

Agency: Department of Natural Resources**Project Title:****Project Type:** New Construction and Land Acquisition

Mastodon Trail and Trailhead

State Funding Requested: \$405,214
One-Time Need**House District:** Fairbanks Areawide (7-11)**Brief Project Description:**

This project will fund the development of a trail head (parking area and restroom) along with the final 3 1/2 miles of trail construction for the Mastodon Trail. This new trail and trailhead will provide an overland/year-round trail to Nugget Creek Public Use Cabin and eventually link with the Granite Tors Trail to the east forming a 40 mile network of non-motorized trails to three public use cabins / trail shelters.

Funding Plan:

Total Project Cost:	\$633,189
Funding Already Secured:	(\$227,975)
FY2013 State Funding Request:	<u>(\$405,214)</u>
Project Deficit:	\$0

Funding Details:

2009/2010 NPS, Rivers, Trails, Conservation, Assistance Program-Trail Layout/Design- \$44,000 in-kind service

2011, State Trails Office: RTG Program- \$45,975

2011, Legislative Appropriation CIP- \$89,000

2012, State Trails Office: RTG Program- \$49,000

Detailed Project Description and Justification:

The Northern Area of Alaska State Parks seeks funding to construct the final 3 1/2 miles of Mastodon Trail in Chena River State Recreation Area, 26 miles east of Fairbanks, Alaska. In addition to finishing the trail the Northern Area also requests funding to construct a trailhead (parking lot and restroom) at 31.7 mile Chena Hot Springs Road to support the new trail. This new trail and trailhead will provide safe, year-round access to Nugget Creek public use cabin. The existing access to the cabin crosses the Chena River which can be hazardous due to thin ice or open water, even in late winter. The new alignment will also provide an overland connection to Mist Creek Trail and eventually link the very popular Tors Trail to the east forming a 40 mile network with three public use cabins / trail shelters. The trail and trailhead will provide a new opportunity for mountain bikers, skiers, and horseback riders to access a public use cabin on a non-motorized trail.

BACKGROUND: From 2003 through 2006 the Chena River State Recreation Area Management Plan went through a substantial public review process. The following recommendations came from that process. On page 24, the plan states that several routes are possible and should be considered for the future, such as trails connecting the Mist Creek Trail with the Granite Tors Trail. Future new trails should link to existing trails to create more loop trail opportunities or to extend into new areas." Elsewhere, on page 54, the plan directs Northern Area State Parks to design the Mist Creek Trail for winter

and summer non-motorized use and to work with user groups and individuals to expand winter trails and a cabin system for non-motorized users. Finally, on page 47, the plan recommends that trail access to the existing Nugget Creek cabin be improved.

These recommendations serve as a catalyst for Northern Area State Parks proposal for the Mastodon Trail and Trailhead. The Mastodon Trail and Trailhead will implement these plan recommendations, providing a sustainably designed and constructed year-round trail that will substantially improve access for people of all ages and skill levels.

In October 2009, the Northern Area of Alaska State Parks was awarded a grant for technical assistance from the National Park Service, Alaska Region Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA) to access the Mist Creek Trail alignment and identify a sustainable non-motorized trail to Nugget Creek cabin in Chena River State Recreation Area. RTCA technical assistance was provided from October 2009 through September 2010. NPS and park staff spent six days in the field, hiked 55 miles, and laid out and flagged 10.5 miles of trail. 10 8-hour days were spent on post-field analysis, map creation, and report writing.

The 2011 Recreational Trail Grant for \$45,975 funds cutting the 10 1/2 mile trail corridor 6' wide, re-shooting the grade and reflagging the critical edge in preparation for mechanical construction. The grant will also fund hardening the first 1/2 mile of trail.

The 2011 Legislative Appropriation of \$89,000 funds the purchase of .82 acres of wetlands, four miles of mechanically constructed trail, and four trail bridges.

The 2012 Recreational Trail Grant will fund a private contractor constructing 3 1/2 miles of trail.

This capital request funds the final 2 1/2 miles of trail and trailhead. Trail costs are calculated at \$14,000 per mile based on recent contract bids for trail work in Chena River State Recreation Area. The Engineers estimate for the Mastodon Trailhead (\$370,214) was completed by the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation Design and Construction Section.

PUBLIC OUTREACH AND SUPPORT: The 2006 update of the Chena River State Recreation Area Management Plan involved several rounds of public review and many meetings and workshops that gave the public an opportunity to comment on plan proposals, including those recommendations highlighted above. Since that time, improvements made on other trails in the area have increased public support for trail development and the public has been kept abreast of recreation area trail projects through regular media releases. The Northern Area State Park Citizen Advisory Board (Northern Area CAB), a diverse group of trail users who assist recreation area staff with management and development issues, has been an important conduit for public participation and opinion, conveying ideas and concerns to and from park staff.

The proposed Mastodon Trail and Trailhead has the full support of the Northern Area CAB. In recent years, Northern Area CAB members, Tom Paragi and Dave Payer, have been instrumental in carrying forward the proposal. Both have researched a number of routes for the Mastodon Trail that would link the Tors Trail to Mist Creek Trail and improve access to the Nugget Creek cabin. They conducted reconnaissance for these routes during the winter of 2007 and spring of 2008 and drew up a map reflecting their findings, including a potential shelter location.

In 2010, Northern Area State Parks began a formal public involvement process to solicit input on the trail proposal. On March 23rd key stakeholders were invited to discuss the Mastodon Trail and receive training on sustainable trail design and construction. Ten Northern Area CAB members, three Northern Area State Park staff, and seven visitors attended.

On May 6th, the Fairbanks Daily News Miner published an article about the trail proposal and upcoming public open house hosted by the Northern Area CAB. The open house, held on May 12th in Fairbanks, gave the wider public an opportunity to learn more about the trail proposal and provide feedback. Nineteen people signed in at this open house.

As part of its public outreach, Northern Area State Parks also set up an on-line survey for public input, with questions about the Mastodon Trail. The trail received broad public support. Of the 181 people completing the survey, more than 91% supported building a sustainable trail to Nugget Creek cabin.

Permitting has been completed for trail construction in 2012. This capital project provides funds to finish the trail and provide a parking area and restroom.

Project Timeline:

2011- PERMITTING COMPLETED: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Compensatory Mitigation fee paid to the Conservation Fund, Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan, National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), State Historic Preservation Office, and Office of Habitat Management and Permitting.

Summer 2012- Construction of trail bridges and 5 miles of trail

Winter 2012- Contract award to build trailhead and 5 1/2 miles of trail

Summer 2013- Construct last 5 1/2 miles of trail and trailhead

Entity Responsible for the Ongoing Operation and Maintenance of this Project:

Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation

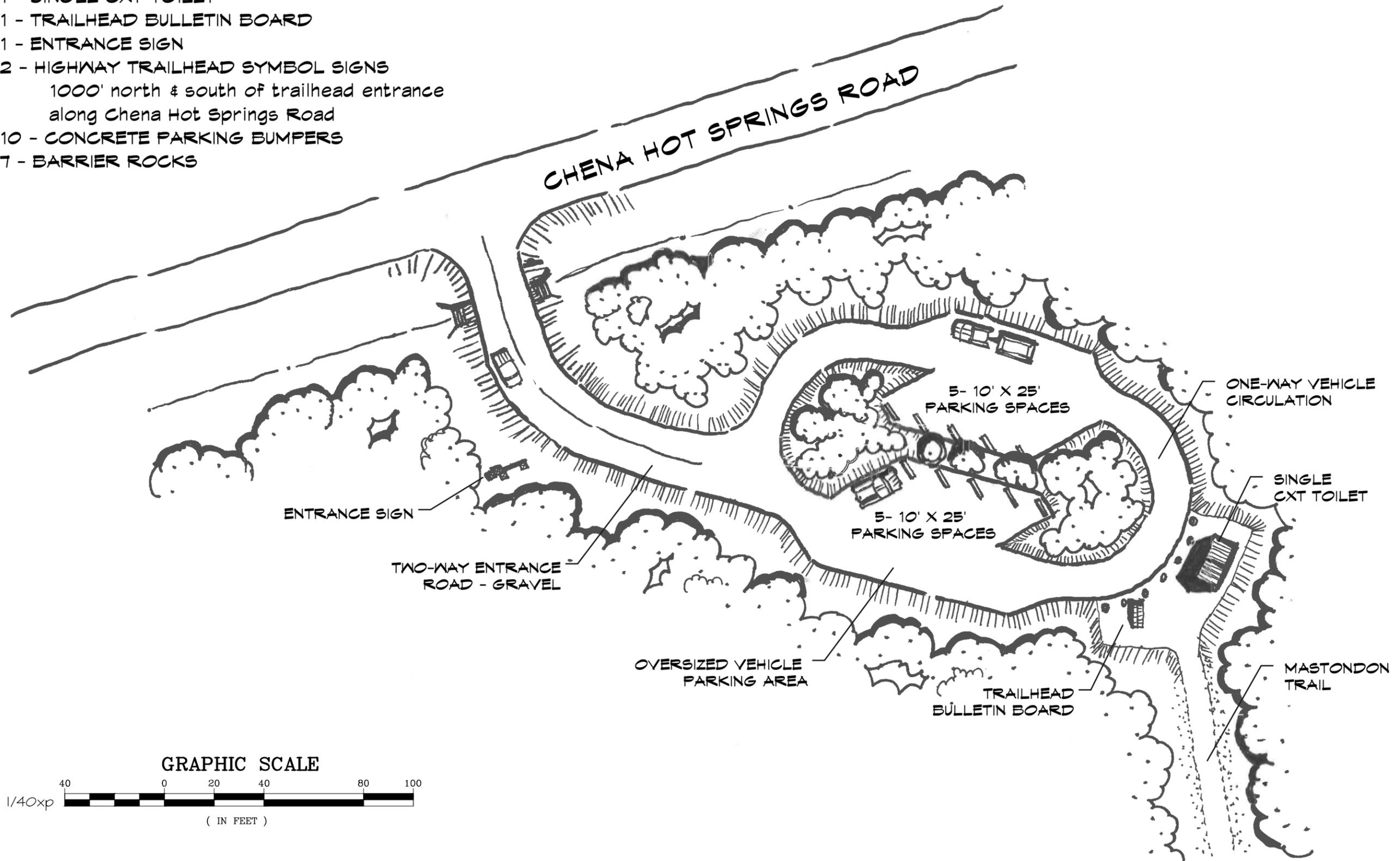
Grant Recipient Contact Information:

Name: Brooks Ludwig
 Title: Park Superintendent
 Address: 3700 Airport Way
 Fairbanks, Alaska 99708
 Phone Number: (907)451-2698
 Email: brooks.ludwig@alaska.gov

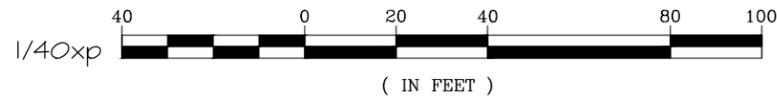
Has this project been through a public review process at the local level and is it a community priority? Yes No

PROGRAM-

- 10 - ANGLE PARKING SPACES
- 2 - OVERSIZED VEHICLE PARKING AREAS
- 1 - SINGLE CXT TOILET
- 1 - TRAILHEAD BULLETIN BOARD
- 1 - ENTRANCE SIGN
- 2 - HIGHWAY TRAILHEAD SYMBOL SIGNS
1000' north & south of trailhead entrance
along Chena Hot Springs Road
- 10 - CONCRETE PARKING BUMPERS
- 7 - BARRIER ROCKS



GRAPHIC SCALE



**ENGINEER'S ESTIMATE
CRSRA: Mastodon Trailhead
Trailhead - CONCEPT**

BASIC BID

ITEM NO.	ITEM	UNIT	UNIT PRICE	QUANTITY	AMOUNT
201(3B)	Clearing and Grubbing	Acre	\$10,000.00	0.55	\$5,500.00
203(3)	Unclassified Excavation	C.Y.	\$10.00	1,400	\$14,000.00
203(5A)	Borrow, Type A	C.Y.	\$20.00	1,500	\$30,000.00
301(1)	Aggregate Base Course, Grading D-1	Ton	\$20.00	450	\$9,000.00
603(17-18)	18 Inch Pipe	L.F.	\$35.00	35	\$1,225.00
603(20-18)	End Section for 18 Inch Pipe	Each	\$400.00	2	\$800.00
615(1)	Standard Sign	S.F.	\$150.00	38.50	\$5,775.00
618(2)	Seeding	Pound	\$150.00	9.0	\$1,350.00
620(1)	Topsoil	S.Y.	\$7.00	1,200	\$8,400.00
640(1)	Mobilization and Demobilization	L.S.	\$33,000.00	All Req'd	\$33,000.00
641(1)	Erosion, Sediment and Pollution Control Administration	L.S.	\$5,000.00	All Req'd	\$5,000.00
641(2)	Temporary Erosion, Sediment and Pollution Control	C.S.	\$10,000.00	All Req'd	\$10,000.00
641(6)	SWPPP Price Adjustment	C.S.	\$0.00	All Req'd	\$0.00
642(1)	Construction Surveying	L.S.	\$10,000.00	All Req'd	\$10,000.00
642(3)	Three Person Survey Party	Hour	\$275.00	5	\$1,375.00
643(2)	Traffic Maintenance	L.S.	\$5,000.00	All Req'd	\$5,000.00
647(6)	Hydraulic Excavator, 1 CY, 100 HP Minimum	Hour	\$150.00	5	\$750.00
650(17)	Concrete Parking Bumpers	Each	\$200.00	10	\$2,000.00
650(21)	Barrier Rock	Each	\$200.00	7	\$1,400.00
650(36A)	Bulletin Board, Type A	Each	\$4,000.00	1	\$4,000.00
650(38)	Entrance Sign	Each	\$4,000.00	1	\$4,000.00
654 (2)	Concrete Single Vaulted Toilet	Each	\$100,000.00	1	\$100,000.00
BASIC BID (BB) TOTAL					\$252,575.00
PROJECT CONTINGENCY (10%)					\$25,258.00
ENVIRONMENTAL / DESIGN / SITE PLANNING (DS, 20% of BB)					\$50,515.00
CONSTRUCTION ADMINISTRATION (CA, 15% of BB)					\$37,887.00
CAP (4.5% of DS + CA)					\$3,979.00
PROJECT TOTAL					\$370,214.00

Division Solicited For: Div Of Agriculture Date Opened: 6/24/10 Date Delivery Required: 7/19/2010

Vendor/Contact Information	Happy trails 1600 College Rd Fbx AK 99709 322 5834	TNT Enterprize PO Box 16096 Two Rvers Ak 99716 488 2282	Small Wood Creek 3679 Carline Ct. Fbx. Ak. 99712 457 6171	Alaska Dirt & Trail PO Box 57010 North Pole, Ak 99705 488 1414
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Price List Item Number	Qty	Unit	Happy trails		TNT Enterprize		Small Wood Creek		Alaska Dirt & Trail		Unit Price	Ext. Price	Unit Price	Ext. Price
			Unit Price	Ext. Price	Unit Price	Ext. Price	Unit Price	Ext. Price	Unit Price	Ext. Price				
Install 4 miles of trail	1	ea		\$61,248.00		\$54,047.91		\$56,000.00						
Install 1.5 miles of trail	1	ea		\$22,968.00		\$19,680.53		\$12,000.00						
NO BID														
Subtotal				\$84,216.00		\$73,728.44		\$68,000.00						
5% Alaska Bidders Pref.			Yes	(\$4,210.80)	Yes	(\$3,686.42)	Yes	(\$3,400.00)						
Alaskan Products Pref.			%		%		%		%		%		%	
Other Preference(s)														
5% Recycled Prod. Pref.														
Freight Charges														
Total				\$80,005.20		\$70,042.02		\$64,600.00						

Comments: Award made on total bid price for all 5.5 miles of trail as funding for the entire project is available.

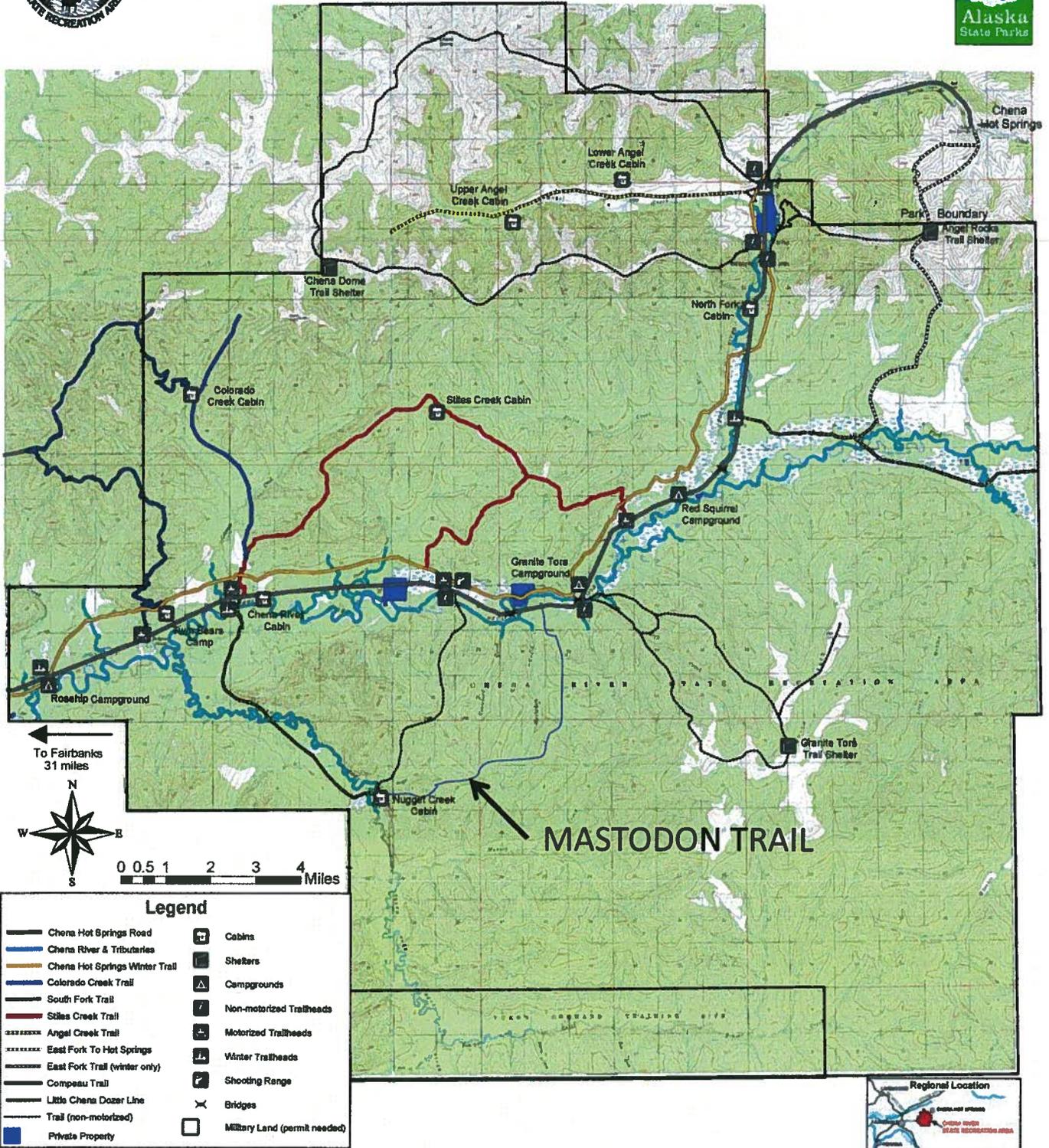
Type of Procurement (circle one): Goods/Services Professional Services Construction Other

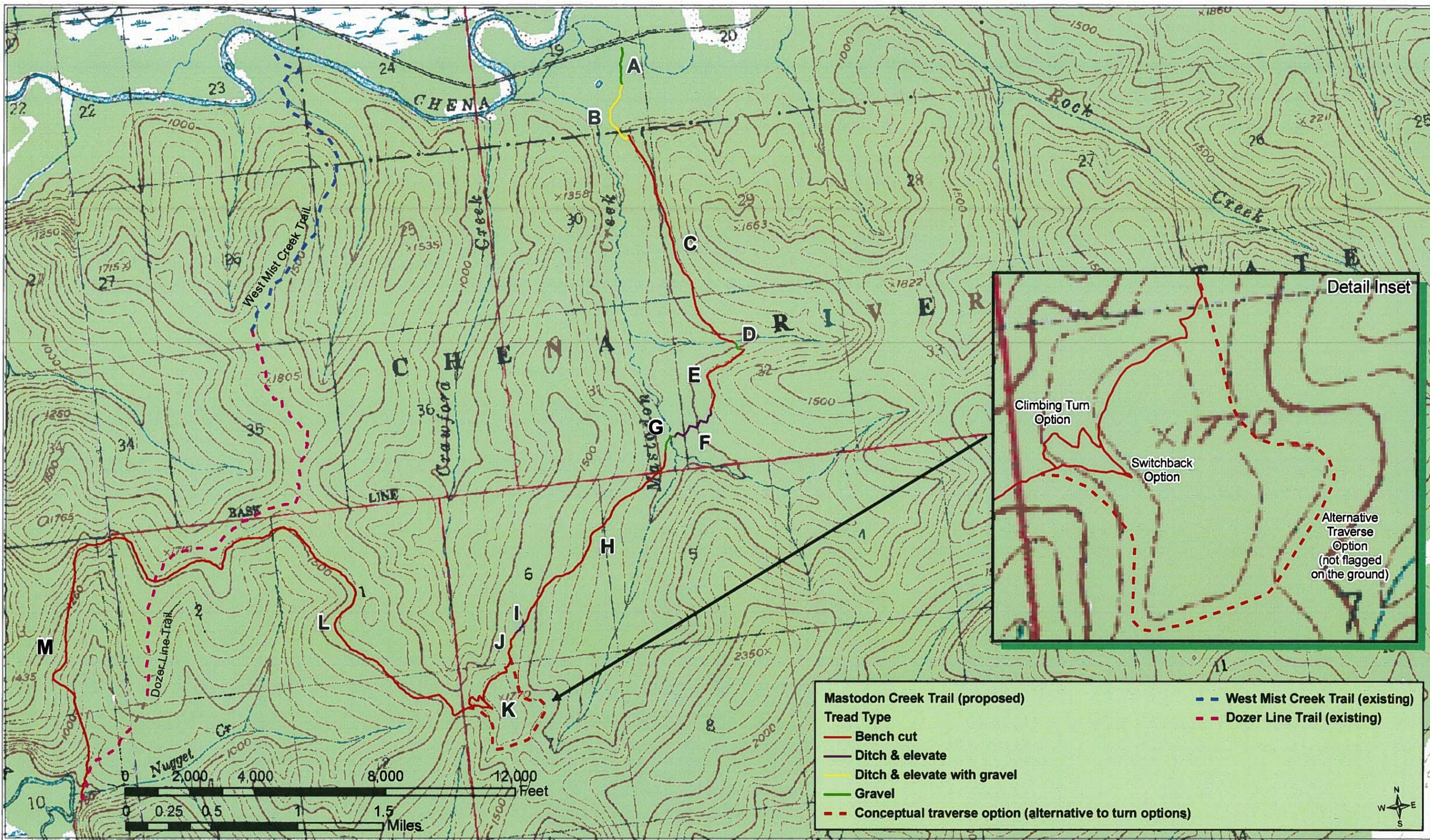
Awarded To (circle one): Not Awarded Lowest Only Bidder/Offeror Other

Preparer's Name: Ward Wells Preparer's Signature: *Ward Wells* Date of Award: 7/19/10

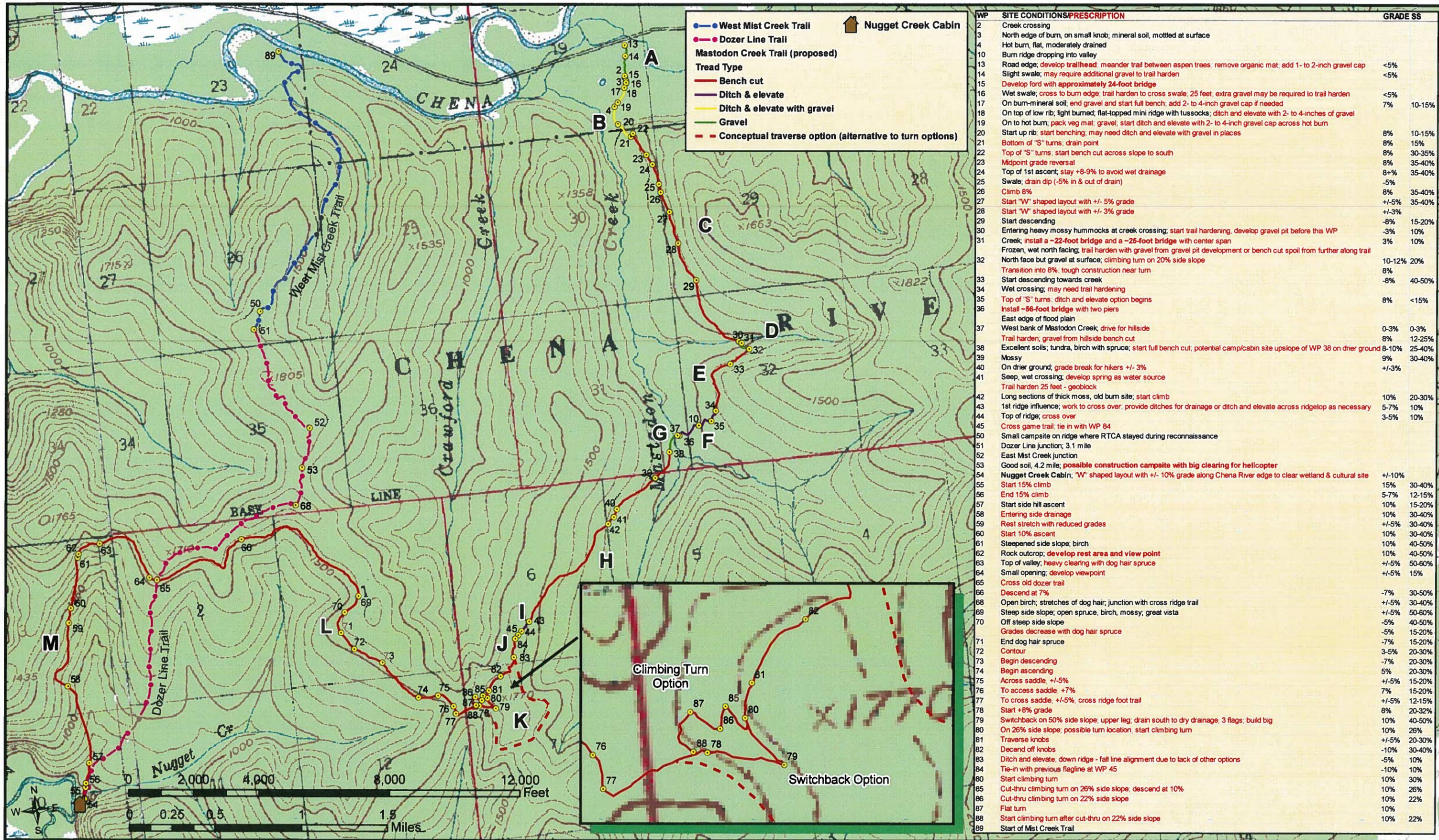


Chena River State Recreation Area





Mastodon Creek Trail (proposed)	West Mist Creek Trail (existing)
Tread Type	Dozer Line Trail (existing)
Bench cut	
Ditch & elevate	
Ditch & elevate with gravel	
Gravel	
Conceptual traverse option (alternative to turn options)	



WP	SITE CONDITIONS/PRESCRIPTION	GRADE	SS
2	Creek crossing		
3	North edge of burn, on small knob, mineral soil, mottled at surface		
4	Hot burn, flat, moderately drained		
10	Burn ridge dropping into valley		
13	Road edge; develop trailhead, meander trail between aspen trees, remove organic mat; add 1- to 2-inch gravel cap	<-5%	
14	Slight swale; may require additional gravel to trail harden	<-5%	
15	Develop ford with approximately 24-foot bridge		
16	Wet swale; cross to burn edge; trail harden to cross swale; 25 feet; extra gravel may be required to trail harden	<-5%	
17	On burn-mineral soil; end gravel and start full bench; add 2- to 4-inch gravel cap if needed	7%	10-15%
18	On top of low rib; light burned; flat-topped mini ridge with tussocks; ditch and elevate with 2- to 4-inches of gravel		
19	On to hot burn; pack veg mat; gravel; start ditch and elevate with 2- to 4-inch gravel cap across hot burn		
20	Start up rib; start benching; may need ditch and elevate with gravel in places	8%	10-15%
21	Bottom of "S" turns; drain point	8%	15%
22	Top of "S" turns; start bench cut across slope to south	8%	30-35%
23	Midpoint grade reversal	8%	35-40%
24	Top of 1st ascent; stay +8-9% to avoid wet drainage	8+%	35-40%
25	Swale; drain dip (-5% in & out of drain)	-5%	
26	Climb 8%	8%	35-40%
27	Start "W" shaped layout with +/- 5% grade	+/-5%	35-40%
28	Start "W" shaped layout with +/- 3% grade	+/-3%	
29	Start descending	-8%	15-20%
30	Entering heavy mossy hummocks at creek crossing; start trail hardening, develop gravel pit before this WP	-3%	10%
31	Creek; install a ~22-foot bridge and a ~25-foot bridge with center span	3%	10%
32	Frozen, wet north facing; trail harden with gravel from gravel pit development or bench cut spoil from further along trail		
33	North face but gravel at surface; climbing turn on 20% side slope	10-12%	20%
34	Transition into 8%; tough construction near turn	8%	
35	Start descending towards creek	-8%	40-50%
36	Wet crossing; may need trail hardening		
37	Top of "S" turns; ditch and elevate option begins	8%	<15%
38	Install ~66-foot bridge with two piers		
39	East edge of flood plain		
40	West bank of Mastodon Creek; drive for hillside	0-3%	0-3%
41	Trail harden; gravel from hillside bench cut	8%	12-25%
42	Excellent soils; tundra, birch with spruce; start full bench cut; potential camp/cabin site upslope of WP 38 on drier ground	8-10%	25-40%
43	Mossy	9%	30-40%
44	On drier ground; grade break for hikers +/- 3%	+/-3%	
45	Seep, wet crossing; develop spring as water source		
46	Trail harden 25 feet - geoblock		
47	Long sections of thick moss, old burn site; start climb	10%	20-30%
48	1st ridge influence; work to cross over; provide ditches for drainage or ditch and elevate across ridgetop as necessary	5-7%	10%
49	Top of ridge; cross over	3-5%	10%
50	Cross game trail; tie in with WP 84		
51	Small campsite on ridge where RTCA stayed during reconnaissance		
52	Dozer Line junction; 3.1 mile		
53	East Mist Creek junction		
54	Good soil, 4.2 mile; possible construction campsite with big clearing for helicopter		
55	Nugget Creek Cabin; "W" shaped layout with +/- 10% grade along Chena River edge to clear wetland & cultural site	+/-10%	
56	Start 15% climb	15%	30-40%
57	End 15% climb	5-7%	12-15%
58	Start side hill ascent	10%	15-20%
59	Entering side drainage	10%	30-40%
60	Rest stretch with reduced grades	+/-5%	30-40%
61	Start 10% ascent	10%	30-40%
62	Steepened side slope; birch	10%	40-50%
63	Rock outcrop; develop rest area and viewpoint	10%	40-50%
64	Top of valley; heavy clearing with dog hair spruce	+/-5%	50-60%
65	Small opening; develop viewpoint	+/-5%	15%
66	Cross old dozer trail		
67	Descend at 7%	-7%	30-50%
68	Open birch; stretches of dog hair; junction with cross ridge trail	+/-5%	30-40%
69	Steep side slope; open spruce, birch, mossy; great vista	+/-5%	50-60%
70	Off steep side slope	-5%	40-50%
71	Grades decrease with dog hair spruce	-5%	15-20%
72	End dog hair spruce	-7%	15-20%
73	Contour	3-5%	20-30%
74	Begin descending	-7%	20-30%
75	Begin ascending	5%	20-30%
76	Across saddle, +/-5%	+/-5%	15-20%
77	To access saddle, +7%	7%	15-20%
78	To cross saddle, +/-5%, cross ridge foot trail	+/-5%	12-15%
79	Start +8% grade	8%	20-32%
80	Switchback on 50% side slope; upper leg; drain south to dry drainage, 3 flags; build big	10%	40-50%
81	On 26% side slope; possible turn location, start climbing turn	10%	26%
82	Traverse knobs	+/-5%	20-30%
83	Descend off knobs	-10%	30-40%
84	Ditch and elevate, down ridge - fall line alignment due to lack of other options	-5%	10%
85	Tie-in with previous flagline at WP 45	-10%	10%
86	Start climbing turn	10%	30%
87	Cut-thru climbing turn on 26% side slope; descend at 10%	10%	26%
88	Cut-thru climbing turn on 22% side slope	10%	22%
89	Flat turn	10%	
90	Start climbing turn after cut-thru on 22% side slope	10%	22%
91	Start of Mist Creek Trail		



Public Notification / Press Coverage

MASTODON TRAIL

<u>PUBLICATION</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Page</u>
Stakeholder Workshop letter	02/11/2010	1
Workshop Sign-In Sheet	03/23/2010	2
DNR Press Release	04/14/2010	4
Fairbanks Daily News Miner	05/06/2010	5
Open House Sign-In Sheet	05/12/2010	6
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Results-Online Trail Survey	08/10/2010	9
NPS e-Newsletter	01/11/2011	12

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF PARKS & OUTDOOR RECREATION

SEAN PARNELL, GOVERNOR

NORTHERN AREA
3700 AIRPORT WAY
FAIRBANKS, ALASKA 99709-4899
PHONE: (907) 451-2695
FAX: (907) 451-2754

February 11th, 2010

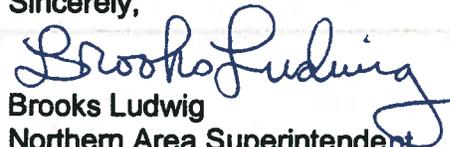
Dear Trail User,

Alaska State Parks is working with the National Park Service: Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA) to lay out a non-motorized trail to Nugget Creek Public Use Cabin in Chena River State Recreation Area. This new trail will be year round, ten miles long, and mechanically constructed using today's best trail management practices.

Before developing trail management objectives and doing a trail alignment we need input from stakeholders. You are invited to a 2 hour presentation on Sustainable Trail Construction sponsored by the Northern Area Alaska State Parks Citizens Advisory Board and RTCA. This training will be given Tuesday March 23rd from 5:30 to 7:30pm at the DNR building located at 3700 Airport Way. The goal of the training is to educate stakeholders in sustainable trail construction and provide design parameters according to user groups. You have been selected as a key stakeholder / representative.

The goal of this meeting is to bring stakeholders together at the beginning of the planning process, to educate them in sustainable trail construction, and initiate a well-thought out process within the context of site opportunities and constraints. If you cannot make the presentation please designate someone to attend for you. If you have questions or need additional information please contact our office at 451-2695. A formal public meeting / open house will be held in late April.

Sincerely,


Brooks Ludwig
Northern Area Superintendent
Alaska State Parks

cc.

Stan Justice
Jamie Marschner
Beth Patterson
Paul McCarthy
Becky Alexander
Joe Buth

Nordic Skiing
Skijor / Polk Association
Interior Trail Riders Association
Fairbanks Hiking Club
Two Rivers Dog Musers Association
Fairbanks Cycle Club

Alaska State Parks
 Citizen Advisory Board
 Northern Area



Mastodon Trail
 Planning Workshop
 Sustainable construction

March 23rd, 2010

<u>Signature</u>	<u>Printed Name</u>	<u>Affiliation (group association)</u> <u>Phone and/or email</u>
<i>Dianna Leinberger</i>	DIANNA LEINBERGER	dizanna.leinberger@451-3014 717slca.gov
<i>Judy Hicks</i>	Judy Hicks	CAB checkpoint@dmtrc.alaska.org
<i>Mindy Eggleston</i>	Mindy Eggleston	CAB mde@alaska.net
<i>Kyle Joly</i>	Kyle Joly	CAB
<i>Jeremy Douse</i>	Jeremy Douse	CAB
<i>John Lysen</i>	John Lysen	CAB
<i>Joe Letarte</i>	Joe Letarte	CAB
<i>Tom Truitt</i>	Tom Truitt	CAB
<i>Jim Williams</i>	Jim Williams	CAB
<i>Tom Bachert</i>	Tom Bachert	CAB
<i>Malcolm McEwen</i>	Malcolm McEwen	mcewen@mosquitonet.com
<i>Geoffrey Outh</i>	GEOFFREY OUTH	322-4499 Alaska Trails Alaska Trails FMSB TAC
<i>Joel Both</i>	Joel Both	Fairbanks Cycle Club Goldstream sports
<i>David Charron</i>	DAVID CHARRON	State Parks Tech 907-978-0571

Alaska State Parks
 Citizen Advisory Board
 Northern Area



Sign-in sheet

March 23rd, 2010

<u>Signature</u>	<u>Printed Name</u>	<u>Affiliation (group association)</u> <u>Phone and/or email</u>
<i>[Signature]</i>	LARRY MORRIS	FNSB TAC
<i>[Signature]</i>	Dan Chagnon	" AK Trails, ANPA
<i>[Signature]</i>	THOMAS CHANCOCK, JR	THANCOCK@CO-FAIRBANKS,AK.GOV
	Mike Stredney	mike.stredney@acis.alaska.net
	Tom Pragi	CAB

Tom Irwin
Commissioner

550 W. 7th Ave., Ste 1400
Anchorage, AK 99501
907-269-8491



Public Information Center

650 W. 7th Ave., Ste. 1250
Anchorage, AK 99501

www.dnr.alaska.gov
907-259-8460

Press Release

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
04/14/2010

Media Contact: Brooks Ludwig 451-2698
Division of Parks & Outdoor Recreation

New Trail Proposed for Chena River State Recreation Area State seeks public input

(Fairbanks, AK)

The 2006 update of the Chena River State Recreation Area (CRSRA) Management Plan involved several rounds of public review and many meetings and workshops. The following recommendations came from that planning process and serve as a catalyst for Alaska State Parks proposed new trail.

Recommendations for Unit 5, the non motorized portion of CRSRA, were to improve access to Nugget Creek Cabin, provide summer access to Mist Creek Trail, and work with user groups to expand winter trails and a cabin system for non-motorized users. This trail proposal will implement those management plan recommendations.

The next step in the public process is to identify stakeholders and get their input for a new trail. To that end, the Northern Area Alaska State Parks Citizen Advisory Board is planning an open house on April 26th at the Department of Natural Resources building located at 3700 Airport Way. This meeting will be held in the large conference room from 6:00 to 7:30pm. The public is invited to attend to learn more about the trail proposal and to provide feedback.

Alaska State Parks has an online survey for public input. This survey can be completed by going to alaskastateparks.org and clicking on: *CRSRA New Trail Survey*. This survey captures public comments and will help managers determine whether to proceed with planning a new trail as well as what specific user group the trail should be designed for, what user groups the trail should be actively managed for, and what user groups to accept on the new trail. State Parks needs this information before moving forward with trail planning efforts.

For more information call the Fairbanks State Parks office at 451-2695.



Fairbanks Daily News Mirror

Thursday, May 6, 2010

Parks group proposes new trail in Chena River State Rec Area

By TIM MOWRY
tmowry@newsminer.com

As it is now, anyone who wants to hike to Nugget Creek Cabin in the Chena River State Recreation Area has to ford the Chena River and then negotiate the Mist Creek Trail, a gnarly marginally marked, 5 1/2-mile overland trail to the cabin.

"It's definitely primitive," said Tom Paragi, who talked to the cabin in September and peddled down the South Fork of the Chena River to Chena Hot Springs Road. "It's not a cakewalk. It's not something you want to take your grandmothers or young kids in."

"You want to be in pretty good

physical shape and know a thing or two about route finding," Paragi said.

Needless to say, Nugget Creek Cabin doesn't see much use in the summer.

But that could change if Alaska State Parks goes ahead with a plan to build a new overland trail to Nugget Creek Cabin in the non-motorized section of the popular 250,000-acre recreation area east of Fairbanks.

The proposed 9-mile Mastodon Creek Trail would start near 36 Mile Chena Hot Springs Road, eliminating the need for a river crossing, and it would be a much tamer and more developed trail than the Mist Creek Trail.

Alaska State Parks is hosting an open house from 5:30-7:30

p.m. Wednesday at the Department of Natural Resources to see what the public thinks about the new trail.

"If the public says they want the status quo and they don't want another trail out there, that's fine," said northern region state parks superintendent Brooke Ludwig.



Deedee Hammond/News-Miner

OPEN HOUSE

Alaska State Parks will be hosting an open house from 5:30-7:30 p.m. Wednesday at the Department of Natural Resources at 3700 Airport Way to discuss its proposal for a new non-motorized trail in the Chena River State Recreation Area that would lead to the Nugget Creek Cabin. The goal of the meeting is to find out if the public wants the trail and who will use it.

If you can't make the meeting, state parks has an online survey you can fill out by visiting alaskastateparks.org and clicking on "Chena River State Recreation Area: New Trail Survey."

Please see TRAIL, Page C2



Alaska State Parks
Citizen Advisory Board
Northern Area Alaska State Parks
Open House ~ Mastodon Creek Trail Proposal

Sign-in sheet

May 12th, 2010

<u>Signature</u>	<u>Printed Name</u>	<u>Affiliation (group association)</u> <u>Phone and/or email</u>
<i>Don Lokken</i>	Don Lokken	FANC (479-5419)
<i>Carol Lokken</i>	Carol Lokken	FANC
<i>Tom Perry</i>		CAB
<i>Alan Batten</i>	Alan Batten	
<i>M. M. Harin</i>	Drew Harrington	
<i>David Pater</i>	DAVID PATER	
<i>Peter Fix</i>	PETER FIX	
<i>John Lyser</i>	John Lyser	CAB
<i>DAVE CHARRON</i>	Dave Charron	State Parks Employee
<i>Kyle Joly</i>	Kyle Joly	CAB
<i>Jeremy Douse</i>	Jeremy Douse	CAB
<i>Steve Taylor</i>	STEVE TAYLOR	ORTAB
<i>Stan Justice</i>	Stan Justice	479-5017 stanjustice@pci.net
<i>Roger Burns</i>	Roger Burns	



Alaska State Parks
Citizen Advisory Board
Northern Area Alaska State Parks
Open House ~ Mastodon Creek Trail Proposal

Sign-in sheet

May 12th, 2010

<u>Signature</u>	<u>Printed Name</u>	<u>Affiliation (group association)</u> <u>Phone and/or email</u>
	Barry Whitehill	488-0234
	GEOFFREY DAULTON	ALASKA TRAILS 479-0014
	Jo Ann	Ann.
	Sean McGuire	479-7334
	Brooks Ludwig	State Parks

Thursday, June 24, 2010

Mastodon Creek Trail is a go in Chena River State Recreation Area

State Parks has already laid out trail

By TIM MOWRY
tmowry@newsminer.com

After receiving overwhelming support, Alaska State Parks is going ahead with a plan to build a new non-motorized trail in the Chena River State Recreation Area. A crew last week laid out and flagged the Mastodon Creek Trail, which will lead 14 miles from Chena Hot Springs Road to Nugget Creek Cabin, a small public-use cabin on the South Fork of the Chena River.

The trail's length originally was estimated at 9 miles but came out to be 5 miles longer, said state parks northern region superintendent Brooks Ludwig. "It was longer than the original concept due to following the natural topography and staying on good stable slopes," Ludwig wrote in an e-mail. The trail will be built using sustainable techniques to promote

drainage and reduce maintenance, he said.

State parks proposed the trail last month, and the idea has received broad support, both at public meetings May 13 in Fairbanks and through an online survey on the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation website.

More than 80 percent of the 178 people who completed the online survey supported building a sustainable trail to Nugget Creek Cabin, Ludwig said.

The Mastodon Creek Trail will start near 38 Mile Chena Hot Springs Road and go up the Mastodon Creek drainage, winding its way to Nugget Creek Cabin, one of five backcountry public-use cabins in the 250,000-acre recreation area east of Fairbanks. The trail is in a non-motorized portion of the rec area.

The five-person crew, which consisted of two state parks employees and three from the National Park Service's Rivers and Trails Conservation Assistance program, hiked 49 miles throughout five days to lay out the trail.

"They made it all the way to the

cabin and back; they flagged the whole thing," Ludwig said. "We got the trail up on good ground and on south-facing slopes so it should be pretty burnproof once we get it in."

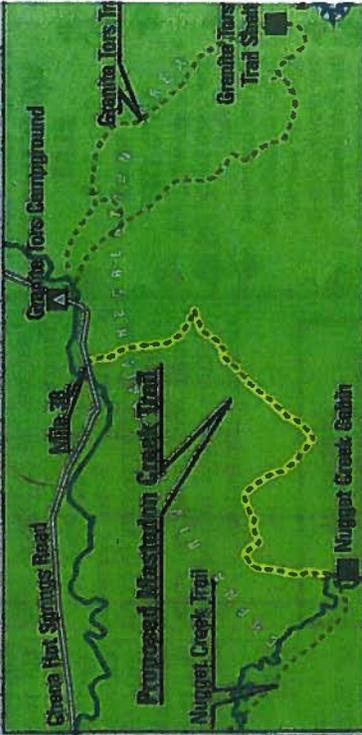
State parks is hoping to get a state recreational trails grant to begin construction of the trail next summer, he said.

Construction of the trail will require a 60-foot bridge to be built across Mastodon Creek, Ludwig said.

The 4-foot-wide trail also will be open to horseback riding and mountain biking, he said. More than 60 percent of people who responded to the online survey supported opening the trail to mountain bikes.

Almost half the respondents (47.2 percent) to the online survey indicated they will use the trail primarily for hiking.

Mountain biking and cross-country skiing were next on the list at 15.9 percent, followed by horseback riding (9.7 percent), skijoring (5.7 percent), mushing (4.5 percent), and snowshoeing (1.1 percent).



DeeDee Hammond/News-M

network in the non-motorized portion of the rec area.

Before any connector trails are built, however, state parks is planning to evaluate what needs to be done to make the Granite Tors and Angel Rocks trails more sustainable, Ludwig said.

"We're looking at doing an evaluation of the Granite Tors and Angel Rocks trails before we do any connector trails because they're the most-used non-motorized trails," he said.

Contact outdoors editor Tim Mowry at 459-7687.

In the winter, cross-country skiing will be considered the primary use, Ludwig said.

More than 95 percent of respondents support a trail network with shelters in the non-motorized portion of the park. State parks has identified a future cabin site on the Mastodon Creek Trail about 4 miles from Chena Hot Springs Road, Ludwig said.

In addition to providing an overland route to the cabin, the trail could be fed into the 16-mile Granite Tors Trail, Ludwig said, which would create a 40-mile trail.

New Trail Proposal In Non-Motorized portion of Chena River State Recreation Area Edit

Default Report + Add Report

Response Summary

Total Started Survey: 181
Total Completed Survey: 181 (100%)

PAGE: DEFAULT SECTION

1. Which trail option do you support?

Create Chart Download

	Response Percent	Response Count
Existing access is suitable (status quo / no change) 	8.1%	14
Build sustainable trail to Nugget Creek Cabin 	91.9%	169
answered question		173
skipped question		8

2. Under 11AAC 20.490 bicycles are only allowed in Chena River State Recreation Area in campgrounds and the following areas: 1.) Chena Dome Trail, 2.) picnic areas, and 3.) trails described as open to off-road vehicles. Do you support changing regulations to open the new trail to bicycles?

Create Chart Download

	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes, I support opening the trail to bicycles 	60.7%	108
No, I do not support changing the use in the area by opening the trail to bicycles. 	39.3%	70
answered question		178
skipped question		3

3. What is the principle type of access you would use on this trail? (CHOOSE ONE)

Create Chart Download

	Response Percent	Response Count
Dog Team 	4.4%	8
Skijor 	5.8%	10
Cross Country Ski 	18.1%	29
Snowshoe 	1.1%	2
Horse 	9.4%	17
Bicycle 	15.8%	28

SurveyMonkey - Survey Results

Hike		47.8%	88
		answered question	180
		skipped question	1

4. What other type(s) of access would you use on this trail?

Create Chart Download

	Response Percent	Response Count	
Dog team	9.8%	17	
Skijor	16.8%	29	
Cross Country Ski	50.3%	87	
Snowshoe	34.1%	59	
Horse	9.2%	16	
Bicycle	28.5%	51	
Hike	56.6%	98	
		answered question	173
		skipped question	8

5. Do you agree with Alaska State Parks Vision Statement?

Create Chart Download

	Response Percent	Response Count	
Agree	94.8%	164	
Disagree	5.8%	10	
		answered question	173
		skipped question	8

6. If you disagree with Alaska State Parks Vision Statement. Please tell us what you would like to see.

Download

	Response Count
Show replies	12
answered question	12
skipped question	169

7. Do you support a trail network with shelters in the non-motorized Tors unit?

Create Chart Download

	Response Percent	Response Count	
Yes I support a trail network with shelters.	94.8%	168	
No I do not support a trail network with shelters.	5.2%	9	
		answered question	174
		skipped question	7

SurveyMonkey - Survey Results

8. Please check the following age bracket that applies.

Create Chart Download

	Response Percent	Response Count
0 - 10	0.0%	0
10 - 20 <input type="checkbox"/>	1.7%	3
20 - 30 <input type="checkbox"/>	13.5%	24
30 - 40 <input type="checkbox"/>	18.5%	33
40 - 50 <input type="checkbox"/>	20.8%	37
50 - 60 <input type="checkbox"/>	32.0%	57
60 - + <input type="checkbox"/>	14.0%	25

answered question 178

skipped question 3

9. What is your gender?

Create Chart Download

	Response Percent	Response Count
Male <input type="checkbox"/>	50.0%	89
Female <input type="checkbox"/>	50.0%	89

answered question 178

skipped question 3

10. Do you live in the Fairbanks North Star Borough?

Create Chart Download

	Response Percent	Response Count
yes <input type="checkbox"/>	97.2%	174
no <input type="checkbox"/>	2.8%	5

answered question 179

skipped question 2

11. Are there any other comments / suggestions you'd like to make?

Download

	Response Count
Show replies	70
answered question	70
skipped question	111



In This Issue:
Alaska State Parks

Conservation + Recreation: December 2010

In 1970, the Alaska Department of Natural Resources established the [Division of Parks](#), the beginning of a network of protected lands that has grown to 3.2 million acres in 131 units. As this "System of

Dreams" has grown, many individuals have worked to improve and expand Alaska's outdoor recreation facilities. [Chena River State Recreation Area](#) is currently undergoing such an improvement.



Photo: Nugget Creek Cabin (NPS Photo)

Located east of Fairbanks, the Chena River State Recreation Area boasts 397 square miles of forests, rivers, and alpine tundra. More than 150,000

people camp, hike, kayak, canoe, and fish there every year. The park has trails for motorized and non-motorized vehicles, so a winter visitor is as likely to see a dog sled as a snow machine.

One under-utilized asset in the park is the [Nugget Creek Cabin](#), a cozy log cabin ideal for a getaway. To access the cabin, visitors must ford the Chena River and then negotiate 5½ miles of rugged, poorly marked trail. Park managers currently recommend that only hardy, experienced adventurers attempt the trip. With help from the National Park Service [Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program](#), that will change.



AK State Parks Field Crew (NPS Photo)

Planning is now underway for the new Mastodon Creek Trail to improve access to the cabin and other destinations. A preliminary route has been flagged for more than ten miles of trail that will tie into a 40-mile network of trails in the non-motorized portion of the park. The Mastodon Creek Trail, unlike its predecessor, will be constructed with an eye toward sustainability and

user-friendliness. It will avoid dangerous river crossings and provide easier navigation for hikers, horseback riders, and mountain bikers. The new trail will be constructed at a grade suitable for families and novice hikers.

Planners involved in the Mastodon Creek Trail project hope to see existing trails in the park improved to the same standard, ensuring sustainable construction and improving accessibility.



Fairbanks North Star Borough

809 Pioneer Road

P.O. Box 71267

Fairbanks, Alaska 99707-1267

907/459-1000

www.co.fairbanks.ak.us

November 9, 2010

State Trails Coordinator
Recreational Trails Grant Program
Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation
550 W 7th Ave., Suite 1380
Anchorage, AK. 99501-3561

Re: Mastodon Trail Grant Application - Letter of Support

To Whom It May Concern:

The Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB) Department of Parks and Recreation supports the Alaska State Parks, Northern Area, grant application for the construction of the new Mastodon Trail within the Chena River State Recreation Area.

The new Mastodon Trail will provide a safe alternative year-around access to a public use cabin area at Nugget Creek, giving recreational trail enthusiasts the opportunity to avoid a hazardous ice/open-water crossing of the Chena River system. The new Mastodon Trail will provide recreational trail enthusiasts the opportunity to enjoy activities such as mountain biking, skiing, horseback riding, hiking, and dog-mushing, to name a few.

The Chena River State Recreation Areas new Mastodon Trail will eventually link to an ever expanding network of popular recreational trails, and provide safety, health, and social value to visitors of the Chena River State Recreation Area. The FNSB Department of Parks and Recreation urges your support of this grant application.

Sincerely,


Thomas E. Hancock, Jr., Trails Coordinator
Department of Parks and Recreation
Fairbanks North Star Borough

Cc: Brooks Ludwig, Park Superintendent, Northern Area: Alaska State Parks

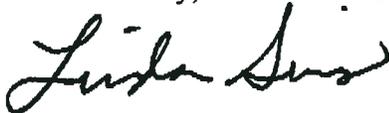
INTERIOR ALASKA TRAIL
RIDERS ASSOCIATION
ESTABLISHED 1967

Mr. Brooks Ludwig
Park Superintendent
Northern Area Alaska State Parks
3700 Airport Way
Fairbanks, Alaska. 99709

The Interior Alaska Trail Riders Association, an equestrian group, would like to express our support for the proposed Mastodon Trail. A 10.5 mile non-motorized trail to the Nugget Creek Cabin would be a great asset to our use of the Chena Hot Springs Recreational Area. Built as you described with a 4 foot tread and 8 to 10% grade will allow use by both novice riders and riders with a pack horse carrying supplies for an overnight stay at the cabin.

We thank you for your efforts in proposing this trail and look forward to riding it!

Sincerely,



Linda Sims

President



PO Box 84237
Fairbanks AK 99708
www.runningclubnorth.org

January 27, 2011

Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation
550 W 7th Ave, Suite 1380
Anchorage AK 99501-3561

To Whom It May Concern:

Running Club North is an organization that enthusiastically supports new and existing trails in interior Alaska. Our group would favor the development of a new trail identified as the Mastodon Creek Trail in the Chena River Recreation Area.

We currently run on other trails in the area, such as Granite Tors and Angel Rocks, that are very challenging and enjoyable. A new trail would open up a new area for our club members and other runners from around the country and the world.

There is no doubt that this new trail would enhance the recreation area tremendously. And we support project and hope for its development.

Sincerely,

Bob Vitale

Bob Vitale
President
Running Club North



INTERIOR TRAILS PRESERVATION COALITION

ITPC

Tuesday, November 9, 2010

To Whom It May Concern:

The Interior Trails Preservation Coalition supports the efforts of the Northern Area office of Alaska State Parks and Recreation to obtain grants for the Mastodon and Stiles Creek Extension trails in the Chena River State Recreation Area. The ITPC is happy to see these projects being addressed.

Mastodon Trail

A lot of interior Alaska trail users are already anticipating construction of Mastodon Trail. Many years have passed since a new non-motorized trail has been built in the recreation area. The location selected for this trail is excellent. It will give trail users year-round access to Nugget Creek Public Use Cabin with another cabin being planned elsewhere along the non-motorized trail system. The new trail will also eventually provide access to the popular Granite Tors Trail, giving non-motorized trail users more trip options. And while non-motorized trails in the recreation area are primarily for foot traffic, this new trail will be built to accommodate a wide variety of non-motorized users, including mushers, mountain bikers, and horseback riders.

Stiles Creek Extension Trail

The planned improvements to the Stiles Creek Extension Trail are an excellent idea. The current trail is wet down low and steep on its climb up the hill. The Stiles Creek Trail is already tremendously popular with many types of trail users, and improvements to that trail have been extremely well received. Improving the extension trail will make it usable for a broader range of trail users as well as give trail users of all types more options for trips. The Stiles Creek Extension Trail has also been identified as a site for a possible public use cabin. Such a cabin, along with the trail improvements, would allow another overnight option for trail users.

The Chena River State Recreation Area is already a tremendous asset to the Interior's residents and visitors. It enhances quality of life by adding to the outdoor recreational opportunities and increases tourism by offering an attractive destination. These trail improvements will make the area even more attractive.

Sincerely,

Eric Troyer
Vice President

ITPC

P.O. Box 74263, Fairbanks, AK 99707

Phone: (907) 458-7968

The logo for Alaska Trails, featuring the words "ALASKA" and "TRAILS" stacked vertically in a stylized, hand-drawn font. The letters are filled with a pattern of small dots and lines, giving it a textured, outdoor feel. The logo is positioned on the right side of a decorative horizontal band that spans the width of the page. This band consists of several parallel lines in shades of blue and green, with small black dots scattered throughout, resembling a trail or a natural landscape.

9 November 2010

Bill Luck, State Trails Coordinator
Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation
550 W 7th Ave, Suite 1380
Anchorage AK 99501-3561

Dear Mr. Luck,

Alaska Trails, a statewide trails education and advocacy nonprofit, supports the two grant applications by the Northern Area of Alaska State Parks: Mastodon Trail and the Stiles Creek Extension projects.

State Parks has invested a considerable amount of time and effort in the conceptual development of the Mastodon Trail. They have held public scoping sessions, formed partnerships with the NPS Rivers, Trails, Conservation Assistance program, and determined a preliminary trail corridor. The construction of 10.5 miles of non-motorized/multi-use trail in this area of the Chena River State Recreation Area (CRSRA) will have the added benefit of linking to adjacent trails and makes good use the existing recreational potential.

The Stiles-Colorado Creek Trail is an extremely popular recreational trail system in the CRSRA and the hardening and re-alignment of the Stiles Creek Extension is a well deserved project. This maintenance project will transform a very marginal 4.5 trail into a sustainable curvilinear route that will attract both motorized and non-motorized recreational users. It also links to adjacent trails and makes good use of the existing recreational potential.

Both these projects propose using sustainable trail design principles that will leverage the funds spent. Alaska Trails strongly supports the Northern Area of Alaska State Parks grant request for the Mastodon Trail and Stiles Creek Extension projects.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G. Orth". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional but personal style.

Geoffrey Orth, Board President

Enhancing the Alaska trail experience by supporting sustainable, world-renowned trails through advocacy and education

P.O. Box 100627 Anchorage, AK 99510 Ph: 907-334-8049 Email: office@alaska-trails.org
www.alaska-trails.org



Northern Area Alaska State Parks Citizen Advisory Board

3700 Airport Way Fairbanks, Alaska 99709-4609 (907) 451-2695

October 19, 2010

Recreational Trails Grant Program
Division of Parks & Outdoor Recreation
550 W 7th Ave., Suite 1380
Anchorage, AK. 99501-3561

To Whom It May Concern:

The Chena River State Recreation Area has seen a substantial increase in visitor days in recent years. Increased energy costs have led to many people participating in their recreation endeavors close to home. The Chena River State Recreation Area serves as an area where Alaskans can participate in a wide variety of recreational opportunities and still be relatively close to home. Also, this recreation area is a destination where visitors to the state can experience the boreal forest and the wildlife that exist in this unique environment.

Many of the existing trails within the recreation area were never designed to sustainably support multiple types of recreational uses. Some of the trails were originally constructed by miners who were trying to gain access to their claims. These trails are not sustainable and some are degrading to the point where they pose significant safety issues. Also, because of the increased number of visitor days, new areas need to be developed to accommodate more users. This will spread out the use so individual areas do not see as much impact.

The Northern Area of the Alaska State Parks has worked to accommodate the increased use of the recreation area by planning for extensions of existing trails and development of new ones. They have prioritized the areas that are in need of attention and identified the most important for the recreation area. The Stiles Creek Extension Re-Route and the Mastodon Trail are ranked among the highest priority projects that meet the needs of the recreation area and the users.

The Citizen Advisory Board (CAB) of the Northern Area Alaska State Parks supports these projects. The CAB also identified them as two of the most important projects to continue to serve the needs of the recreational user. These projects will open up new areas for non-motorized users as well as improve trail conditions and safety for multiple-use trail users. The CAB hopes that the Recreational Trails Grant Program will look favorably on these two worthy endeavors when deciding on what projects to grant funding to.

Sincerely,

Jim Williams
Chairman Northern Area Citizens Advisory Board



711 Sheep Creek Road
Fairbanks AK 99709
907-455-7148

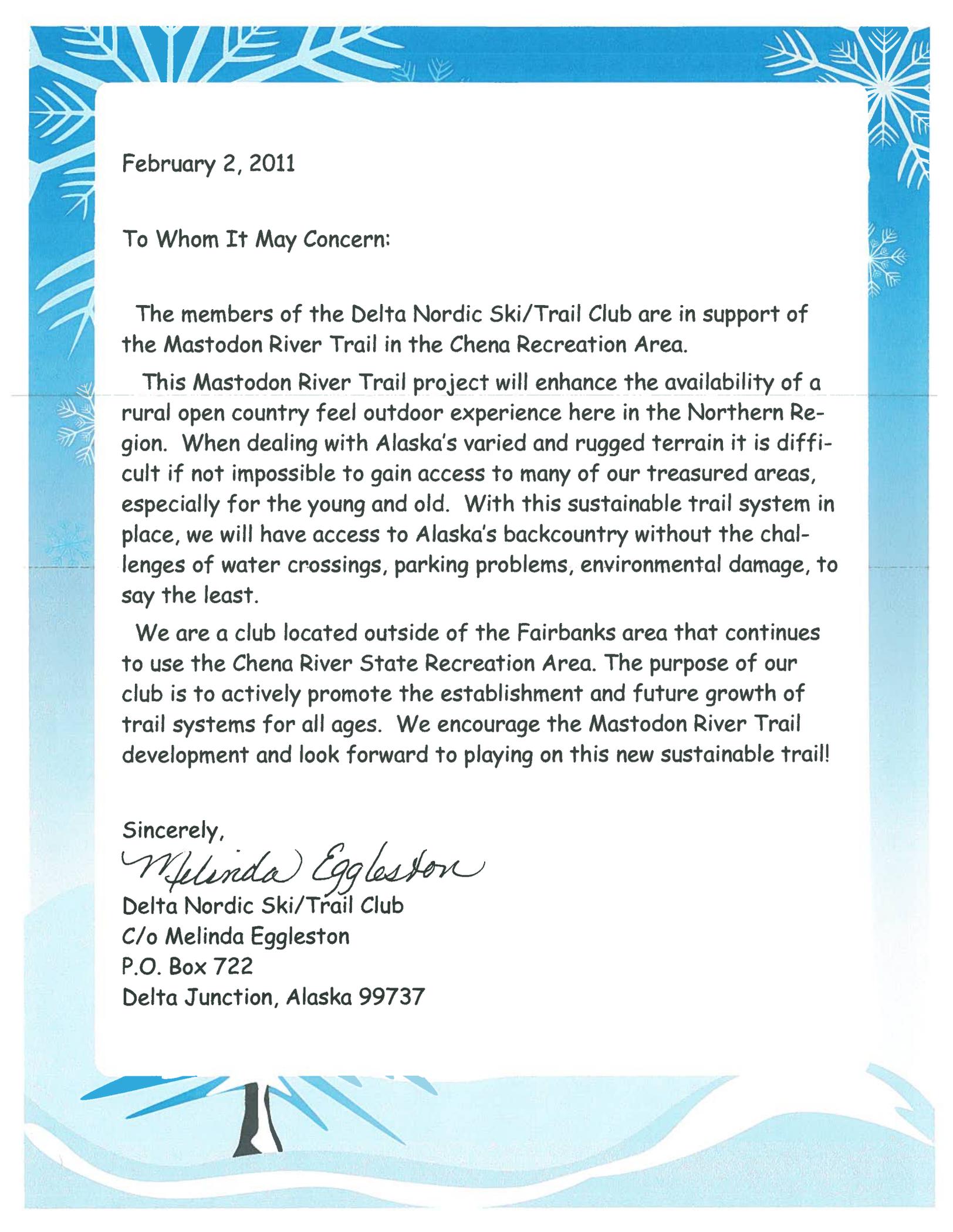
I would like to voice my support of the Mastodon Trail. This new trail will provide great, safe summer and winter access to the existing public use cabin and aligns nicely with future trail development in the area. These trails provide great opportunities for outdoor recreation that benefits the public. Getting people outside is great for their mental and physical health in a society that is increasingly sedentary.

Funding is critical to be able to properly design and construct trails to last. Many of the older poorly designed trails erode away. We need to move forward with properly designed trails like the Mastodon trail that are built to last.

My business depends on availability of trails like this to stimulate more people to ride and ski more often. This in turn allows me to employ more people and continue to support trail development.

Joel Buth

Owner of Goldstream Sports



February 2, 2011

To Whom It May Concern:

The members of the Delta Nordic Ski/Trail Club are in support of the Mastodon River Trail in the Chena Recreation Area.

This Mastodon River Trail project will enhance the availability of a rural open country feel outdoor experience here in the Northern Region. When dealing with Alaska's varied and rugged terrain it is difficult if not impossible to gain access to many of our treasured areas, especially for the young and old. With this sustainable trail system in place, we will have access to Alaska's backcountry without the challenges of water crossings, parking problems, environmental damage, to say the least.

We are a club located outside of the Fairbanks area that continues to use the Chena River State Recreation Area. The purpose of our club is to actively promote the establishment and future growth of trail systems for all ages. We encourage the Mastodon River Trail development and look forward to playing on this new sustainable trail!

Sincerely,

Melinda Eggleston

Delta Nordic Ski/Trail Club

C/o Melinda Eggleston

P.O. Box 722

Delta Junction, Alaska 99737





FAIRBANKS PADDLERS

BOX 83329
FAIRBANKS, AK 99708



February 4, 2011

Recreational Trails Grant Program
Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation
550 West 7th Ave., Suite 1380
Anchorage, AK 99501-3561

To Whom it May Concern:

Fairbanks Paddlers is a Fairbanks, Alaska-based organization dedicated to promoting safe enjoyment of Alaska's waters by non-motorized watercraft, conserving the quality of Alaskan waters and adjoining lands, and protecting and enhancing access for paddling.

Fairbanks Paddlers supports the proposed construction of the sustainably-aligned Mastodon Creek Trail within the non-motorized portion of the Chena River State Recreation Area. This trail will substantially enhance the trail system in this popular recreation area by linking in to existing trails and providing year-round access to the Nugget Creek public use cabin. The trail will also provide access to the South Fork of the Chena River at the Nugget Creek cabin, several miles upstream of the confluence with the main stem of the Chena River. This will make it possible for floaters to access this previously little-used but navigable branch of the Chena River with small, packable watercraft.

We applaud the efforts of the many volunteers and State Parks' staff who are working to enhance recreational opportunities and trail sustainability in the Chena River State Recreation Area. We urge your support for Alaska State Parks' grant application for sustainable development of the Mastodon Creek Trail. We also look forward to contributing the volunteer efforts of some of our members in future trail improvement and maintenance projects.

Sincerely,

Mary Pagel
President, Fairbanks Paddlers

Ludwig, Brooks A (DNR)

From: Mike Kramer [mkramer@bnblaw.com]
Sent: Monday, October 25, 2010 9:46 AM
To: Ludwig, Brooks A (DNR)
Subject: Letter of Support for Chena Rec Area trail projects

Brooks, As an avid trail user, I support expansion of the trail system in the Chena Rec Area. I understand the Mastodon Creek Trail and the Stiles Creek extension are two projects that are currently in need of grant money to move forward.

These projects would improve the trail network for both motorized and non motorized users. Making more loops and interconnected trails greatly facilitate multi day trip options and will help ensure the public use cabins are utilized more often.

I encourage State Parks to continue its efforts to improve this trail network.

Michael C. Kramer

Borgeson & Burns
Key Bank Center
100 Cushman St. Suite 300
Fairbanks, Alaska, 99701
(907) 452-1666
mkramer@bnblaw.com