

Eagle River Trails

Project Overview

7/20/2008

Purpose and Scope: Develop and maintain a system of multi-use, year-round community trails linking Eagle River High School with the Gruening Middle School and Lions Park area to provide outdoor recreation and trail opportunities in support of school athletic and outdoor learning programs, and for use by the general public. This system of non-motorized trails will be designed and managed to accommodate hiker/pedestrian, mountain bike, running, Nordic skiing, and snowshoe use. In addition to improving trail opportunities within and adjacent to Chugach State Park's Eagle River Campground and the Eagle River Greenbelt, the project would also mitigate impacts stemming from user-created access routes.

Location: The trail system is proposed for development on property owned and managed by the Anchorage School District, Municipality of Anchorage, and Chugach State Park (see Project Overview Map).

Project Components: The overall trail project is divided into three components reflecting the underlying land ownership and management of the trail network:

- A. Anchorage School District:** Approximately 3 kilometers of trail development on ASD land surrounding and adjacent to Eagle River High School. A subsequently planned phase will include an approximately 1 kilometer trail connection on ASD property near Gruening Middle School.
- B. Parks & Recreation:** Approximately 2 kilometers of trail development on Chugiak – Eagle River Parks and Recreation land, connecting Eagle River High School trail segments with the Eagle River Campground in Chugach State Park.
- C. Chugach State Park:** Approximately 4 to 6 kilometers of trail, incorporating both new and existing trail segments within Chugach State Park on the north and south sides of Eagle River. This component also includes the installation of a trail bridge across Eagle River at the old location of the previous Glenn Highway road bridge.

Development Sequence: Phased development of the trail network is planned to sequentially provide useable trail segments, while focusing construction efforts to maximize efficiency. Due to the multiple project components, funding sources and partners, development sequence may be adjusted to reflect current funding options, priorities, and partnership opportunities.

Support and Implementation: The project involves the collaboration and coordination of multiple agencies, organizations, citizens, and partners. Primary participating agencies include the Anchorage School District, Municipality of Anchorage Chugiak – Eagle River Parks and Recreation, and Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation. Overall trail design, fundraising, construction, and maintenance is being initiated and coordinated by the Eagle River Nordic Ski Club, working in partnership with the primary land managers listed above. The Eagle River Trails Development Committee, appointed by Anchorage Mayor Mark Begich, is providing overall coordination assistance and guidance for the project.

Trail Management Objectives: All trail location and construction will incorporate trail sustainability guidelines and be based on the following conceptual Trail Management

Objectives (TMOs). These TMOs are subject to refinement as coordination and site-specific planning of each of the three project components progresses with the Anchorage School District, Chugiak-Eagle River Parks and Recreation, and Chugach State Park.

Trail Management Objectives: Eagle River Trails

- Trail Class:** 3
- Managed Use:** *The modes of travel that are actively managed and appropriate, considering the design and management of the trail:*
- Non-Snow Months: Hiker/Pedestrian, Mountain Bike
 - Snow Months: Nordic Ski (Skate & Classic)
- Designed Use:** *The single Managed Use that controls the desired geometric design of the trail, and determines the subsequent maintenance parameters for the trail:*
- Non-Snow Months: Mountain Bike
 - Snow Months: Nordic Ski (Skate)
- Prohibited Use:** Motorized Use, Equestrian Use
- Trail Width:**
- Non-Snow Months: 10' tread (native surface)
 - Snow Months: 16' tread (snow, with width accommodating combined Skate and Classic Nordic Ski use)
- Surface Type:**
- Non-Snow Months: Native surface with compacted aggregate added where needed to provide durable tread during non-snow use season.
 - Snow Months: Groomed or compacted using implements and/or tracklayer when packed surface is snow-covered, drifted, melted or skied out.
- Obstacles:** Generally smooth. Dips, bumps, or ruts to 8" uncommon and widely spaced. Surface obstructions not present.
- Design Grade:** Target range <10% on at least 90% of trail length. Potential short sections of steeper grade of <20%, generally not exceeding 200' in length and not making up more than 5% of the total trail length.
- Cross Slope:** Target range <5%.
- Clearing Limits:**
- All Vegetation: Cleared 16' wide x 10' high (brush, trees, limbs)
 - Woody Vegetation: Cleared 30'- 50' from centerline of trail (woody brush cleared and tree thickets limbed as needed to provide relatively open understory with sight distance)
- Turning Radius:** Minimum 40' (to provide sufficient radius for grooming equipment).