

Alaska Trails Initiative

More and Better Trails; More and Better Ways to Experience the Best of Alaska

Spring 2020 Trails Investment Strategy – SC AK



FAIRBANKS TO SEWARD ADVENTURE CORRIDOR

**Recommendations for Priority Trails/Access Infrastructure -
Draft in progress** *Reasons for "OMD" (One More Day in AK)*

Fairbanks North Star Borough – Pioneering Partnerships

- Rosie Creek Trails/Timber Management project
- Equinox Marathon loop
- *And other projects being identified...*

Denali Borough – Frontcountry Alternatives

- Bison Creek Parking/Trailhead & Trail – Phase 2
- McKinley Village Bridge/Trailhead & Trail
- Expanded winter rec opportunities, Denali Hwy and other locations

Matanuska Susitna Borough – New/Improved Destinations

- South Denali Visitor Center
- Kesugi-Curry hut-to-hut & trail system
- Traverse Trail – Skeetawk to Govt Peak Rec. Area
- Independence Mine
- Mat Su Visitor Center/Three- way Trails Hub
- Knik River Valley trail systems

Anchorage Bowl – "Destination Anchorage"

- Chugach State Park – "Five Front Doors to the Alpine Frontcountry" plus new "signature trails".
- "The Moose" – in town trail system
- "Mountain to Sea" Trail Connector

Seward – Anchorage – AK's Most Accessible Alpine Terrain

- Fill key gaps the Iditarod & related trails
- Whistle Stop hut to hut system
- "Trail towns" – Girdwood, Cooper Landing, Seward...
- Turnagain Connector/Windy Corner – filling a critical gap in existing bike/hiking trails

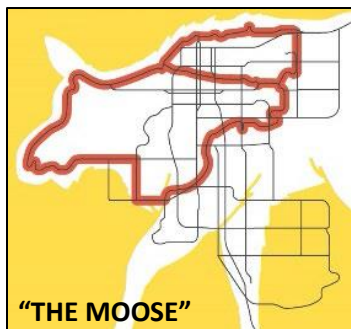
(not included here: comparable, worthy projects in SE and Rural Alaska)



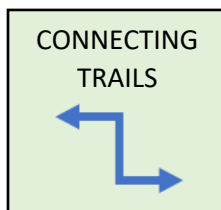
Investment Strategy Contents: Anchorage Example

OVERVIEW – “DESTINATION ANCHORAGE 365”

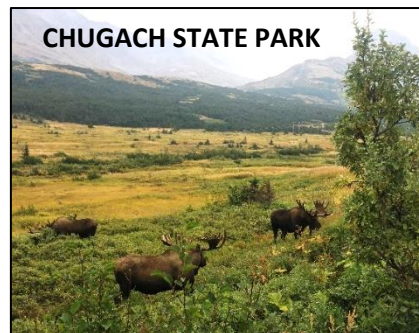
- Take better advantage of Chugach State Park to create a much **stronger four-season destination**
- **Hiking/nature walks are the fastest growing activity** for out-of-state visitors to Alaska¹
- Give visitors reasons to stay an **extra day and generate \$100’s of millions in additional spending**
- Investments in trails, marketing and wayfinding **bring life and spending to a struggling downtown**



Untapped Opportunities: a well-publicized, clearly marked loop trail



Fill one key gap, create ability for ride or ski from Chugach S.P. to in-town destinations



Untapped Opportunities: including North America’s single best moose viewing location

PRIORITY PROJECTS – DRAFT IN PROGRESS

Project	Lead (s) & Support	Est Cost	Priority
“Moose”			
Lk Otis Overpass	Park Foundation, MOA, DOT/PF	\$13 Million	Near term/costly
Wayfinding – signs, marketing	Park Found., MOA, Visit Anchorage	+/- \$50,000	NEAR TERM/affordable
“Mtns to Sea” Connecting Trail			
Fill the ¼ mile gap in the route	MOA, STA	+/- \$50,000	NEAR TERM/affordable
Wayfinding – signs, marketing	Park Found., MOA, Visit Anchorage	+/- \$50,000	NEAR TERM/affordable
Chugach Alpine Frontcountry			
<i>“Five Front Doors to the Alpine”</i>			
1. Arctic Valley	Chugach St. Pk., Arctic Valley ski club	See notes	Mid Term – work needed
2. Glen Alps	Chugach State Park	See notes	Mid Term – work needed
3. Rabbit Creek/Flattop South	Chugach State Park, MOA	See notes	Near term/costly
4. McHugh/SW Chugach	Chugach State Park, MOA	See notes	Mid Term – work needed
5. South Fork of Eagle River	Chugach State Park,	See notes	Mid Term – work needed
<i>“Signature Trail(s)”</i>			
1. Two Valleys Ballfield Loop	Chugach State Park	+/- \$100,000	NEAR TERM/affordable
2. Upgraded Flattop Trail	Chugach State Park	\$1,000,000	Near term/costly
Little O’Malley Trail	Chugach State Park, Park Foundation	+/- \$50,000	NEAR TERM/affordable
Comprehensive CSP Strategic Plan	Chugach State Park, MOA	+/- \$100,000	Mid term/affordable
Regional Connections			
– Anchorage to Palmer	Park Foundation, MOA,	TBD	Longer term – work needed
– Windy Corner – “Turnagain Gap”	MOA, Chugach State Park		Near term/costly

PARTNERS & SUPPORTERS

Developing the Priorities: Partners to date:	Other Involved parties – ongoing and planned	
Anchorage Park Foundation Chugach State Park (staff, Advisory Board) Trail user groups and trail businesses Municipality of Anchorage Staff	Anchorage Assembly State legislators Congressional delegation Downtown Partnership	Visit Anchorage Chamber of Commerce Anch Economic Development Corporation

¹ For visitors coming by air, participation grew from 38% in 2011 to 46 % in 2016; for cruise visitors, from 20 to 26%. (AVSP VII – Section 5 Visitor Activities). Both are the fastest rate of increase of any participation category.