

Municipality of Anchorage



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

David Bronson, Mayor

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

Resolution 2023-20 Of the Girdwood Board of Supervisors In Support of immediate remediation of Glacier Creek embankment

WHEREAS, Glacier Creek is the main water channel that flows through Girdwood Valley and runs beneath the Alyeska Highway and Pedestrian Bridges, the only road and pedestrian path essential to connecting residential, business, and infrastructure West of the creek; and

WHEREAS, these two bridges play a critical role in Girdwood's transportation needs: motorized and non-motorized, in addition to housing vital utilities including drinking water, Anchorage Water and Wastewater Utility (AWWU) infrastructure, and power; and

WHEREAS, the loss or closure of either bridge or AWWU infrastructure will have a tremendous impact on our community for residents, businesses, and economy; and

WHEREAS, high flow status at 1 ft from flood stage results in mitigation for Girdwood Fire Department, activating Girdwood Area Command, Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) and public works to monitor the water flow around the community; and

WHEREAS, Glacier Creek streambank is steep with active erosion upstream of the pedestrian bridge, located North of the Alyeska Highway Bridge at the East abutment over Glacier Creek, exhibiting a collapsed bank and exposed soil, which has been observed by numerous community members consistently concerned about the stability of the Highway and Pedestrian Bridges; and

WHEREAS, Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (AKDOT&PF) Bridge Section, in an email Sept 7 2023, stated it is aware of the active streambank erosion upstream of the pedestrian bridge and is coordinating internally and externally to monitor and respond to the erosion while seeking funding to complete repair, which would likely not occur until Summer 2024; and

WHEREAS, AWWU believes the Glacier Creek bank erosion is a critical situation due to the 7.5 ft proximity of the collapsed bank to their 16-inch transmission main, air vacuum vault, and utility pole, threatening and posing a continued risk to the Girdwood community during a fire; and

WHEREAS, these integral components transport bulk water through Girdwood, providing the resilience of a looped water transmission system, ensuring proper water distribution operation, and maintaining a load center for heat trace; and

WHEREAS, AWWU wrote on Oct. 5 to AKDOT&PF, highly encouraging a design and installation of erosion protection for the East bank in 2023, thus eliminating infrastructure risk and avoiding the obstacles of fish habitat and migratory bird permitting if the work is done before 2024; and

WHEREAS, in the three years since the October 2021 storm, which washed out Ruane Road and served as a reminder that storm events pose a serious threat to streambanks and infrastructure, Glacier Creek has experienced high flow status more frequently, including cresting to near flood stage in July and September 2023; and

WHEREAS, the recent atmospheric rain events and future increased intensity of precipitation are both forecasted and less predictable, and fall precipitation and spring runoff experience peak flow drivers for Glacier Creek, which collectively create a strong possibility for catastrophe before the 2024 proposed repair time frame;

THEREFORE, the Girdwood Board of Supervisors requests a repair design and installation in the fall/winter of 2023 and looks forward to an expedited response in efforts to work with AWWU and contractors on the Glacier Creek streambank erosion situation for the benefit and safety of the Girdwood Community.

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

Briana Sullivan

Briana Sullivan
GBOS Co-Chair

Margaret Tyler

Attest