

CHUGACH STATE PARK
TRAIL PLAN

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CHUGACH TRAIL PLAN

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background

The Chugach Trail Plan is an access plan to the interior of Chugach State Park. Most of this extremely rugged, mountain park has not yielded to the building of roads which span its exterior boundaries in all but the eastern perimeter. Trails are and always will be the principal means of getting around this magnificent glaciated landscape.

The Alaska Outdoor Recreation Plan of 1981 shows trail-related activities to be the largest category of recreational use in Alaska. This accounts for the present popularity of the park to area residents. Statistics suggest that its use will continue to grow faster than the general population growth of Anchorage and vicinity.

Because there are so many different trail user groups that have an interest in Chugach State Park, it was considered necessary to develop a comprehensive trail management plan for the park which examines the many, oftentimes competing uses, to arrive at a system that provides access and recreational opportunities as well as protection of the park resources. Many of those user groups have requested permission of the park management staff to build trails that serve their own needs. Among these groups are the Nordic skiers, equestrians, hikers and snowmobilers. This pressure has been greatest in the Hillside Unit of the park, but this is not the only area.

Trails mean many different things to different people. In discussing the subject with members of the Chugach State Park Advisory Board and other knowledgeable users of the park, it became apparent that there are many different thoughts on managing trails there.

One school of thought suggests that no new trails should be built in Chugach State Park. "People can find their own way into and around the park." Even people who "professionally" advocate further trail construction often privately hold the view that no new trails should be built. This attitude shows their acute concern that the very special wild country values and scenic resources of the park should not be diminished.

Another group urges development of a much more comprehensive network of trails, and perhaps a greater number of wide trails. Still another group or individuals urge that the park be totally opened to the use of motorized vehicles of all types. Through analysis, the reasoned middle ground can hopefully be arrived at - a system that provides reasonable access to all user groups within the constraints of resource protection that most users agree is so important.

Purpose and Scope

This plan establishes guidelines for the future use and development of trails in Chugach State Park. It is based on an analysis of existing access points and trails, the park environment, and current and anticipated trends in recreational use.

The primary purposes of this plan are to provide:

1. A trail system which allows for optimum recreational use of the area while preserving the natural environment of the park for future generations.
2. A consistent set of principles and policies for trail management.
3. A basis for future funding (CIP prioritization).
4. A roadmap for the trail building and maintenance efforts of volunteer organizations.

As with all master plans, periodic review will be necessary to insure that the concepts and recommendations of this trail plan reflect the changing needs of the public.

This plan will examine trailheads, patterns of trail use (about which much is still to be learned), and existing plans such as the Chugach State Park Master Plan, the Alaska Recreation Trail Plan, and the Anchorage Trails Plan, (1984). Land ownership and land status will be reviewed as well as urban growth patterns along the park boundary. Analysis of this information and public and citizen advisory board comments will provide the direction needed to recommend new trailheads, new trails, improvements or upgrading, and trails that should possibly be closed or relocated.

Management Units

In the Chugach State Park Master Plan (1980), the park has been divided into five units which correspond roughly with important geographic units. The recommendations of this plan will be made within these same planning units. They are:

1. Eklutna-Peters Creek;
2. Eagle River;
3. Ship Creek;
4. Hillside;
5. Turnagain Arm.

On the other hand, policies pertaining to the entire park are included within the areawide section of the trail plan. The Goals and Objectives of this plan are identical with those enumerated in the Chugach State Park Master Plan with the emphasis of this plan being towards access and trails. In a few cases this plan may recommend an amendment to the master plan in order to accommodate trail related activities that are considered to be in the best interests of the park and its users. Land acquisitions will also be recommended in several instances to facilitate access into and within the park. In a number of cases, the Municipality of Anchorage will be asked to provide platted access to the park through properties that are undergoing subdivision along the park's boundaries. This will require close coordination of municipal and state interests.

Land Management Status

There are a number of private inholdings within the legislatively designated boundaries of Chugach State Park. Several of these, particularly in Rabbit Creek Valley, Peters Creek, and the South Fork of Eagle River, are complicating or blocking the logical access to these portions of the park. In

addition, since the Chugach State Park Master Plan was published in 1980, the North Anchorage Land Agreement (NALA) has returned some 40,000 acres of Eklutna Village lands to the management of Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation in the Eklutna Valley - Peters Creek areas. This is vital to the management of the park as a cohesive unit.

The land ownership status of the park is a complex issue which can best be understood by studying the Land Ownership Map included for reference.

Chugach State Park Land Use Zones

The master plan for the park established three land use classification zones which apply according to the physical suitability of the area and Alaska Statute 41.20, the park enabling legislation. These can be referred to in greater detail on pages 27, 28, and 29 of the Chugach State Park Master Plan. Briefly, they are:

- * Recreation Development Zone - to meet intensive recreation needs by providing well developed access points and facilities.
- * Natural Environment Zone - to provide for low-impact recreation needs of a general nature.
- * Wilderness Zone - to promote, perpetuate and restore the wilderness character of the land. No motorized vehicles of any type are allowed in this zone.

CHAPTER 2

PUBLIC PREFERENCES AND EXPECTATIONS

Residents and out-of-state visitors frequently have different preferences and expectations when visiting a recreation or park area. In the particular situation of Chugach State Park, a rugged, mountain park close to the state's largest population, some interesting observations can be made.

Residents

Use of the park by residents has risen dramatically since its establishment in 1970, many times faster than the general population growth of the area. This is probably due primarily to:

1. Better road access to the park.
2. New trailheads and increased parking.
3. New trails and better maintenance.
4. Developed picnic and leisure facilities.
5. Increased facility servicing and ranger presence which gives areas a more orderly appearance; making them more family oriented.
6. General awareness of physical fitness by the public.
7. Increased appreciation of natural processes and desire to see wild-life.
8. Better signing and media publicity.
9. Daylight-saving time (more evening use).

As recently as 1974, it was quite possible to hike at Glen Alps in the Hillside on a warm, sunny weekday evening in mid-June and see perhaps one other car in the parking area. Now it is typical to find two or three dozen cars on a similar evening. Residents have discovered their park, and the potential for increased use is probably many times present use, even with no increase in general population.

New residents tend to seek out the more obvious access points first - those which provide easy access on good well-marked roads - Turnagain Arm, Eagle River Valley (visitor center), Arctic Valley and Eklutna Lake. Their first hikes are usually short and oriented around facilities. As they become more familiar with the park, they seek out new and less obvious areas which provide more penetrating experiences and longer, more arduous hikes - increasingly distant from the "general user". The lesser known trailheads and backcountry areas of the park are used principally by well acquainted residents.

Out-of-state Visitors

Out-of-state visitors or tourists are also discovering the park. Their experiences are generally much more superficial - passing through it, for example, along Turnagain Arm, perhaps in a tour bus or rented car. Increasingly, areas like Glen Alps, Upper Huffman and Upper O'Malley are being "discovered" because of the panoramic views and the chance to see Mt. McKinley, a major Alaskan attraction.

Easily accessed destinations with superb scenery are most in demand by visitors with limited time. Many want to be able to experience and photograph the magnificence of Alaska as conveniently as possible. Destinations such as Turnagain Arm, Arctic Valley, Eagle River Valley and Eklutna Lake offer the best opportunity for sightseeing without running into accessibility problems.

Other areas with high use potential, because of their proximity to downtown Anchorage and fine views, are Upper Huffman trailhead, Upper O'Malley, and if the road is improved, Glen Alps Trailhead. Trail experiences for visitors tend to begin where the trail is obvious, inviting and looks safe. Eagle River Visitor Center Trail (especially the new nature trail) is a good example. Displays of natural history and good maps invite a walker to explore further. Other trails with a high potential for attracting visitors are the Old Johnson Trail at Potter Marsh (Section House Visitor Center) and McHugh Creek, the new Upper Huffman to Flattop Trail (to be recommended in this plan), Eklutna Lake Glacier Trail, and an improved Ship Creek Valley trail. It is conceivable that tourist use of the park could rise dramatically, yet impact only the peripheral areas of the park. Most trails would be used for the first half mile or so, yet the experience could be rewarding enough to many visitors to entice them to remain longer in Anchorage.

Increased Access

Bus service, both tour buses and Municipal buses, would substantially increase use by residents and visitors. Lower income residents, younger people, and the handicapped and elderly would benefit particularly from Municipal bus service. Visitors would benefit by the convenient bus access to areas they know little about reaching. Both residents and visitors want to enjoy a rewarding nature experience that involves carefree access to the superlative recreation resources that are represented by Chugach State Park.

The use of buses would reduce the need to expand parking facilities as more and more people visit the park in the future. It would also reduce traffic in residential areas bordering the park.

Common Interests

Generally speaking, out-of-state visitors expect more in the nature of developed facilities at trailheads than residents, largely because of their orientation toward similar facilities in the more developed states. But visitors, like residents, also have a strong desire to experience a little bit of the real Alaska during the short time they spend in Anchorage. The trails of Chugach State Park can provide visitors an unparalleled opportunity to have intimate contact with natural Alaska.

User Expectation/Satisfaction

This section will examine user expectations and satisfaction elements by type of recreational activity.

Cross-Country Skiers

To the cross-country skier, the condition and design of the trail is paramount. A smooth, well-honed track adds immeasurably to the enjoyment of a

ski outing. Conversely, a rutted, gouged or otherwise damaged trail can prove to be almost unskiable or thoroughly unpleasant to use.

The rhythm of a trail is a key element for user satisfaction. The trail should ski smoothly without being jerky or of monotonous grade. If the skier can develop a good stride with carefree turns and hills, several of his or her expectations will have been met.

The skier should be able to enjoy a variety of scenery and vegetation types. Fortunately, the highly diversified landscapes of the Chugach Mountains make this easily achievable. Nonetheless, a conscious effort should be made to provide a variety of environments and vistas along any given trail.

Loop trails can provide diversity by allowing the skier to experience new scenery along the entire route. Loop trails at different elevations and terrain configurations are also capable of taking advantage of superior snow or weather conditions prevalent at certain elevations. Loop trails are sometimes easily created by constructing short connecting links with existing trails, or by connecting other loops. Loop trails can serve as a valuable management tool in providing a wide variety of satisfying experiences in areas that are most capable of accommodating such trails. For example, in the Hillside unit, extensive loop trails west of Campbell Creek would provide the kind of outing most two or three hour weekend skiers desire without having to cross the creek into areas that are desirable to retain as dispersed, low impact landscapes that are important for wintering wildlife or wilderness characteristics. In this way, greater use can be accommodated near the park boundary in development zones without placing greater impacts in backcountry natural areas or wilderness zones.

Origin - destination trails will always be the major trail type in Chugach State Park. Trails beginning at a park periphery trailhead and penetrating the park to specific landscape features will always be in demand. Many of these are already available to one degree or another, and vary from poor to good in serving as ski trails. Narrow valleys and changes in elevation limit the options for acceptable trail grade and variety more often than not. Where there is a choice, open forests are often preferable to treeless areas especially on cloudy days, which result in whiteout conditions, or windy days, which result in an unpleasant chill factor or wind-eroded snowpack.

Skiers expect ski trails to be free of motorized uses, which can easily destroy the tread of the trail; and also free of horses, hikers and dogs, each of which damage ski trails in different ways. However, many skiers enjoy taking dogs with them on ski outings since many of the Municipal ski trails are closed to dogs. The trenching that occurs from walking may render a trail unskiable, dangerous to use, or just unpleasant to the skier. The expectation of the skier is, that for satisfaction and enjoyment of the outing, none of these unpleasant events will occur on trails managed by Chugach State Park. Fortunately, the more skiers that use a trail, the less likely it is that there will be inappropriate uses of it.

In a nutshell, the skier, in order to have a satisfying experience, expects to follow a well-maintained trail free from inappropriate activities, through a variety of scenic woodlands and alpine areas. The condition of the trail is important to the skier.

Horseback riders. Horseback riders in Chugach State Park seek experiences that allow them to get away from it all in pleasant, quiet surroundings and to enjoy the manifest beauties of nature in the mountains. Equestrian trails should follow hardened surfaces so that horses can avoid mudholes and insecure footing. Grades should be moderate, especially where winter use is anticipated. Equestrian trails should also be free of all motorized activity which could result in danger to horse and rider. A good horse trail should provide the rider with a variety of terrain and vegetation types, and give the feeling of going somewhere. This can be achieved, even in the relatively limited flat terrain of the Hillside unit, by providing a series of loop trails. Wide, hard-surfaced trails such as the powerline trail in the Hillside are ideal for providing longer trips amid spectacular mountain scenery. The combination of loop trails and several good longer destination routes within the major valleys of Chugach State Park can provide the horseman with exhilarating, safe and satisfying riding experiences. Wildlife viewing is very successful on horseback because many species are unafraid of a human on horseback.

Many of these trails already exist, but in some instances new trails will be needed to provide continued satisfactory experiences. Several trails may have to be relocated in part, because of trail degradation, such as large mudholes, which pose a hazard to horsemen and other users. Sensitive alpine terrain can also suffer from horse use. Wet areas must be avoided if satisfactory trail treads are to be maintained. Through careful route selection, difficult situations can be avoided allowing the rider to have an experience that is thoroughly enjoyable and safe.

Sled Dog Musers. Dog mushing enthusiasts need a more exacting set of favorable conditions than other trail users in order to enjoy their sport. This is partly because of the difficulty in disciplining a large team of dogs and the fact that the team and sled are more unwieldy than any other over-the-snow transport even under the best of conditions. The driver frequently stands 30 to 40 feet behind the lead dog, and this limits his ability to see and respond to sharp changes in the trail or other hazards. Generally flat grades, gentle turns, and ample width (ten feet plus) are important requirements for dog trails.

It is especially important that sled dog trails are free of motorized vehicles or horses. The natural hazards of moose are severe enough without adding additional hazards that are controllable by management techniques. Even skiers and people on foot can create problems for dog mushers in narrow trail corridors.

Most of the frequently used winter trails in Chugach State Park are considered multiple use winter trail corridors that are reasonably compatible for sled dog teams and skiers or hikers. If the trail clearing is wide enough, both uses can be accommodated without conflict. The Hillside unit trails, the powerline, gasline and Wolverine trails, are frequently used by mushers when the snow is deeper there than in town or other sea level portions of the park.

To provide more opportunities for sled dog mushers, a connection between the Hillside Trail System and Far North Bicentennial Park Trail System should be made. Then additional loops should be constructed to diversify travel distances and possible motorized use conflicts should be examined. If the sled

dog musher can choose a variety of loop trails with moderate grades, wide tread and gentle turns, that are independent of motorized activities, then his desire to enjoy one of Alaska's most time-honored traditions will have been met.

Snowmobilers. The snowmobiler likes trails that go somewhere. The concept of a distant destination is important, in part, because it takes so little time to get there, and because such routes traditionally have provided a wide range of conditions that are challenging to the user. Distance, lots of space, adequate snow cover, and freedom from avalanche hazards are the requirements for enjoyable snowmobiling.

A wide range of trail types can be used by the highly responsive, agile, and speedy snowmobile, which includes the three- and four-wheel ATC's. This has led in part to conflicts with non-motorized users.

For these reasons, carefree snowmobiling requires trails and areas that are extraordinarily well marked and laid out to take advantage of natural terrain breaks, heavy vegetation and logical topographic boundaries. The number of non-motorized trails that intercept snowmobile trails should be kept to a minimum to discourage penetration of snowmobiles into non-motorized areas. This is essential, because, if the system of area zoning is not enforceable, snowmobilers will find themselves under increasing pressure to close these areas as the steady escalation of non-motorized users make their own demands for trail use felt.

Three-wheelers and motorbikes. It should be noted at the outset that three-wheelers are considered to be snow vehicles in winter (like snowmobiles), while two-wheel motor bikes are not. Also, both two and three wheeled bikes are simply off-road vehicles (ORV's) in the snow-free seasons, which will be discussed now.

Like snowmobilers, motorcyclists enjoy destination-oriented trails that traverse a wide range of challenging terrain and provide the distance that is sought - in a word - going somewhere. Practically any trails but the steepest are accessible to cyclists which creates both opportunities and the need for limitations. The limitations are concerned with site degradation, particularly soil erosion and destruction of vegetation, as well as noise near non-motorized users. The opportunities are that the network of logging roads in Bird Creek Valley that may have been viewed as undesirable for most uses are well suited for ORV use. However, in general, because of the preponderance of alpine zone in Chugach State Park, and the narrowness of accessible valleys, little of Chugach State Park is suitable for ORV use when compared with more favorable areas north of the park and the numerous potential conflicts with non-motorized users within the park.

Mountain bikers. Mountain bikers are enjoying a new sport in Chugach State Park. Most bikes are being used for reaching specific destinations in a short time using better than average trails such as the gasline and powerline "roads" to Indian, and the Eklutna Lake Road between Campground "A" and the glacier. Mountain bikers want additional suitable trails for their activities in Chugach State Park.

Several preliminary studies in other states indicate that mountain bikes cause soil compaction and displacement roughly comparable to vibram-soled boots, except on steep downhill grades where a small amount of additional gouging may occur to the trail tread. Perhaps the most significant impact is social as some hikers may resent the ease with which mountain bikers arrive at back-country destinations.

Hikers and mountaineers. Chugach State Park is a hiker's and mountaineer's dream. It offers gentle, forested valleys, vast alpine regions and mountains that range from gentle to extremely rugged. Interspersed throughout are gem-like alpine lakes and several large glaciers and ice fields. Hiking and mountaineering are the only practical means of reaching vast areas of the park.

Designated or improved foot trails are desirable within the forested zone and among the alder brush fields. Few additional improvements, other than those to promote public safety such as rustic bridges and alpine cairnes, are needed to provide a satisfying experience for many hikers and mountaineers. For those who desire shorter duration, closer to the trailhead experiences, a few wider trails that permit side-by-side conversations with family or friends are desirable. Picnicking experiences frequently accompany these day hikes.

Wildlife viewing is a prized experience for many in Chugach State Park. Narrow, low-standard trails are ideal for wildlife viewing. There should be enough natural impediments to guarantee that no motorized use is possible on environmentally sensitive wildlife viewing trails. This could shatter the user experience and threaten wildlife populations. Wildlife viewing trails thus differ sharply from nature trails which are built to much higher standards to accommodate even the young and handicapped.

Boaters and river runners. Eagle River is the only regularly used boating or floating stream in the park. However, it should be noted that Bird Creek, Ship Creek (in park) and Peters Creek can be kayaked for short distances and this is happening occasionally now. Eklutna River may also have some potential. Since the nature and character of the stream is a given, and one found most enjoyable by some kayakers and rafters, contributions to enjoyment or satisfaction are mostly in the nature of access points. The Moose Pond and Eagle River campground are two principal points of access. Maintaining water quality and the quality of shoreline viewsapes, especially beyond the park boundary, are important components to be dealt with in preserving Eagle River's recreational assets. The proposed Eagle River Greenbelt Plan will be a vital component in protecting the stream within the municipal boundaries.

Eklutna Lake serves a trail function because it has road access at the north end and attractive destinations beyond the seven miles of lake surface at the south end. A walkway to facilitate hand launching of small craft would be useful at each end of Eklutna Lake because of the fluctuating water level.

Handicapped users. Disabled persons would benefit from the construction of recreation trails designed to meet their specific needs. Nature trails which feature fairly flat grades, compacted and mud-free surfaces, and interpretive features are well-suited for their use and enjoyment. Trails suitable for handicapped use should be sited in a variety of park environments to provide

shorter access from various parts of the city, and to provide a variety of splendid viewscapes at different seasons. These should include an alpine area, several along Turnagain Arm, Eklutna Lake and Eagle River Visitor Center. Well-designed handicapped accessible trails can provide enjoyable outdoor experiences and new challenges for handicapped persons.

CHAPTER 3

POLICIES

Policy on Naming and Numbering of Trails

Trails within Chugach State Park should be named and numbered. Naming is important because it provides descriptive information about the trail to users and enables them to identify ground locations from maps. It is also vital to rangers in identifying the location of events or incidents. Naming trails is akin to the importance of naming streets in a city.

Numbering offers additional advantages. It prevents any misunderstanding of trail identity when names are similar. While naming provides valuable information about origin-destination and environment of a trail, numbering can key the trail to a particular management unit of the park and will be valuable in the future as the maintenance management system for the division begins to be coded for computerization.

Names for trails should be descriptive of origin-destination or the character of the country through which the trail passes. For example, "Middle Fork Loop Trail" describes the former and "Hemlock Knob Trail" the latter. Trails in Chugach State Park will be numbered as follows within the five planning units of the master plan:

1. Eklutna/Peters Creek - 100 series
2. Eagle River - 200 series
3. Ship Creek - 300 series
4. Hillside - 400 series
5. Turnagain Arm - 500 series.

A trail passing through several different planning units may carry the same origin-destination name but will carry the numbering system of that particular drainage (planning unit). The Arctic Valley/Indian Valley Trail would carry a 300 series and 500 series number respectively, dividing at Indian Pass.

Policy on Signing Trails

Trail names should be posted at the trailhead/terminus with a relatively small, rustic low-maintenance sign. The size of the sign should be carefully scaled to the distance to be read and speed of the user, yet it should not be obtrusive. Trail numbers are not necessary at trailheads or trail intersections. Trail names and directions are necessary at intersections of major trails, but optional at intersections of minor trails, depending on demonstrated need.

Motorized trail corridors within non-motorized zones of the park should be well marked at both ends and marked on both sides of the trail with small, low maintenance directional markers at 100 foot intervals. Where the motorized corridor is physically confined by thick brush, the interval between signs can increase to up to 600 feet.

Horse trail corridors should be posted at the trailhead/terminus and at trail intersections with a small, rustic low-maintenance sign. Sled dog trails should be posted in a similar manner.

For more detailed information regarding trail signs and signing, refer to the UNIFORM TRAIL MARKING SYSTEM of the Alaska Recreation Trail Plan (pp. 67-77).

Trail Classification System

Class A Trails. Class A trails are wide, graded trails with gentle grades and graceful, easy turns. They can serve a variety of heavy duty-type functions. These include double-track ski trails, horse trails, handicapped trails and mainstem access corridors from important trailheads. Such trails may also be suitable for natural history interpretation; dog sleds, mountain bikes, three-wheelers or snowmobile use. In the Hillside Unit of Chugach State Park, existing trails that fit into this category are the old homestead roads (Wolverine Bowl, Southfork of Campbell Creek (east rim and lower part of west rim), the powerline trail, gasline trail, and Glen Alps access trail.

Class A trails should have a tread width of 8 to 10 feet with at least one foot of additional clearing on each side. Grades should be a maximum of 8%, with steeper grades permitted for short distances. Handicapped trails at heavily used visitor parking areas should be restricted to 6 to 8 percent grades. These trails should be surfaced with gravel or equivalent material, or even paved. The general intent of Class A trails is to provide the capability of accommodating a large number of users at one time with little conflict. It is also to provide for activities which require trails with hardened surfaces and adequate width.

Class B Trails. Class B trails are trails of moderate width and grades which feature a narrow, hand-worked tread, or comparable machine-worked tread. They serve a variety of functions such as single track ski trails, horse trails, hiking, nature trails, or low speed access corridors for snowmobiles, three-wheelers or dirt bikes. Existing trails of this type are the Johnson Trail along Turnagain Arm and new portions of the Middle Fork Loop Trail, the Willawaw Lakes Trail (following the middle fork) and Eagle River Snowmobile Access Trail.

Class B trails should have a tread width of 4 to 6 feet with at least one foot of additional clearing on each side. Grades should be a maximum of 12% with steeper grades permitted for short distances. Grades for ski trails should be confined to less than 10%. These trails are generally not hard surfaced and must be carefully located and assigned for uses which do not result in degradation or mudholes. The general intent of these trails is to provide the capability of accommodating a moderate number of visitors with little tread scarring on the landscape and lesser clearing widths than Class A trails. It is also to provide for activities which would not require hardened surfaces, precisely graded treads, or additional clearing width.

Class C Trails. Class C trails are the lowest standard of improved and maintained trail. They feature no tread grading and serve a variety of uses such as single-track skiing, hiking, and wildlife observation. These trails are less adequate for horse use, snowmobiling, sled dog mushing, mountain bikes or three-wheelers and dirt bikes. Existing trails of this type are the South Fork Rim Trail, Hemlock Knob Trail and the East Fork of Eklutna River Trail.

Class C trails should have a cleared tread width of 2 to 3 feet with a total clearing width of 4 to 6 feet. Grades should be kept under 8% for those designed for winter ski use, and under 20% for hiking to avoid soil erosion. Sustained grades should be avoided to reduce erosion as well. The general intent of these trails is to provide the capability of accommodating a small number of users with no appreciable tread scarring other than that which occurs with normal foot traffic. They also feature the most narrow clearing width (trees would seldom ever have to be cut; mostly just brush or scrub trees), but a width adequate for hiking, wildlife observation and exploratory skiing. Class C trails could be established in the more sensitive landscapes such as wilderness or where narrow clearings and no tread cutting is required.

In alpine areas where no clearing is necessary, Class C Trails become Routes, and are identified as such on the trail maps.

* * * * *

This classification system establishes three broad categories which contain trails of surprising diversity in terms of intended uses. In terms of construction standards and impacts on the land, the three trail classes provide the range of options needed for different uses. No classification system for trails is perfect. It is hoped that this three-level system based largely on impacts on the land and number of users served will guide future trail construction and maintenance decisions.

Location, Design and Construction of New Trails

This chapter makes specific recommendations about locating, designing and construction of trails to serve the expectations of users identified in the previous chapter. References are also made to Class A, B, and C trails as a means of achieving these recommendations.

Ski Trails

Trails to be used for competition or beginning skiers and family use should be double-track Class A trails with equal parts of uphill, downhill and level terrain. Curves at the bottom of a hill should be gentle enough to accommodate a high speed run out. The wide Class A trails should avoid steep side hills which would result in severe gouging of the landscape. During construction, removal of all large trees is desirable before grading begins to reduce scarring of surrounding "leave" trees, and to prevent large trees from being left adjacent to the trail. Bulldozed trees are very unsightly, constitute a fire hazard and may permit the build-up of epidemic bark beetle populations. Wherever possible, on-the-ground trail location should avoid large trees. In most of the open-canopy spruce forest of the Hillside unit this is quite possible. Usually only alder brush or ground debris must be removed.

In areas where the spruce canopy is quite open and there is little or no alder brush, the grading can be omitted and hand work substituted. The great advantage here lies in the fact that not disturbing the moss, cranberry, crowberry and other small plants prevents alder from growing in thickets along the edge of the trail, creating an expensive maintenance problem on a recurring basis. Many of the older homestead roads in the park are easily

recognizable today because they are a corridor of alder in otherwise open spruce forest. These roads (trails) were created by bulldozing down to mineral soil over 20 years ago.

Single-track ski trails are lesser impact Class B trails which serve recreational skiers with a variety of opportunities from easy to challenging. Grades are permissible up to 10% with steeper grades for short distances. While the tread width is 4 to 6 feet, the clearing width is 6 to 8 feet. The tread of Class B trails should be hand cleared to avoid impacts, or machine cleared only if the impact is comparable to hand clearing. Grades that roll with the terrain, gentle curves, and equal parts of uphill, flat and downhill areas are desired goals. The National Ski Association suggests the following grades. The maximum grade for beginner trails is 10%. The maximum grade for general purpose trails is 17% for no more than 300 feet. Racing trails may have grades up to 30% for 100 feet or less. However, the most enjoyable and safest grade for track set and well-used trails is 8% or less due to the frequent hard pack or icy conditions encountered in Chugach State Park.

Single-track "adventuring" or "exploring" trails should be narrow and low impact Class C trails. Because they are narrow, grades should be confined to less than 8% when designed for skiing use. Generally speaking, only brush needs to be cut to open up and maintain these trails. No grubbing of the tread is necessary. Long, sustained grades should be avoided to prevent too much speed build-up. Trees would seldom have to be cut to provide these trails except in mountain hemlock thickets or young spruce stands. These would be excellent winter wildlife viewing trails.

Equestrian Trails

Trails to be used for horseback riding should be Class A or Class B trails. While Class C trails without graded treads can be used, they are often too narrow and offer poor footing on sidehills and rocky terrain. The most crucial element in selecting equestrian trails in Alaska is to avoid wet areas that could result in mud holes. These conditions, for example, make the Johnson Trail along Turnagain Arm unusable by horses. Both good drainage and soils that can sustain compaction are both desirable horse trail location criteria. Horses seldom need a treadway wider than three or four feet; however, adequate overhead clearance is crucial.

Equestrian trails for winter use should be free of areas that form aufeis (glaciering ice). Equestrian trails should also be closed to all motorized uses which represent a safety problem. Some of the wider Class A trails that are suitable for winter horse use should have the horse tread separated from the ski tread (tracks). This is necessary to avoid ruining the comparatively fragile ski tracks. In the Hillside area, the gasline trail is about 16 feet wide, half of which could be reserved for horses and half for skiers. The powerline trail, on the other hand, has a clearing over 50 feet wide, and if the eastern portion were used by skiers, the western part of the clearing would be excellent separation for horse use.

Alpine areas developed for horse trails should be limited to well-drained, erosion-resistant, trample-resistant areas. However, horses are used for sheep and moose hunting in Chugach State Park. Horses are relied upon for hauling out moose from the North Fork of Ship Creek and this use has become

traditional. Route relocation will be necessary in Ship Creek to avoid mudholes that are becoming larger and more numerous each year. In some cases, hard surfacing of existing trails may be necessary to sustain horse use.

Sled Dog Trails

Sled dog trails are generally the wider, flatter Class A trails with gentle turns and grades. The gasoline trail and powerline trail are the two most used trails in the Hillside unit for these very reasons. The other vital requirement is freedom from motorized conflicts, either on the same trail or crossing the dog trail. The development of future sled dog trails should take into consideration access from Far North Bicentennial Park and appropriate motor-free areas in Bird Creek Valley.

The location, design and construction of sled dog trails should follow the requirements spelled out previously under Class A ski trails.

Snowmobile Trails

Snowmobile trails are generally wide Class A trails which can accommodate a wide variety of grades and turns. If these trails are not to be used during the summer season, the quality of the tread is not a major factor. Swamp areas are suitable once they are frozen and snow covered. However, such trails should be blocked in summer to prevent site degradation of swampy areas. Upper Huffman snowmobile access is a good example.

Where snowmobile trails are provided an access corridor through an area closed to motorized vehicles, very careful site investigation is necessary to locate the trail as much as possible out-of-sight and sound of non-motorized users. This may mean deliberately reducing snowmobile speed through trail design and signing, location in dense timber or brush, and utilization of terrain interceptions. It is likewise very important to locate snowmobile corridors through non-motorized areas so that they intercept non-motorized trails as little as possible. This physically reduces the opportunity for penetration into non-motorized closed areas. It also reduces the need for extensive signing and makes the management of snowmobile use easier for field staff. The existing situation is virtually unenforceable in the Hillside at current staffing levels. A better defined access corridor also protects non-motorized users from having the quiet of their experience shattered by illegal snowmobile use and prevents carefully honed ski trails from being destroyed. It also protects the rights of snowmobilers to use a particular valley by preventing the ease and frequency of illegal penetration by a careless or uncaring few, resulting in pressure to remove all motorized uses from the valley because the situation is "unmanageable".

In valleys that are currently open to snowmobile use in Chugach State Park, and this is half of the major valleys in the park, it is frequently possible to accommodate both motorized and non-motorized uses by building new trails which physically separate the uses. These could be either motorized or non-motorized trails. In some cases it may mean building both types of trails because the present trail is unsuitable for either use and should be closed. Adequate physical separation is the key factor, using vegetation and terrain wherever possible to achieve this. Other constraints on motorized trails are

wilderness areas of the park, and areas where noise and wildlife incompatibility would prevent use.

Three-wheeler and Motorbike Trails

Three-wheeler and motorbike trails are Class A and Class B trails which can feature a wide variety of grades and turns. These trails must be hard surfaced to avoid mudholes and related site degradation. Grades should be confined to slopes that minimize soil erosion for the particular soil involved.

Many of the locational factors that apply to snowmobile trails (previously), apply to three-wheeler and bike trails as well. The physical separation of motorized and non-motorized uses is very important during the snow-free months when trails open for foot use could be easily damaged by motorbikes.

Alpine areas are particularly susceptible to motorbike damage because the soils are thin and easily eroded, and vegetation is very fragile and slow growing. Motorbike trails should always stop in heavy vegetation before the alpine zone is reached. Once motorbikes enter the alpine zone, they are uncontrollable and potentially very damaging. The current situation in Little Peters Creek Valley illustrates this very well, as the damage to alpine tundra here is very extensive and worsens yearly.

Developing an adequate physical barrier may be a vital factor in the proper management of motorbike use. Otherwise total closures and strict enforcement may be the only options to avoid unacceptable site degradation in Chugach State Park.

Mountain Bike Trails

Mountain bike trails are Class A and Class B trails with hardened treads and moderate grades (generally under 15%). The trail should be free of muddy or boggy areas which would impede use and result in site degradation. The most used trails at the present time are the powerline trail (for its entire length), the gasoline trail in the Hillside area, and the Eklutna Lake Road between Campground "A" and the glacier.

The physical and social impact of mountain bike use is not well understood in Chugach State Park. Until more is known, no new trails will be recommended. The continuation of suitable existing trails should be the thrust of current management.

Hiking and Walking Trails

Hiking trails cover the entire gamut of trails - Classes A, B, and C. Many of the gentle gradient, wide cross-country skiing trails are excellent for family activities or large groups of people on social outings such as weekend walks, berry picking and nature observation. Hiking trails are also used by runners and joggers.

Cross-country ski trails of moderate width (Class B) in open-canopy spruce where no tread grubbing was necessary can be used as Class C walking and hiking trails during the snow-free months. With use, a narrow trail tread will develop, not unlike a well used game trail except for the wider clearing.

Class C trails, with no grubbed trail tread (just a 4 to 6 foot wide clearing), are ideal for access to mountainous backcountry through brush fields and alder patches. The Class C trail is also ideal as a wildlife viewing trail where a low impact on the landscape is desired and use is expected to be light. Wildlife viewing trails will be desirable for access within the park's dedicated wildlife viewing areas. To accommodate summer use adequately, all clearing should be done to ground level.

Handicapped Person's Trails

Trails for the physically disabled will, in most cases, be Class A trails with hardened treads and grades less than 8% for short distances. Sustained grades of less than 6% are desirable. Muddy areas should be avoided whenever possible. Major nature trails will also serve handicapped users and be designed to accommodate them using Class A standards.

Class B and C trails can be used by persons with smaller disabilities, and this challenge is important to them. However, only the safest Class A trails should be signed to invite use by handicapped persons.

Classification System for Trailheads

Trailheads will be classified into small, medium, and large size categories. This size will also be an indication of impact on the immediate surroundings, and of potential traffic generation. Broadly speaking, they are:

- Small: 5 to 15 cars
- Medium: 20 to 40 cars
- Large: 50 to 100 cars.

Buses could also be served at large trailheads if road conditions and surfacing are adequate.

Trailheads serve as the principal access points to Chugach State Park because trails are what this park is all about. Over 60 points of entry have been identified in Chugach State Park stretching from Knik River (Hunter Creek) to East Anchorage (Hillside) to Girdwood Valley (Crow Pass). All of these could be considered to be trailheads to one degree or another. They range from 2 or 3 car pull-offs to go to 100-car parking areas at Glen Alps and Eagle River Visitor Center.

Because of the highly variable nature of Alaska weather and trail conditions, use of these trailheads fluctuates from 1 or 2 cars on a poor weekend (January - raining on ice) to 50% over design capacity on the best of Memorial Day, Fourth of July, and September autumn color weekends. Over 150 cars have been counted at the Glen Alps parking lot which is designed for 98. There is probably no way to accommodate peak weekend traffic short of over-designing the lots for average weekend and weekday use (95% of the time). To attempt to provide for peak load conditions would drive up maintenance and construction costs of parking areas (trailheads) by a large degree.

Design can reduce the impact of parking areas on the surroundings. In big trees, a series of crescent-shaped lots could be designed to fit into the natural terrain and reduce the need for extensive straight line boundaries.

Where the park trailhead borders residential areas, dirt berms can screen the view of cars and greatly reduce noise originating there. In time, brush and trees will screen the development still further.

Small trailheads would serve primarily as local or neighborhood access points, or possibly for seldom used trails. Medium trailheads would serve heavy-use local needs or popular trails that have only a limited physical capability for parking development. Large trailheads would serve very popular trails and access points for both residents and out-of-state visitors. Such areas must, of course, be physically capable of providing this space in a large lot, or by a group of linked, crescent-shaped parking areas.

Much of Chugach State Park is or soon will be surrounded by residential development. This situation exists along most of the park boundary except for Turnagain Arm where only a few subdivisions abut the park. It is understandable that most neighborhoods resist attempts to provide for parking that is accessed through their neighborhoods. They want the best of both worlds - a huge wilderness park in their back yard, and mostly use for themselves and their friends, with little traffic from outside their neighborhood.

However, the location, size and reasons that Chugach State Park was founded cannot be overlooked. Chugach State Park is nearly half a million acres in size, situated at the very edge of Alaska's largest city and rapidly developing nearby communities of Eagle River, Chugiak, Matanuska Valley and Girdwood. It would not be acceptable to deny or constrain access to the park by residents of the city as a whole, neighborhood residents or out-of-state visitors. Selecting the proper access facilities to fit the existing and projected needs, physical setting and demographic profile is much of what this plan is about.

Certain access corridors (roads) into the park have little or no residential development along them. These areas are ideal for development as major tourism and visitor destination areas in the park. Foremost among these are Eklutna Lake and Glacier, Eagle River Visitor Center, Arctic Valley, and Turnagain Arm. Each of these areas should have one or more large parking areas or a series of medium and small areas that provide an aggregate total parking capacity comparable to a large trailhead. These areas should be targeted for the majority of tourism development in Chugach State Park, including bus service.

Nearly all of the other trailheads that provide access to the park are in or pass through neighborhoods that border it. Residents who live along the park boundary enjoy the special attributes of being at the edge of urban development; with pure water, air and natural forest and mountain landscapes starting next to their property. The other side of the coin is that it is a public park, and during nice weather or favorable snow conditions, people are going to use it, at least on weekends. And of course they have the right to use the park through reasonable means of legal access, be they other neighbors, other Anchorage residents, visitors from across the state or tourists. On balance, most residents living along the park boundary are glad to trade-off weekend use of the park by others to retain the obvious benefits they enjoy living next to the park.

Trailheads that are accessed through residential areas to a point within the park, should generally be small and medium trailheads to reduce the traffic through any one neighborhood. The decision must be carefully evaluated because if the trailhead parking is too small, a worse situation may develop if cars are parked along the access road or blocking driveways. If the trailhead is too large, an unnecessary clearing impact and expenditure of funds will have been made.

Several existing large trailheads in the Hillside do have access through subdivisions. These are Glen Alps, Upper Huffman and Prospect Heights trailheads. Due to the popularity of two of them, this was probably unavoidable, while Upper Huffman is at least 1,000 feet within the park; a wise decision since unloading of snowmobiles can create noise.

Future trailheads which are accessed through neighborhoods (subdivisions) should be of small and medium size to disperse use and limit traffic impacts on any one neighborhood. To meet demands for parking, it may be necessary to space them closer together. This has advantages too because neighborhoods bordering the park are better served. More numerous but smaller trailheads also provide for greater diversity and a better selection of winter snow and road conditions.

Public Use Cabins

There are presently three shelter cabins next to Eklutna Glacier and Whiteout Glacier on the Eklutna Lake to Girdwood traverse. These were constructed almost 20 years ago by the local mountaineering club and are maintained by them for general public use. An old log cabin at the south end of Eklutna Lake has been renovated by the district and is maintained as a patrol cabin. An old trapper's cabin up Eagle River Valley within the wilderness zone is used occasionally for ranger patrols.

In general, cabins should be used to provide a public safety function or to provide a convenience which can stimulate increased year-round use of a particular trail. In this sense, public use cabins increase recreation opportunities for visitors and residents. Cabins can also be used to reduce scarring in popular camping areas by eliminating fire scars and make-shift shelters, as well as reducing wood requirements by use of small woodstoves for heating and cooking.

One such area that has been discussed over the years by user groups is in Ship Creek Valley on the traverse to Indian. A cabin located in the trees just below timberline could serve a public safety function during inclement weather or whiteout conditions, and as a convenience during better conditions. Public cabins should be located out-of-sight of the trail both for the benefit of cabin users and to retain the natural character of the area through which the trail passes. However, cabins are not permitted in the wilderness zones of Chugach State Park (see page 28 of the Chugach Master Plan), and most of this valley lies within the wilderness zone.

Another location that has been discussed is up Eagle River Valley before ascending into the alpine zones of Raven Creek. Here again, it is in the wilderness zone and not permitted by the Chugach Master Plan. A public use cabin has also been suggested at Nine Mile Creek in Peters Creek Valley.

This location is outside of the wilderness zone. A cabin in this location would be expected to significantly increase use of the valley, especially during the colder months.

Of the five existing cabins within Chugach State Park, only the Eklutna Lake cabin is sited outside of the wilderness zone. The other four are exceptions to the rule. The primary justification for continuation of the three Eklutna Glacier/Whiteout Glacier traverse cabins is for public safety along a potentially hazardous route.

Sun Stations

Sun stations are rest stops situated at locations that take advantage of winter sunshine. They range from a simple, rustic bench to a small, wooden shelter with several reclining seats, a plexiglass front and side panel door. The function they serve is one of convenience and comfort. In good weather an open bench is desirable as a place to eat lunch, stop for a thermos of tea, or talk with friends and relax in a snow-free setting. During sunny, cold weather typical of late winter and spring skiing (late January through April), the shelter would be popular for sunbasking and enjoying a warm, wind-free space for lunch or tea.

The sun station is a recreational service feature with high appeal to users for the low cost involved. As such, it can be used as a management tool to increase use on certain trails. Their value lies not just in providing a highly visible public service at low cost, but in channeling use where it can best be sustained, and to reduce over-use of more fragile backcountry areas.

Sun stations would be sited along cross-country ski trails intended for heavy use in recreation development zones, primarily the Hillside Planning Unit. The hillside area is also one of the few areas of the park that receives direct winter sunshine during the shortest winter days. Sun stations should not be located within the wilderness zone or backcountry trails where a high volume of ski use is undesirable. They should be located where frequent ranger patrols and heavy public use is expected.

CHAPTER 4

TRAIL MANAGEMENT

Much of the trail management effort in Chugach State Park until recently has been directed to the management of trails that were inherited when the park was established; trails that had evolved through use. While much of this basic network will continue, there will be more of an emphasis in the future to provide better recreation opportunities and greater resource protection. This will be done by establishing new trails which direct use to areas which disperse activities, and by directing use to areas where it can be sustained without damage.

The use of trails in Chugach State Park is strongly influenced by topography and the regulations for the park. Patterns of use and types of uses encouraged in various portions of the park are the product of topography that is suitable for the activity, and regulations which promote resource protection and visitor safety.

Topography

Chugach State Park is a mountain park on a grand scale. Except for the relatively flat ice fields of Whiteout Glacier, Eagle Glacier and Eklutna Glacier, over 90% of the park is steep terrain (over 35% slope). This reduces the area suitable for most activities except mountain hiking or climbing to less than 10% of the park or 49,500 acres. When areas under 35% slope but subject to avalanche run-out or other hazards such as marshes, rocky zones or wind prone ridges are subtracted, one finds most of the use in Chugach State Park occurring on less than 40,000 acres, most of which occurs within the fifteen major valleys of the park. These valleys are:

1. Eklutna Valley;
2. Thunderbird Creek Valley;
3. Peters Creek Valley;
4. Little Peters Creek Valley;
5. Meadow Creek Valley;
6. Eagle River Valley;
7. South Fork Eagle River Valley;
8. Ship Creek Valley
9. North Fork of Campbell Creek Valley;
10. Middle Fork of Campbell Creek Valley;
11. South Fork of Campbell Creek Valley;
12. Rabbit Creek Valley;
13. Indian Creek Valley;
14. Bird Creek Valley;
15. Penguin Creek Valley.

Understanding this provides one with an insight as to why users of the park are frequently competing with each other to use the "best" areas. If we're looking at just 40,000 acres on which to provide snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, dog mushing and horseback riding winter activities for over 50,000 active potential users of the park, the management becomes a real challenge to provide users with satisfactory experiences.

The type of activity also has a marked effect on the apparent size of the suitable area. Motorized activities, because of their speed, reduce the apparent size of the area by the inverse of their speed. Thus 100 skiers in a square mile would experience no more crowding than 20 snowmobilers moving at five times their speed. Or, because of the 5X increase of speed over the skier, the motorized rider would perceive the area as one-fifth the size. The implications of this phenomenon are significant when dealing with limited areas but constantly increasing numbers of users.

Regulations

Regulations are designed to protect park values and resources, to protect users from particularly severe hazards, and to provide for those activities which could not or would not occur successfully without a separation of uses.

For example, non-motorized recreation seldom occurs in areas open to motorized uses. The ALASKA RECREATION TRAIL PLAN states: "The response to our questionnaire on compatibility of use indicates that most trail users find mechanized and non-mechanized use of the same trail or area incompatible due to the impact of noise and exhaust fumes". (p. 81)

Management direction and signing is also needed to guide users away from particularly hazardous conditions such as known avalanche chutes following a heavy snowfall or wind-loading; or away from cliffs that have taken their human toll in the past, yet seem to invite use.

Park values and resources are also protected by regulation. Fragile alpine vegetation will be quickly lost if repeated motor vehicles or horses use an area. The Flattop area suffered motorized damage before the park was created that will take a hundred years to heal. Now, the foot traffic is so heavy that significant additional damage is occurring and reaching a crucial stage that only regulation of use can reverse.

The Present Pattern

When one considers the combination of topography and regulation in Chugach State Park, interesting patterns of use emerge, or more significantly, may occur in the future.

Winter Use

Of the 15 major valleys in the park, seven are open to snowmobile use. Eklutna Lake (the largest valley in the park), Peters Creek, Little Peters Creek, Eagle River, South Fork of Campbell Creek (the third largest valley), Bird Creek and Penguin Creek are open. Of the potential skiing valleys, Thunderbird Creek is virtually impassible currently, Meadow Creek has no legal access and is avalanche prone, South Fork Eagle River has virtually no access (steep, icy road), Ship Creek has only limited access due to military constraints, North Fork of Campbell Creek likewise, Rabbit Creek is difficult to access because of the steep road and private land, and Indian Creek access is very narrow and using it becomes increasingly tenuous as more houses are built. Of the remaining valleys, Eagle River seldom has enough snow for skiing, Peters Creek is allotted to skiers, but only after traveling six miles from the trailhead as is Bird Creek Valley. Looking at these areas

on a map provides a much clearer picture. The usable areas shown on the map are constrained by terrain (under 35% slope) and the regulations.

Other Uses

Horse use is permitted in most of the park in summer, with only a few small areas excluded from use. The closed areas are Eklutna Lake Campground, Thunderbird Falls, Eagle River Visitor Center and Valley (open under special permit), Susitna View Picnic Area, Glen Alps Flattop trails, the Old Johnson Trail, McHugh Creek Picnic Area, Meadow Creek drainage and Bird Creek Campground. In winter, several additional trails are closed to allow for set ski trails, and most trails are closed during break-up when little trail use of any kind occurs.

As additional horse use occurs in the park, it will be necessary to carefully monitor use to prevent damage to trails in alpine areas and wet spots. Changes in regulations or trail routes may be necessary to prevent resource damage or annoyance of other users.

Three-wheel vehicles and dirt bikes are allowed in Eklutna Lake Valley following the road between campground "A" and the glacier on Sunday through Wednesday, and in Bird Creek Valley (old logging trails). In addition, four-wheel drive vehicles are permitted on Peter's Creek Road and Bird Creek Valley logging trails. This is the only legal off-road location in the park for four-wheel vehicles, primarily because it is the only location in which use can be confined to trails thus preventing excessive resource damage, particularly to alpine areas.

Bicycles (no motors) are allowed in campgrounds, on the Eklutna Lake Road, the gasline service road (trail) from Prospect Heights to Indian, and Bird Creek logging trails. This includes the so called "mountain bikes".

The wilderness zone of the park is closed to motorized and mechanized vehicles by definition of the wilderness concept. Present regulations for motorized and mechanized uses carefully observe this zoning concept.

The steeper portions of Chugach State Park, which is the other 90%, is available to hikers and mountaineers throughout the year. This is the true wilderness of the park, nearly all of it being within the spectacular alpine zone. It is here, more than anywhere else however, that weather and climate restrain outdoor activities far more than the sheltered, forested valleys of lower elevations. To most users, the mountains are the "scenery", the spectacular landscape that gives this park its special flavor and definition.

Findings and Recommendations

In this sub-chapter there will be specific recommendations made for each trail and trailhead. This recommendation may include a new trailhead and trail, expansion of an existing one or deletion. A justification will accompany each recommendation, together with relevant comments from the Chugach Master Plan.

Eklutna-Peters Creek Planning Unit

This 190,00 acre planning unit would feature 27 marked and maintained trails and routes (glacial and alpine traverses) totalling 165 miles. The majority of trail mileage would be in the alpine zone, above both brush and tree line. Most of these trails are also Class C trails, the lowest standard. Many of these trails were proposed to meet the expressed need for more access into major drainages for hunting, wildlife observation and backcountry camping. This unit contains four public cabins:

- 1) Pitchler's Perch at Eklutna Glacier
- 2) Whiteout Glacier
- 3) Eagle Glacier
- 4) Peters Creek ski cabin

Much of this unit is wilderness area and the lower standard of trails would retain that quality.

In this unit, careful route selection will be necessary to avoid heavy alder-covered slopes wherever possible. In most cases, this will mean selecting the south-facing slopes of a drainage where vegetation is much more open-growing and loses snow cover earlier in the summer.

Eagle River Planning Unit

This 136,000 acre planning unit would feature 22 marked and maintained trails and routes (glacial and alpine traverses) totalling 119 miles. The majority of trail mileage would be in the alpine zone above the timber and brush line. Most of the trails are also Class "C" trails, the lowest standard. Many of these trails presently exist and would be merely upgraded and marked. Additional trails will be built primarily for wildlife observation, nature interpretation and canoe trail access. This unit contains one public cabin in Eagle River Valley upstream of the narrows. The upper valley and glacier area is in the wilderness zone. The lower standard trails there would help retain that quality.

As in the previous unit, careful route selection will be required to avoid as much brush clearing as possible, and to avoid particularly dangerous avalanche areas for winter trails. Trails should be maneuvered wherever necessary to avoid large trees. In most cases, the south-facing slope of the valley will be the best trail location because of the more widely spaced trees and brush, and earlier snow melt.

Ship Creek Planning Unit

This 46,000 acre planning unit would feature 5 marked and maintained trails totalling 39 miles. Most of the trail mileage would be below the alpine zone, in open timber and shrubs. In many respects, this gentle and spacious valley is perhaps the most beautiful and appealing area in Chugach State Park, yet it has received little use because of limited access through Fort Richardson Military Reservation. The entire unit is classified as wilderness area except a small portion at the downhill ski area and trailhead. Only two trails presently serve the area - a biathlon trail and a main valley access

which has become badly damaged by horses where it crosses a series of springs and wet seeps. Important remedial efforts will be necessary to harden and relocate short portions of the horse trail. A new general purpose foot trail and ski trail will be located uphill to the east where parking can successfully accommodate vehicles without horse trailers. This trailhead will also serve Rendezvous Peak and other popular destinations along the ridge. Most trails in the unit will be Class "C" to lessen impacts, and the North Fork of Ship Creek route will not be marked or signed to maintain its present wilderness character.

Hillside Planning Unit

This 29,000 acre planning unit would feature 40 marked and maintained trails totalling 86 miles. Approximately 26 miles of these are alpine zone routes above tree and brush line which require no clearing and little maintenance. Several will be marked, but not all. This leaves 60 miles of cleared, marked and maintained trails as recommended in the Chugach Master Plan.

Trail development in this unit will be more concentrated or intensive than in other planning units. There are several reasons for this. First, much of the western portion of the unit was heavily modified by homestead clearings and access roads, powerlines and gaslines. Secondly, the existing trail system, though quite extensive because it follows many of these old roads, is generally inadequate for many of the recreational activities that have a high potential in this unit because of inadequate linkages, too steep or sustained grades and aesthetic problems. Third, the gentle terrain and open forest conditions west of Campbell Creek are ideal for trail development, particularly cross country skiing. Fourth, the Chugach Master Plan has targeted most of the hillside sections for more intensive recreation development zones, as shown on the Park Zoning Map. Fifth, because the hillside sections are adjacent to urban Anchorage, they are highly accessible to many users, and this pressure can best be handled by providing a substantial number of loop trail experiences which will be designed to satisfy the 90% or so of users who want a satisfying trail experience for 2 or 3 hours. In this way, additional pressures can be deferred from sensitive back country areas and the wilderness zone.

In addition, the winter snowmobile route will be relocated to lessen penetration into closed areas and to reduce conflicts with skiers and winter equestrians.

Most of the trails in this unit will be Class A and B trails, with Class C trails into the wilderness zones and alpine areas to reduce adverse impacts.

Major revisions of the Glen Alps to Flattop trails will be required. Dozens of small trails have evolved in the last decade and many wander aimlessly over the fragile tundra. This plan recommends the establishment (after very detailed field investigation) of 3 or 4 loop trails that will include a route to Flattop Mountain and a representative sample of sub-alpine flower, berry and scrub forest environments. Other trails should be closed and comprehensive signing of the area will be required to confine users to the hardened trails. Barriers may be necessary in some instances. The situation in this area is

critical, and another decade without intensive management could mean the loss of most of the attractive flowering and berry plants that make this area so appealing.

Turnagain Arm Planning Unit

This 94,000 acre planning unit (of which 13,000 acres is tidelands and waters of Turnagain Arm) would feature 20 marked and maintained trails totalling 128 miles. About a third of the trail mileage would be in the alpine zone. Most of these are existing trails that would be upgraded or recleared after years of not being maintained. Several important new trails such as a loop trail at McHugh Creek and a tie into the Hillside Trails from there, as well as the California Creek trail providing access into the eastern park from Girdwood Valley, are also planned. An especially significant new addition is the continuation of the Old Johnson Trail from Bird Creek bikeway to Girdwood Valley following the north side of Seward Highway. Parts of the old trail can still be found east of Bird Hill. Parts of this trail are seasonally avalanche prone but would provide an excellent summer trail.

The selection of south facing slopes for trail location is especially important in this planning unit because these slopes are much more open and inviting for use. North-facing slopes generally feature dense Sitka spruce forests or alder brush, and heavy accumulation of late-melting snow pack.

The eastern part of this planning unit is mostly wilderness area and trails will be Class C to lessen impacts on wilderness values, and to restrict access into Bird Creek, Penquin Creek and Camp Creek valleys. Should closures ever become necessary in some of these drainages to protect park resources, a five year period without maintenance will generally close the trail because of heavy alder growth.

Trail Inventory

The following is an inventory of existing and proposed trails. Trail projects that are recommended in the Chugach State Park Master Plan and this plan are denoted by "*" under Trail Name.

<u>Trail Name</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Use/Function</u>	<u>Dist.</u>	<u>Trailhead</u>
PLANNING UNIT #1						
Hunter Creek	101	C	Knik River Road to park boundary, thence up Hunter Creek. Follow section line easement to park.	Access to northeast corner of park. Sheep hunters use area but access is very difficult because of private land. First two miles to park boundary are timber and brush. Remaining six miles are alpine traverse to Bold Peak.	8 mi 2 mi new	New 10-15 car trailhead at section line 25/30 on Knik River Road ½ mile west of Hunter Creek.
Goat Creek Trail	103	C	Old Palmer Highway up Goat Creek drainage following north side of creek to stay out of heavy brush.	Access to Goat Creek drainage and high country beyond. No good access there yet. Would provide alternate less steep access to Pioneer Peak. Trail should be cleared through alder and devils club to timberline for about 3 miles. Upper valley lies beyond park but is very beautiful.	7 mi 3 mi new	New 10-15 car trailhead on Old Palmer Highway 6 miles east of Glenn Highway junction in old gravel pit on south side of highway.
Eklutna Lake to Hunter Creek and Goat Creek Traverse	104	C	Eklutna Lake Road 5 miles east of campground "A" to Hunter Creek Trail at park boundary (4 miles from Hunter Creek Trailhead).	Access for wildlife viewing, sheep hunting, and mountain hiking. Would provide access to alpine terrain in northeast corner of park. Brush and clear 1½ miles trail from Eklutna Lake Road and 2 miles trail from Hunter Creek Trail. Follow north side of drainage to avoid brush.	9 mi 3½ mi new	New 10-15 car trailhead on Eklutna Lake Road 2½ miles east of campground "A"

<u>Trail Name</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Use/Function</u>	<u>Dist.</u>	<u>Trailhead</u>
Bold Peak Trail*	105	B & C	Eklutna Lake Road to Bald Peak Ridge and then to Hunter Creek Trail.	Present trail is used to access Bold Ridge from Eklutna Lake. The first 3 miles should be improved to alpine zone. New construction of one mile through brush to Hunter Creek Trail. Will provide access to alpine zone from Hunter Creek and spectacular hiking scenery.	5 mi 3 mi new	New 10-15 car trailhead on Eklutna Lake Road 5 miles east of campground "A".
Twin Peaks Loop Trail*	106	B & C	Eklutna Lake Campground "A" to Twin Peaks, thence west to West Twin Peak Ridge descending to campground "A".	Present trail is heavily used access to Twin Peaks. New portion would include loop to West Twin as recommended in the Master Plan. Excellent wildlife viewing and scenic hiking trail.	6 mi 4 mi new	New 80 car parking lot was constructed in connection with campground "A".
Goat Creek to Eklutna Lake Trail	107	C	Eklutna Lake campground "A" to Goat Creek via Twin Peaks Trail.	Trail would depart Twin Peaks Trail near Twin Peaks Pass, enter Goat Creek and connect with proposed Goat Creek Trail. Last 1½ miles of trail at Goat Creek would require clearing; remainder is in the alpine zone. Very scenic hike.	3 mi 1½ mi new	Same as above.
Peak 5450 Spur Trail	108	C	Between Twin Peaks Trail and Peak 5450.	Trail would depart Twin Peaks Trail just at edge of trees; would be on alpine route following the open ridge to Peak 5450. Spectacular views and relatively easy climb.	2 mi	Same as above.

<u>Trail Name</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Use/Function</u>	<u>Dist.</u>	<u>Trailhead</u>
Eklutna Lake Northshore Trail*	109	A	Between campground "A" and Eklutna Glacier Parking area. Follows the old trail portions on scenic bench well above the lake. Bench is an old lateral moraine well above the lake.	Provides a major non-motorized access between the present road terminus and the glacier. Would be excellent for walking, skiing and wildlife observation giving good separation with motorized uses along present road around lake below. Should be a graded trail.	12 mi new	Same as above.
East Fork of Eklutna River Trail*	110	C	Between Eklutna Lake Road and a steep notch in this spectacular valley.	Provides very scenic valley trail used for sightseeing, camping and hunting in this spectacular valley. Not recommended for horses because of dangerous pitches.	4 mi	New 10-15 car trailhead at Eklutna Lake Road just north of East Fork River.
Eklutna Glacier Trail*	111	A & C	Between end of glacier road trailhead and glacier snout. The Eklutna Glacier traverse continues from the glacier south.	Provides major access to Eklutna Glacier snout from parking area (trailhead) ½ mile away. Should be a well-graded trail with adequate steps and streamlet crossings, as use of the area will be heavy when road is reopened.	½ mi trail 12 mi route	New 50-70 car trailhead with picnic area and toilets.
Eklutna Lake to Upper Peters Creek Traverse	112	C	Between trailhead along Eklutna River to Peters Creek at a point just below the forks.	Provides hiking access for wildlife observation and to complete a loop trail opportunity through Peters Creek Valley. The pass between the valleys is 5,400 feet elevation and includes some rugged hiking.	7 mi 2 mi new	New 5-10 car trailhead at end of unimproved road.

<u>Trail Name</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Use/Function</u>	<u>Dist.</u>	<u>Trailhead</u>
West Eklutna Lake Valley Trail	113	B	Between Eklutna Glacier Trailhead and #112 trailhead above.	Provides a pleasant nature trail along the west side of Eklutna Lake Valley and connects to trail #112. This trail connection to Eklutna Glacier Trailhead could make trailhead #112 unnecessary. Brush and grade 3 miles of trail.	3 mi new	(Eklutna Glacier Trailhead under #111.)
Eklutna Lake to Thunderbird Creek Trail	114	C	Between Eklutna Lake Campground "A" and upper Thunderbird Creek.	Provides a trail connection and route between Eklutna Lake Valley and Thunderbird Creek Valley. Very scenic hiking route and perhaps the easiest access into upper Thunderbird Creek. Brush and clear 1½ miles of trail leading to alpine zone.	3.5 mi 1½ mi new	Campground "A".
Thunderbird Creek to Peters Creek Trail	115	C	Between Thunderbird Creek Trail and Peters Creek Trail.	Provides a traverse between upper Thunderbird Creek and Peters Creek in direct alignment with trail #114. Would eventually connect with Eagle River Valley. Should be a small amount of brushing as most is alpine zone.	4.5 mi 2 mi new	
Peters Creek Trail (non-motorized)	116	B	Between new Trailhead and the upper valley.	Provides an alternative access around existing snowmobile trail which it parallels but is well separated from. This will make the valley usable by skiers so they can travel to upper valley where snowmobiles are excluded by regulation.	7 mi new	New trailhead at park boundary for 15-20 cars on north side of Peters Creek separated from present access.

<u>Trail Name</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Use/Function</u>	<u>Dist.</u>	<u>Trailhead</u>
Peters Creek Trail (existing)	117	B	Between park boundary inholding and upper valley. (Follows a road through inholding to Peters Creek residential area.)	Provides walk-in access to Peters Creek Valley and snowmobile access under current regulations as far as south as the Township Line between 14 and 15N. This is a magnificent valley which now receives little use because of poor access. Site a public cabin just outside of the wilderness area.	15 mi	New trailhead for 25-50 cars if road can be upgraded to a driveable condition.
Four Mile Creek Trail*	118	B	Between Peters Creek Trail and the upper end of Four Mile Creek Valley.	Provides access to Four Mile Creek Valley and defines limits of vehicular traffic in this area. This facility will help to accommodate large influx of Peters Creek residents who want to use the park. Two miles of new clearing.	4 mi 2 mi new	New trailhead for 25-30 cars at north end of private land (inholding) with picnic area.
Peters Creek to Thunderbird Creek Traverse	119	C	Between Four Mile Creek Trail and Thunderbird Creek Trail.	Provides a traverse between lower Thunderbird Creek Valley and Four Mile Creek (Peters Creek Valley). Approximately 1 mile of trail would require clearing to reach the alpine zone.	2 mi 1 mi new	Same as above.
Mt. Eklutna Trail	120	B	Thunderbird Falls trailhead to Mt. Eklutna.	Clear and mark 4 miles of trail to provide good access for an excellent scenic climb. The first 2½ miles are in timber and brush. This hike has been requested by the public (Chugach Master Plan). Private land for a trail corridor may have to be acquired. An easement is another option.	4 mi 2½ mi new	Thunderbird Creek Trailhead.

<u>Trail Name</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Use/Function</u>	<u>Dist.</u>	<u>Trailhead</u>
Thunderbird Creek State Trail	121	A, C	Between parking area on Glenn Highway and Upper Thunderbird Creek.	Construct a viewing area close to the falls with guard railing. Continue the trail at Class C standard to Upper Thunderbird Creek Valley for 12 miles to provide access into the valley for hiking, skiing and wildlife observation. Although closed to snowmobiles, skiers can't use valley now.	12 mi 11 mi new	New trailhead for 50-75 cars at the site of the present inadequate trailhead. It will be necessary to acquire several acres of private land for the existing and expanded trailhead.
Little Peters Creek Trail (Ptarmigan Valley)*	122	B	Between the trailhead near the park boundary and a large, flat alpine area in the upper valley.	This will provide good summer and winter access into the valley. Motorcycles and off-road vehicles are ruining the alpine tundra in this valley; hence some means to stop them must be found. Encouraging more hiking with a better road, trailhead and signing would help.	5 mi 1 mi new	New trailhead for 25-50 cars within the park boundary.
Chugiak Hillside Ski Trail	123	A	Little Peters Creek Trailhead to Chugiak Recreation Center.	This will provide a very scenic 6 mile long ski trail (loop) and summer hiking trail with spectacular views over the valley along the park boundary. Easily accessible to rapidly expanding population of Eagle River - Chugiak.	6 mi new	Use trailhead above and Recreation Center parking area.

<u>Trail Name</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Use/Function</u>	<u>Dist.</u>	<u>Trailhead</u>
Peters Creek to Eagle River Traverse	124	C	Peters Creek Trail MP 8 to Ram Valley Trail.	Provides access to Ram Valley from Peters Creek, thence over to Eagle River Valley. Only the lower mile would have to be brushed. Would tie in well to the public cabin suggested for #117.	4 mi 1 mi new	
Peters Creek to Ram Valley Trail	125	C	Peters Creek Trail MP 10 to Ram Valley.	Additional access from upper Peters Creek Valley to Ram Valley. This traverses the edge of the glacier near Ram Valley. Little or no clearing required.	4 mi 1 mi new	
PLANNING UNIT #2						
Iditarod Trail*	201	B	Trailhead at Eagle River Visitor Center to Raven Glacier and Crow Pass Trailhead in Chugach National Forest.	Main Park access route between Eagle River Valley and Girdwood Valley following the historic and highly scenic gold rush trail.	19 mi	Existing 100 car parking area at Visitor Center. Parking should be expanded to accommodate 75 more cars.
Eagle River Glacier Spur Trail	202	C	Between Iditarod Trail and Eagle Glacier Lake.	Provides access to the Eagle River Glacier. Passes next to scenic Glacier Lake. Several miles of brushing would be required in the lower reaches.	3 mi 2 mi new	
Eagle River Snowmobile Access Trail	204	B	Between Eagle River Visitor Center Parking area and Eagle River.	Provides access for snowmobiles from visitor center parking lot to Eagle River without interfering with skiers and nature trail use along Iditarod Trail.	2 mi	Existing visitor center parking.

<u>Trail Name</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Use/Function</u>	<u>Dist.</u>	<u>Trailhead</u>
Visitor Center Nature Trail*	205	A	Eagle River Visitor Center parking area and return on a ½ mile long loop interpretation trail.	To provide a nature trail that is handicapped-accessible. This trail will be heavily used and constructed to a high standard with interpretation stations and rest stops. It will complement the present visitor center activities.	½ mi	Eagle River Visitor Center.
Falling Water Creek Trail	206	B	Mile 11.1 Eagle River Road where main road forks. Follows Falling Water Creek in a 3 mile loop.	To provide parking, picnic facilities and a well designated trail in an area which presently receives considerable use for fishing, camping, hiking, picnicking, and cross-country skiing. No facilities presently existing.	3 mi new	New trailhead for 15-25 cars well off main road and small picnic area with toilet.
Ram Valley Trail	207	C	Mile 11.5 Eagle River Road to Ram Valley above private lands.	To provide access into a beautiful and highly desirable hiking and wildlife viewing area. Present access is blocked by private lands. Access from a trailhead on Eagle River Road can be gained following Section Line 4/3 on trail through private lands. Brush and grade lower 2 miles of trail.	3 mi 2 mi new	New trailhead for 30-50 cars to act as trailhead for Trail #208 as well.
Eagle River Horse Trail	208	B	Mile 11.5 Eagle River Road to Eagle River main channel.	This loop trail would provide a trail useable by horses within that portion of Eagle River Valley open to horse use by current regulations. The parking area would accommodate horse trailer parking as well.	2 mi new	Same as above.

<u>Trail Name</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Use/Function</u>	<u>Dist.</u>	<u>Trailhead</u>
High Valley Rock Glacier Trail	209	C	The Ram Valley Trail and High Valley Rock Glacier.	This is a popular short hike among local people into a beautiful alpine valley with a rock glacier. Access to the area is presently blocked by private lands as with trail #207, which it intersects. Little clearing needed. Trail would eventually continue into Upper Peters Creek Valley.	4 mi. 1 mi new	Same as #207.
Mountain Meadows Trail	210	B	Eagle River Visitor Center to high meadows in the mountains directly east.	This wildlife viewing trail would access the spectacular cliffs and escarpments east of the visitor center to the high meadows seen from there. Would provide breathtaking views out over the valley from this hanging valley.	4 mi new	Eagle River Visitor Center parking area.
Whiteout Glacier Traverse	211	C	From Eklutna Glacier to the Iditarod Trail at Crow Pass.	This traverse is a ski route year-round between Eklutna Valley and Girdwood Valley. Only marking is needed as entire length is in the alpine zone.	8 mi	
Meadow Creek Trail*	212	B	At MP 3.0 on Skyline Drive Eagle River Valley, Skyline Drive is newly paved.	Excellent ski and hike in Meadow Creek Valley. Brush and mark six miles of trail. Will provide excellent loop trail to possible trailhead at Mile High Road. Only convenient access to Meadow Creek Valley.	5 mi 2 mi new	Access is currently blocked by private land. Chain across road. Acquisition needed.

<u>Trail Name</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Use/Function</u>	<u>Dist.</u>	<u>Trailhead</u>
Mount Magnificent Trail	213	C	Mile High Subdivision Road to park.	This trail provides for mostly local access to Mt. Magnificent. It is currently used illegally by snowmobiles and three-wheelers. More use by foot travelers will help to deter illegal motorized uses. Brush and mark one mile of new trail. An easement across private land may have to be acquired.	2 mi 1 mi new	New 5-10 car parking area/trailhead within park on Mile High Subdivision Road.
Eagle River Crest Trail	214		Mile 8 Eagle River Road (Roop Road) to mountain ridge southeast of Mt. Magnificent.	This route would provide hiking access to the ridgetop and opportunities to observe wildlife. May be an important access if others along Eagle River Road prove unfeasible because of land status/road conditions.	4 mi 2 mi new	New 10-15 car trailhead within park boundary.
Eagle River Canoe Trail Landing*	215	A	Mile 8 Eagle River Road. Between the highway pull-out and Eagle River launch area.	Build 300 feet of new trail to Eagle River for canoe launch area. This will provide a very attractive picnic site and canoe launching area. Cars are presently parked along highway because of inadequate parking.	300 ft. new	Construct a new 20-30 car trailhead and picnic area. Provide toilets.
Canoe Trail Access and Ice Skating Area*	216	A	Mile 9.3 Eagle River Road where pond is next to highway.	Build a 15-20 car parking area with an extension of the existing highway pull-out. Construct 50 feet of good trail from parking area to river. Pond provides a popular road accessible ice skating area.	50 ft. new	Extend present inadequate parking area to accommodate 15-20 cars. Provide toilets.

<u>Trail Name</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Use/Function</u>	<u>Dist.</u>	<u>Trailhead</u>
Eagle River Nature Trail and Canoe Portage*	217	A	Eagle River Visitor Center west to Eagle River main channel.	To provide good access across a very interesting marshy area with 1.5 miles of boardwalk trail. This would be a valuable interpretive trail and would provide the needed portage for the beginning of the Eagle River Canoe Trail.	1.5 mi new	Eagle River Visitor Center parking.
Eagle River Canoe Trail Access*	218	A	Mile 7.4 Eagle River Road near the junction of the east and west channels.	To provide canoe access at the last point to enter the river before reaching the end of the canoe trail. At this point, canoes can be recovered from either channel of the river.	300 yards new	New parking area for 20-30 cars.
Lower Valley Canoe Access*	219	A	Between Eagle River landfill on Hiland Drive and the Eklutna Powerline crossing of Eagle River.	This takeout point allows less experienced canoers to take out of the river before Class III white water begins just below this point. Would require 1 mile of new road. Presently, no vehicular access to this point.	1 mile of road new	New parking for 15 cars and boat ramp.
South Bank Eagle River Trail*	220	A	Between Eagle River Campground and the small lake in the valley at the narrows in the upper valley.	This would provide an excellent hiking trail, skiing trail and nature trail on the south side of Eagle River to a point three miles southeast of the Visitor Center. A complex pattern of private ownership may prevent this proposal.	18 mi 15 mi new	Trailhead at Eagle River campground. Several acres of private land will have to be acquired for this existing site.

<u>Trail Name</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Use/Function</u>	<u>Dist.</u>	<u>Trailhead</u>
South Fork Eagle River Valley Trail	221	C	Between a trailhead on the south Fork Road and Eagle and Symphony Lakes.	To provide a good main trail into this valley without having to trespass onto private land. Very scenic valley with great potential for hiking and skiing. Little clearing needed for trail. Private land boundary should be well marked.	8 mi 2 mi new	Establish a 10-20 car trailhead within the park using access provided in purchase of subdivision state.
Hanging Valley Lake Trail	222	C	Between trail #219 and Hanging Valley Lake.	To provide a good spur trail to this attractive valley which features spectacular high country.	3 mi	
PLANNING UNIT #3						
Ship Creek Valley Trail	301	A, B	Arctic Valley Road near the ski area to Indian Pass.	Main access into this wilderness valley. This trail is a reroute to higher ground with gentler grades for skiers. Horses will continue to use the old horse trail in the lower valley. First two miles are Class A trail.	14 mi 9 mi new	Work with the Military to build a trailhead for 70-100 cars. No horse trailers at this parking area.
Ship Creek Valley Hors Trail*	302	B	Arctic Valley Road to North Fork of Ship Creek.	Horse trail to be improved in wet spots by small reroutes and placement of rock fill material or log carduroy. This would be predominantly a horse and hunter's trail. Other foot traffic would use #301 above to avoid potential conflicts.	8 mi 1 mi new	Upgrade existing trailhead by widening to accommodate cars with horse trailers.

<u>Trail Name</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Use/Function</u>	<u>Dist.</u>	<u>Trailhead</u>
North Fork of Ship Creek Trail	303	C	Ship Creek Valley Trail (#301) to Crow Pass Trail.	Main trail up north fork of Ship Creek used by horses for moose hunting and hikers and skiers. Means to alleviate horse damage in wet areas must be explored and implemented. Brush and mark on dry benches.	14 mi	
Rendezvous Peak Trail	304	C	Ski lodge parking area to Rendezvous Peak.	Popular summer hiking route in alpine tundra. Mark trail to restrain users from damaging surrounding tundra and for safety during foggy conditions.	2 mi	Ski lodge parking area (existing).
Arctic Valley to South Fork Eagle River Trail	#305	C	Between Ship Creek Valley Trail (#301) and South Fork Eagle River Trail (#221).	This trail would provide a route over a low pass (3,000') to provide an access between Arctic Valley and the South Fork of Eagle River. Only brushing in the lower elevations would be required.	3 mi New	
Ship Creek to Symphony Lake Traverse	306	C	Between Symphony Lake and Ship Creek.	Fairly easy summer hiking route through alpine tundra between Symphony Lake and Ship Creek Valley. Only the lower portions of this route would require some brushing.	5 mi new	
PLANNING UNIT #4						
Wolverine Bowl Trail	401	A	Prospect Trailhead to Wolverine Bowl.	Existing heavily used ski and hiking trail. Suitable for double track skiing.	2.3 mi	Prospect Heights Trailhead with 50-70 car capacity and toilets.

<u>Trail Name</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Use/Function</u>	<u>Dist.</u>	<u>Trailhead</u>
Wolverine Peak Spur	402	C	Wolverine Bowl Trail to Wolverine Peak summit.	This spur has been used for many years to reach the summit and needs brushing in the lower elevations.	2.5 mi	Same as above.
Middle Fork Loop Trail	403 & 403A	B	Wolverine Bowl Trail to Glen Alps access trail.	This trail is a popular ski loop using the existing Powerline Trail (#405). The upper end of this trail needs an improved stream crossing of the South Fork of Campbell Creek and brushing to the Glen Alps access trail. Trail #403A is a ski route through alder only to correct for steep unskiable grades on the comparable portion of Trail #403. Class C average grade of 7.5%.	4.1 mi 1.3 mile new	Same as above.
Williwaw Lakes Trail	404	B	Between Middle Fork Loop Trail and North Williwaw Lake.	Well used existing trail to access Williwaw Lakes. Popular ski route.	5 mi	
Powerline Trail	405	A	Between Prospect Trailhead and Powerline Pass in South Fork of Campbell Creek.	Popular hiking, skiing, and horse riding route in lower end; snowmobile and mountain bike trail above gasline trail (#406) junction. Needs grading and water bars to improve drainage. Horse route on west side of clearing.	9 mi	Prospect Heights Trailhead.

<u>Trail Name</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Use/Function</u>	<u>Dist.</u>	<u>Trailhead</u>
Gasline Trail	406	A	Between Powerline Trail and Upper O'Malley Trailhead.	Popular multi-purpose summer and winter trail. New snowmobile corridor will remove them from this trail. Excellent ski run, dogmushing and running area. Good winter horse route on one half of the trail. Trail needs grading, small culverts and water bars to eliminate present drainage problems.	1.5 mi	Expand Upper O'Malley Trailhead parking for 50-70 cars, picnic area and toilets. Chugach Master Plan to be amended to allow this action.
Glen Alps Access Trails (Upper and Lower Loop)	407	A	Between Glen Alps Trailhead and the Powerline Trail. Upper and Lower trails form a loop.	The most used of the Glen Alps trails. Could be adapted to handicapped use. Serves as a main access to a number of other destination oriented trails. Upper loop needs water bars and gravel fill to improve drainage.	1.0 mi	Glen Alps parking area with 100 car parking capacity.
South Fork Rim Trail	408	C	Follows the west rim of the South Fork of Campbell Creek from Prospect Trailhead to Glen Alps access trail (#407).	The lower half of the trail is completed while the upper half needs to be. Is an excellent ski trail and walking route. Few if any trees to be removed in new section of trail; mostly alder brush and hemlock thicket at south end.	4.0 mi 2.0 mi new	Prospect Heights Trailhead.

<u>Trail Name</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Use/Function</u>	<u>Dist.</u>	<u>Trailhead</u>
Denali View Ski Trail	409	B	Follows the west and north facing ridge between Prospect Trailhead and upper O'Malley Trailhead.	Traces of the old Denali View Trail can still be found. This trail would replace it with a series of well-designed loops that take advantage of an otherwise unusable part of the hillside area between the powerline and park boundary. Heavy alder brush at lower end; little clearing near O'Malley in large open spruce.	3.5 mi 3.5 mi new	Prospect Heights Trailhead
Silver Fern Trail	410	A	Main access trail between upper O'Malley and Glen Alps.	This trail will become the main access trail to Glen Alps from Upper O'Malley and Upper Huffman Trailheads. It will be a wonderful ski trail (designed grades under 8%) and offer a natural corridor with better scenery, drainage and tread than the existing gasline easement (trail). It is only 1.3 miles longer than starting at Glen Alps.	1.7 mi new	Upper O'Malley Trailhead. 50-70 vehicles.
Silver Fern Spur Trail	411	A	Main access between Upper Huffman parking area and Silver Fern Trail (#410) to Glen Alps.	This spur trail from the paved Upper Huffman Trailhead will become the main access to Glen Alps destination points. (See Trail #410.) It will provide skiable grades (less than 8%), a fine downhill run and is only 1.1 miles longer than starting at Glen Alps Trailhead.	0.3 mi new	Existing paved Upper Huffman Road Trailhead (60-70 vehicles).

<u>Trail Name</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Use/Function</u>	<u>Dist.</u>	<u>Trailhead</u>
Upper Huffman Road Snowmobile Corridor	412	A	Between Upper Huffman Trailhead and Powerline Trail (#405). The snowmobile trailhead may be relocated at Glen Alps to reduce illegal motorized penetration. Field investigation will confirm this location.	Most of this trail will be relocated to prevent illegal penetration into closed areas presently occurring. The old route will be closed. The preferred routing will require acquisition of 25 acres of land in NE $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ Sec. 30 to accommodate the trail. This acquisition is vital to retain this "corner" of the park (see map). Trail closed in summer because of wet conditions.	1.5 mi new	Existing paved Upper Huffman Road Trailhead (60-70 vehicles).
Blueberry Hill Ski Loop	413	B	Glen Alps area.	This trail will provide an excellent ski loop utilizing early snow (often the <u>only</u> snow) in the hillside. Existing trails will be connected by loops that traverse an open meadow necessitating little clearing of trees (mountain hemlock).	2.7 mi 1.6 mi new	Upper Huffman and Upper O'Malley Trailheads.
Hemlock Knob Trail	414	B	Between Silver Fern Trail (#410) and Powerline Trail (#405).	This trail was built in 1972 for skiers and partly follows a firebreak and old homestead roads. To make it more useable, 3 short linkages are proposed which will complete it. A steep switch-back section is proposed for relocation for skiers through an old burn (May, 1972). Wonderful panoramas from the top of Hemlock Knob. Good wildlife viewing trail.	1.5 mi 0.3 mi new	

<u>Trail Name</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Use/Function</u>	<u>Dist.</u>	<u>Trailhead</u>
Hemlock Spur Trail	415	B	Between Hemlock Knob Trail (#414) and the Powerline Trail (#405).	This short spur trail within Mountain hemlocks is very attractive and well cleared. This is a favorite ski trail and provides a link to the powerline trail.	0.2 mi	
Hemlock Burn Trail	416	B	Bypass of the switchbacks in Hemlock Knob Trail (#414).	This trail will by-pass the four sharp switchbacks in the Hemlock Knob Trail providing good skiing grades and magnificent views of the Chugach Mountains. Follows a south-facing slope, partly within an old burn. Some clearing required, mostly alder and hemlock.	0.5 mi new	
Sanctuary Valley Trail	417	B	Between Upper O'Malley Trailhead and South Fork Rim Trail (#408).	This trail provides a fine route through spruce and hemlock forest at the edge of Sanctuary Valley. Sanctuary Valley and the ridge to the north are favorite wintering areas for moose. No ski trails should go into the middle of the valley to avoid disturbance. Two sections of this trail are already established.	1.1 mi 0.6 mi new	Upper O'Malley Trailhead.
White Spruce Trail	418	B	Between Upper O'Malley Trailhead and South Fork Rim Trail.	This existing trail passes through open groves of white spruce of exceptional beauty. A favorite ski trail with special scenic qualities. Only the portion east of the Powerline Trail (#405) needs to be cleared and marked to bring it up to standard.	1.0 mi	Upper O'Malley Trailhead.

<u>Trail Name</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Use/Function</u>	<u>Dist.</u>	<u>Trailhead</u>
Blueberry Hollow Trail	419	Between Silver Fern Trail and South Fork Rim Trail.	This trail follows a natural draw which contains an old trail, part of which is still used. It would provide an excellent ski trail loop with Silver Fern and South Fork Rim Trails. Well protected area during high winds.	0.7 mi 0.4 mi new	
Last Forest Ski Trail	421	A small loop off Middle Fork Loop Trail south of Middle Fork of Campbell Creek.	This loop passes through an open spruce forest (an isolated stand surrounded by treeless area), forming a loop off the Middle Fork Loop Trail. This area is explored mostly by skiers on random trails through the spruce forest.	0.9 mi new	
Huckleberry Meadow Trail	422	B A small loop off Middle Fork Loop Trail south of Middle Fork of Campbell Creek.	This old road is well used as a principal access into areas north of Flattop. This trail should be well signed and other nearby trails closed. Should be extended north to the Powerline Trail.	1.0 mi 0.2 mi new	
Upper Campbell Creek Crossing	423	B Between South Fork Rim Trail and Middle Fork Loop Trail.	A new trail through Mountain hemlock thickets and open meadows to attain a good summer and winter crossing of South Fork of Campbell Creek. The bridge upstream from this location should be relocated to this point.	0.7 mi new	

<u>Trail Name</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Use/Function</u>	<u>Dist.</u>	<u>Trailhead</u>
Alder Trail	424	C	Between Powerline Trail and Gasline clearing on the Park boundary.	Cut for horseman use as a summer/winter trail following an old homestead road. It is a cutoff loop between the Powerline and Gasline Trails horse winter route.	0.5 mi	Between Upper O'Malley and Prospect Trailheads.
Campbell Creek Loop Ski Trail	425	A	Between the Far North Park Trail System and Wolverine Trail, and Prospect Trailhead.	Provides an excellent short loop trail system for skiing and ties in both Wolverine Trail and municipal trails in Far North Bicentennial Park.	2.0 mi new	Prospect Heights
Golden Grass Trail	426	B	Between two sections of Powerline Trail near Prospect Heights.	This ski trail was built to avoid a dangerously steep pitch in the Powerline Trail and to provide several interesting ski loops. It is particularly beautiful in autumn when fields of grasses beneath the birches turn golden.	0.9 mi	Same as above.
Campbell Gorge Trail	427	C	At confluence of Middle and South Forks of Campbell Creek.	This trail would provide direct access between South Fork Rim Trail and Middle Fork Loop Trail.	0.6 mi new	Same as above.
Lost Cabin Valley Trail*	428	B	Between Stuckagain Heights Road Trailhead and Wolverine Peak Spur.	This would become a main access trail to Wolverine Bowl and North Fork of Campbell Creek. This is an existing Class C trail.	2.0 mi	New trailhead for 30-50 cars on Stuckagain Heights Road entry into park boundary in Sec. 7.

<u>Trail Name</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Use/Function</u>	<u>Dist.</u>	<u>Trailhead</u>
Wolverine Bowl Ski Loop	429	B	Between Wolverine Peak Spur (#402) and Wolverine Trail. A new bridge on Campbell Creek will be required to provide a safe crossing.	This trail would complete the Wolverine Bowl loop system for skiing.	0.7 mi new	
Little Loop	430	A	Between Wolverine Bowl Trail and Middle Fork Loop Trail.	This short loop of ski trail was built to provide an excellent view from an old homestead clearing and to provide more ski opportunity.	0.3 mi	
Rusty Mountain Loop	431	B	Between Wolverine Bowl Trail and Middle Fork Loop Trail.	This trail would provide spectacular views along the lower slopes of Rusty Mountain as well as wildlife viewing opportunities. Would be a beautiful additional loop trail for skiing and provide a nice traverse of the lower Wolverine Bowl.	1.7 mi new	
North Fork Trail*	432	B	Between Wolverine Bowl Trail and Upper North Fork of Campbell Creek.	This trail would provide the principal year-round access into the North Fork valley. It will be necessary to acquire private land in the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ Sec. 5 or to obtain an easement for trail use. Mostly alder brush clearing at lower elevations and an existing route in the alpine zone.	8.0 mi 4.0 mi new	Stuckagain Heights bordering the state park. 5-10 car local trailhead.

<u>Trail Name</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Use/Function</u>	<u>Dist.</u>	<u>Trailhead</u>
Hidden Lake Trail and Ship Lake Traverse	433	C	Between Powerline Trail and both forks of Hidden Lake valley and Ship Lake.	This trail would provide a few improvements for the best summer route to the lakes. In winter, it is no problem as the area is quite open. A new bridge is needed across Campbell Creek. The traverse to Ship Lake will provide a connection to Ship Creek Valley Trail.	7.0 mi	
Rabbit Lake Trail	434	B	Between Rabbit Valley Trailhead and Rabbit Lake.	Very popular route between the end of an unimproved, steep road and the lake. If starting at the park boundary, it is 5.5 miles to the lake; from the end of the present road it is 2.0 miles.	5.5 mi	New trailhead for 50-60 cars. The exact location depends on whether or not the inholding can be acquired.
Rabbit Valley Ski Trail	435	B	Between the proposed municipal park on the state park boundary and Rabbit Lake, via the valley bottom in small trees.	This ski trail is needed to offer a route within the birch and mountain hemlock forest where snow conditions are not windblown and bare. Starts at the municipal park on Rabbit Creek on our park boundary. Private inholdings would have to be crossed with this trail.	4.0 mi 3.0 mi new	New trailhead to accommodate 50 cars. Joint state/municipal project.
McHugh Peak Telemark Hill	436	C	Between Rabbit Valley Ski Trail and the top of McHugh Peak.	This trail follows a valley protected from high winds which accumulates a heavy snowpack. Very uniform 15% slope for almost 1½ miles. Only the lower portion near Rabbit Creek requires clearing of alder and mountain hemlock.	2.0 mi 1.0 mi new	

<u>Trail Name</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Use/Function</u>	<u>Dist.</u>	<u>Trailhead</u>
Flattop Trail (west approach)	437	C	Between the western park boundary on Rabbit Creek Road and the summit of Flattop.	A popular approach to climb Flattop for Rabbit Creek valley residents. Starts at timberline. No clearing required.	1.0 mi	New parking area for 5-10 cars along existing road. May be served by parking for Trail #434.
Little Rabbit Creek Trail	438	C	Bear Valley Area - access to the park.	Access to this area of the park should be reserved by the subdivision platting process to ensure that local residents have access to the park along this stream valley. Alpine terrain - no clearing required.	1.0 mi	A car accessible trailhead is probably not possible here because of steep slopes along the park boundary.
Potter Creek Trail	439	B	Upper Potter Creek Valley to McHugh Peak.	Access to Potter Valley area of the park, primarily for the benefit of local residents which could one day number 10,000. Subdivision platting process will be required to provide public access to this portion of the park. Clearing required for first ½ mile of trail.	1.0 mi 0.5 mi new	A trailhead may not be possible because of slope steepness.
Potter Creek to McHugh Creek Trail	440	B	The south side of residential development in Potter Creek Valley. From the saddle to Table Rock (McHugh).	A highly scenic trail passing through cottonwoods, aspen and grasslands between Potter Valley residential area and Table Rock above McHugh Creek Picnic Area. Highly appealing southwest exposure.	1.4 mi 1.0 mi new	New trailhead for 20-30 cars within the park with road access to it guaranteed by the platting process.

<u>Trail Name</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Use/Function</u>	<u>Dist.</u>	<u>Trailhead</u>
Potter Road Trail	441	A	Existing road is no longer used for a road; will become a trail.		0.5 mi	
PLANNING UNIT #5						
Indian Valley Trail*	501	A, B	Indian Valley Trailhead to Indian Pass. Connects with Ship Creek Trail (#301).	Popular trail for summer hiking. Connects with Ship Creek Valley Trail to Arctic Valley (#301). Several trail and bridge improvements as well as some additional clearing required for the first five miles. Popular winter ski traverse to Arctic.	6 mi	New trailhead for 20-30 cars at the end of the present access road.
Old Johnson Trail (old section)	502	A, B	Potter Marsh Trailhead to Indian Creek Trailhead in Indian Valley.	Popular trail between Potter and Indian for all season hiking. Many access points along Turnagain Arm have been identified with short connecting spur trails. Some improvements are needed to restore the trail in its historic location. Several bridges are also needed.	12 mi 2 mi new	A new trailhead for 30-50 cars should be built in the Potter Marsh area. McHugh Creek provides good access.
Old Johnson Trail (new section)	502	A	Indian Creek Valley Trailhead to California Creek Trailhead in Girdwood Valley.	This section of trail will continue the concept of a "trail above the highway" using the 5 miles of Bird Creek Bikeway in Bird Creek Valley. Sections of an old trail above the road are still to be found. Bird Hill avalanche area will restrict winter use. Several other areas also.	17 mi new	A new trailhead for 10-15 cars along California creek within the park in Girdwood Valley.

<u>Trail Name</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Use/Function</u>	<u>Dist.</u>	<u>Trailhead</u>
Bird Pass Trail	503	C	Between Bird Creek Valley and Bird Creek Pass.	This trail provides access to upper Bird Valley and Bird Creek Pass which joins the North Fork Ship Creek Trail (#303). Natural impediments to prevent motorized use should be retained.	9 mi	
Table Rock Trail	504	B	McHugh Creek to Table Rock.	A popular short hike which offers spectacular scenic views over Turnagain Arm and is accessible by all ages. A new trail from here to the park boundary extends the spectacular walk 1.4 miles (#440).	0.8 mi	McHugh Creek Picnic Area.
McHugh Creek to McHugh Lake	505	B	McHugh Creek to McHugh Lake and Rabbit Lake.	The first mile of this trail is in. Several miles of additional clearing are required to establish a useful trail on the north side of the creek. Several areas of steep terrain and side hill will insure that no motorized vehicles follow this trail. South slopes ensure early season use.	5.5 mi 3.0 mi new	McHugh Creek Picnic Area.

<u>Trail Name</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Use/Function</u>	<u>Dist.</u>	<u>Trailhead</u>
McHugh Ridge Loop Trail	506	B	McHugh Creek to McHugh Lake and Rabbit Lake.	This trail will establish a cleared route along the crest of a steep but spectacular ridge which will form a loop trail with trail #505. A rock scramble causing serious erosion on Johnson Trail east of McHugh should be closed after this ridge trail is built.	2.0 mi new	McHugh Creek Picnic Area.
Beluga Point Trail Access	507	B	Beluga Point parking area to Old Johnson Trail.	This short access trail has served for many years as a way to the Old Johnson Trail.	0.4 mi	Beluga Point Trailhead for 20 cars.
Johnson Trail at Rainbow Valley*	502	B	Rainbow Valley east of the access road.	A short section of the Old Johnson Trail between Rainbow Valley Road and the trailhead next to the highway needs to be reestablished.	0.5 mi new	Existing parking area for 15 cars. Needs signing.
Windy Corner Trail	502	B	Windy Corner access to Old Johnson Trail.	A short section of trail through an open meadow provides access to the Johnson Trail.	0.3 mi new	Windy Corner parking area can hold 15-20 cars.
Falls Creek Trail*	509	B	Falls Creek Trailhead to Teardrop Lake.	The first mile of this trail is cleared. The remaining trail would provide access to a beautiful cirque valley containing Teardrop Lake. Less than half a mile of additional clearing is needed.	3.0 mi 0.5 mi new	Falls Creek Trailhead for 25 cars. Existing area.

<u>Trail Name</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Use/Function</u>	<u>Dist.</u>	<u>Trailhead</u>
Forget-me-Not Meadow Trail	510	B	Just west of Indian Valley.	This short trail provides access to the Old Johnson Trail. It passes through a meadow which contains a profusion of forget-me-nots in late May.	0.3 mi	Small trailhead can accommodate 15 cars.
Powerline Pass Trail	511	B	Indian Creek Valley Trailhead to Powerline Pass (South Fork Campbell Creek).	Existing trail needs improvements to Powerline Pass Summit; erosion control and some clearing. A new rugged gate should be installed to prevent 4-wheel drive vehicles from entering the pass area.	5 mi	Indian Creek Valley Trailhead.
Bird Ridge Trail	512	B	Between the new parking area west of Bird Ridge and the limits of walking terrain to the north.	Popular early spring trail for hiking, wildlife observation (sheep) and wildflowers.	6 mi	New trailhead for 25 cars was built west of the old trailhead.
Bird Creek Bikeway	513	A	Between Boulder Stadium in Indian Valley through Bird Creek Campground.	Very scenic, gentle paved bikeway which provides local access between communities and probably is the best high standard trail in the park. Passes through Bird Creek Campground.	3 mi	Bird Creek Campground and Boulder Stadium.

<u>Trail Name</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Use/Function</u>	<u>Dist.</u>	<u>Trailhead</u>
Bird Creek Valley Trail	514	C	Between Bird Creek Trailhead and Upper Bird Creek Valley.	The lower part is one of a series of old logging trails that are used by motorbikes and 4-wheel drive vehicles. The upper valley is overgrown with alder brush and it is presently a difficult bush whack. Extensive clearing would be required but some local people would rather not see it opened if motorized vehicles could gain access.	15 mi 7 mi new	Existing Bird Creek Trailhead for 35 cars.
Penguin Creek Trail	515	C	Between Going-to-the-Sun Trail and upper Penguin Creek Valley.	This trail would provide access into Penguin Creek Valley. As with Bird Creek Trail, the design should provide enough natural impediments to preclude any motorized use within this wilderness valley.	11 mi 6 mi new	New trailhead for 20-30 cars to serve new Johnson Trail and Penguin Creek Trail.
Bird Point Loop Trail	517	B	Between trailheads at Bird Point and slopes north of the Seward Highway.	This trail would provide a wide range of environments from beautifully sculpted glacier scoured rocks and Sitka spruce to quiet birch forests with fine views throughout. North of the highway x-c skiing is possible.	4 mi new	West trailhead 5-10 cars. East trailhead 20-30 cars in an old rock quarry. Picnic site also.

<u>Trail Name</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Use/Function</u>	<u>Dist.</u>	<u>Trailhead</u>
Going-to-the-Sun Trail	518	C	Between Bird Creek Valley and California Creek Trailheads.	This rugged ridgecrest route may be the most spectacular trail in Chugach State Park. Both ends would require extensive brushing while the middle portion is essentially a scramble along rugged ridges and spectacular benches. Route should be marked.	15 mi	Bird Creek Trailhead and California Creek Trailhead.
					11 mi new	
California Creek State Trail*	519	B	California Creek Trailhead and Penguin Creek Trail at the pass.	To provide access from Girdwood Valley into a little used mountain valley containing California Creek. Not be a safe winter route because of avalanche hazard. Remnants of gold mining activity and high scenic qualities along this trail.	4 mi	New trailhead for 10-15 cars on 3.3 acre ILMT site.
					2 mi new	
Crow Pass Trail	520	B	Crow Pass Trailhead in Chugach National Forest to Chugach State Park boundary.	Provides the other end of the Iditarod Trail over Crow Pass to Eagle River Visitor Center. Although within the national forest, it is an integral part of the state park trail system here. Excellent condition.	4 mi	Existing Crow Pass Trailhead.
					TOTAL	MI NEW
Eklutna-Peters Creek Trails	101-127		24 trails or routes.		149 mi	66 mi
Eagle River Trails	201-222		21 trails or routes.		90 mi	35½ mi

			TOTAL	MI	NEW
Ship Creek Trails	301- 306	6 trails or routes.	46 mi		18 mi
Hillside Trails	401- 441	40 trails or routes.	89.1 mi		30.0 mi
Turnagain Arm Trails	501- 520	19 trails.	124 mi		55 mi

110 trails and routes

498 miles of trails and routes in park;
1 mile of trail for each 1,000 acres. **204 miles new trails and routes.**

CHAPTER 5
IMPLEMENTATION

Priorities for Trails and Access

Setting priorities for trails and access in Chugach State Park is necessary to properly allocate state funds which are always far less than the amount that is needed to meet even a fraction of the projects listed below. The priorities fall into three groupings with Priority No. 1 projects being the most important. This does not mean that the schedule must be slavishly adhered to, especially regarding projects for volunteer organizations: volunteers frequently have greater capability and interest to undertake Priority No. 2 projects, which should be made available to them when they are ready to work.

The highest priorities are the threat of irretrievable loss and public safety. The threat of irretrievable loss may be the acquisition of a park inholding which if not acquired, might be developed residentially resulting in the blockage of thousands of acres of park land for public use; or it may be the potential loss of alpine vegetation due to trampling damage that might require 50 years to regrow. The threat to public safety may be a needed cable at the ford of a rushing river or guardrails at a popular overlook.

Priority No. 1: Threat of Irretrievable Loss

- A. Loss of natural features (vegetation, soils, wildlife) from destructive use: Consolidation of numerous trail routes leading to a common feature may be the best solution, or hardening of an existing trail.
- B. Loss of human life and threats to public safety from hazardous conditions. Trails which would contribute to this problem should be eliminated, rerouted or repaired to a safe standard. In some cases, an entirely new trail or no trail would be the best solution.
- C. Loss of vital parkland due to development of an inholding (private property). To prevent a vital access corridor from being lost; to prevent blockage of an entire drainage; to prevent loss of scenic qualities, wildlife, air and water quality, it may be necessary to purchase a parcel or acquire development rights on it, or trade for other state land elsewhere.

Priority No. 2: Sustaining Level

- A. Repair and rebuild existing trails; defense of the existing system, adequate maintenance, and improving the present trail network with brushing, tread improvement, and better signing.
- B. Build new trails from an existing trailhead that has excellent design and capacity but little use. A good trail system can provide a little used trailhead with a reason to exist, and reduce pressure at nearby overused trailheads.
- C. Build linkages into the existing trail system to form loop trails and a more useful, flexible system by constructing short, new sections of trail between existing trails.

Priority No. 3: Increasing Recreational Opportunities

- A. Interpretive nature trails which provide visitors with a better understanding and appreciation of park resources and protection.
- B. New trails into backcountry areas of the park which may include new destinations and low standard trails and routes within the wilderness zone of the park.
- C. Trail-related structures which provide visitors with overnight shelter and comfort facilities.

It is quite likely that the existing trails in the park are not being adequately managed and maintained. There are several reasons for this. First, there is no funding to maintain trails at the present time, and, secondly, the present level of staffing is barely adequate to maintain facilities for which maintenance monies are available. Before any new trails and trailheads are developed, the existing trails must be upgraded and maintained. A staffing increase or a shift in emphasis with present staffing would be required in most instances to rebuild and maintain existing trails and those that are proposed for future construction. These facts underscore the importance of identifying projects in Priority No. 1 and Priority No. 2 until staffing levels increase (see Trail Crews in Chapter 5, Implementation).

The Ten Top Trail Projects

THUNDERBIRD FALLS STATE TRAIL ACCESS AND REHABILITATION

Description: Acquire and pave existing parking lot, build stairway at beginning and end with viewing platform, build a single vault latrine, upgrade existing surface with 6' wide D-1 gravel, install handrails on cliff exposure areas. The existing parking lot is on private land. Needed signs will be installed.

This project is necessary to provide public safety along a dangerous cliff area, to protect the natural features from erosion, and to provide the public with their expectation of seeing the falls. At this time, it is impossible to see the falls from the end of the trail without endangering lives or getting wet. Over 100,000 visits were recorded on this trail in 1984.

GLEN ALPS REHABILITATION

Description: This project will rehabilitate severe resource damage to alpine soils and vegetation by consolidating trailheads from an established parking lot, establishing a good hardened trail to Flattop Mountain and relocating a bridge crossing over the South Fork of Campbell Creek. Also included will be the hardening of an existing trail to an Anchorage bowl overlook with treadway surfacing, handrails, benches and viewing platform. Comprehensive signing and closure of undesirable trails or areas will be made as well.

This project will conserve deteriorating land values by providing a low impact trail to Alaska's most commonly hiked mountain with scenic overlooks of Denali, Cook Inlet and Anchorage bowl. It will also rehabilitate damaged soils and vegetation lost due to indiscriminant hiking pressure in a fragile alpine environment.

EAGLE RIVER VISITOR CENTER ACCESS DEVELOPMENT

Description: Construct by-pass road around parking lot, expand and pave existing parking lot, and build two miles of new trail to access Ram Valley.

This project is necessary to protect the visitors from hazardous traffic flow through the parking lot, and to establish the visitor center as the main trailhead. Trails are needed to open public access to Ram Valley and Peters Creek (which is one of the largest single valleys in the park). This would provide an alternative to the Iditarod Trail which is currently the only maintained trail in a major valley open to the average hiker. Some trail equipment would be needed such as a ski tracksetter and a small tractor for trail maintenance.

RABBIT CREEK ACQUISITION AND ACCESS DEVELOPMENT

Description: Acquire through trade and purchase, the private lands within Sections 4 and 5 in T11N, R2W, S.M. Develop trailhead at park boundary with parking for 15 vehicles. Install bulletin board and signing.

This project is necessary to protect a fragile tundra area from increasing and deliberate damage by 4-wheel drive and 3-wheel drive vehicles. Because of its remote and difficult access, the public is afraid to confront offenders, and many cases of vandalism to parked cars and local homeowners have been reported. This area would provide an alternative to people wishing to gain access to high alpine tundra.

UPPER HUFFMAN TRAILHEAD ACCESS IMPROVEMENT

Description: This project will provide a new major winter/summer trailhead access and trail loop to the alpine zone. It will improve the existing winter snowvehicle route to the upper Campbell Creek Valley. The project will also provide a new signing plan and its implementation for trails and the trailhead as well as provide a greatly needed loading/unloading facility for snowvehicles.

This area has existing paved access maintained by DOT/PF and provides key winter/summer recreation opportunities. It receives the most visitor use of any designated snowvehicle area in the Anchorage bowl. If improved, this facility could be a major tourist destination for Anchorage visitors as well as residents for winter/summer use.

OLD JOHNSON TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS

Description: This project would provide construction of bridges and improved trails from new parking access along the Seward Highway at Potter, Rainbow and Windy Corner. Trails would be hardened the first 200 yards and handrails installed as needed. Trailhead and trail signing would be implemented.

The Old Johnson Trail along the Seward Highway at Turnagain Arm is easily accessible to residents and tourists by vehicle or tour bus. However, the trail is impassable at certain locations due to washouts of the treadway. New bridges would provide access to areas of historic significance, tremendous

scenic splendor and wildlife viewing overlooks. Relocation of portions to its historic grade would enhance its integrity.

ARCTIC VALLEY

Description: This project would establish the Arctic Valley access as a bonafide Chugach State Park Trailhead. Trailhead construction would include highway approach signing, an interpretive kiosk, a route to Rendezvous Pass and a new trail up the Ship Creek drainage. The project would provide trail maintenance on the lower four miles of the Ship Creek Valley Trail.

This project would provide legal access into Chugach State Park, whereas presently trail access is across Fort Richardson. Clearly marked and maintained trails would greatly reduce the number of lost hikers and skiers using this area each year. New trail construction would allow for trail use year-round up the Ship Creek drainage and provide hiking access into the South Fork of Eagle River.

EAGLE RIVER TRAIL ACQUISITION AND DEVELOPMENT

Description: Purchase private land from Eklutna, Inc., in order to develop a trail from the south side of Eagle River Campground to the Eagle River canoe/raft takeout point. This is necessary in order for river floaters to have a safe takeout before they encounter dangerous rapids a short distance downstream.

PETERS CREEK ACQUISITION AND TRAILHEAD DEVELOPMENT

Description: Establish three trailheads and parking areas beyond private lands up Four Mile Creek and Peters Creek. Construct the Peters Creek non-motorized trail (#116) to provide a separate corridor for non-motorized users which now shun the area (on state park land). These trails would provide access to the upper valley and loops to Thunderbird Falls and Eagle River Visitor Center. Trail #116 will require acquisition of private land on the north side of Peters Creek in the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 15, T15N, R1W, S.M., to provide legal access to a well-used existing trail.

SOUTH FORK OF EAGLE RIVER ACCESS DEVELOPMENT

Description: This project is needed to provide legal and safe access into one of the main valleys of the park. A 10- to 20-car parking area and informational bulletin board with appropriate barriers will allow vehicles to have safe and legal parking off the existing subdivision road. A new trail will be needed for about two miles to connect the new trailhead with the old jeep trail in the middle of the valley. A small bridge across the stream should also be built. This trail will connect with the Arctic Valley Trail (#305).

Land Acquisition Needs

The following land acquisition needs are recommended to identify private inholdings that are blocking access into major valleys in Chugach State Park, or which are blocking the best and most logical trail route into a major valley:

1. Rabbit Creek Valley - Hillside Planning Unit, Two parcels within Sec. 5 and Sec. 4 completely straddle the valley. While road access through the parcels is presently possible, it is very steep and rocky, and not negotiable in normal road vehicles in winter and because of extensive glaciating ice. The area along the road is above timberline. The best summer-winter trail location is along Rabbit Creek itself both within and outside of the private inholdings, where mountain hemlock trees provide a pleasant park-like setting for a major trail. If these parcels are developed for residential uses, a quality creekside trail corridor would no longer be possible. Such an action would constitute an irretrievable loss of recreation opportunities in what is arguably the most beautiful alpine valley in the Hillside unit. Consequently, these inholdings should be acquired to provide for this vital addition to Chugach State Park.

The Municipality of Anchorage is planning to develop a major trailhead for the Rabbit Creek Greenbelt at the state park boundary. This would also be the best trailhead for access into the state park within Rabbit Creek Valley. This trail would continue within the municipal greenbelt to Hillside Drive. Consequently, it is very important that no boundary changes are made which would undermine this concept (within the 80 acre "projection" S $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 31). The Flattop Mountain Trail and Trailhead on Rabbit Creek Road in the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ Sec. 31 is also an important access within an important boundary projection that should be retained.

2. South Fork of Eagle River Valley - Eagle River Planning Unit. The private inholdings within Sec. 15 block the most logical access to this valley. Because Section 15 is above timberline, the inholding is a particularly sensitive alpine landscape. Several options to establish a trailhead in this area could be explored. First, the municipal platting authority, at our request, could designate public access through the parcel during the subdivision process to a trailhead within the park. Secondly, a public corridor several hundred feet wide could be acquired by the park to serve road access and buffer needs. Third, in the unlikely event that funds were appropriated to purchase the parcel, a trailhead could be developed within the parcel; or the parcel could be acquired through a land trade for developable state land elsewhere.
3. Thunderbird Falls - Eklutna-Peters Creek Planning Unit. The parking area which constitutes the trailhead belongs to the Eklutna Native Corporation. Acquisition of several acres of land will be needed to guarantee continue public access and to provide for future improvements or expansion of the trailhead. A management agreement or land trade between Alaska State Parks and the Native corporation may also be an option to assure continued public access to Thunderbird Falls.
4. Peters Creek Valley - Peters Creek - Eklutna Valley Planning Unit. The private inholdings within Sections 13, 18, and 19 could block or complicate access to this major valley. A road through the

private parcel presently permits access to a trailhead at the upper end of the private land. However, development of this parcel for residential uses could jeopardize the new ski trail (No. 116) or even the existing trail (No. 117) for snowmobile use. Also, a major private development of this extent could threaten park resources such as water quality and scenic values, as well as block opportunities for access up Four Mile Creek (trail No. 118).

5. **Eagle River Visitor Center Trails - Eagle River Planning Unit.** The private inholdings within Sec. 15 south of the visitor center would be a desirable acquisition (in spite of its present development) to free the area for trail development of the Mountain Meadows Trail (No. 210), and to return to public ownership an area logically part of the park. Road access to this parcel across park land is not a desirable situation.
6. **North Ridge of Blueberry Knob between Upper Huffman Road and Glen Alps Trailheads - Hillside Unit.** This 25-acre proposed acquisition abuts two of the park's exterior boundaries in the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ Sec. 30. Although not an inholding per se, it projects into a gentle, wet valley of open spruce and tundra which has always been regarded by users as "park land". It is also this area which would serve as the vital link for the new snowmobile access corridor (trail No. 412). Much of the area is unsuitable for residential development because of the high water table yet it is vital as a landscape zone for this part of the park.
7. **Ram Valley Trail Access - Eagle River Planning Unit.** The private land within Section 33 north of the Eagle River Visitor Center presently blocks access between Prudhoe Bay Road and the park boundary. The municipal platting authority, at our request, could designate public access through the parcel during the subdivision process to a trailhead within the park. Another option would be to acquire several lots between the subdivision road and park boundary in an area suitable for a small trailhead. A third option would be to establish a trailhead near Eagle River Road and utilize the section line 33/4. No land acquisition would be required but the visitor would start hiking at 500 feet elevation instead of 2,000 feet elevation as in the first two options. This may not be a realistic situation for users who know of the road and want to use it. An upper elevation trailhead should be the ultimate goal.
8. **Mile High Subdivision - Eagle River Planning Unit.** The private land within section 14 has blocked legal access between the subdivision road and state park land which includes destinations to Mount Magnificent and upper Meadow Creek Valley. The municipal platting authority, at our request, could designate public access through the parcel during the subdivision process to a trailhead within the park. Other options include purchasing land or a broad trail corridor between the road and park boundary. A trailhead at the upper park boundary should be a goal in this area.
9. **Meadow Creek - Eagle River Planning Unit.** Private land is blocking access into the road accessible lower end of Meadow Creek

Valley. Land acquisition for an access corridor may be necessary to establish a small, local trailhead here for the use of local residents. The municipal platting process could provide an access corridor if further subdivision occurs here.

10. North Fork of Campbell Creek - Hillside Planning Unit. The homestead entry in the NW¼ Sec. 5 blocks trail access into one of the Hillside's most primitive valleys. The homestead entry is above timberline, on steep terrain and highly visible to the northwest. It is also in the Watershed Zone. This parcel should be traded for other state land outside of the park.
11. Eagle River Campground Canoe and Raft Takeout. This 3 to 5 acre acquisition from Eklutna, Inc., also includes six existing campsites.

This completes the list of trail-related recommended park acquisitions.

Phasing

It is generally suggested that development start at the trailhead - the access point - and work inward toward the center of the park, opening trails in the timbered and brushy areas of the park and working into the alpine areas last - unless of course a management crisis has developed there, such as at Glen Alps/Flattop Trails.

Another aspect of the phasing process that should not be overlooked is that when a new trailhead is developed, the trails that originate there should be developed concurrently and designed to emanate smoothly and logically from the trailhead. Otherwise, the trailhead loses much of its useful function. It is also important to coordinate with the municipal government to achieve important trail connections with their programmed development, and to utilize the municipal platting process to obtain needed access points through private lands undergoing subdivision along the park boundary or within inholdings. The district staff should also be prepared to utilize the efforts of volunteer trail organizations in the best way possible to achieve sequential trail development.

Trail Crews

A special trail ranger (Park Ranger II) position should be established on Chugach District to supervise and direct trail maintenance, signing and construction activities in Chugach State Park. This ranger would supervise inmate crews, volunteer trail crews, and a core park crew.

The Chugach Trail Crew would consist of four to six permanent employees whose sole job is trail maintenance, new trail construction, signing and construction/repair of trail-related structures. A target of five years of trail projects should be anticipated at this level to repair and construct trails. After this time, a review of accomplishments may allow for a reduction of this workforce.

The special trail ranger would be the resource person responsible for targeting, prioritizing, coordinating, training and providing logistical support for the trail crew. This person would also be responsible for coordinating projects parkwide for volunteer groups, park staff, and inmates. Other responsibilities would be resource inventories, documentation of resource degradation and determining use patterns and trends.

Sign Plan

A sign plan for Chugach State Park should be prepared to function on all maintained trails and access points. A sign plan is necessary to coordinate the very complex task of providing adequate information to trail users regarding destinations, distances, permitted activities (or those not permitted), potential hazards, and degree of difficulty. Special opportunities or interpretive features could also be provided. The signing scheme should be kept current with new trails as they are built and must accurately reflect park regulations in all locations. This task could be assigned to the special trail ranger. The sign plan should be prepared soon after the adoption of this plan.

Recreation Opportunity Guide

A recreation opportunity guide should also be prepared for the park. While not an essential item, this catalogue would function as an index to interested recreationists. It would feature updated information on exact trail location on a map, trail conditions, trail distances and a general description including potential hazards. This guide could be removed from a detachable binder and copied for public use. The guide could answer many questions from the general public which otherwise requires considerable office staff time.

CHAPTER 6

MANAGEMENT PROBLEMS

Vegetative Destruction

When trails are built, there are potential management problems. However, a well-designed system of trails can be used to alleviate management problems. For example, a maze of random or helter-skelter trails, such as those around Flattop Mountain, can result in destruction of much of the alpine vegetation. It can be argued that had two or three well-designed, hardened and carefully signed trails been constructed there before the parking lot was rebuilt to hold five times as many vehicles, that much of the present damage (which is appalling when seen from an overlook perspective) could have been avoided.

In a related matter, the horse trail within Ship Creek Valley passes through springs and moist seeps which have become an ever widening quagmire of mud as users seek "drier ground" along the fringes. New trail construction can result in the relocation of portions of the trail to nearby drier ridges and the hardening of other potentially troublesome sections of trail. Part of the relocation should include signs and barriers to prevent further use of the old trail.

In the Old Johnson Trail east of McHugh Creek Picnic Area is a large scree slope crossing the trail which grows larger and more unstable daily. The reason for this peculiar phenomenon is misdirected human use of the trail. To gain a firmer foothold, users climb a fraction higher each time on the "sliding bench". The net result is a trail going well up the scree slope before it goes down the other side to the Johnson Trail. This has resulted in many people either continuing up the scree slope to a dramatic overlook, or people seeking to access this overlook by this dangerous scree and rock chute, resulting in a continuing accumulation of debris on the Old Johnson Trail. To alleviate this problem, a new loop trail (#506) has been proposed to gain a logical and safe access to this overlook, and thence to continue up to McHugh Ridge which is absolutely spectacular, eventually tying into the McHugh Creek Trail (#505), in a loop configuration. Access up the scree chute can then be barricaded and closed, and the Old Johnson Trail repaired with a rerod and log bench to help contain the scree. Natural revegetation will then very gradually help to stabilize much of the slope.

Littering

Littering along trails is increasing noticeably each year. This is a sad reflection of today's society and something which many trail advocates would not have predicted. Examining this situation reveals some interesting insights. For example, littering along the Iditarod Trail (#201) south of the Eagle River Visitor Center seems to have decreased with the advent of the visitor center even though use of the trail has increased many times. It is likely that the visitor center itself and personal contact of users by the ranger staff has put people in a frame of mind that encourages responsible behavior and appreciation of the natural surroundings. On the other hand, an area such as McHugh Creek Picnic Area trails (Old Johnson Trail and Table Rock) show increased littering each year - roughly proportional to the increased use of the trails. One can only assume that the lack of personal

contact with rangers and the lack of "appreciative interpretation" has not put potentially troublesome visitors in the proper frame of mind. Rangers are stretched very thin here considering the size of the crowds they deal with and funding limitations perpetuate this problem.

Three actions may help to eliminate the littering problem in places like McHugh Creek and its trails. First, rangers should talk to as many users as possible - especially the ones who appear troublesome. This takes a lot of time and it is not always pleasant, but it may more than make up for the time spent in retrieving litter. Secondly, litter containers placed conspicuously at trailheads with attractive signs that plead for responsible litter disposal may be an improvement over the somewhat distant dumpsters. True, it takes more time to empty scattered litter containers, but much less time than collecting it over half a mile of trail - especially broken bottles. It is well known that uncollected litter encourages further littering. Third, the psychology of signing is very important to encourage responsible behavior in users. Signing is needed at each trailhead that encourages personal responsibility for proper litter disposal. These concepts could be implemented and monitored at selected trailheads to see if it results in a significant improvement.

There is little doubt that the most far-reaching measure to reduce littering along trails is statewide bottle/can legislation which would target 90% of the trail litter that now accumulates. This legislation makes the individual responsible for proper disposal of beverage containers instead of the state, and it puts a price on those containers that are not returned by their users, assuring that someone will return them.

Motorized Vehicles

Each year brings a greater diversity and number of motorized vehicles capable of off-road use. As the number of residents living along the park boundary increases, greater pressure is placed on non-motorized zones within the park. Enforcement with existing park staff is not enough to meet this challenge. Clear signing and carefully engineered barriers can help, but ultimately it is the legitimate users of the park who will have to bring about compliance with existing regulations. This is the single best argument for encouraging greater non-motorized uses along the park boundaries. The "self policing" action that occurs when many like-minded recreationists use an area is a great asset to continued proper use.

Seeking greater cooperation with the military police where parkland abuts the military reservation should also result in better enforcement of common goals in areas such as the North Fork of Campbell Creek and Ship Creek. A similar effort should be made with the Municipality of Anchorage to enforce common goals where Far North Bicentennial Park abuts Chugach State Park.

Barriers are a useful enforcement tool. The standard verticle 8"x8" treated wooden posts close enough together to deter motorized users but permit passage of foot traffic, are very useful where they are visible and near the trailhead. In areas where these are repeatedly removed or cut down, large rocks should be used or metal posts anchored in concrete barrels with large cable. When new non-motorized trails are built, barriers should be installed at key penetration and access points to defer illegal uses immediately. Proper barriers and signs are an integral part of trail construction.

Signs that are clearly placed and strategically located are also important to achieve compliance with the majority of motorized users. They should be as economical in size, words and installation as possible to reduce costs and visual pollution. Innovative signing is needed. The fiberglass six-symbol, six-red slash 6"x8" sign is excellent. Clever signs may win compliance, too. Such as: "Everyone is welcome in this area, but all motorized vehicles must remain in the parking lot."

Signing

Economical and clear signing can do much to encourage proper use. For example, on the new snowmobile corridor, small 4"x6" fiberglass (reflective) arrows pointing toward each other on small metal posts 10 to 12 feet apart would be much clearer than large "Yes/No" metal placks on 4"x4" posts which are quite confusing as to intent on the existing corridor.

In an eastern national park, a horseshoe-shaped trail that followed the perimeter of forest and flower meadow was receiving a lot of cut-through foot traffic in spite of signs which read - "Stay off the meadow - please go around." The flowered meadow was suffering as a result. This sign finally kept people out of the meadow - "This meadow needs a rest - follow the designated trail."

APPENDIX I

Suggested Changes in Future Regulations - Citizen's Input

1. Horses should be restricted to hardened trails and non-alpine areas as a general goal. Monitoring of present use will better determine where future use should be allowed, but it was generally agreed that too many sensitive areas of the park are currently open to horse use. A loss containment policy is presently in effect.
2. Under proposed changes, Peters Creek Valley will be closed to snowmobile use in the future. This recommendation was made by the Chugach State Park Citizens Advisory Board as a condition of approval of this plan, and by many citizens testifying at the three public hearings held to review the draft plan. Three factors contributed to the decision to close Peters Creek Valley to snowmobile use.
 - a) Steep access road grades and limited opportunities to develop adequate parking for snowmobile trailers and off-loading.
 - b) Extreme difficulty in preventing snowmobiles from going beyond the present six mile legal limit and into the wilderness zone beyond.
 - c) This is the only valley on the north side of Chugach State Park (Eagle River, Chugiak and Peters Creek communities) suitable for cross-country skiing and other non-mechanized winter activities which fare best in a quiet, primitive atmosphere.

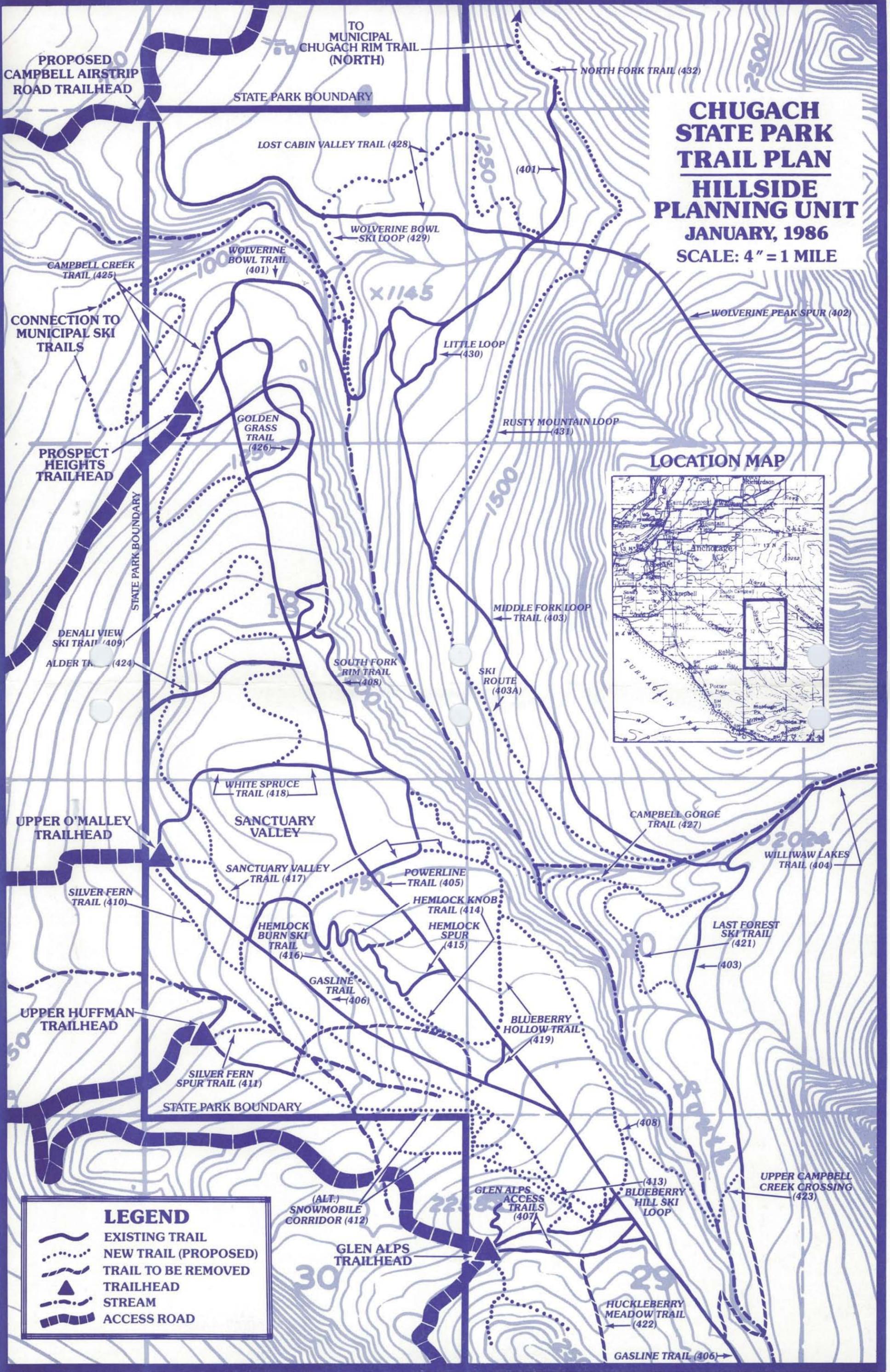
In addition, it was suggested that future regulations consider time zoning for Eklutna Lake Valley, Bird Creek Valley and Eagle River Valley. Larger blocks of time exclusively for skiers and snowmobilers were suggested to provide a better experience and reduce conflicts. Two or three week to half-winter time blocks were proposed.

3. Motorcycles and four-wheel drive vehicles were suggested for time zoning in Bird Creek Valley and Eklutna Lake Valley. Larger blocks of time were suggested to give hikers and backpackers an opportunity to enjoy these valleys in a quiet, primitive atmosphere. The Chugach State Park Citizens Advisory Board once again reiterated its determination that Eklutna Lake Road between Campground A and Eklutna Glacier should be closed to all motorized uses.
4. Mountain bikes should be allowed to use the following additional trails and routes (they are currently permitted on four trails and trail systems):
 - a) Wolverine Bowl Trail (#401).
 - b) Rabbit Creek Valley Trail (#434) (careful monitoring of use will be required).
 - c) South Bank Eagle River Trail (#220).
 - d) Powerline Trail between the Gasline Junction and Prospect Heights Trailhead.

In general, mountain bikes are probably not appropriate where the trails are so rough or steep that the user spends most of his time watching the tread instead of the surrounding scenery. This is particularly true of non-destination-oriented trails in which the trail itself is the experience.

CHUGACH STATE PARK TRAIL PLAN HILLSIDE PLANNING UNIT JANUARY, 1986 SCALE: 4" = 1 MILE

LOCATION MAP

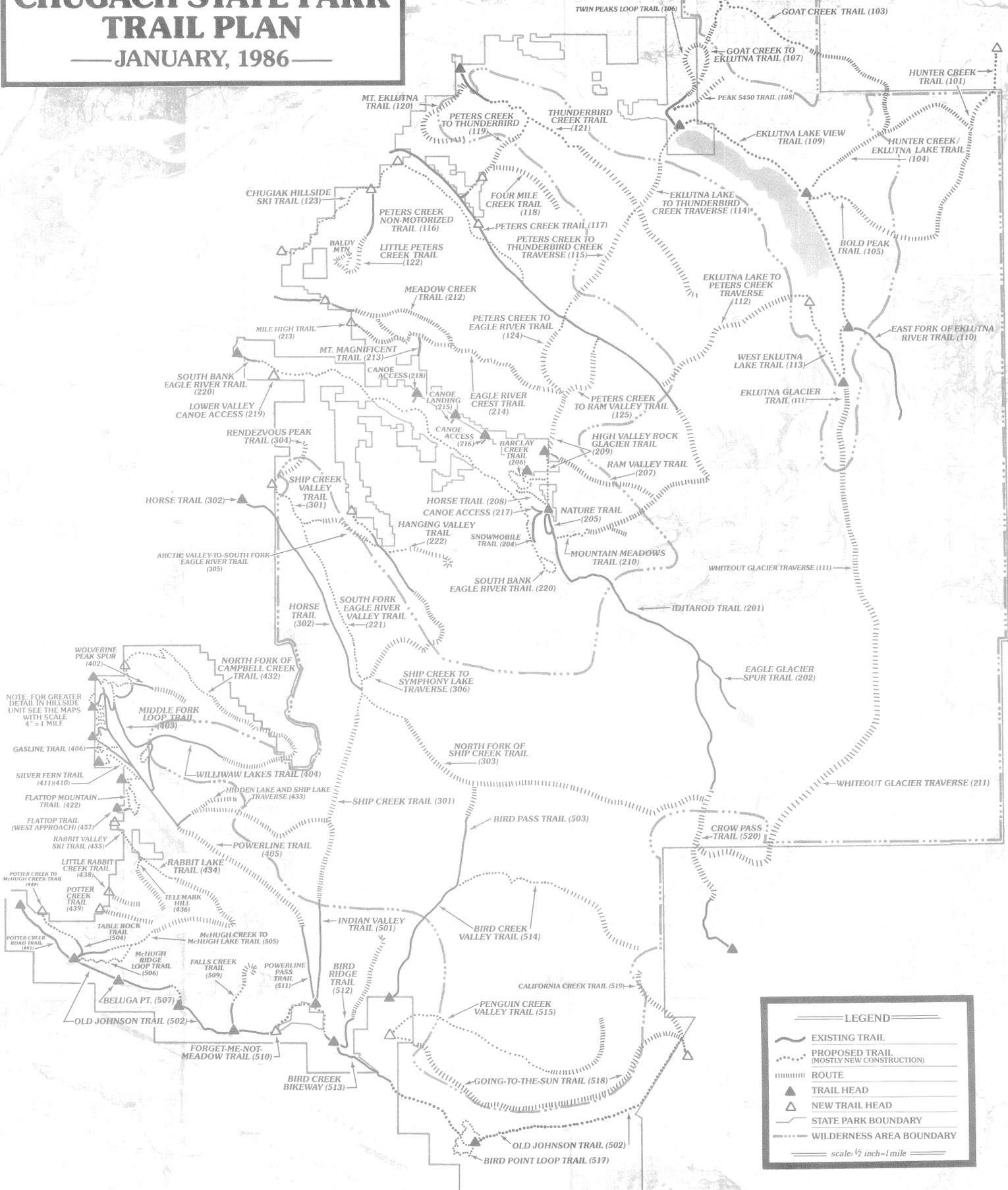


LEGEND

- EXISTING TRAIL
- NEW TRAIL (PROPOSED)
- TRAIL TO BE REMOVED
- TRAILHEAD
- STREAM
- ACCESS ROAD

CHUGACH STATE PARK TRAIL PLAN

— JANUARY, 1986 —



NOTE: FOR GREATER
DETAIL IN HILLSIDE
UNIT SEE THE MAPS
WITH SCALE
4" = 1 MILE

LEGEND

- EXISTING TRAIL
- - - PROPOSED TRAIL (MOSTLY NEW CONSTRUCTION)
- ||||| ROUTE
- ▲ TRAIL HEAD
- △ NEW TRAIL HEAD
- STATE PARK BOUNDARY
- - - WILDERNESS AREA BOUNDARY
- scale 1/2 inch = 1 mile