**
- Reduces infringement on the rights of residential property owners in close proximity to the existing trailhead as well as those along the narrow, winding road to that trailhead.
- Advances the collection of parking fees at the Ptarmigan Valley Trailhead.
- Avoids conflicts with local zoning restrictions and subdivision covenants, codes and restrictions.
- Eliminates expenses of road improvements to present trailhead.
- Respects rights of residential property owners. “Respect invites respect.”
ALASKA LONG TRAIL - CAPSIS FY2024

Alaska Trails, working closely with partners, identified 14 high-priority shovel-ready and planning-ready projects along the length of the Alaska Long Trail proposed route. These projects have been submitted to legislature for the FY2024 state capital budget. The table on the following page provides the summary of the projects, including TPS#, and their location is shown on the map below. “Multi-use” refers to both motorized and non-motorized uses.

CONTACTS

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Haley Johnston, Trails Initiative Manager  haley.johnston@alaska-trails.org  907-444-5766

www.alaska-trails.org/the-alaska-long-trail
ALASKA LONG TRAIL - CAPSIS FY2024 PROJECTS INCLUDE:

- Building new non-motorized trails (#1, 4, 11, 14)
- Existing multi-use¹ trail improvements (#6, 8, 9, 13)
- Planning studies to identify links between segments (#7, 10)
- Improving trail access and parking (#4, 5, 7, 8, 14)
- Wayfinding and cultural heritage (#2, 3)
- Separated highway paths for safe non-motorized travel (#12)

WHO IS MAKING IT HAPPEN? Alaska Trails, a statewide non-profit, is coordinating this ambitious project, working with the Long Trail Coalition (representatives from each region along the route) bringing in local trail users, landowners, and communities.

LEVERAGE & MATCHING FUNDS: Requested state capital dollars can be used to leverage additional, larger sums of federal LWCF, FLAP, and RTP funds.

FY2023 state capital budget: State legislature included 15 Alaska Long Trail projects in the FY2023 budget last year – THANK YOU! However, only seven of the projects were funded after the vetoes. The table below shows the new set of ALT projects for FY2024, including a few that didn’t make it last year².

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TPS #</th>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Use</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Recipient</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Connect Oceanview Bluff Park to Potter Marsh</td>
<td>non-motorized</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
<td>Anchorage Park Foundation</td>
<td>Anchorage</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Connect Ship to Coastal Through Indigenous Place Name Plaza</td>
<td>non-motorized</td>
<td>$600,000</td>
<td>Anchorage Park Foundation</td>
<td>Anchorage</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Wayfinding in Anchorage &amp; Chugach-Eagle River</td>
<td>non-motorized</td>
<td>$300,000</td>
<td>Anchorage Park Foundation</td>
<td>Anchorage</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Indian Valley Trail Reroute</td>
<td>non-motorized</td>
<td>$1,500,000</td>
<td>Alaska Trails</td>
<td>Indian / Chugach State Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Arctic Valley Trailhead Parking Expansion</td>
<td>non-motorized</td>
<td>$175,000</td>
<td>DPOR</td>
<td>Arctic Valley / Chugach State Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Eklutna Lakeside Trail Improvements</td>
<td>multi-use</td>
<td>$234,000</td>
<td>Alaska Trails</td>
<td>Eklutna / Chugach State Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Ram Valley Re-establishing Access</td>
<td>non-motorized</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
<td>Alaska Trails</td>
<td>Eagle River / Chugach State Park</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Peters Creek Trailhead Parking Survey and Design</td>
<td>multi-use</td>
<td>$75,000</td>
<td>DPOR</td>
<td>Peters Creek / Chugach State Park</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Peters Creek Trails Assessment and Design Prescription</td>
<td>multi-use</td>
<td>$60,000</td>
<td>Chugach Mountain Bikers</td>
<td>Peters Creek / Chugach State Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Core Mat-Su Corridor Planning</td>
<td>non-motorized</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
<td>Alaska Trails</td>
<td>Matanuska-Susitna Borough (Greater Palmer)</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>GPRA Traverse and Little Susitna Loop</td>
<td>non-motorized</td>
<td>$1,900,000</td>
<td>Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation</td>
<td>Matanuska-Susitna Borough (Greater Palmer)</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Carlo Creek to Crabbies Crossing Separated Path</td>
<td>non-motorized</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
<td>Denali Borough</td>
<td>Denali Borough</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Isberg 4-Season Trail</td>
<td>multi-use</td>
<td>$890,000</td>
<td>Fairbanks North Star Borough</td>
<td>Fairbanks North Star Borough</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Equinox Marathon Trail -- Parks Highway to Fairbanks via Ester Dome</td>
<td>multi-use</td>
<td>$1,450,000</td>
<td>Fairbanks North Star Borough</td>
<td>Fairbanks North Star Borough</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL $9,484,000

¹ "Multi-use" refers to both motorized and non-motorized uses.
² Projects that were included in the FY2023 capital budget last year but didn’t make it through the vetoes are shaded in yellow.

www.alaska-trails.org/the-alaska-long-trail