

Chilkoot River Bear Viewing Area

FY2010 Request: \$225,000
Reference No: 47798

AP/AL: Appropriation**Project Type:** Parks / Recreation**Category:** Natural Resources**Location:** Haines**Contact:** Leta Simons**House District:** Cordova/Southeast Islands (HD 5)**Contact Phone:** (907)465-3379**Estimated Project Dates:** 07/01/2009 - 06/30/2014**Brief Summary and Statement of Need:**

With a mix of salmon, fish weir, bears, fishing, bear viewing, kayakers, campers, boats, tours and others, and no agency in charge, the Chilkoot River corridor is unsafe. A position is needed to help people using the area avoid conflict with the bears. A management plan will bring the community together with the agencies to find solutions (single agency managing area, viewing walkways, parking, moving the road and campground, etc.) Infrastructure will reduce conflicts and safety problems while promoting recreation, fishing, tourism and the economy.

Funding:	FY2010	FY2011	FY2012	FY2013	FY2014	FY2015	Total
Gen Fund	\$225,000	\$2,980,000	\$2,900,000	\$2,000,000			\$8,105,000
Total:	\$225,000	\$2,980,000	\$2,900,000	\$2,000,000	\$0	\$0	\$8,105,000

<input type="checkbox"/> State Match Required	<input type="checkbox"/> One-Time Project	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Phased - new	<input type="checkbox"/> Phased - underway	<input type="checkbox"/> On-Going
0% = Minimum State Match % Required		<input type="checkbox"/> Amendment	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Bill	

Operating & Maintenance Costs:

	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Staff</u>
Project Development:	50,324	1
Ongoing Operating:	50,324	1
One-Time Startup:	5,300	
Totals:	105,948	2

Additional Information / Prior Funding History:

New Project

Project Description/Justification:

- Phase I:** Hire a natural resource specialist to be on site actively guiding people and reducing bear/people interaction while reducing human conflicts
 Complete a planning process with the community and the agencies to develop a management plan
 Design and permit proposed infrastructure upgrades
 Construction of infrastructure upgrades with remaining money
- Phase II:** Build elevated walkways, parking, move the road
- Phase III:** Move the campground out of the most intensely used bear habitat

Why is this Project Needed Now?

- The road to Chilkoot Lake is managed by DOT with a state recreation area at the end of the road managed by State Parks, the Chilkoot State Forest on the uphill side of the road managed by the Division of Forestry and the Chilkoot river on the lower side of the road with sport fishing, a weir and wildlife viewing involving the Sport Fish, Commercial Fisheries and Wildlife Conservation Divisions of the Department of Fish and Game.

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- The river is a popular fishing area, the campground and boat launch at the end of the road are heavily used and in recent years brown bear viewing has become increasingly popular with almost a guarantee of seeing bears during the evenings from mid-July through mid-September.
- Photos of the area often look like Yellowstone in the 1970's with bears surrounded by people or up on hoods of cars.
- Many locals and agency representatives have predicted that if things continue the way they are it is not a matter of if someone will get mauled but just a matter of when.
- There is no single agency with clear management authority of the area so no organized effort to reduce conflicts between humans and bears has occurred to date.
- In the past a cobbled together effort to place a bear monitor (person) on site to guide the people met with limited success.

This is a state problem and a management plan needs to be developed now to prevent dangerous bear/human encounters.

Specific Spending Detail:

LINE ITEM	DOLLAR AMOUNT	DESCRIPTION
Personal Services	\$ 123,000	Natural Resource Spec.
Travel	\$ 2,000	
Services	\$100,000	planning

Project Support:

The Governor received a letter from the community with a resolution of support from the community with the following:

- Haines Borough Resolution No. 08-06-124
- Letter from Haines Chamber of Commerce
- Letter from Chilkoot Indian Association
- Letter from Alaska Chilkoot Bear Foundation
- Letter from Lynn Canal Fish and Game Advisory Committee
- Letter with 147 signatures from Haines residents