



VALDEZ COMMUNITY MASTER TRAIL PLAN
of Existing and Proposed Trails
created by Valdez Adventure Alliance

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ABOUT THIS TRAILS PLAN

This plan was developed by the Valdez Adventure Alliance over the span of 2016-2019, with input from State of Alaska, BLM, City of Valdez, and other land managers, key stakeholders, and community members. The plan covers the existing trail system in the Valdez area to the best of our knowledge at that time. Additionally, we have included information on trails that were proposed by community members. This plan is not meant to be an “authority” on the trails nor guarantee accuracy on every detail contained herein. It is meant to: be used as a general reference for interested community members; provide background and information that can be used as a starting point for those wishing to pursue more information on a specific trail or topic; convey suggested upgrades for existing trails; introduce possible new trails; keep the importance of trails to the Valdez community in the forefront; and provide a common reference for discussions regarding the trails. We hope this information can be useful for these purposes.

This plan contains two parts: the conditions of existing trails in 2016, and new trails that were proposed by community members.

Most of the existing condition was taken from a previous Valdez Parks & Recreation Master Plan and updated during a field visit in the summer of 2016. A version without the maps of this document was provided to the Valdez Parks & Recreation Department in the Spring of 2019, after some of their computer-stored documents could not be recovered.

Proposed trails were derived from multiple community meetings. The trail committee took the 41 trails suggested at these meetings and developed 16 new proposals. They were ranked based on the following criteria.

- Public interest in the trail
- Potential quality of experience provided by the trail
- Connections to other trails or loop potential
- Feasibility of construction and continued maintenance
- Potential impact to resources (both lack of negative and potential for positive)
- Opportunities for diverse recreation

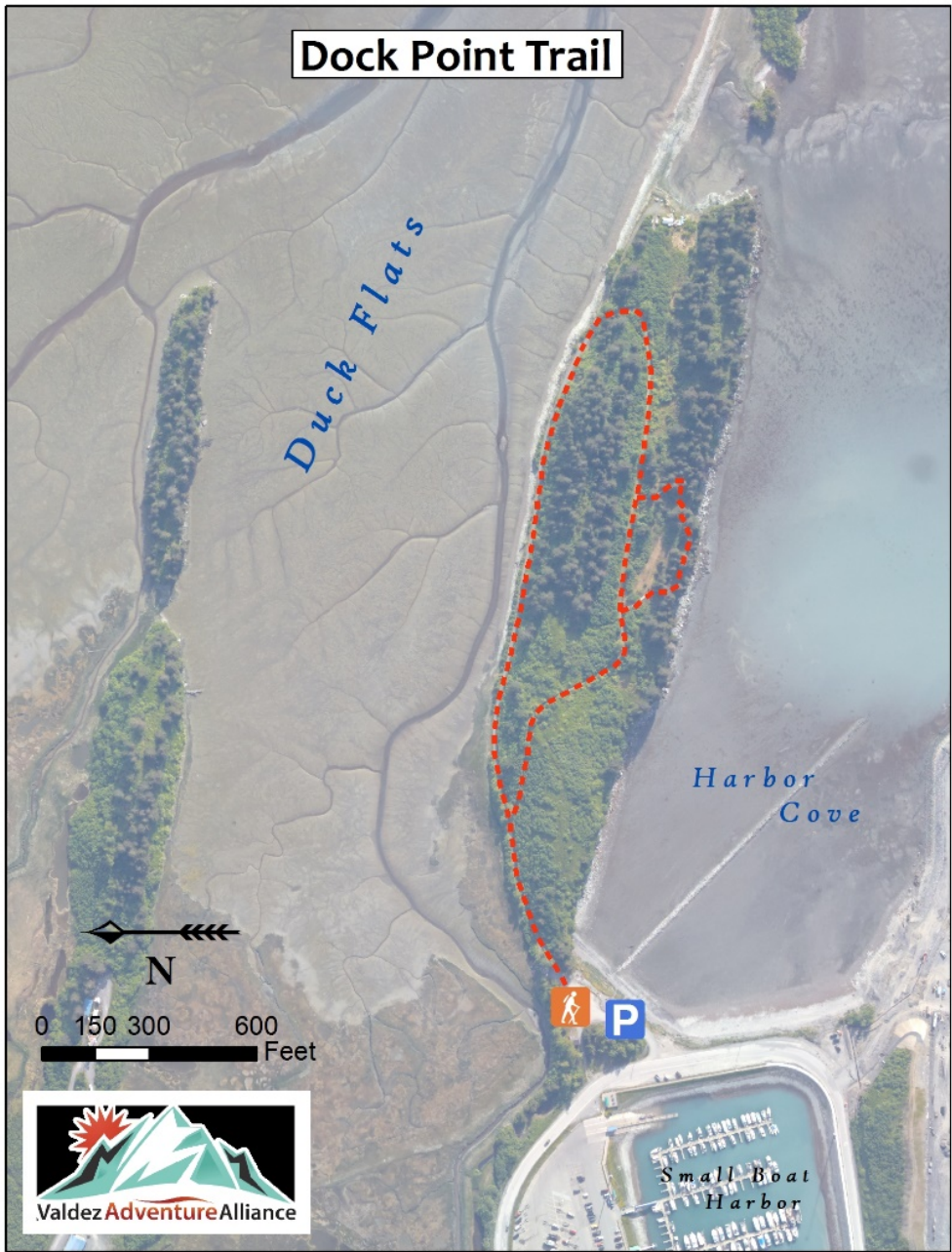
It is not the intent of Valdez Adventure Alliance to imply that any of the proposed trails will, or should, be constructed. We are simply providing a product that was synthesized from community input. We hope land managers will share any issues or concerns they have about trails that may be proposed on their property, but we also welcome their comments on any of the trails in this plan.

Valdez Adventure Alliance

Existing Trail System

In-Town Trails

Dock Point Trail



Dock Point Trail

Trail Length: 0.80 mile gps

Trail Beginning: Dock point parking lot

Trail End: Loops back to beginning

Trail Type/ Class: Hiker/pedestrian/ Class 4

Current Use: Hiker/ pedestrian, fatbikes

Prohibited Use: All motorized, camping

Land Ownership: City of Valdez

Trailhead Facilities: Shelter, restrooms, 2 BBQ grills, beach, gate, City-serviced dumpsters

On-Trail Facilities: Interpretive signs, 2 viewing platforms, benches, boardwalk,

Trail History: The City received an Exxon Valdez Marine Recreation Grant to construct a trail and parking/ beach improvements in 1997. A restroom was completed in 1998. Interpretive signs were installed in 2000 and a picnic shelter was added in 2001.

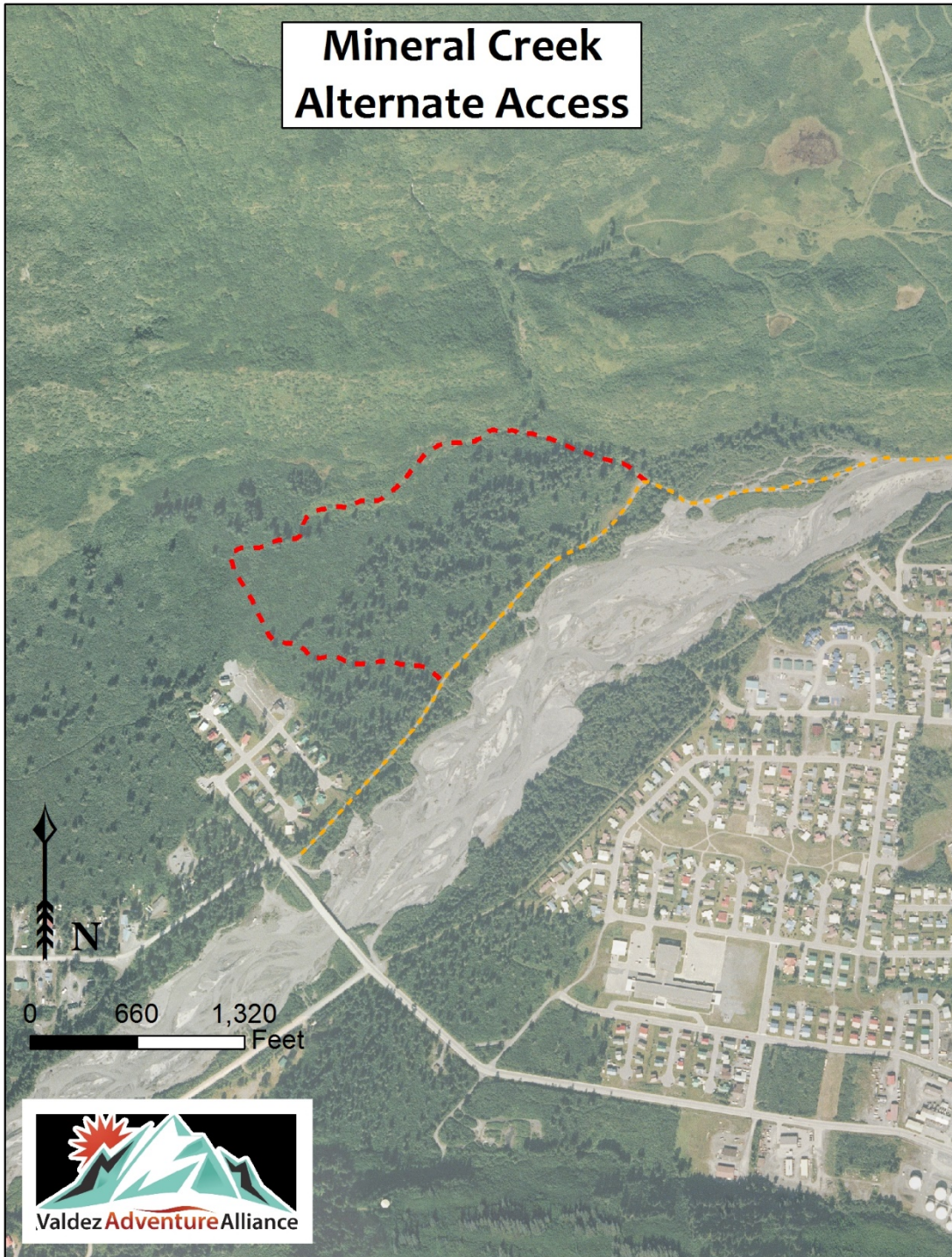
Trail Narrative: The trail has two overlook sites and has a nature trail feel to it. Despite its proximity to town and short length, the trail provides an excellent opportunity to experience natural beauty and quiet. The interpretive signs, gates, boardwalk, viewing platforms, and most of the tread are all in excellent condition. The trail requires some regular brushing back of cow parsnip and other plants which can be accomplished with small tools. The trail and parking lots are not maintained for winter use. There have been some concerns with drinking/"partying" on the trail overlooks and at the trailhead.

Summer Use: Hiking, Bonfires and Barbecues. Extremely popular with residents and visitors.

Winter Use: It is not designed for grooming or other motorized maintenance, although occasionally portions of it are groomed. While winter use can be difficult because of its maritime location, it does get winter use and can be good for snowshoeing.

Future Development: There are some issues on the small second loop where the viewing platforms are located. There are signs of erosion and exposed roots where there is no boardwalk. Possible mitigation includes filling the area and extending the boardwalk over the exposed areas. Vegetation in the meadow section of the trail needs to be consistently brushed back, especially cow parsnip which causes skin irritation.

Mineral Creek Alternate Access



Mineral Creek Alternate Access

Trail Length: 0.92 mi gps

Trail Beginning: Mineral Creek West Dike

Trail End: Mineral Creek West Dike

Trail Type/ Class: Standard Terra

Current Use: All Motorized, fatbikes

Prohibited Use: Non-motorized (although this is not observed)

Land Ownership: City of Valdez

Trailhead Facilities: None

On-Trail Facilities: None

Trail History: In 2000 the Parks & Recreation Department applied for and received a Trails and Recreational Access for Alaskans (TRAAK) grant to construct a new access trail into the Mineral Creek Valley. Work on the route was completed in 2001.

According to Valdez Parks & Recreation Master Plan, "This trail requires a good deal of snow to allow it to be groomed. The trail was groomed for the first time in February of 2002. In 2003 the alternate access could not be opened due to unfavorable weather and snow conditions. A plan has been established to close the traditional route to motorized traffic when the alternate access is opened. "The Valdez Parks & Recreation Master Plan states this trail is open to motorized traffic only. However, is used by non-motorized as well. According to the Valdez Parks & Recreation Master Plan, "The trail was not intended to be used in the summer, but it shows signs of receiving foot traffic and an unofficial path has been established through the most undeveloped section."

Trail Narrative: There are several muddy spots throughout the trail, the northwest part of the trail goes through an anadromous stream. The bank has eroded away causing the stream to be wider at this point. On the north section are large mud holes, forcing several braided trail segments to start. The south, and most of the north part of the trail are located on low flat land. There are also at least one jump and multiple steep hill sections that are hazardous to ATV traffic.

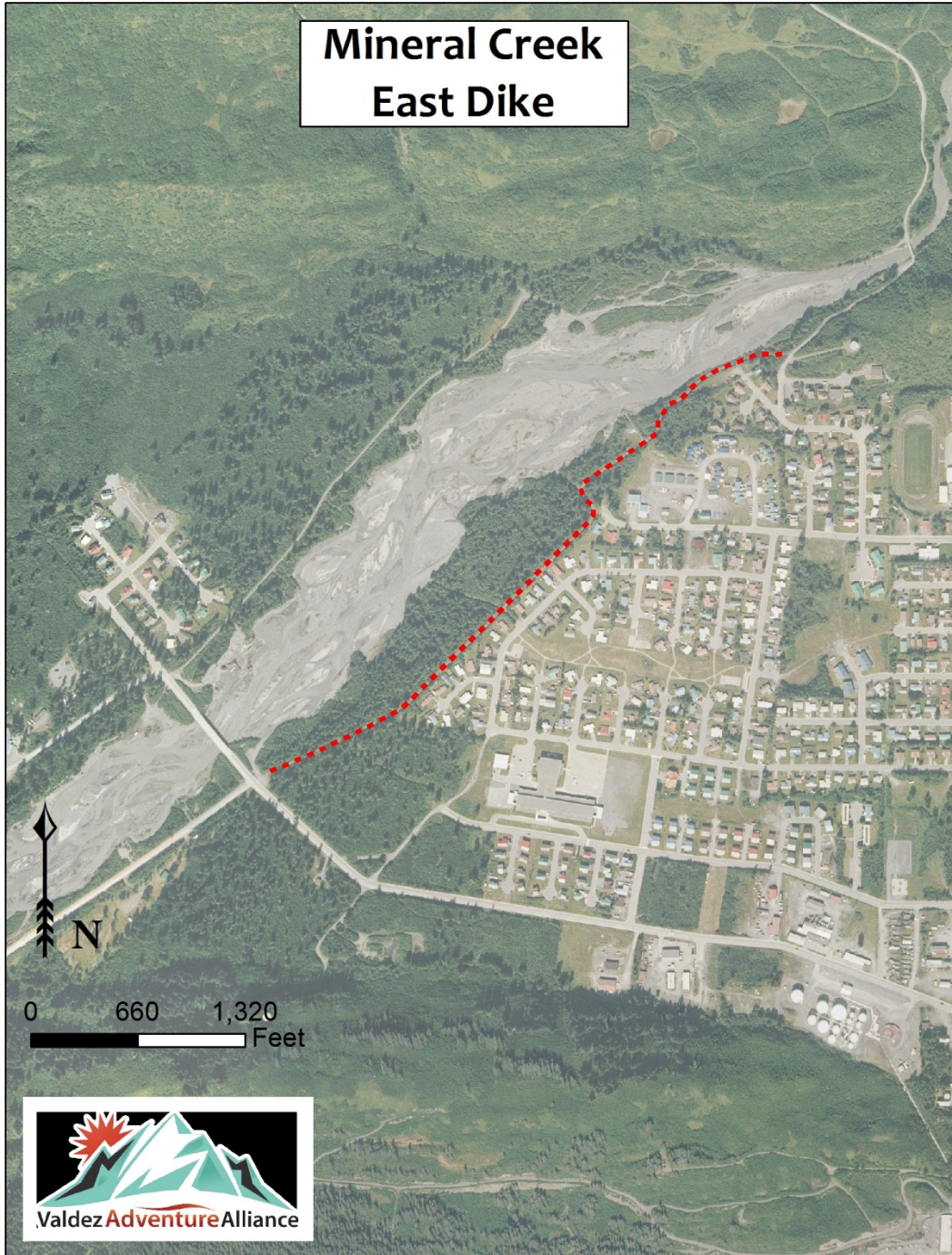
Winter Use: This trail is meant to be used as an access point to the Mineral Creek Valley for snowmachines, in order to minimize conflicts between snowmachines and non-motorized users. Snow conditions do not always permit opening the trail. There is a management directive to open and close the trail as conditions permit.

Summer Use: Trail was not intended for summer use, although it is used informally. ATV use of the trail should be discouraged due to existence of anadromous stream on the route and ATV hazards. Valdez Parks & Recreation Master Plan states developing the trail for non-motorized summer use in the future would extend hiking opportunities.

Future Development: Valdez Parks & Recreation Master Plan was cautionary about this trail and predicted there would be issues with it. This trail has three major issues:

1. The trail goes through an anadromous stream and has made visible negative impacts on the stream.
2. The trail runs through low ground making it susceptible to water and will continue to become a mud bog with braids in sections.
3. The trail contains sections that are hazardous for ATVs. The best mitigation for this trail is to close it to all motorized summer use and make it a seasonal winter multi-use trail.

Mineral Creek East Dike



Mineral Creek East Dike

Trail Length: .84 miles gps

Trail Beginning: Egan Drive

Trail End: Mineral Creek Road

Trail Type/ Class: Terra Standard/ Class 3

Current Use: Multiple use non-motorized

Prohibited Use: Motorized

Land Ownership: City of Valdez

Trailhead Facilities: Gate and parking

On-Trail Facilities: None

Trail History: This is a long-established trail.

Summer Use: This unimproved route provides a pleasant hiking/walking and mountain biking trail in the summer.

Winter Use: The East Dike is groomed as a multiple use area for non-motorized activities.

Skiers, skijorers, dog sledgers, snowshoers and walkers have all traditionally made use of this trail. By connecting to Mineral Creek Road, it allows residents along the trail corridor to access the larger Mineral Creek trail system without traveling on the road system.

Trail Narrative: This trail runs along the east side of Mineral Creek from West Egan Drive to the water tower hill thus passing behind the Black Gold and Mineral Creek subdivisions.

Motorized vehicles are not permitted on this trail.

The two track trail starts at Egan Drive with multiple access points on the east side from local neighborhoods and access points to the water on the west side. The trail makes good use of large wood barricades on the ground. There are several regulatory signs throughout.

Summer Use: This unimproved route provides a pleasant hiking/ walking and mountain biking trail in the summer.

Winter Use: The East Dike is groomed as a multiple use area for non-motorized activities.

Skiers, skijorers, dog sledgers, snowshoers and walkers have all traditionally made use of this trail. By connecting to Mineral Creek Road, it allows residents along the trail corridor to access the larger Mineral Creek trail system without traveling on the road system.

Future Development: Recommend continuing brushing efforts and minor filling of potholes and resurfacing with gravel.

Mineral Creek West Dike



Mineral Creek West Dike

Trail Length: 1.09 mi gps

Trail Beginning: Egan Drive

Trail End: Mineral Creek Road

Trail Type/ Class: Terra Standard/ Class 3

Current Use: Summer and winter multiple use

Prohibited Use: None known

Land Ownership: City of Valdez

Trailhead Facilities: Gate

On-Trail Facilities: None

Trail History: This is a long-established trail.

Trail Narrative: This trail runs along the west side of Mineral Creek from West Egan Drive to the Mineral Creek Bridge thus passing behind the Cottonwood Subdivision. Depending on river flow the northern end of the trail may not be passable at times. ATVs and snowmachines are permitted on this trail.

The trail is a straight two track that is in good shape, there are minimal water issues on this trail. There are several water access points on the east side of the trail. This trail is also access for the Mineral Creek Alternate Access Trail. The trail ends by crossing a shallow section of Mineral Creek.

Summer Use: This unimproved route provides a pleasant hiking/walking and mountain biking trail in the summer as well as a point of access for ATVs traveling along the river bed or into Mineral Creek canyon.

Winter Use: The West Dike is groomed as a multiple use trail for both motorized and non-motorized activities.

Future Development: If the Mineral Creek Alternate Access Trail is closed seasonally, it may be necessary to install a gate at the point of access from this trail. A potential improvement for summer use would be to install rip-rap on the west side of mineral creek below the mouth of the canyon to allow use during high water

Meadow Ski Trails (Otter & Knoll Trails)



Meadow Ski Trails (Otter and Knoll Trails)

Trail Length: 1.02 miles gps

Trail Beginning: Mineral Creek Road

Trail End: Mineral Creek Road

Trail Type/ Class: Winter Trail/ Class 3

Current Use: Nordic Skiing

Prohibited Use: All other use besides skiing

Land Ownership: University of Alaska- Will be taken over by City of Valdez

Trailhead Facilities: Parking, gate, signage

On-Trail Facilities: None

Trail History: Until 1993, the trail was used by trucks and 4-wheelers, as well as limited use by bicyclers and hikers. The damage to the vegetation caused by the motorized vehicles resulted in the City prohibiting that use beginning in 1993. The trail is extremely wet in the summer, which makes it undesirable for summer hiking. The City applied for, and received, a Recreational Trail Grant to improve the trails on the south side for hiking, walking and bicycling, and to construct a motorized trail approximately 1/2 mile south of the site, in an area not as susceptible to damage. The City completed the work on the trails in 1995, but motorized vehicles have continued to access the area and damage the trail bed.

In March of 2018 the City of Valdez announced that it intends to purchase this land from the University of Alaska.

Trail Narrative: This component of the trail system consists of approximately 2 miles of trails on the north and south side of Mineral Creek Road, approximately 1/2 mile west of the Mineral Creek Bridge. The trail is currently in good shape for its intended use Nordic skiing. There are some muddy spots and evidence of motorized use on some of the lower trail segments.

Summer Use: Prohibited, although violators exist.

Winter Use: These trails are groomed daily and are used for cross-country skiing only. A biathlon range, which was located at the western end of these trails was removed in 2002 to allow for safe crossing of the newly created alternate access.

Future Development: Further deterrents may be needed to stop motorized traffic from using the trail.

Mineral Creek State Park Trail (also known as Homestead Trail)



Mineral Creek State Park Trail (also known as Homestead Trail)

Trail Length: 3,260 ft.

Trail Beginning: Homestead Road

Trail End: Port Valdez

Trail Type/ Class: Terra Standard/ Class 3

Current Use: Hiker/ Pedestrian, Fatbike

Prohibited Use: All Motorized

Land Ownership: State of Alaska

Trailhead Facilities: Parking, gate, interpretive signage

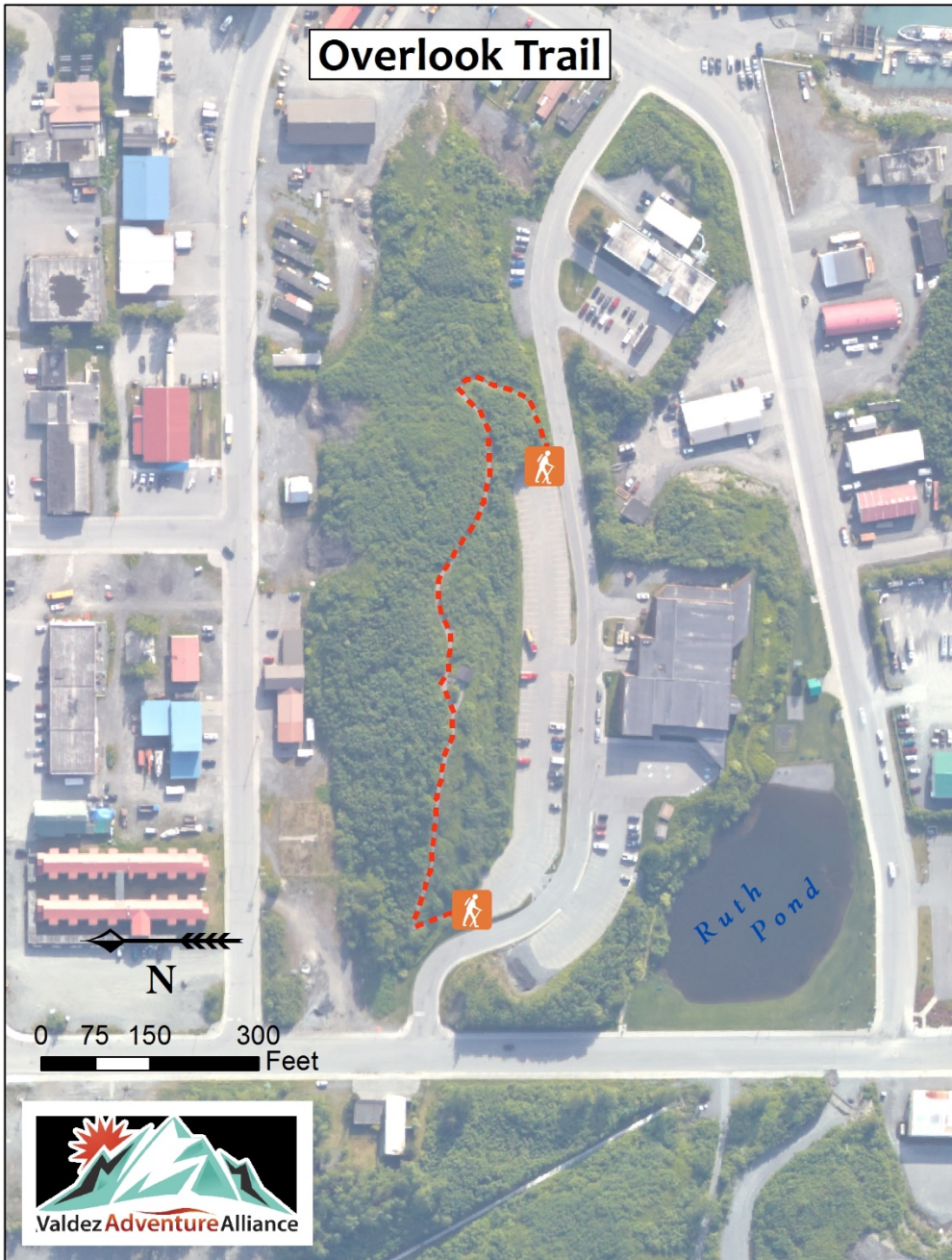
On-Trail Facilities: Bench at end

Trail History: This trail provides access to West Mineral Creek State Park. This area is comprised of the 92 acre "Blondeau Property" and 50 acres that were donated by the City of Valdez. The "Blondeau Property" was purchased by the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council Habitat Protection Program in 1999 from Wayne Blondeau, with strong support from the City of Valdez. The area is valued for its high-quality habitat, and for the beach access it provides to local residents. Alaska State Parks surveyed local residents about their usage preferences for this area in 2002.

Trail Narrative: The trail is an old two track about eight feet wide with gravel. There is a reroute a short distance in that may have been done to keep it from flooding, the old route is still there and accessible. The newer route has the potential to be impacted by changes in the river. There are a few informal trails going to the north to access Mineral Creek. The trail remains gravel till the end where there is a bench and excellent views of Port Valdez.

Future Development: This trail is in excellent condition, minimizing informal trails and keeping the trail brushed are the main concerns. Rip-rap could potentially be installed to prevent erosion and damage from Mineral Creek.

Overlook Trail



Overlook Trail

Trail Length: 1,132 ft. gps

Trail Beginning: Parking lot north of Clifton Court

Trail End: Parking lot north of Clifton Court

Trail Type/ Class: Terra/ Class 4

Current Use: Hiker/ Pedestrian

Prohibited Use: All motorized

Land Ownership: City of Valdez

Trailhead Facilities: Trailhead sign, interpretive sign

On-Trail Facilities: Shelter and picnic table

Trail History: The stairs were repaired in 1991 and a new hand rail was installed in 1996.

Trail Narrative: The trail starts with a short climb up well-built stairs with a handrail. The trail is gravel throughout. The short trail goes to a small shelter with a picnic table that has a good view of the city and the dock.

Future Development: This area could be expanded to provide a trail that connects people from the ferry to the downtown area with some reroutes on the east end.

Shoup Bay Trail



Shoup Bay Trail Gold Creek to Cabins



Shoup Bay Trail

Trail Length: 9.5 miles

Trail Beginning: End of West Egan Drive

Trail End: Shoup Bay

Trail Type/ Class: Standard Terra Trail/ Class 3 initially, changing to Class 2

Current Use: Hiker/ Pedestrian

Prohibited Use: All motorized

Land Ownership: City of Valdez and State of Alaska

Trailhead Facilities: Parking lot, restroom, trailhead sign, interpretive sign (2002).

On-Trail Facilities: Camping amenities (pit toilet, fire ring and food cache) exist at Gold Creek, 3½ miles from the trailhead.

Cabins are available for rent at the end of the trail, in Shoup Bay.

Trail History: The Shoup Bay Trail was completed by Alaska State Parks in 1999. The trail connects Valdez with Shoup Bay State Park where 3 Recreational Use Cabins were constructed in 1997. Funding for this trail was provided by a Marine Recreation grant through Exxon Valdez Settlement monies.

As this trail runs straight through an alder hillside for many miles, it is extremely susceptible to becoming overgrown. As hikers sought to avoid the most overgrown sections of trail, the tread was impacted and it became unclear where the main trail truly lay. Hiking from Valdez to Shoup Bay became unfeasible for several years due to overgrowth and difficult wayfinding. Valdez Adventure Alliance undertook a clearing effort with a team of volunteers and paid staff that started in 2016. In June of 2017, the trail was re-opened.

Trail Narrative: The first mile of the trail is about 4 feet wide, straight and goes through some lowland areas. There are several muddy areas and other drainage issues. All the small bridges in this area need further inspection and at least two of them need to be replaced immediately. There is also two-plank boardwalk throughout the first mile that needs maintenance.

At about 1 ¼ mile in the trail narrows to about 1 ½ feet wide and starts to climb at about a 30% grade. The trail climbs for about 1 mile and then goes up and down for another ½ mile before it tops out at 337 feet. The trail tread has moved downhill along this stretch because of major brush pushing it downhill. At this point the trail descends at over 40% grade in some places and is difficult to pass in some areas. At about the 3 mile marker the trail levels out and connects to the Gold Creek Campsite Trail.

The trail continues from Gold Creek to Shoup Bay. The trail climbs to a high point above the old terminal moraine of Shoup Glacier with several steep sections on the way. It then descends, often steeply, to the rear portion of inner Shoup Bay. The glacier itself is not visible from the end of the trail.

Summer Use: This trail is used by hikers, runners, berry pickers, and campers. Several commercial operators bring kayakers into the area, who use some of the facilities such as restrooms in both the Gold Creek and Shoup Bay area. Kayakers on commercial trips hike closer to the glacier along informal routes that are not accessible from the Shoup Bay Trail. Private kayakers also utilize the Gold Creek facilities.

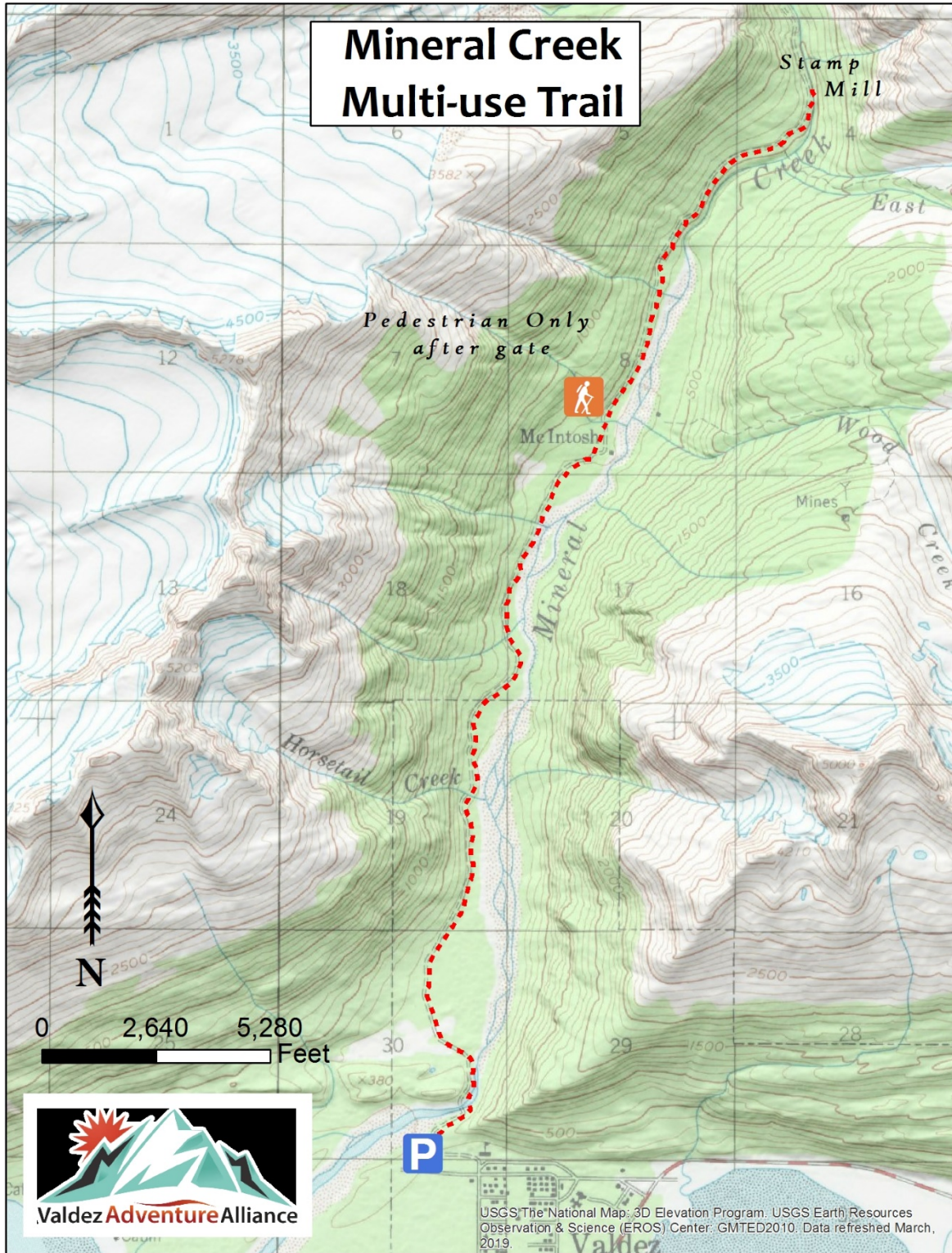
Winter Use: This trail cuts across many active avalanche paths, making it unsuitable for winter use.

Future Development: This trail will continue to require consistent brushwork to keep the alders at bay.

Recommendation to provide more fill for muddy areas during the first mile, consider turnpikes for especially muddy areas. There are two broken bridges that need to be replaced, and other bridges should be inspected.

Continuing trail work is needed to cut brush to re-establish the original trail bench cut on the middle portion that has been pushed down by brush. The travel corridor in this section still needs to be opened wider and the tread needs to be widened and improved. The descent portion of the trail needs a few reroutes or switchbacks; there are sections that are too steep. The view from below and topo maps show that there may be the possibility of a reroute that stays lower on the bench, taking out some of the steep sections. A wooden boardwalk could potentially be rerouted away from its current location in the estuary and moved to the parallel hillside.

Mineral Creek Road



Mineral Creek Multi-Use Trail

Trail Length: 5.5 miles

Trail Beginning: Mineral Creek Drive

Trail End: Stamp Mill at the End of the Road Trail

Type/ Class: Road

Current Use: Hiker, bicycles, fat bikes, all motorized, berry picking

Prohibited Use: None (At the extreme end of the road, there is a gate and access to the stamp mill itself is non-motorized)

Land Ownership: City of Valdez and State of Alaska

Trailhead Facilities: Parking

On-Trail Facilities: Pull-outs

Trail History: This road was originally an access road for mining facilities. It is now a popular area for all forms of recreation.

It is somewhat unusual to include a road in a trail system. However, the lack of long trails or trails that gain elevation in town makes this an essential running and bicycling route for users who seek to maintain mountain-ready fitness. The access provided to cars is also helpful for whitewater enthusiasts.

Trail Narrative: The dirt road begins at the end of Mineral Creek Drive and almost immediately crosses a large and substantial bridge. It then continues uphill through Mineral Creek valley, providing outstanding views of waterfalls along the way.

The road crosses many avalanche paths, and large piles of snowy debris persist along the road well into the summer. There are also several shallow stream crossings and sections with loose rock or eroded runnels.

Several pullouts provide opportunities for camping.

After about 5.2 miles, there is a gate. Beyond the gate there is a short trail to a historic Stamp Mill.

Summer Use: 4-Wheeling, camping, access to white water kayaking, jogging, and biking all occur on this trail.

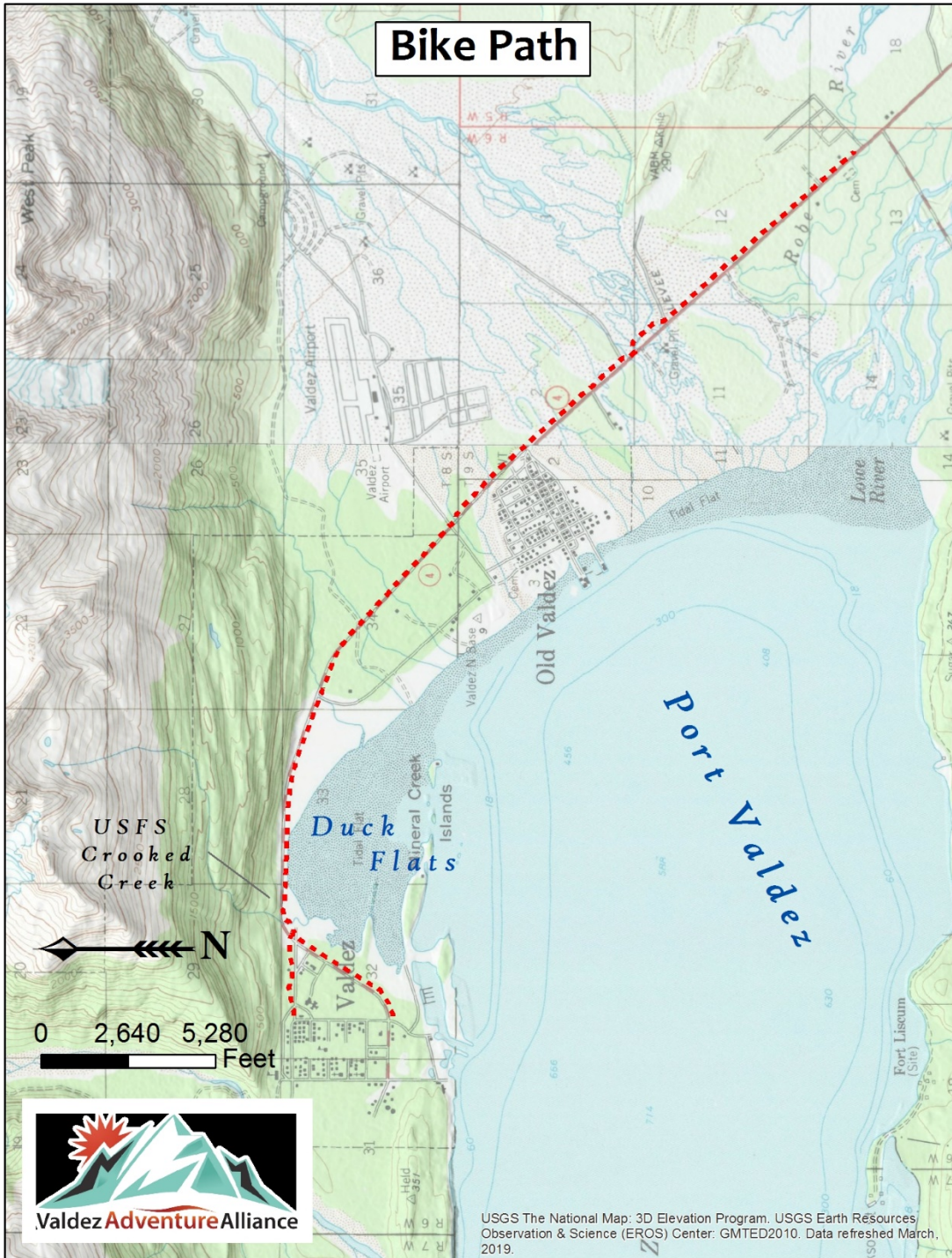
Winter Use: Access to ice climbs, snowmachining, cross country skiing, jogging. A section of the road is groomed for cross country skiing, which loops in with other cross country ski trails. This section is fairly short, as there is severe avalanche risk where the valley pinches in.

Future Development: Restroom facilities could make this area more sanitary, as it is used frequently for camping during the summer. These would need to be maintained, potentially by contract and with funds from an outside interest group. Historically, there were trash receptacles in the area which made dog waste disposal convenient. This has been discontinued. This could be reinstated, again by contract with outside partners.

Existing Trail System

Close-to-Town Trails

Bike Path



Bike Path

Trail Length: 4 miles estimated

Trail Beginning: Meals Avenue

Trail End: River Drive, Robe River Subdivision

Trail Type/ Class: Paved Bike Path/ Class 4

Current Use: Hiker/ pedestrian, bicycle, fat bikes, winter motorized use

Prohibited Use: Summer motorized use

Land Ownership: State of Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

Trailhead Facilities: Parking, trash, and restroom facilities close to the in-town trailhead.

On-Trail Facilities: None

Trail History: The main trail dates back to the late 1990's. A spur between the Crooked Creek pullout and Hanagita Street allows users coming from the high school area to bypass the busiest intersections in town. An additional spur was constructed in 2002 that begins at the intersection of the Richardson Highway and Airport Road.

Trail Narrative: This trail follows the Richardson Highway from Meals Avenue in downtown Valdez to River Drive in the Robe River Subdivision, with the aforementioned spurs. The trail provides access to a grassy park close to town, and also accesses a small wildlife viewing boardwalk at the Crooked Creek Visitor Center. Immediately out of town, the trail passes through migratory waterfowl habitat and provides excellent opportunities to view these animals. Black bear sightings are also common from the trail in the late spring and early summer. After passing through this area, the trail continues to follow right alongside the highway.

Summer Use: Wildlife viewing, commuting, walking, biking, jogging. There is no summer motorized use.

Winter use: Walking, Cross country skiing, snowmachining. The trail is groomed in sections for multiple uses in the winter.

Future Development: There is public and institutional support to expand this trail farther out of town, at least to Keystone Canyon. The pavement also needs continuing maintenance.

Crooked Creek Information Site



Crooked Creek Information Site

Trail Length: 371ft. gps

Trail Beginning: Crooked Creek Visitor Center Parking Lot

Trail End: Waterfall behind visitor center

Trail Type / Class: Pedestrian / Class 5

Current Use: Pedestrian only

Prohibited Use: All motorized and bicycles

Land Ownership: City of Valdez (USFS leases the information site building)

Trailhead Facilities: Parking and signage

On-Trail Facilities: Picnic table, waterfall, and viewing platform

Trail History: The log building opened in 2011 and replaced a trailer that served as a visitor information site since the late '90s.

Trail Narrative: The Crooked Creek Information Site is a small, 3-acre site that harbors a waterfall and a clear water stream where pink and chum salmon return each summer to spawn. Located at Mile .5 on the Richardson Highway, a spot known locally as the "salmon turnaround," the site is a popular and well-situated place to watch wildlife and spawning salmon. It is a common spot for black bear viewing.

Summer Use: Picnicking, wildlife viewing

Winter Use: None

Future Development: Possibility of future trails behind the visitor center.

John Hunter Memorial Trail (formerly Solomon Gulch Trail)



John Hunter Memorial (formerly Soloman Gulch) Trail

Trail Length: 1.9 miles

Trail Beginning: Large parking lot at mile 5.5 of Dayville Road

Trail End: Overlook of Solomon Lake Dam

Trail Type/ Class: Gravel Road

Current Use: Hiker, skiers, snowmachines, bicycles, fat bikes

Prohibited Use: Unknown

Land Ownership: State of Alaska

Trailhead Facilities: Parking, vault toilets at nearby Allison Point

On-Trail Facilities: Wayfinding signs

Trail History: The Copper Valley Electric Association, in conjunction with the Alaska Power Authority, maintains a trail from Dayville Road to Solomon Lake.

Trail Narrative: The trail follows the dam and pipeline access road infrastructure to the Solomon Gulch Dam. The trail is mostly gravel road, with some very loose gravel sections. One or two low points on the trail routinely become flooded during the summer.

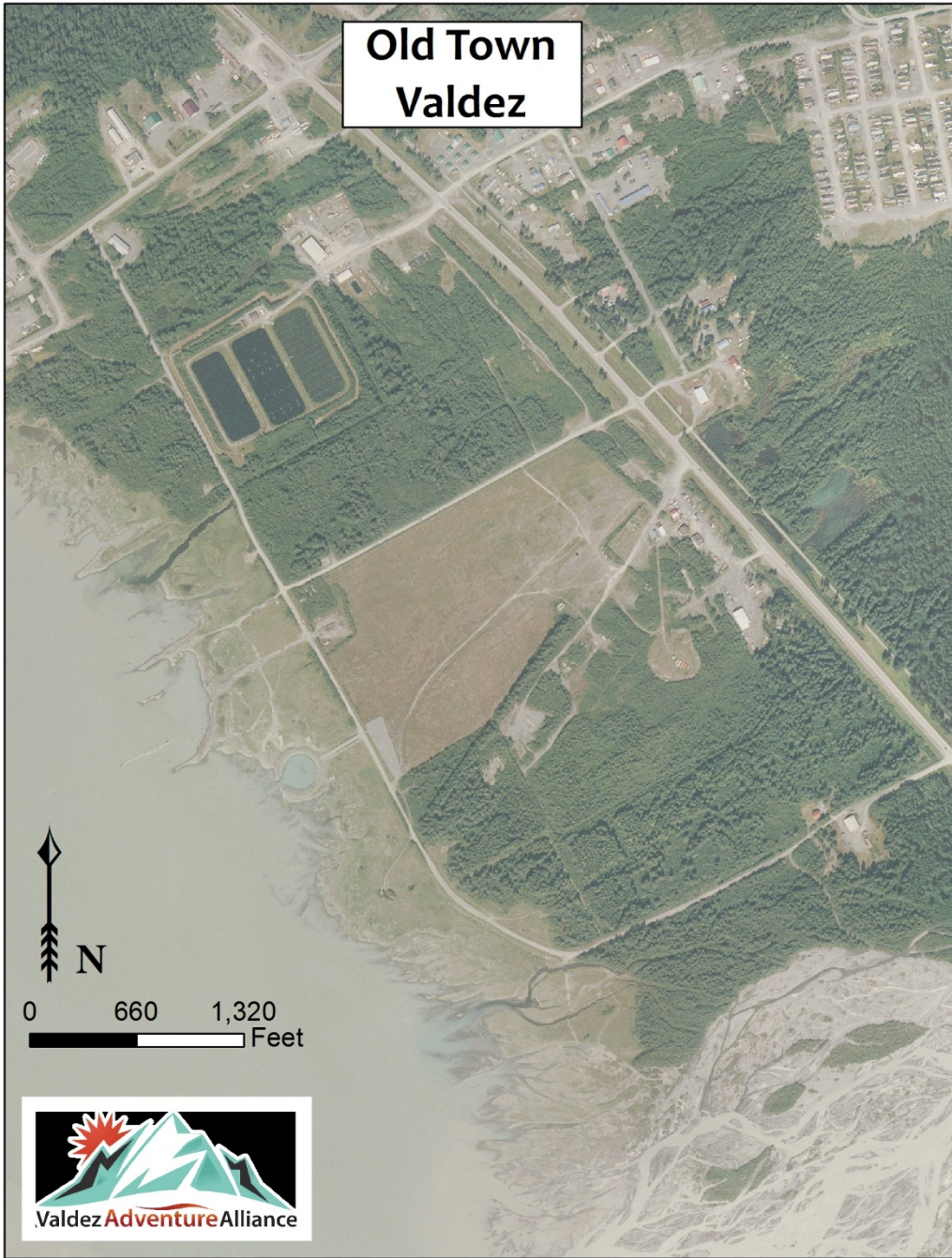
The trail begins with a few switchbacks through mature coastal forest before leveling out to a steadier uphill climb for approximately another $\frac{3}{4}$ mile. The trail then descends a steep hill to a bridge with a scenic view of Solomon Gulch. Soon after the bridge, the trail makes a right turn off of the main pipeline route. The trail then winds uphill to an overlook of Solomon Lake.

Summer Use: Hiking

Winter Use: Backcountry skiers use the beginning of this trail to access other terrain. Cat-ski operations have occasionally used this area as well. The trail is also used for snowmachining, fat biking, and cross-country skiing.

Future Development: The surrounding landscape has many areas that would lend themselves well to additional trails in this area. However, due to the trail's proximity to the Alyeska Pipeline Terminal there is some concern that security issues could limit future access to the area. Also, in the distant future if and when the pipeline itself becomes obsolete, TAPS will no longer maintain the pipeline-related infrastructure that provides access to much of this area.

Old Town Trails



Old Town Trails

Trail Length: Summer 1.7 miles

Trail Beginning: Alaska Avenue

Trail End: Old Town Valdez

Trail Type/ Class: Dirt Roads/Groomed Trail/Beach

Current Use: Hiker/ pedestrian, bicycles, fatbikes, cross country skiers

Prohibited Use: Unknown

Land Ownership: City of Valdez and State of Alaska

Trailhead Facilities: Parking

On-Trail Facilities: Interpretive signs

Trail History: This is the area where the historic town of Valdez was located. The town site was condemned after extensive damage by the 1964 earthquake. In 2014, the Valdez Museum & Historical Archive completed a 1.7 mile walking tour pamphlet with interpretive signs. This tour utilizes dirt roads which are unmaintained in the winter.

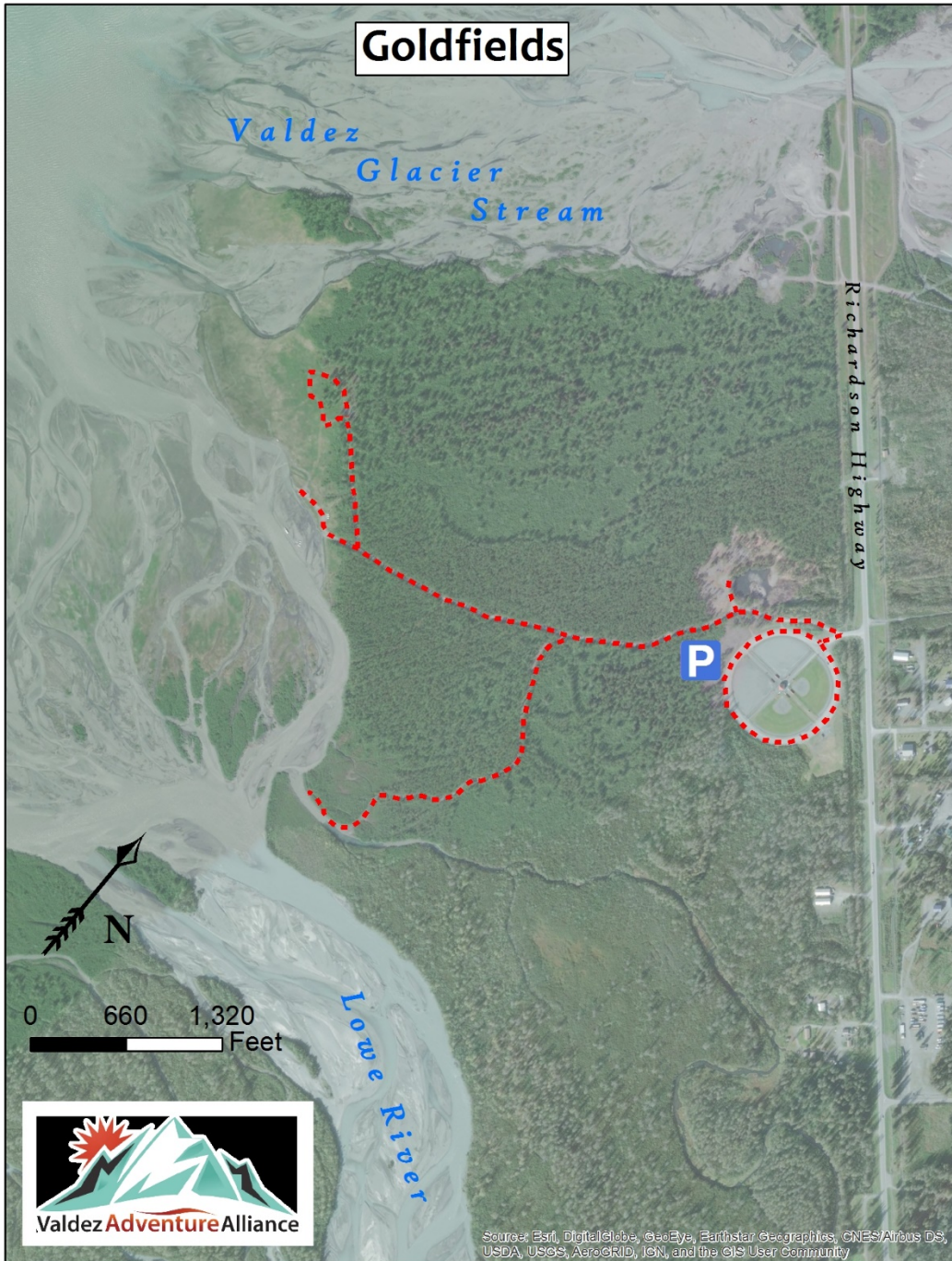
Trail Narrative: There are no summer trails in this area. However, users utilize dirt roads and the beach for recreation by foot or bicycle. The City of Valdez grooms a track through the area for winter recreation. The winter trail connects with the Gold Field trails when the Valdez Glacier Stream is safe to cross.

Summer Use: Walking, beach access, non-motorized boat launch (kayaks, kite boards, paddleboards), historic information & education

Winter Use: Cross country skiing, walking, snowshoeing, snowmachining

Future Development: There is the potential for more official trails in this area. Any development would have to proceed with extreme caution due to the sensitive historic nature of the site.

Gold Field Trails



Goldfields

Trail Length: Estimated less than a mile

Trail Beginning: Richardson Highway across from the Corbin Creek Subdivision

Trail End: Lowe River Estuary

Trail Type/ Class: Groomed Ski Trail

Current Use: Skiers, Beach Access, fatbikes

Prohibited Use: None

Land Ownership: City of Valdez & State of Alaska

Trailhead Facilities: Parking

On-Trail Facilities: Ocean views

Trail History: This is a road in the summertime that is not maintained for automotive use in the winter. The City of Valdez currently grooms this area for winter recreational use.

Trail Narrative: This is a short, quiet trail that passes through a forest of large cottonwood trees before ending at the estuary of the Lowe River. It is groomed for recreational use by the City of Valdez.

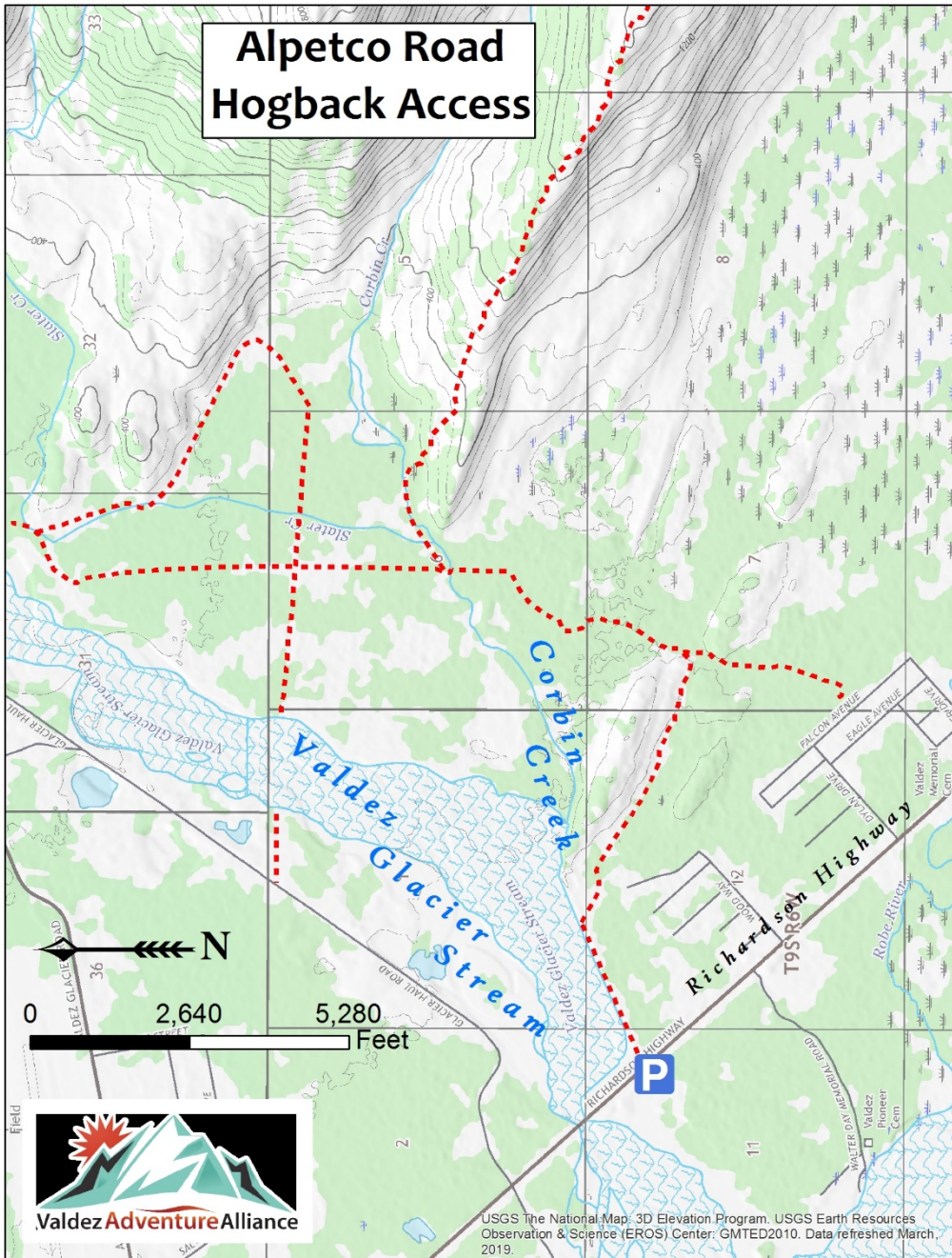
The trail connects with the Old Town Trails when safe crossing of the Valdez Glacier Stream is possible.

Summer Use: Not used recreationally in the summer.

Winter Use: Primarily cross country, skiing, walking, and snowshoeing.

Future Development: This is a fairly small area. The winter trail is typically in excellent condition once there is enough snow for grooming.

Alpetco Road Trail System, known as Hogback Area Trails, "Out the Road Trails" includes Robe Lake Winter Access



Alpetco Road Trail System, known as Hogback Area Trails, “Out the Road Trails” includes Robe Lake Winter Access

Trail Length: 6 miles estimated

Trail Beginning: Richardson Highway, just north of the bridge over the Valdez Glacier Stream

Trail End: Branches lead to Hogback Glacier and Robe Lake

Trail Type/ Class: Groomed Ski and Snowmachine Trail

Current Use: Snowmachine (primary), skiers, hiking, ATV, fatbikes

Prohibited Use: None

Land Ownership: City of Valdez & State of Alaska

Trailhead Facilities: Parking

On-Trail Facilities: None

Trail History: These are primarily snowmachine trails. The City of Valdez began grooming much of this area in 2002, which led to an increase of non-motorized use. Much of the maintenance is carried out by the Valdez Motor Sports Club.

Trail Narrative: This trail begins on the "Alpetco Road," in the Valdez Glacier Stream Flats. Forks lead partially up Hogback Mountain and towards Robe Lake. It is primarily used by snowmachines in the winter, although skiers and walkers do also access this trail.

In the summer, muddy sections make walking or biking difficult beyond the first mile or so of the trail. Many locals do utilize the initial section of the trail for short summer walks. ATVs currently access the area in the summer.

Winter Use: Snowmachining, skiing

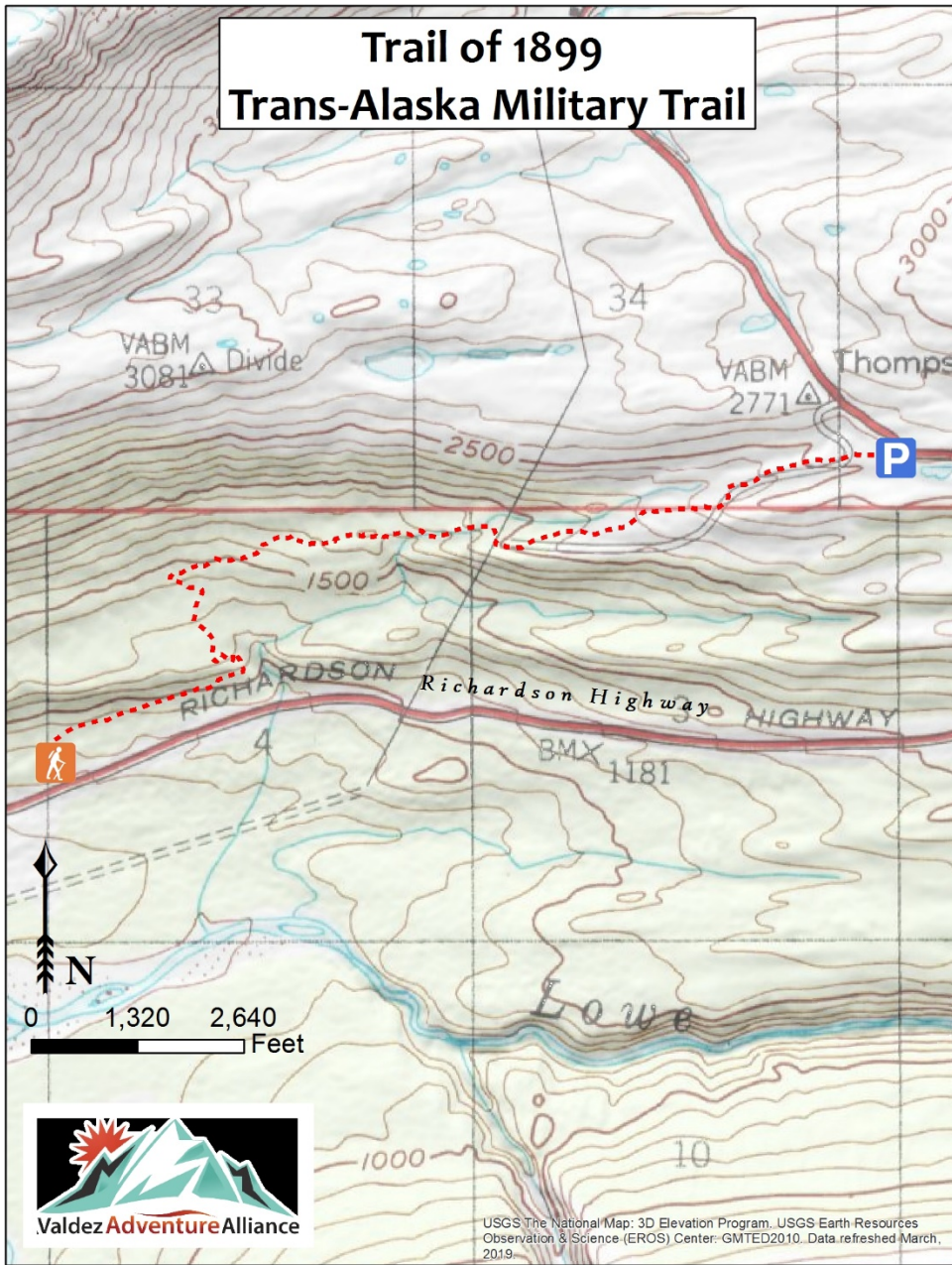
Summer Use: Walking, ATVs

Future Development: The City of Valdez Trails plan indicates that this area should remain primarily a motorized use area to minimize conflicts between users and the risk of accidents between user groups.

Existing Trail System

Out of Town Trails

Trail of '99, Trans-Alaska Military Trail



Trail of '99, Trans-Alaska Military Trail

Trail Length: 2.84 mi gps

South Trailhead: Mile 19 on the Richardson Highway

North Trailhead: North of Mile 25 on Richardson Highway

Trail Type/ Class: Standard Terra Trail class 3 on north side and class 2 at the south side

Current Use: Hiker, fatbikes (downhill)

Prohibited Use: Unknown

Land Ownership: State of Alaska DNR

Trailhead Facilities: Large Parking lot and trailhead sign on northeast section, no trailhead on the southwest section, but does have a trailhead sign and registration box.

On-Trail Facilities: None

Trail History: This trail is a section of the original Trans-Alaska military trail that predated the construction of the modern Richardson Highway. Sections of this trail have been cleared and improved upon by individuals and groups including (but not limited to) local resident Jim Shephard (honored with a plaque at the 19 mile trailhead), scout troops, and the Valdez Trails Association.

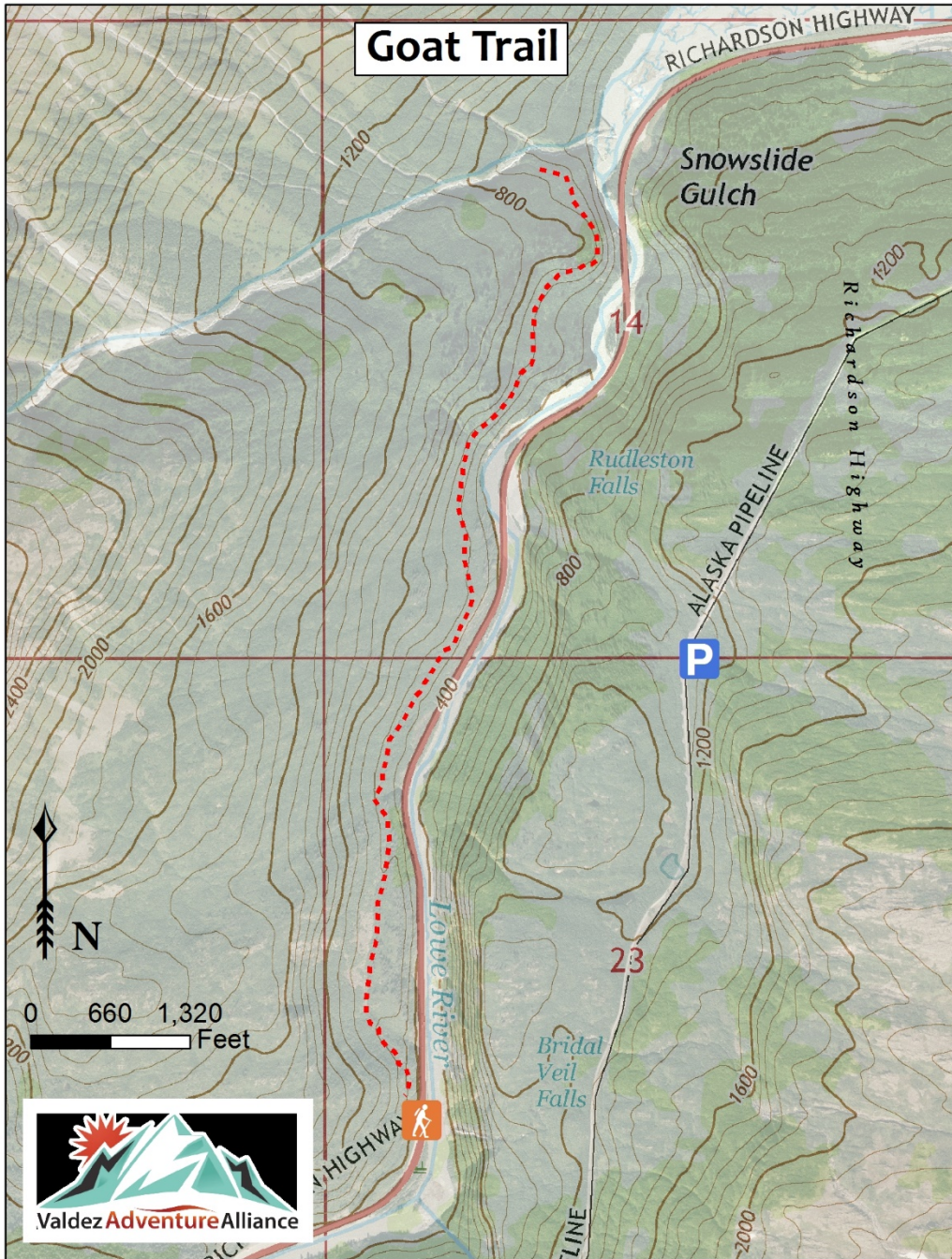
Trail Narrative (north to south): Starting from the large parking lot heading west the two-track trail slowly descends from an alpine area. It reaches trees and alders after approximately 1 mile. At this point, the trail narrows to about 1 ½ feet. Water drainage issues are present for the next mile with several large mud holes. During wet weather, there are at least 20 small stream crossings throughout the hike. After 2 ¼ miles, the trail descends quite steeply. The trail then ends at the Richardson Highway where there is no trailhead.

Future Development: There is some evidence of vehicles driving in at the top of the trail, if this is a non motorized trail there may need to be boulders put in place or other deterrents. The trailhead could also use a small kiosk with a map, information, and regulations. The middle section of the trail needs several water drainage features installed as well as small plank style stream bridges. There is some evidence of an interpretive theme on this trail in the form of small letter signs toward the end of the trail, this could be reset if the original information can be found. The end of the trail is very steep and tread work needs to be done along with steps or reroutes. Any work proposed on this trail needs to be closely coordinated with the State of Alaska because of its historic nature.

The interpretive signs could use some cleaning/maintenance.

Different groups have worked on different sections of the old military route between the Old Richardson Highway and the Tsaina River at different times. This will likely continue in the future. A coordinated effort and some substantial infrastructure would be necessary to make the entire original route from Valdez through Thompson Pass to the Tsaina River passable for hikers. There is interest among many parties to see this happen, as it would provide a continuous trail with several interesting features and historic interest.

Goat Trail / Wagon Road, also known as the Trail of 1898



Goat Trail / Wagon Road, also known as the Trail of 1898

Trail Length: 2.22 mi gps

Trail Beginning: Pullout at Bridal Veil Falls on Richardson Highway

Trail End: Snowslide Gulch (due to bridge no longer in place)

Trail Type/ Class: Standard Terra / Class 3

Current Use: Hiker

Prohibited Use: All motorized

Land Ownership: State of Alaska

Trailhead Facilities: Parking, trailhead sign

On-Trail Facilities: Interpretive signs

Trail History: "Goat Trail" is local nickname for a portion of original Trans-Alaska Military Trail from just east of Horse Tail Falls to Bear Creek Bridge. Trailhead is located Bridal Veil Falls pullout. First 2 miles of the trail were re-opened in summer of 1996. Valdez Trails Association cleared the trail from Snowslide Gulch to Bear Creek in 1998. The Association later received an Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) grant to build a bridge across Snowslide Gulch and a pedestrian bridge across Bear Creek utilizing the old trestle still in place. This work was completed in the fall of 2001. The Snowslide Gulch Bridge sustained heavy damage the following winter and is no longer there.

Trail Narrative: Users park in large parking lot used for Bridal Veil Falls viewing on Richardson Highway in Keystone Canyon. There is a short social trail through the grass along the side of the road to the base of the actual trail. Trail climbs steeply until it reaches an elevation above the roadside cliffs. Provides an excellent view of Bridal Veil Falls and Lowe River from this point. It continues above Keystone Canyon. Once the trail emerges from the canyon, the name of the trail changes to "Wagon Road." Trail passes through a few streams and a long tunnel in alders, then emerges at Snowslide Gulch, where there used to be a bridge.

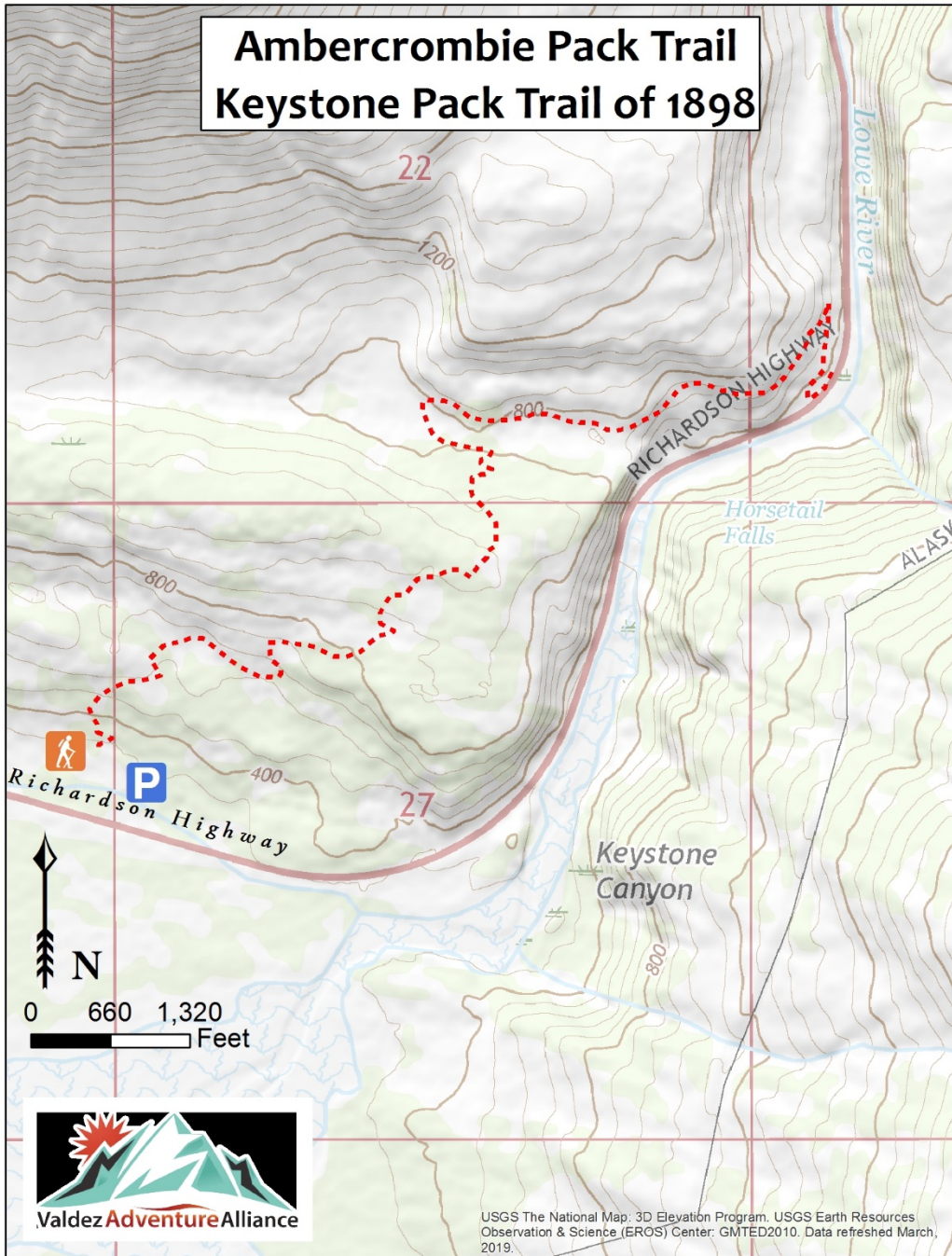
Summer Use: Hiking

Winter Use: This trail can be used for ice climbing access.

Future Development: Initial climb from parking lot is quite muddy, but the landscape does not provide many options for a re-route. Ladders, cables, or other features could be installed. Trailhead is also not very obvious for visitors, and could be made more prominent. The interpretive signs could use some cleaning/maintenance.

Different groups have worked on different sections of the old military route between the Old Richardson Highway and the Tsaina River at different times. This will likely continue in the future. A coordinated effort and some substantial infrastructure would be necessary to make the entire original route from Valdez through Thompson Pass to the Tsaina River passable for hikers. There is interest among many parties to see this happen, as it would provide a continuous trail with several interesting features and historic interest.

Abercrombie Pack Trail, also known as the Trail of 1898



Abercrombie Pack Trail, also known as the Trail of 1898

Trail Length: 2.30 mi gps

Trail Beginning: Old Richardson Highway spur at mile 12 of the Richardson Highway

Trail End: Goat Trail and Richardson Highway on north end of trail

Trail Type/ Class: Standard Terra / Class 3 with some Class 2 sections due to grade and tread

Current Use: Hiker

Prohibited Use: All motorized

Land Ownership: State of Alaska?

Trailhead Facilities: The south end has no parking lot but there is room for vehicles to pull off. There is a trailhead sign on the main highway and at the trailhead. The north end trailhead uses the Goat Trail trailhead and parking lot.

On-Trail Facilities: Secured trail rope on difficult section, interpretive signs, registration box

Trail History: Local resident Jim Shephard cleared a 2-mile section of this historic trail, from the old Richardson Highway loop on the west end of Keystone Canyon, to the Goat Trail, in 1997.

The trail is the original trail constructed in 1899 by Lt. Abercrombie and used by packhorses and mules to transport supplies and equipment for the Army. The tread is very narrow and not well defined in places. Interpretive signs were placed on this trail in 1999.

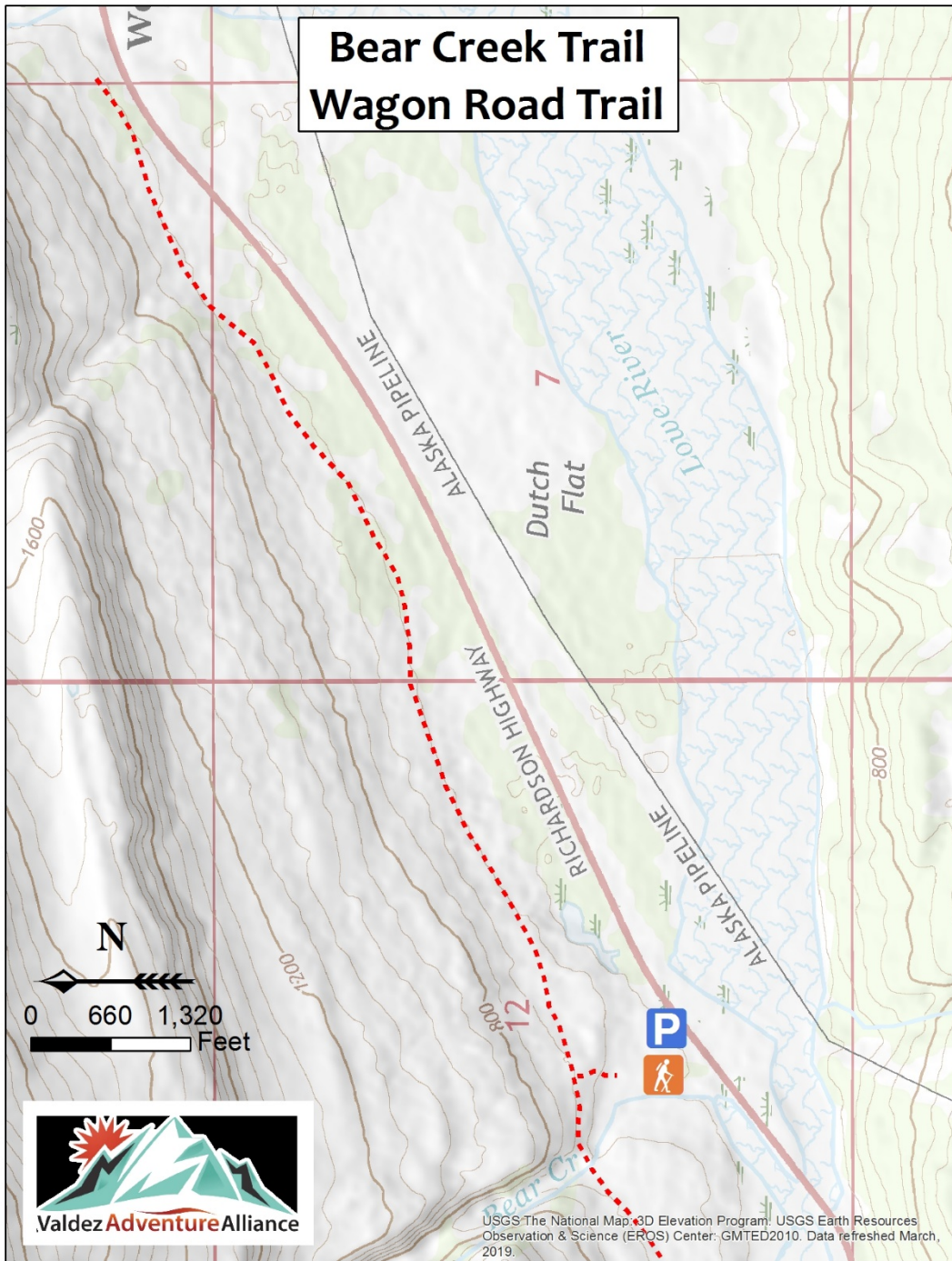
Trail Narrative: The trail starts from a section of road no longer used, except to access this trail. The trail starts with a climb on a 30% plus grade. The tread starts at three feet wide, and narrows to two (2) feet wide one mile in, and then down to one foot wide two miles in. There are one or two muddy sections along this trail, but drainage is good overall. At about 1 ¼ mile in there are excellent views of falls and the surrounding landscape. There are interpretive signs throughout the trail. Almost at the end of the trail there is a secure rope feature that assists getting down a very steep hill. The trail ends in a fork at the Goat Trail, at this point you can head north and continue on, or head south on a spur to the Goat Trail parking lot.

There is some exposure on this trail, along a steep side of Keystone Canyon.

Future Development: Signs should be installed warning of exposure. Some work could be done to minimize this for visitor safety including reworking the tread. Some minor clearing of alders at key viewpoints may be helpful. The interpretive signs could use some cleaning/maintenance. Any work done on this trail needs to have state approval because of its historic nature.

Different groups have worked on different sections of the old military route between the Old Richardson Highway and the Tsaina River at different times. This will likely continue in the future. A coordinated effort and some substantial infrastructure would be necessary to make the entire original route from Valdez through Thompson Pass to the Tsaina River passable for hikers. There is interest among many parties to see this happen, as it would provide a continuous trail with several interesting features and historic interest.

Bear Creek Trail



Bear Creek Trail

Trail Length: 3.23 mi gps

Trail Beginning: Richardson Highway at the Valdez welcome sign pullout

Trail End: Snowslide Gulch

Trail Type/ Class: Standard Terra / Class 3

Current Use: Hiker

Prohibited Use: All motorized

Land Ownership: State of Alaska

Trailhead Facilities: Parking, interpretive

On-Trail Facilities: Major bridge across Bear Creek, registration box near the bridge

Trail History: The Valdez Trails Association cleared the section between Bear Creek Bridge and the Mile 18.5 turnout in the fall of 1996 and summer of 1997. The area around the trailhead is currently very popular with trappers. A bridge that took the trail across Snowslide Gulch and connected to the Abercrombie Trail has been destroyed and has not been replaced.

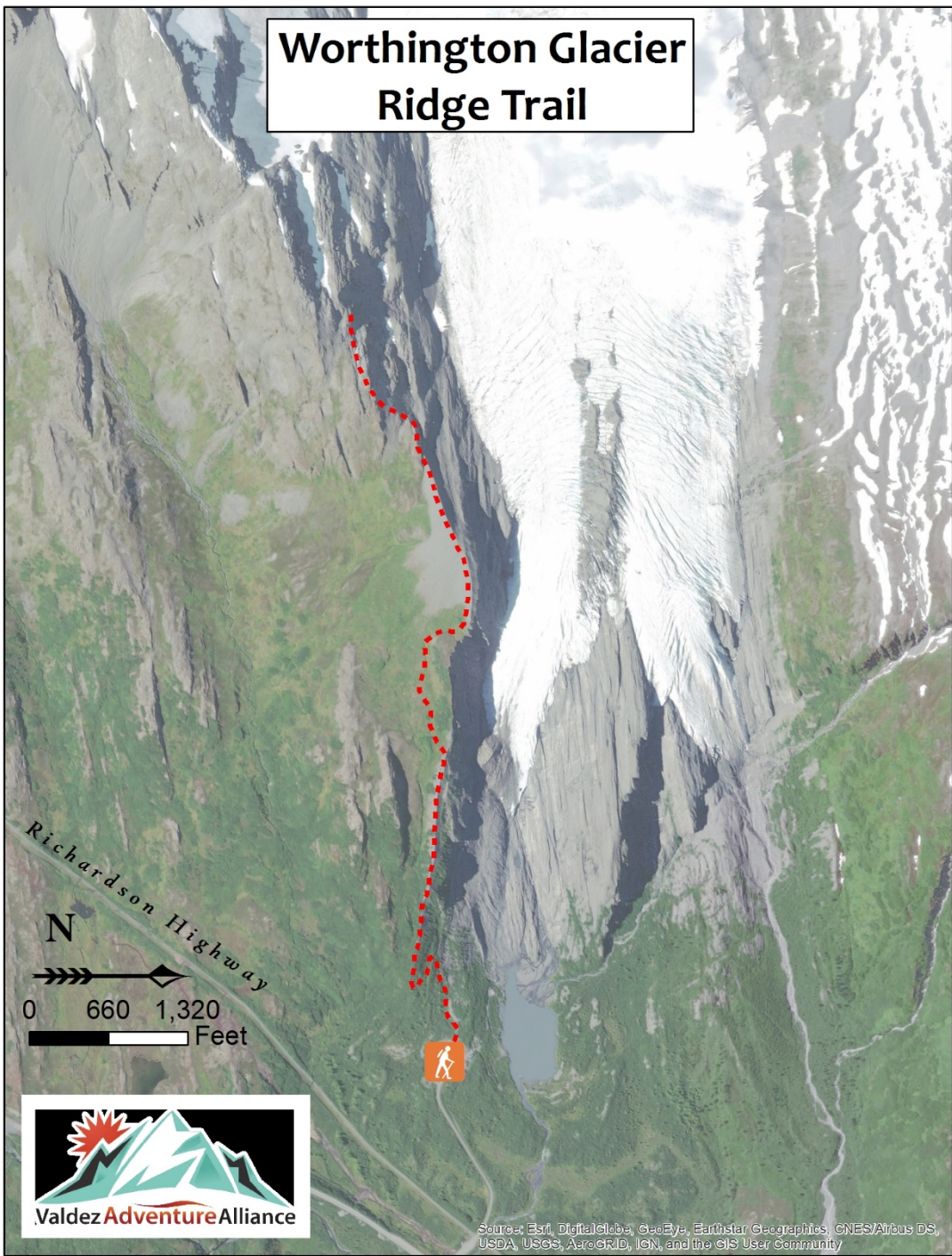
Trail Narrative: The trailhead is at the Valdez Welcome sign just south of Mile 19 on the Richardson Highway. There is room for a few vehicles to park, but there is no trailhead sign. The spur from the parking area is less than a ¼ mile long and connects to the main trail which runs northeast and southwest. A left turn on the trail takes users to Bear Creek. At 1 ¼ mile in, there is another trail that leads to an alternate trailhead. The upper part of the alternate access is in good condition but there is some tread work needed on the descent that leads out to Richardson Highway. The main trail continues to a major bridge that crosses Bear Creek. From there, a two track trail in the forest continues to an open field right before the north side of Snowslide Gulch.

Overall the trail is in good shape with minor water drainage issues.

Future Development: A brushing schedule for an area like this will be the biggest challenge in the future.

There is a large culvert that needs to be dug up, inspected and maybe reset. There are about 5 water drainage issues on the trail. A solution to get people across Snowslide Gulch is needed, as this would connect this trail all the way to the Abercrombie Trail, creating a long continuous trail. Solutions may need to be seasonal because avalanche conditions are likely to continue to destroy any permanent structures. A removable bridge or some kind of cable car pulley system are two possible options.

Worthington Glacier Ridge Trail



Worthington Glacier Ridge Trail

Trail Length: 1.27 mi gps

Trail Beginning: Worthington Glacier Visitor Center Parking Lot

Trail End: Near Worthington Glacier

Trail Type/ Class: Terra / Class 2

Current Use: Hiker

Prohibited Use: Motorized (summer)

Land Ownership: Alaska State Parks and Alaska DNR

Trailhead Facilities: Parking, restrooms, trailhead sign

On-Trail Facilities: None

Trail History: There is evidence of some brushing by park staff in the wooded area leading up to the scree slope. The trail through the rocks appears to have been created almost entirely by foot traffic along the most obvious route. It is difficult to tell where the official trail ends, and where a social trail begins.

There was a re-route in 2016, but there is still a fall line trail that needs infrastructure or another reroute to improve it.

Trail Narrative: The trail leaves the Worthington Glacier parking lot, heading up a well maintained and wide track for about 200 yards. The trail then turns into a foot path, winding through scree fields and switchbacks to gain the necessary elevation and access to the ridge. It continues for another half mile before dropping back down into the valley and then rejoining ridge. The trail ends on a knoll that has tremendous views of Worthington Glacier.

Summer Use: Hiking

Winter Use: Snowmachines and skiers utilize this area extensively in winter, but probably not this particular trail.

Future Development: Trail signage, including hazard warnings and natural history interpretation, could be added.

Worthington Glacier Viewing Trail



Worthington Glacier Viewing Trail

Trail Length: 2,604 ft. gps

Trail Beginning: Worthington Glacier Visitor Center Parking Lot

Trail End: Glacier Viewing Platform

Trail Type/ Class: Hiker/ Pedestrian / Class 5

Current Use: Hiker

Prohibited Use: All motorized

Land Ownership: State of Alaska

Trailhead Facilities: Restrooms, interpretive displays, parking

On-Trail Facilities: Benches, interpretive displays, partially wheelchair accessible

Trail History: This is a long-established portion of the Worthington Glacier visitor facilities.

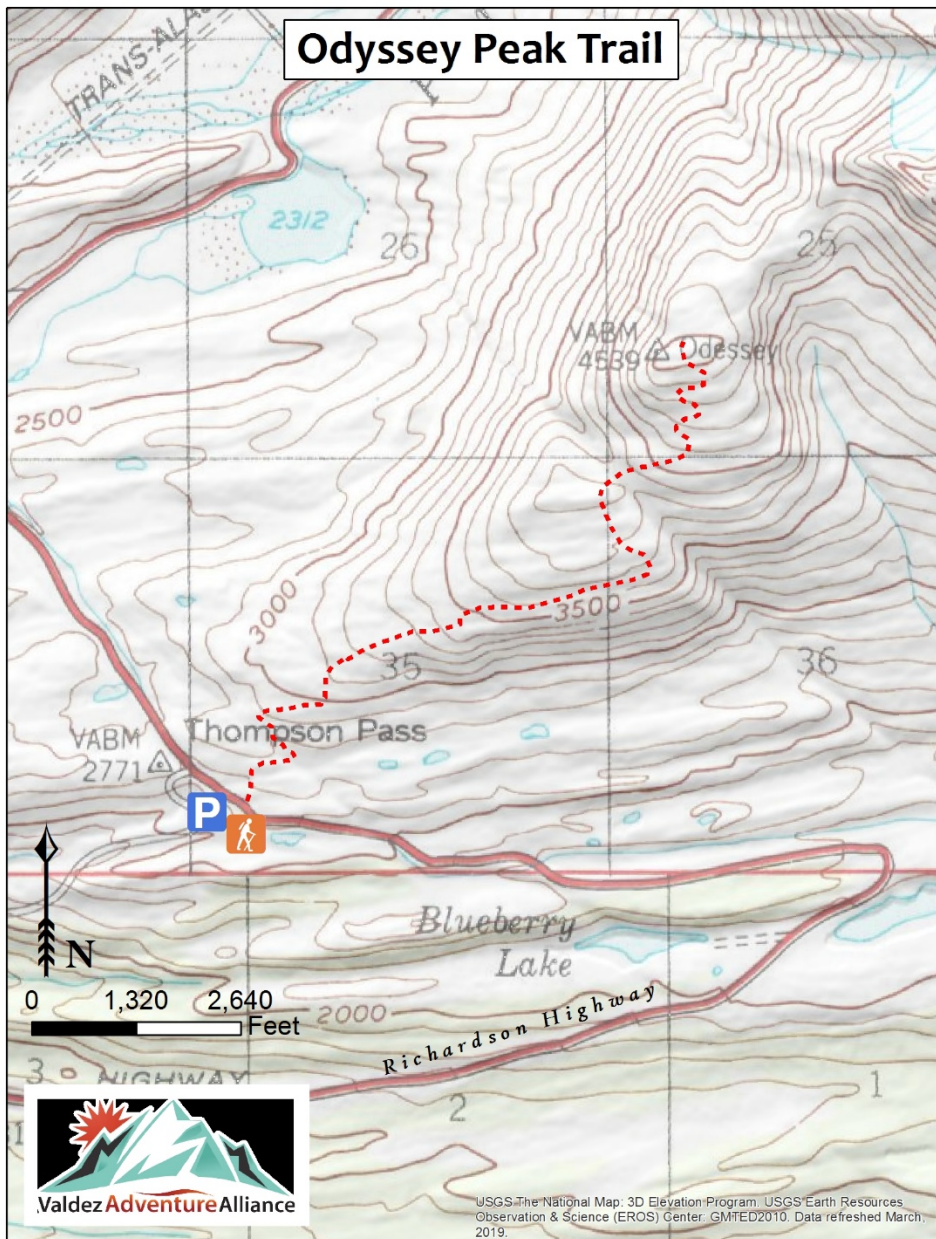
Trail Narrative: This trail begins at the Worthington Glacier parking lot. It passes through a sheltered series of interpretive displays. A boardwalk takes visitors to a view of the glacier with an overlook of the glacial outwash.

Summer Use: walking, glacier viewing, wheelchair access Winter Use: None

Future Development: Additional loops could be created into the glacial moraine from this area. It is currently in excellent condition and well used by visitors.

Common Routes Outside of the Official Trail System

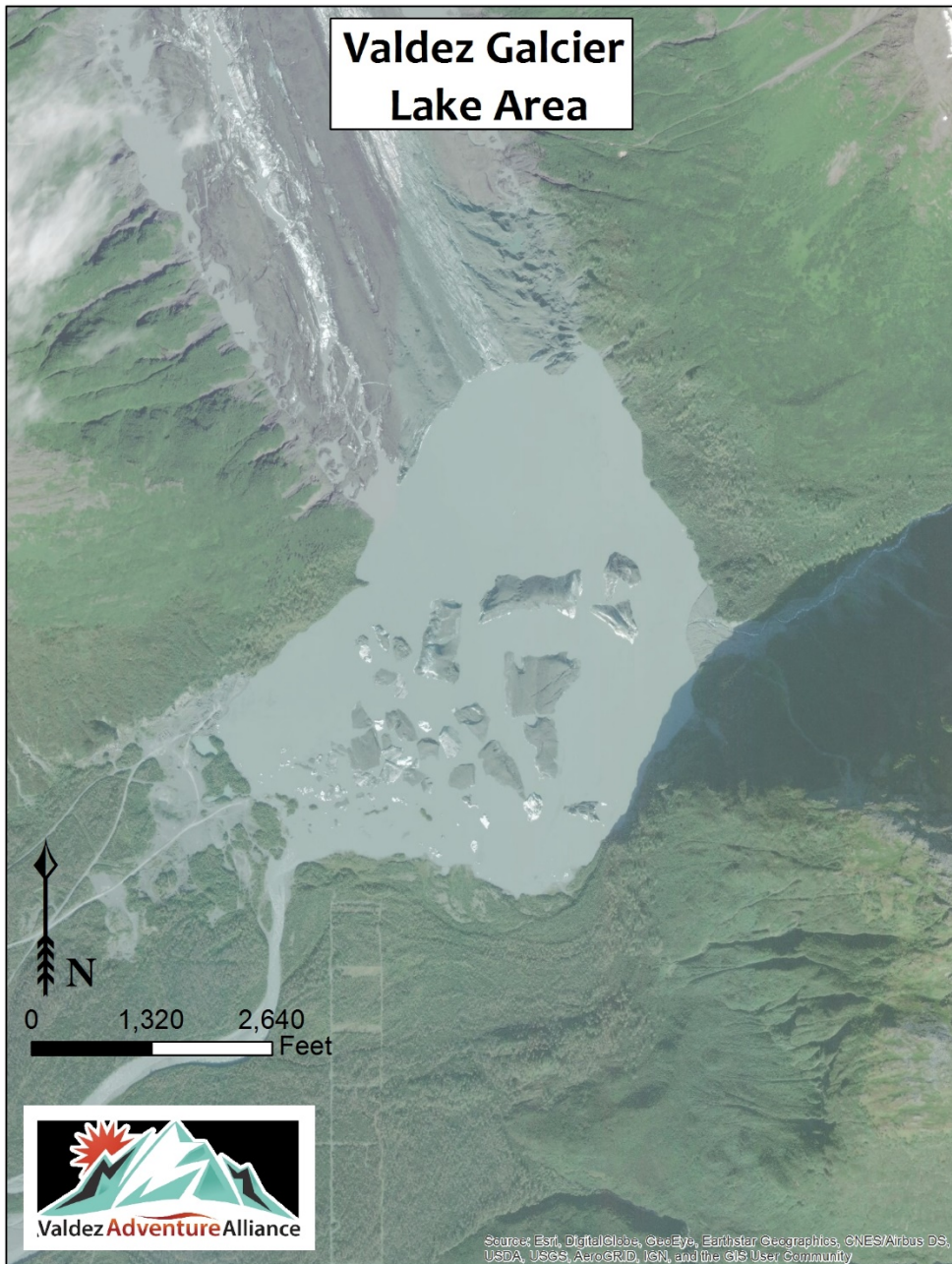
Mount Odyssey



Mount Odyssey is located in Thompson Pass. It is an easily accessible peak that does not require bushwhacking. There are no official trails in the alpine, but it is well enough known for the mainstream national hiking journal Backpacker Magazine to list it as part of a route.

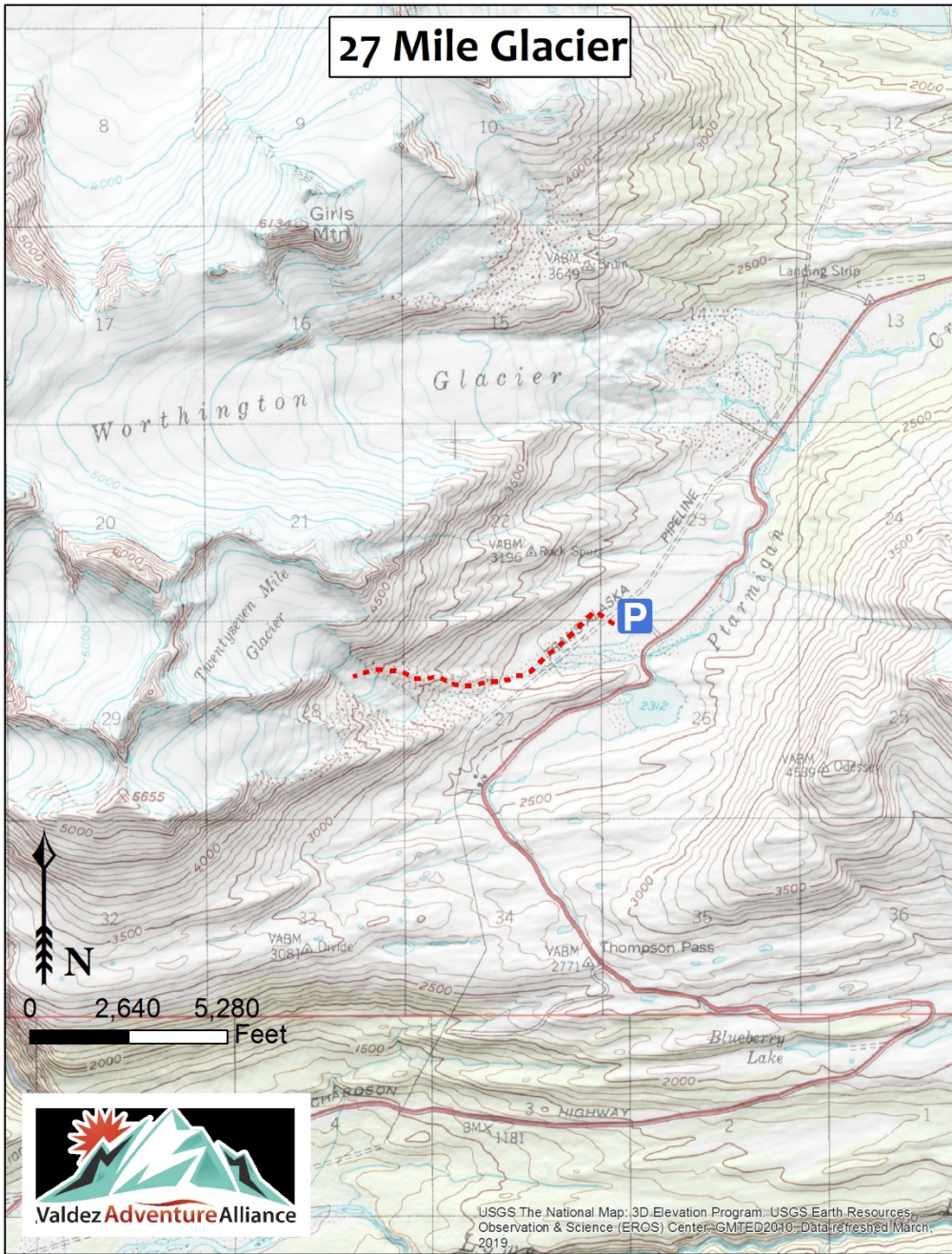
Continued traffic in this alpine area without one developed trail will eventually create erosion and damage to the tundra.

Valdez Glacier Lake and Stream



Snowmachines currently access much of the stream area, looping in to Alpetco Road System, or traveling on to the Valdez Glacier Lake and the Valdez Glacier. Hikers, skiers, snowshoers and fat bikers create routes on the Glacier lake in the winter, some of which are periodically groomed by a private individual. These routes typically access fingers of the glacier and ice caves. Commercial kayak companies and private watercraft users access the lake in summer to explore the ice at the toe of the Valdez Glacier, and the beach at the far side of the glacier.

27 Mile Glacier



This roadside glacier can be accessed via a short walk on the moraine.

The Alyeska Pipeline System (TAPS)

Many locals utilize the pipeline system for walking, biking, fatbiking, jogging, cross country skiing, snowmachining, trapping, and dog mushing. Although the pipeline is not particularly scenic, it provides a convenient corridor for these activities that is off of the road system. Sections of the pipeline can also be incorporated into a route in order to create a loop comprised of trails, roads, and the pipeline.

Local recreationists also utilize many of the access pullouts, parking areas, and short road spurs created for the purpose of maintaining the pipeline to access wilderness beyond the pipeline area.

Access for much of the pipeline system including the pipeline itself, access roads, and parking areas is currently tacitly permitted. Future access is not guaranteed.

Proposed Trails

Valdez residents suggested trails that would expand recreation opportunities in the area at a series of public meetings. Meeting participants were invited to hand draw estimated routes on maps of the area provided by Valdez Adventure Alliance. These trails were reviewed at a subsequent meeting by members of the public.

The exact routes of the proposed trails have not been mapped/ surveyed. Respondents viewed maps with a rough sketch of where a potential trail might be routed.

By the end of the public process over 40 trails had been suggested. At a later stage, some of the trails were removed from consideration in order to devote more attention to the most promising and popular projects. Trails that had severe feasibility issues or low public interest were discarded. Some trails were discarded if they possessed the same basic advantages as other trails on the list, but presented more difficulties.

The remaining trails were given a ranking based on numerous criteria.

Ranking criteria included:

- Public interest in the trail
- Potential quality of experience provided by the trail
- Connections to other trails or loop potential
- Feasibility of construction and continued maintenance
- Potential impact to resources (both lack of negative and potential for positive
- Opportunities for diverse recreation

Town Mountain Trail

Ranked: 1st -- Score: 13 / 15

Trail narrative: This ~1 mile trail would ascend Town Mountain, the peak immediately behind Valdez High School.

Public need met: Towns including Seward, Petersburg, Ketchikan, Juneau, Sitka, Cordova, Wrangell, Girdwood, and others, feature trails up a mountain overlooking town. These trails are within walking distance of the city center. They are extremely well used by both residents and visitors. Valdez does not have this opportunity.

More than 60% of respondents to a recent Valdez Parks and Recreation Survey stated they would prefer to travel less than five miles to recreate on a weekday. Over 90% of these respondents identified recreation as "important" or "very important" to them.

This trail would fulfill the locally-expressed desire for routes that go from below to above tree line. It would also provide the elevation gain desired by users who value fitness as a component of trail use. There are currently informal routes up Town Mountain. However, sections of these present a great deal of exposure, which deters many users.

Additional benefits of this trail: This trail would be likely to get the most use out of all of the proposed trails due to its proximity to town. The view from the top of Town Mountain encompasses the ocean, the Lowe River, the City of Valdez and its harbor, and other landmarks that make Valdez a special place to live.

This trail could have economic benefits for the City of Valdez by extending the time independent travelers spend in the area. A mountain hike could also give tourism businesses an activity to combine with what they already offer.

Feasibility Advantages: Manageable length, good public support, and convenient access.

Based on past volunteer efforts, it is reasonable to expect volunteer assistance with construction and maintenance.

Challenges: Switchbacks will have to be designed and constructed using sustainable trail principles due to both steep terrain and high rainfall. The trail may have to incorporate retaining walls or other special features in steep or rocky sections. The development of shortcut trails between switchbacks and continued use of fall line trails may be an issue.

Land Ownership: Needs to be confirmed and access agreements granted. This trail may cross City of Valdez, and State of Alaska land.

Potential Partners: City of Valdez Parks and Recreation; Valdez High School; Alaska DNR Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation; Valdez Chamber of Commerce; Cruise Ships

Next Steps:

1. Identify landowners
2. Request permission for trail
3. Apply for grants or obtain funding for professional layout and design
4. Apply for RTP and other grants
5. Hire a contractor
6. Work with potential partners above to develop a maintenance plan
7. Recommended Trail Management Objectives
 - Trail Type - Summer (Terra)
 - Trail Class - 3 Developed
 - Designed Use - Hiker/ Pedestrian
 - Managed Use – Pedestrian
 - Prohibited Use - Motorized and Bicycles

Recommended Amenities

- Parking - Could work with school
- Trailhead Kiosk
- Signs to deter short cuts
- Benches at one or two overlooks
- Signs marking distance/elevation gain

Hogback Mountain Trail Extension

Ranked: 2nd -- Score: 13 / 15

Trail narrative: This would be an approximately 2 mile extension of the existing Hogback Mountain trail. Depending on the route, it could complete loops between different sections of the extant system.

Public needs met: This could create loop trails, which are rare within the current system. For snowmachines, this would be extremely helpful during low snow periods as a single route becomes chewed up by repeated use.

Summer development of the lower sections of trail would create access to an alpine wonderland that is currently too muddy and brushy to access. This area could be used for hiking, mountain biking, or summer skiing.

This area is quite close to several neighborhoods. Over 60% of respondents to a recent Valdez Parks and Recreation Survey stated they would prefer to travel less than five miles to recreate on a weekday. Over 90% of these respondents identified recreation as "important" or "very important" to them.

Additional benefits of this trail:

This trail could have economic benefits for the City of Valdez by extending the time independent travelers spend in the area. This trail would provide unique views of the Lowe River and the Valdez Glacier.

Feasibility Advantages: This would be adding on to an existing trail. It would also benefit a group that is already motivated to perform trail volunteerism and maintenance.

Challenges: Fill will be necessary to provide summer access through muddy sections. This could require future maintenance.

Non-motorized winter use is currently permitted. However, The City of Valdez recreation plan states concern that if non-motorized winter use grew, user conflicts and potential for accidents could increase.

Avalanche hazard is present here, which could prompt liability concerns.

Land Ownership: Land ownership needs to be confirmed and access agreements granted. This trail may cross City of Valdez, and State of Alaska land.

Agency and Potential Partners: Valdez Snowmachine Club; Alaska State Snowmobile Association; City of Valdez Parks and Recreation; Alaska DNR Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation

Next Steps:

1. Identify landowners
2. Request permission for trail
3. Work with snowmachine groups to choose a preferred layout
4. Apply for RTP and other grants for construction
5. Hire a contractor or use volunteers to cut a trail corridor
6. Work with potential partners above to develop a maintenance plan

Recommended Trail Management Objectives

- Trail Type - Winter/Potentially Summer
- Trail Class - 3 Developed
- Designed Use – Snowmachine
- Managed Use - Snowmachine, fatbikes

Recommended Amenities

- Signs or blazes marking the new route, keeping in mind snowpack

Mount Odyssey Trail

Ranked: 3rd -- Score: 13 / 15

Trail narrative: This approximately 2 mile trail would be located in Thompson Pass. The trail would ascend a small mountain from the highway corridor. The mountain features primarily tundra ecology.

This trail would be a development of an existing social route. Trail construction could be limited to signage, improvements in areas vulnerable to erosion, and other minor work.

This area has the potential to provide a biking opportunity rare within the State of Alaska. This would dictate a different design.

Public needs met: This trail would encourage a wider variety of visitors to Thompson Pass to leave the highway behind and enjoy the natural beauty of the area. A very short trail at Worthington Glacier is the only official trail that is currently in the world-famous area.

Additional benefits of this trail: This trail would be likely to be well used by both locals and visitors. It gives people the opportunity to ascend a mountain, but the terrain is not excessively difficult.

This trail could have economic benefits for the City of Valdez. It could extend the amount of time independent travelers spend in the Valdez area. A tundra hike could also give tourism companies an additional activity to combine with what they already offer.

Biking opportunities around the state are so limited that developing biking here would be a major draw.

Due to the fragile nature of the tundra ecosystem this area is easily damaged. A trail would be more rugged to traffic, and could minimize damage to the surrounding tundra in comparison to informal traffic with multiple routes. This could also make it more feasible for natural history educational activities to occur on the mountain.

Feasibility Advantages: There are no stream crossings or other significant physical obstacles. There is abundant extant parking, and limited need for brushing.

Challenges: The development of shortcut trails between switchbacks and continued use of fall line trails may be an issue.

Land Ownership: Land ownership needs to be confirmed and access agreements granted. This trail may cross State of Alaska land.

Agency and Potential Partners: DNR Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation; Local tourism related businesses; Prince William Sound Community College

Next Steps:

1. Identify landowners
2. Request permission for trail
3. Apply for grants or obtain funding for professional layout and design
4. Apply for RTP and other grants for construction
5. Hire a contractor to construct trail sections that do not currently exist
6. Work with potential partners above to develop a maintenance plan

Recommended Trail Management Objectives

- Trail Type - Summer (Terra)
- Trail Class - 3 Developed
- Designed Use - Hiker
- Managed Use - Hiker, bicycle, fatbikes
- Prohibited Use - Motorized

Recommended Amenities

- Trailhead with parking
- Trail sign on the highway (work with AKDOT)
- Interpretive signs describing tundra ecology
- Benches or platforms in key areas to minimize spreading of visitor impact to the tundra
- Signs to deter shortcuts

Cracked Ice Trail

Ranked: 4th -- Score 13 / 15

Trail narrative: This approximately 2 mile long trail would ascend from the Richardson Highway in the vicinity of mile 33 into a phenomenally scenic alpine valley featuring a charismatic glacier (" Cracked Ice") Once in the alpine, users would have the opportunity to route find and extend their trek to other alpine areas or peaks. Currently, the primary access issue is a bushwhack towards the base of the route. Public needs met: This trail would fulfill the locally-expressed desire expressed for routes that go from below to above tree line. It would also provide the elevation gain desired by users who value fitness as a key component of trail use.

Additional benefits of this trail: With access to the alpine this trail would open up potential backpacking routes.

This trail could have economic benefits for the City of Valdez. It could extend the amount of time independent travelers spend in the Valdez area. An alpine hike could also give tourism companies an additional activity to combine with what they already offer.

Biking opportunities around the state are so limited that developing biking here would be a major draw.

Feasibility Advantages: This area does not present significant physical obstacles. The section that requires continued brushwork is relatively short. Based on past volunteer efforts, it is reasonable to expect that volunteers could perform the required annual brushing work.

Challenges: Water/erosion at the base could be an issue, depending on the exact route.

There are fewer large pullouts in the immediate vicinity for parking. Winter users commonly park in an area that is technically private, for which future use is not guaranteed.

Land Ownership: Land ownership needs to be confirmed and access agreements granted. This trail may cross State of Alaska.

Agency and Potential Partners: DNR Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation; Local Lodges

Next Steps:

1. Identify landowners
2. Request permission for trail
3. Identify a parking area on state land or receive proper permission for existing parking
4. Identify nearby restroom options
5. Apply for grants or obtain funding for professional layout and design
6. Apply for RTP and other grants for construction
7. Hire a contractor to construct trail sections that do not currently exist
8. Work with potential partners above to develop a maintenance plan

Recommended Trail Management Objectives

- Trail Type - Summer (Terra)
- Trail Class - 3 Developed
- Designed Use - Hiker/ Pedestrian
- Managed Use - Hiker, Non-motorized Winter Use
- Prohibited Use - Motorized

Recommended Amenities

- Trailhead with parking
- Trail sign on the highway (work with AKDOT)

Benzene Trail - "Area 51"

Ranked: 5th -- Score: 12 / 15

Trail Narrative: This trail would ascend from the John Hunter Memorial Trail and the Pipeline infrastructure on Dayville road into the alpine area above Solomon Lake. The total route is between 6 and 8 miles long. However, a much shorter access trail could assist users in reaching the alpine and they could continue on their own.

Public needs met: This trail would fulfill the locally-expressed desire expressed for routes that go from below to above tree line. It would also provide the elevation gain desired by users who value fitness as a key component of trail use.

Additional benefits of this trail: This trail would access a genuinely breathtaking area. This proposed trail received strong support in public meetings.

With access to the alpine this trail would open up potential extended day hikes.

This trail could have economic benefits for the City of Valdez. It could extend the amount of time independent travelers spend in the Valdez area. An alpine hike could also give tourism companies an additional activity to combine with what they already offer.

Biking opportunities around the state are so limited that developing biking here would be a major draw.

Feasibility Advantages: The base area already has a large parking lot and summer restrooms. Much of the route already exists as informal trails.

The area that requires brushing is relatively short and accessible: Based on past volunteer efforts, it is reasonable to expect that volunteers could perform the required annual brushing work.

This area does not present significant physical obstacles.

Challenges: Access to pipeline infrastructure is not guaranteed. If/when the pipeline is decommissioned the future of this area is uncertain. Consistent brushing will be required to keep this trail accessible.

Land Ownership:

Land ownership needs to be confirmed and access agreements granted. This trail may cross City of Valdez, and State of Alaska land.

Agency and Potential Partners: DNR Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation; City of Valdez; Alyeska Pipeline

Next Steps:

1. Work with Pipeline, Hatchery, City of Valdez, and State of Alaska on trail permission, access issues and use of existing facilities
2. Complete layout and design of additional trail and ensure existing trail is sustainable
3. Utilize volunteers to fix current trail and hire a contractor to construct new trail
4. Work with partners above to develop a maintenance plan

Recommended Trail Management Objectives

- Trail Type - Summer (Terra)
- Trail Class - 3 Developed
- Designed Use - Hiker/ Pedestrian
- Managed Use - Hiker, bicycle, fatbike
- Prohibited Use - Motorized

Recommended Amenities

- Use existing facilities

Wagon Trail to - 1898 Trail Connector

Ranked: 6th -- Score 12 / 15

Trail Narrative: This trail would provide a two-mile connection between the "Wagon Trail" and the "1898 Trail" in the corridor between Keystone Canyon and Thompson Pass.

Public needs met: This would connect existing trails to create a longer trail. This would be the only trail of moderate length in close proximity to the neighborhoods at miles 10 and 19 on the Richardson Highway. It would also increase the variety of trails longer than 1 mile available in the greater Valdez area.

Additional benefits of this trail: This whole route is of major historical interest. This is not only an educational opportunity for locals, but a potential draw for visitors from outside of the area. The existing trails already feature excellent interpretive signage, and historic artifacts are visible in sections.

Feasibility Advantages: This trail has strong public support. Individuals and groups have dedicated time into working on other sections of this historic area. They are likely to volunteer on future efforts.

It may be possible to locate the original trail bed.

Challenges: This trail would require consistent brushing to remain accessible. As it is on a hillside, erosion may also be an issue. There is some private land located near this proposed route. The trail would have to be routed around any inholdings.

Land Ownership: Land ownership needs to be confirmed and access agreements granted. This trail may cross State of Alaska land.

Agency and Potential Partners: DNR Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation; City of Valdez; Valdez Museum & Historical Archive; Alaska Trails; Boy Scouts Troop 311 and Girl Scouts.

Next Steps:

1. Obtain permission from State of Alaska to restore the trail
2. Work with state Alaska's State Historic Preservation Office to ensure compliance with National Historic Preservation Act
3. Use volunteers to try to locate the original trail bed
4. Ensure this trail bed does not cross private land
5. If the original trail is found, use volunteers to brush the trail and install any infrastructure to improve the trail
6. Figure out if there is a spot that can be used to ford the river, if not
7. Hire a trail builder to design and build new tread if necessary
8. Work with partners to develop maintenance plan
9. Consider renaming this as a single continuous trail

Recommended Trail Management Objectives

- The TMO's should mirror the existing Wagon Trail and 1898 Trail

Recommended Amenities

- Install historical interpretive signs, taking into account existing signs on the two existing trails

Browns Canyon Trail

Ranked: 7th -- Score 12 / 15

Trail Narrative: This proposed trail would follow a mostly existing route approximately 2 miles long through a dramatic canyon with waterfall and glacier views. The summer trail would feature relatively narrow tread and as few obviously manmade features as possible, preserving the intimate feel of the canyon. The primary use of this area would remain winter snowmachining.

This route is currently used in winter for snowmachine access to Meteorite and other mountains. Trappers also utilize the area heavily.

Public needs met: This would increase the diversity of recreational opportunities in the area.

This trail could provide recreation opportunities for multiple user groups in multiple seasons.

Additional benefits of this trail: This trail was popular during public meetings. Snowmachiners who ride the canyon have expressed that it would be a good area for summer hiking.

Feasibility Advantages: Much of the route is already existing. Some bridges are already in place.

Challenges: Regular brushing would be required to keep this trail accessible in summer. There could also be erosion issues. Pipeline infrastructure access is not guaranteed into the future.

Land Ownership: Land ownership needs to be confirmed and access agreements granted. This trail may cross City of Valdez and State of Alaska land.

Agency and Potential Partners:

Valdez Snowmachine Club; Alaska State Snowmobile Association; City of Valdez Parks and Recreation; Alaska DNR Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation

Next Steps:

1. Identify landowners
2. Request permission for trail
3. Scout trail to see what portions exist and are sustainable
4. Apply for grants or obtain funding for professional layout and design if current trail is not to standard
5. Apply for RTP and other grants for construction
6. Hire a contractor to construct trail sections that do not currently exist
7. Work with potential partners above to develop a maintenance plan

Recommended Trail Management Objectives

- Trail Type - Winter and Summer (Terra)
- Trail Class - 2 Moderately Developed
- Designed Use - Snowmachine
- Managed Use - Snowmachine
- Prohibited Use - ATV

Recommended Amenities

- Improved parking lot for snowmachine trailers
- Trailhead sign and kiosk

Robe Lake / Salmonberry Trail

Ranked: 8th -- Score: 11 / 15

Trail Narrative: This trail would form a loop on the north side of the Richardson Highway between Robe Lake and the Salmonberry Ski Hill. It would utilize the high ground of the rolling hills in the surrounding area. It would be approximately 4 miles of new trail.

Public needs met: This trail would provide an opportunity for moderate outdoor exercise in the summer, and provide a loop trail. It would create trail opportunities for Corbin Creek and Deep Lake Road residents, who currently do not have nearby trails.

The trail would also increase the recreation opportunities at Robe Lake. Currently there is only a parking area and a small beach with no opportunities for walking or biking except for the road.

Additional benefits of this trail: This trail received strong support during public meetings.

This trail would provide views of the Lowe River Flats and Robe Lake.

The terrain here would be excellent for intermediate mountain bikers. Biking opportunities are extremely limited throughout the State of Alaska so this would be a major benefit.

Feasibility Advantages:

Robe Lake and Salmonberry Ski Hill currently have extant parking lots.

The terrain of this trail is moderate, which could lend itself well to the use of machinery for construction and maintenance.

Challenges: Depending on the route, this trail may come close to private land on the far side of the lake, which would change the character of those remote parcels.

This area is extremely brushy and muddy. The trail would require regular maintenance and excellent drainage.

Land Ownership: Land ownership needs to be confirmed and access agreements granted. City of Valdez, and may be close to private land.

Agency and Potential Partners: City of Valdez

Next Steps:

1. Discuss this idea with the closest landowners to determine whether they would see the trail as a beneficial or harmful project
2. Create a simple concept map with residents and City of Valdez to identify where the trail should go
3. Apply for grants or obtain funding for professional layout and design if current trail is not to standard
4. Apply for RTP and other grants for construction
5. Hire a contractor to construct trail sections that do not currently exist
6. Work with potential partners above to develop a maintenance plan

Recommended Trail Management Objectives

- Trail Type - Summer (Terra)
- Trail Class - 2 Moderately Developed
- Designed Use - Mountain Bike
- Managed Use - Mountain bike, fat bike, hiker/ pedestrian
- Prohibited Use - Motorized

Recommended Amenities

- There is an existing parking lot, minor improvements may be needed
- Trailhead sign

Allison Reservoir Loop

Ranked: 9th -- Score: 11 / 15

Trail Narrative: This approximately 4 mile route would connect existing hydroelectric infrastructure to Allison Reservoir, a large lake surrounded by alpine terrain.

Public needs met: This trail would fulfill the locally-expressed desire expressed for routes that go from below to above tree line. It would also provide the elevation gain desired by users who value fitness as a key component of trail use.

Additional benefits of this trail: This route could connect with other routes in the area to provide an extended alpine experience.

This route was popular in public meetings.

Feasibility Advantages: Much of this route currently exists as informal trails.

Challenges: Some portions of this route may be currently closed to the public due to security concerns.

Land Ownership: Land ownership needs to be confirmed and access agreements granted. This trail may cross City of Valdez, and State of Alaska land.

Agency and Potential Partners: DNR Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation; City of Valdez; Alyeska Pipeline

Next Steps:

1. Work with Pipeline, Hatchery, City of Valdez, and State of Alaska on trail permission and access issues and use of existing facilities
2. Complete layout and design of additional trail and ensure existing trail is sustainable
3. Utilize volunteers to fix current trail and hire a contractor to construct new trail
4. Work with partners above to develop a maintenance plan

Recommended Trail Management Objectives

- Trail Type - Summer (Terra)
- Trail Class - 3 Developed
- Designed Use - Hiker/ Pedestrian
- Managed Use - Hiker, bicycle, fatbike
- Prohibited Use - Motorized

Recommended Amenities

- Use existing facilities

1898 to Worthington Trail

Ranked: 10th -- Score: 11 /15

Trail Narrative: This is an approximately 8 mile loop that would connect the Worthington Glacier Visitor Center with the top of the Trail of 1898 in Thompson Pass. Half of the loop would run along the east side of the Richardson highway and half along the west side.

Public needs met: This trail would expand the recreation opportunities in Thompson Pass. It would also provide a loop trail. The vast majority of current hiking opportunities are short out and back trails.

This trail could have economic benefits for the City of Valdez by creating an additional offering for tourism companies. They could combine a moderate half day hiking opportunity with what they already have to offer.

Additional benefits of this trail: This trail could provide extended hiking opportunities. Hikers could utilize the main trail to access other alpine routes.

Feasibility Advantages: There are extant large parking lots on either end of the loop. There are restrooms at the Worthington Glacier Visitor Center.

Challenges: This would be a fairly long trail, and much of it would be new. This would make it expensive to develop.

Land Ownership: Land ownership needs to be confirmed and access agreements granted. This trail may cross State of Alaska land.

Agency and Potential Partners:

DNR Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation; City of Valdez; Valdez Museum & Historical Archive

Next Steps:

1. Obtain permission from State of Alaska to restore the trail
2. Work with state Alaska's State Historic Preservation Office to ensure compliance with National Historic Preservation Act
3. Use volunteers to try to locate the original trail bed
4. Ensure this trail bed does not cross private land
5. If the original trail is found, use volunteers to brush the trail and install any infrastructure to improve the trail
6. Figure out if there is a spot that can be used to ford the river, if not hire a trail builder to design and build new tread if necessary
7. Work with partners to develop maintenance plan
8. Consider renaming this as a single long continuous trail as individual section names are confusing.

Recommended Trail Management Objectives

- The TMO's should mirror the existing Wagon Trail and 1898 Trail

Recommended Amenities

- Integrate a trailhead into the existing Worthington Glacier Visitor Center, restrooms and parking already exist
- Install historical interpretive signs, taking into account existing signs on the two existing trails

Valdez: Glacier Trail

Ranked: 11th -- Score: 10 / 15

Trail Narrative: This approximately 2 mile trail would extend from the parking area around the west side of the Valdez Glacier Lake, providing additional views of the area.

Public needs met: The public has expressed interest in having more hiking/walking options in the Valdez Glacier area. This area is also relatively close to town, fulfilling the desire expressed by Valdez Parks and Recreation survey respondents to travel less than 5 miles for recreation on a weekday.

Additional benefits of this trail: This trail would expand the recreation opportunities available in this unique and popular area.

One section of the moraine is currently popular with dirt bikes and other motorized recreational vehicles. A separate hiking area would give both user groups the opportunity to be out of each other's way.

Feasibility Advantages: Much of this route is already existing; a few areas could be worked on to improve ease of access for a wider range of the general public.

This area has been identified as a high priority for developing recreation opportunities by the City of Valdez. Area residents have also expressed interest in expanding recreation opportunities in this area.

Challenges: There is a history of people leaving trash from parties in front of the glacier lake.

Land Ownership: Land ownership needs to be confirmed and access agreements granted. This trail may cross City of Valdez, and State of Alaska land.

Agency and Potential Partners:

DNR Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation; City of Valdez

Next Steps:

1. Confirm that the trail is sustainable and no reroutes are needed
2. Receive permission from State of Alaska to make this a formal trail
3. Use volunteers to improve portions of the trail
4. Create a trailhead with signs from the existing parking lot
5. Work with partners to develop maintenance plan

Recommended Trail Management Objectives

- Trail Type - Summer (Terra)
- Trail Class - 3 Developed
- Designed Use - Hiker/ Pedestrian
- Managed Use - Hiker/ Pedestrian
- Prohibited Use - Motorized

Recommended Amenities

- Use existing infrastructure at end of Glacier Campground Road

Trans-Alaska Trail

Ranked: 12th -- Score: 10 / 15

Trail Narrative: This is the pilot version of a longer trail that is proposed to travel the length of the Alyeska Pipeline. The initial section would run 66 miles from Valdez to the Little Tonsina River at MP 63, following the route of the Alyeska Pipeline.

Public needs met: There are very few extended trails throughout the state of Alaska. This is quite a large project that could provide employment for area residents.

Additional benefits of this trail: This trail could provide a conduit for non-motorized travel between different neighborhoods in the Valdez area.

Feasibility Advantages: This trail has support from multiple groups and individuals, including one of Alaska's state representatives. There is an organization in place dedicated to fundraising and public outreach for this specific trail.

The majority of the route is already well surveyed.

Challenges: This trail would pass close to numerous private inholdings, and in some instances the pipeline route passes through private land. Re-routes would need to be individually surveyed.

There are long sections of this trail that are not particularly scenic.

Access to pipeline infrastructure, and ongoing maintenance of pipeline infrastructure in the long term is not guaranteed.

River crossing infrastructure will be needed.

Land Ownership: Land ownership needs to be confirmed and access agreements granted. This trail may cross City of Valdez, State of Alaska land, and Bureau of Land Management land, is in a corridor leased by Alyeska Pipeline, and crosses through private property.

Agency and Potential Partners:

DNR Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation; City of Valdez; Alyeska Pipeline; Representative Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins; Valdez Adventure Alliance

Next Steps:

1. Engage with private landowners early on to make sure their questions and concerns are answered, and work with each individually to ensure the Trans-Alaska Trail makes a good neighbor from the very beginning.
2. Request access through the appropriate processes with each agency
3. Develop permitting process with Alyeska, permitting agencies, and landowners along the trail route
4. Obtain funding for major infrastructure projects like the notched area and hand trams
5. Create trailhead, signage, and explore ideas for cabins or yurts along the pilot trail

Recommended Trail Management Objectives

- Trail Type - Summer (Terra)/ Winter
- Trail Class - 4 already exists
- Designed Use - Hiker/ Pedestrian
- Managed Use - Hiker/ pedestrian; bicycle, fatbike, skier
- Prohibited Use -

Recommended Amenities

- Create camping locations for multiple day backpacking
- Outhouses (need to be maintained)
- Signage near private land, hazardous river crossings, Alyeska infrastructure, and access roads to the highway

Tiegel River to the Copper River

Ranked: 13th -- Score: 10 / 15

Trail Narrative: This approximately 14 mile route would connect the Tiegel River valley to the Copper River Valley. Once the trail reaches the Copper River Valley, travelers could connect on their own as far as Cordova, or too many destinations in the Wrangell St Elias or Chugach mountain ranges. The Tiegel

River has several spots that are not navigable by boat in summer, and that are open water for most of the winter.

Public needs met: Access to the Copper River from the Tiegel River would expand snowmachine access to a very wide range of territory that currently requires extremely lengthy or difficult travel to access. This route would create the potential for large loops throughout the Copper Valley, creating a world class attraction for long distance motorized and non-motorized travelers including fat bikers, snowmachiners, skiers, and others.

There are also few routes that provide extended cross-country ski opportunities in the Valdez area.

Additional benefits of this trail: Summer access would create the potential for packrafting and other multi-sport endeavors, which would bring adventure travelers from within and outside of Alaska.

This route could provide a corridor for mushers to access the Copper River, depending on the design parameters.

This route would create a backcountry connection between the Richardson Highway community and the communities of Chitina, McCarthy, Glennallen, and Cordova among others.

Feasibility Advantages: This trail was proposed by a highly motivated group of individuals who would provide much of the volunteer labor and small equipment (chainsaws, snowmachines, etc.) for this project.

Challenges: The length of this trail and the fact that almost all of it would be new trail could make it expensive. Access to the area is quite difficult; performing a survey will be challenging.

Land Ownership: Land ownership needs to be confirmed and access agreements granted. This trail may cross State of Alaska land, Bureau of Land Management land, and Native Patent land

Agency and Potential Partners: DNR Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation; BLM - Glennallen Field Office; Wrangell St. Elias National Park and Preserve; Valdez Snowmachine Club; Alaska State

Snowmobile Association; American Packrafting Association; residents and tourism businesses near 46 Mile, McCarthy, Copper Center, Glennallen, Chitina, Kennecott and Cordova.

Next Steps:

1. Create a collaborative planning group with interested partners
2. Work with partners and land managers to pick a route by exploring and creating gps tracks in the area
3. Confirm landowners
4. Request permission to start planning trail
5. If trail passes through federal land, work with landowner to initiate NEPA
6. Obtain funding and hire a trail professional to do the layout and design
7. Fundraise and write grants
8. Use a mix of professional trail builders with mechanized equipment and volunteers to build the trail
9. Work with partners to create a maintenance plan

Recommended Trail Management Objectives

- Trail Type - Summer (Terra)/ Winter
- Trail Class - 2
- Designed Use - Summer - Hiker Winter - snowmachine, fatbike
- Managed Use - Multi-use
- Prohibited Use - ATV

Recommended Amenities

- Main trailhead restrooms, kiosk, signs, and parking
- Multiple trailheads connecting cities
- Rustic camping

Billy Mitchell Access Trail

Ranked: 14th -- Score: 10 / 15

Trail Narrative: The main purpose of this trail is to provide a year-round crossing of the Tsaina River, allowing recreational users to access Mount Billy Mitchell throughout the year. The length of official trail required on either side of the bridge could be quite short.

Public needs met: Backcountry skiers currently access the mountain on foot. However, they rely on snow bridges to cross the river. During the early and late winter, the mountain itself is still skiable yet the river is open.

Additional benefits of this trail: A bridge across the river could also provide summer access to this distinctive mountain, including the prominent glacier in the bowl about halfway up the peak.

Feasibility Advantages: The trail itself would be maintained by locals to the area. The residents are seeking help primarily with the river crossing and are willing to contribute labor towards this project.

Challenges: A substantial bridge would be necessary to cross the Tsaina River, which is an expensive project. Design would have to ensure the bridge was rugged to all possible river conditions. This area is far outside of Valdez City limits, and the terrain is quite rugged.

Land Ownership: Land ownership needs to be confirmed and access agreements granted. This trail may cross State of Alaska land, Bureau of Land Management land, and Native Patent land

Agency and Potential Partners: 46 mile locals, Valdez Nordic Skiing Association; DNR Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation; BLM - Glennallen Field Office

Next Steps:

1. Choose a preferred location and alternative locations for the bridge
2. Work with land manager for permission
3. Seek assistance from land manager engineers or other professionals for best location and design of bridge
4. If on federal land work with agency to initiate NEPA
5. Seek grants and other funding to install bridge
6. Set up inspection schedule and maintenance plan with land manager

Recommended Trail Management Objectives

- Trail Type - Summer (Terra)/ Winter
- Trail Class - 2
- Designed Use - Summer - hiker Winter - backcountry skier,
- Managed Use - Hiker, backcountry skier, fatbike
- Prohibited Use - ATV

Recommended Amenities

- Bridge that is not in danger of being destroyed
- Trailhead parking and signs

Old Jeep Trail Extension

Ranked: 15th -- Score: 8 / 15

Trail Narrative: This 3-4 mile trail would connect the city campground to the bike path on the north side of the airport.

Public needs met: This trail could connect parts of the existing trail system, creating a large loop.

Over 60% of respondents to a recent Valdez Parks and Recreation Survey stated they would prefer to travel less than five miles to recreate on a weekday. Over 90% of these respondents identified recreation as "important" or "very important" to them. This trail would expand recreational opportunities close to town, extending the length of a bike, walk, or run for users.

Additional benefits of this trail: This trail would create more scenic access from town to the Valdez Glacier.

Feasibility Advantages: At least half of this trail is already existing. It may be possible to locate an old road bed for much of the remainder.

Challenges: Closer to the Duck Flats, it will be necessary to ensure that the migratory bird habitat is not disturbed.

Precautions are needed to avoid interfering with restricted areas or airport security.

Land Ownership: Land ownership needs to be confirmed and access agreements granted. The trail may cross City of Valdez land and State of Alaska

Agency and Potential Partners: Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities; DNR Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation; City of Valdez; Valdez Glacier Campground

Next Steps:

1. Work with Work with Alaska DOT P&F discover if there are any areas that restricted near the airport
2. Obtain permission for the trail from State of Alaska
3. Choose a route from the end of the existing portion of the trail that connects with the bike path, be cognizant of any private land
4. Use volunteers to construct the trail
5. Utilize fill where necessary to harden the trail to accept bicycle traffic
6. Install directional signage at campground and on bike path
7. Work with partners to develop a maintenance plan

Recommended Trail Management Objectives

- Trail Type - Summer
- Trail Class - 3
- Designed Use - bicycle/ fatbike
- Managed Use - Hiker/ Pedestrian, bicycle, fatbike, Nordic skier
- Prohibited Use - Motorized

Recommended Amenities

- Directional signs near bike path intersection and in the campground
- Bicycle station in the campground

Duck Flats Trail

Ranked: 16th -- Score: 6 / 15

Trail Narrative: This trail could connect components of the existing trail system with 3 to 4 miles of new trail that begin at Porcupine Street and run across slopes and bluffs towards Valdez Glacier Lake.

Public needs met: This trail would extend the existing trail system by creating a large loop utilizing the bike path and potentially the recreational trails and roads near the Valdez Glacier.

Over 60% of respondents to a recent Valdez Parks and Recreation Survey stated they would prefer to travel less than five miles to recreate on a weekday. Over 90% of these respondents identified recreation as "important" or "very important" to them. This trail would expand recreational opportunities close to town, extending the length of a bike, walk, or run for users.

Additional benefits of this trail: Alpine spurs could potentially be created off of the north side of this trail.

Feasibility Advantages: This trail would increase biking opportunities locally, which could stimulate volunteerism among biking enthusiasts.

Challenges: Closer to the Duck Flats, it will be necessary to ensure that the migratory bird habitat is not disturbed.

Depending on the route, some areas may require boardwalk, which is expensive to install and requires maintenance.

Land Ownership: Land ownership needs to be confirmed and access agreements granted. This trail may cross State of Alaska, City of Valdez and University of Alaska land. The University of Alaska land may change hands to the State of Alaska.

Agency and Potential Partners:

DNR Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation; City of Valdez; University of Alaska

Next Steps:

1. Discuss this idea with the closest landowners to determine whether they would see the trail as a beneficial or harmful project
2. Create a simple concept map with residents and City of Valdez to identify where the trail should go
3. Identify any key habitat and wetlands and mitigate as necessary
4. Apply for grants or obtain funding for professional layout and design
5. Apply for RTP and other grants for construction
6. Hire a contractor to construct trail
7. Work with potential partners above to develop a maintenance plan

Recommended Trail Management Objectives

- Trail Type - Summer
- Trail Class - 3
- Designed Use - bicycle/ fatbike
- Managed Use - Hiker, bicycle, fatbike and Nordic skier
- Prohibited Use - Motorized

Recommended Amenities

- Interpretive signs educating users about the various habitats accessed by this trail
- Benches and bike racks for family use