



MINUTES FINAL
Girdwood Trails Committee Special Meeting
Tuesday, December 14, 2021 7:00PM

Girdwood Trails Committee meetings are taking place on Teams thru March 2022.

GTC Voting members are defined as is any person eighteen (18) years of age or older who has attended one or more Trails Committee meetings in the last 12 months, and is:

- a) a current resident and/or property owner, business owner or designated representative of a non-profit association; and
- b) who has resided in, owned property in, owned a business located in, or operated as a non-profit association for the preceding ninety (90) days or longer in Girdwood Valley.

Attendance is verified through a sign-in sheet available at each meeting, or equivalent process.

The Girdwood Board of Supervisors, its committees, and subcommittees are subject to the Alaska Open Meetings Act as found in Alaska Statute 44.62.310 and Anchorage Municipal Code 1.25 - Public Meetings. The Girdwood Trails Committee operates under the Girdwood Public Meetings Standards of Conduct.

Call to Order

Approval of December 14 Special Meeting agenda approved Barb Crews/Kalie Harrison

Announcements & Presentations: None

Introductions: All attending are asked to introduce themselves for sign in purposes.

New/Returning members are: CeCe Mendonsa, Kai Penn, Kintla Penn

Old Business:

1. Discussion of draft Girdwood Trails Master Plan, reviewing recommendations starting at Natural Spaces Recommendations in the GTP changes recommendations from Huddle AK.

Topic 1:

Natural Spaces Description on Page 35:

Natural Spaces

One way in which this plan improves the balance and diversity of Girdwood's Trail and Natural Space system is by identifying natural areas that should remain entirely or predominantly in their natural state. Natural spaces serve a variety of purposes, including both conservation and recreation. Natural spaces are not solely for conservation and ecosystem services (such as providing wildlife corridors and habitat), but also can be used for primitive, non-mechanized recreation activities like trail walking, running, hiking, skiing, snowshoeing, orienteering, foraging, wildlife viewing, education, solitude, and meditation. Natural spaces are not areas that are 'locked up' or 'off limits,' but rather are places available and open to those who value a more primitive recreation experience.

CHANGE RECOMMENDED – Remove Natural Spaces paragraph and replace with the following:

Areas for Primitive Trails: One way in which this plan improves the balance and diversity of Girdwood's trail system is by identifying areas where primitive trails are desired. Areas that prioritize primitive trails serve a variety of purposes, including both conservation and recreation, where non-mechanized recreation activities like trail walking, running, hiking, skiing, snowshoeing, orienteering, foraging, wildlife viewing, education, solitude, and meditation are the primary uses.

Next Meeting: Jan 4, 2022

Girdwood Trails Committee Agendas and minutes are available on line: <http://www.muni.org/gbos>

Natural Space Network – Throughout the document

CHANGE RECOMMENDED – REMOVE all references to Natural Space Network and adjust language to be consistent with the recommended language above.

Group determines to address these items together.

Motion:

GTC moves to approve retaining the original language related to Natural Spaces in the draft plan (instead of accepting the recommended change).

Motion by Shannon O'Brien, 2nd by Julie Raymond-Yakoubian

Vote via poll with voice votes and chat votes:

Poll vote:	13 yes	22 no	4 abstain
voice vote:	3 yes	7 no	0 abstain
Chat:	3 yes	7 no	0 abstain

Total votes are 19 in favor, 36 opposed, 4 abstaining

Motion Fails, recommended change is adopted.

Group discusses that language on page 16 of the Trails Plan should be adjusted to match the language on page 35, this would require a new recommendation for change at a future meeting:

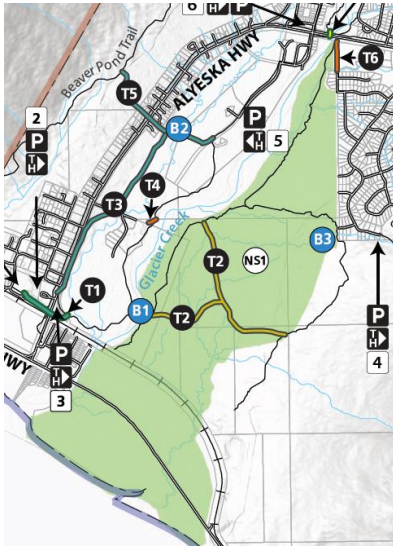


Natural Spaces – While the community planning process has historically focused on the development of new trails, there is a demand for areas within walking distance of town for primitive trail experiences including non-mechanized experiences, habitat protection, spaces for quiet and solitude, orienteering, wildlife viewing, and ungroomed skiing. Trails in these areas would be limited to class 2 standards unless use of trails within these areas warrants improved trail tread to protect the surrounding area.

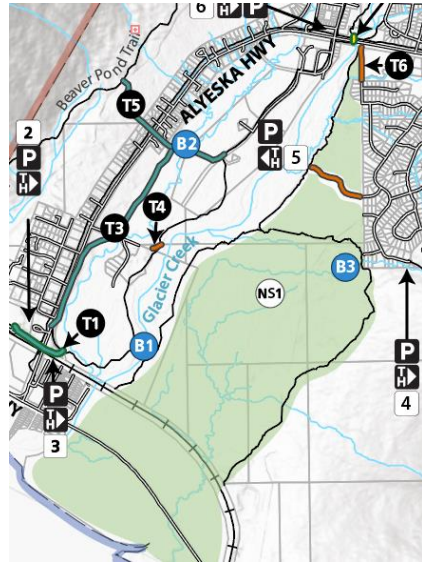
Topic 2: NS1 Virgin Creek Natural Space

CHANGE RECOMMENDED

Recommend adjusting the boundary of NS1. The eastern boundary should extend and include the Wagon Trail. The western boundary should be adjusted to remove the Joe Danich Trail from NS1. ADD a trail project to the plan that brings the Joe Danich up to a Class 3 trail constructed to the bicycle design parameter and relocate out of wetlands to uplands. ADD trail project to the plan to construct neighborhood connector trail (Class 3, bicycle design parameters, constructed in uplands) from the Turin and/or Carlina Drive cul-de-sacs to connect to the Joe Danich trail. NS1, with the adjusted boundary, remains non-mechanized with trails that are no greater than Class 2. Comments indicate that residents want a multi-use alternative trail to connect from the lower valley to the upper valley without using the road system. A Class 3 designation provides a sustainable connection to neighborhoods. The eastern boundary shift better aligns with a primitive experience for the Wagon Trail.



Original concept
(note trail 12 has been removed from draft plan)



Recommended change

Motion: GTC moves to retain the original boundary of NS1 as presented in the draft Trails Plan.

Motion by Jonathan Lee, 2nd by Julie Raymond-Yakoubian

Poll vote: 22 yes 13 no 2 abstain

voice vote: 4 yes 3 no 2 abstain

Chat: 10 yes 4 no 1 abstain

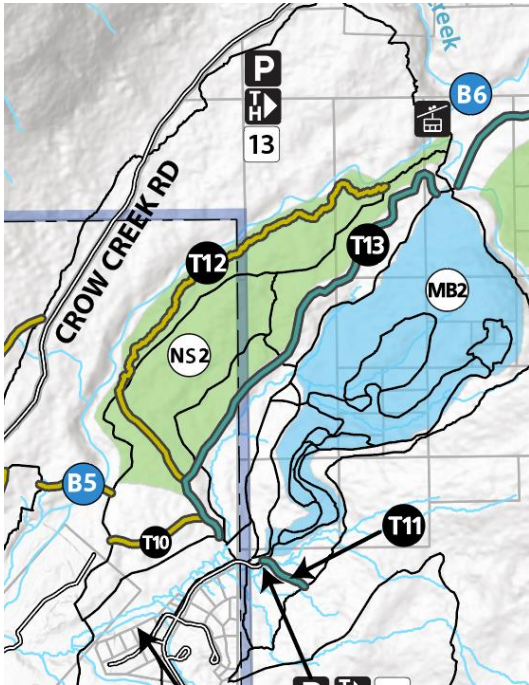
Total votes are 36 in favor, 20 opposed, 5 abstaining

Motion carries, proposed change is rejected

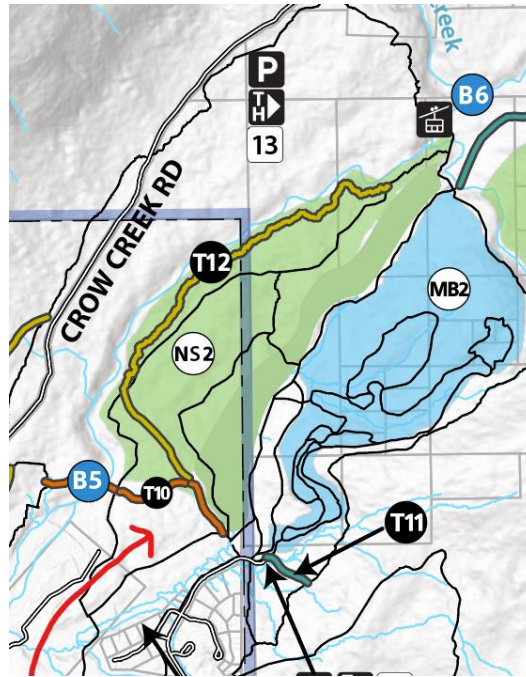
Topic 3: NS2 Stumpy's Natural Space

CHANGE RECOMMENDED

Recommend adjusting the boundary of NS2. Expand the boundary to the east to extend up to but not including the Snowcat Trail and the groomed section of Stumpy's winter trail. (T13-Upper Valley Multi-Use Trail recommended to be removed from the draft plan and add Forest Loop back).



Original concept



Recommended change

Motion: GTC moves to accept the recommended change to extend the boundary of NS2 as presented, noting that the primitive trail area will not impact the previously approved Forest Loop Trail.

Motion by Julie Raymond-Yakoubian, 2nd by Eryn Boone

Poll vote: 21 yes 14 no 2 abstain

voice vote: 2 yes 4 no 1 abstain

Chat: 7 yes 4 no 0 abstain

Total votes are 30 in favor, 22 opposed, 3 abstaining

Motion carries

Topic #4: NS3 Winner Creek Natural Space

No change Recommended

GTC moves to accept the NS3 as presented

Motion by Julie Raymond-Yakoubian, 2nd by Barb Crews

Poll vote: 16 yes 12 no 2 abstain

voice vote: 3 yes 4 no 1 abstain

Chat: 7 yes 6 no 0 abstain

Total votes are 26 in favor, 22 opposed, 3 abstaining

Motion carries

2. Discussion of future Special Meeting Dates for review the Trails Master Plan – tabled.

Jan 4 Regular meeting will continue with Mountain bike project recommendations

Additional meetings can be scheduled as needed: Jan 11, 18, 25 are options

Public Comment (3 minutes each): Public Comment must be on subjects not listed on the agenda.

Julie Raymond-Yakoubian reads a land acknowledgement statement from the MOA, adapted slightly for GTC.

Marguerite Leeds reminds the group that there will be a scheduled power outage tonight 12-4.

Adjourn 10PM

[Chat messages are not viewable by those attending via phone. Chat messages and links that were shared and not discussed in the meeting are below:](#)

Rowton, Shelley A.

I just want to remind you that 95% of Girdwood's trails are in trespass.

It is my job to look at this way, but as I leave, I ask all of you to maybe try to look at it this way too - we aren't planning for any majority. We are trying to plan for many groups and it is possible that everyone gets something. Majority never rules. That's a fallacy. Also, HLB will manage these lands with our mission in mind. That balances many things, one of which is conservation as development.

<https://www.muni.org/Departments/operations/streets/Service/Trails/GTC%202017/Draft%20%20Girdwood%20Trails%20Plan.pdf> See page 33-35. This does not include all the social trails or the illegally built bike trails by Abes.

We will systematically be rewilding and restoring illegally built trails as part of our regular management program now.

HLB lands are not park land and may be closed at any time if damage is occurring or future damage is expected.

Julie Raymond-Yakoubian (Guest)

The Girdwood Area Plan is a private effort, not a public body, which means there are different requirements (lesser) for transparency, public responsiveness and public participation.

Rowton, Shelley A.

Conservation and preservation IS it's own type of development. If you don't plan for it, eventually, you can't because it is gone.