

Committee Chairman

Dave Zastrow

Committee Secretary

Wendy Ranney

Committee Members

Toni Godes

Michelle Hahn

Ryan Schuetze

Elizabeth Senear

Parks & Recreation

Director

Duncan Chisholm

The City of Cordova
Trails Committee

Regular Meeting

July 21, 2023 @ 6:00 pm

The Cordova Center

City Council Chambers

AGENDA

A. Call to Order and Roll Call

B. Approval of Regular Agenda

C. Correspondence/Visitors

1. Presentation of Correspondence
2. Invited Visitors Presentations

D. Discussion Items

1. Expanding trails committee members from six (6) members to seven (7) members
2. Review draft RTCA "Comprehensive Trails Plan Template" document
3. Review draft "Cordova Trails Plan Outline" document
4. Review committee member assignments for trails plan writing and data gathering

E. Election of Officers

1. Election of Committee Chairman
2. Election of Committee Secretary

F. Next meeting date & place/agenda items

G. Adjournment

If you have a disability that makes it difficult to attend city-sponsored functions, you may contact 424-6200 for assistance

Full City Committee agendas and packets available online at www.cityofcordova.net

City of Cordova

Comprehensive Trails Plan 2023



Contributors

City of Cordova

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Cordova Trails Committee

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Chugach National Forest, Cordova Ranger District

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The Eyak Corporation

Tiffany Beedle, Lands Manager

Community Members

Sheridan Alpine Association - Dave Branshaw, Paul Swartzbart, John Williams, Heath Kocan, Steve Vican

Cordova Historical Society

Cordova Covered Spaces Project - Natasha Casciano, Dotty Widman

Cover photo: Liz (Elizabeth) Senear

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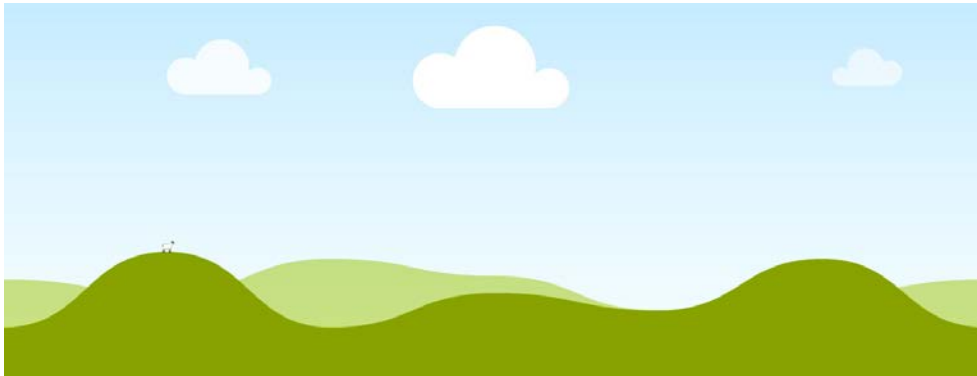
Introduction

Cordova's trail system is a valuable community resource. The trails allow residents and visitors access to pristine and undisturbed areas within a variety of natural environments. Near town trails provide accessible opportunities for residents to exercise, walk their dogs and decompress. This proximity to town allows visitors to experience the spectacular scenery around Cordova. Trails outside of the immediate downtown area can be accessed by bike, walking, or vehicle.

Cordova's trails provide a range of walks from gentle shoreline strolls, moderate climbs to strenuous alpine hikes. These trails provide for a variety of experiences from beginner to those who demand more challenging hikes. Most of the trails within this system are multi-purpose, providing access for a variety of users including backpackers, campers, climbers, hikers, mountain bikers, skiers, snowshoers and subsistence users. ATV use and snow machine activities are also available on some of the trails within the recreation system. Cordova's tradition of respecting the rights of each group's use of these trails and common courtesy make for a friendly outdoor experience.

The purpose of this document is to record each of these trails, to develop a management plan which ensures the basic trail infrastructure is safe, usable and the best it can be. Priorities are based upon public comment and the desire for safe, enriching outdoor experiences. Proposed projects are based upon improving user safety, developing trail connectivity from the port of Cordova to existing trail systems, improving mapping, wayfinding and trail amenities and including traditional Tlingit place names in current and future trail names and signage.

Executive Summary



One major goal that we would like to achieve is the desire of the community to create greater connectivity between existing trails so that users may move thru the system in a safer and more diverse manner. as the community grows it is important to establish new safe corridors for travel around the community.

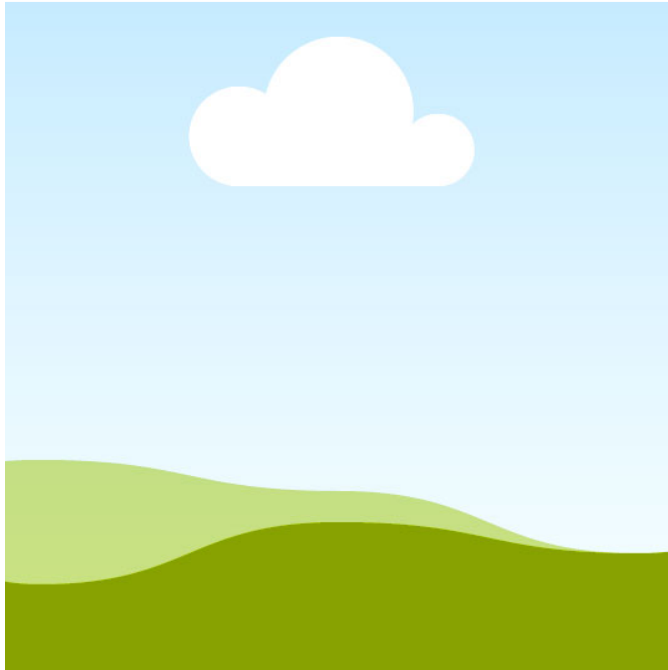
Natural Environment

Geography

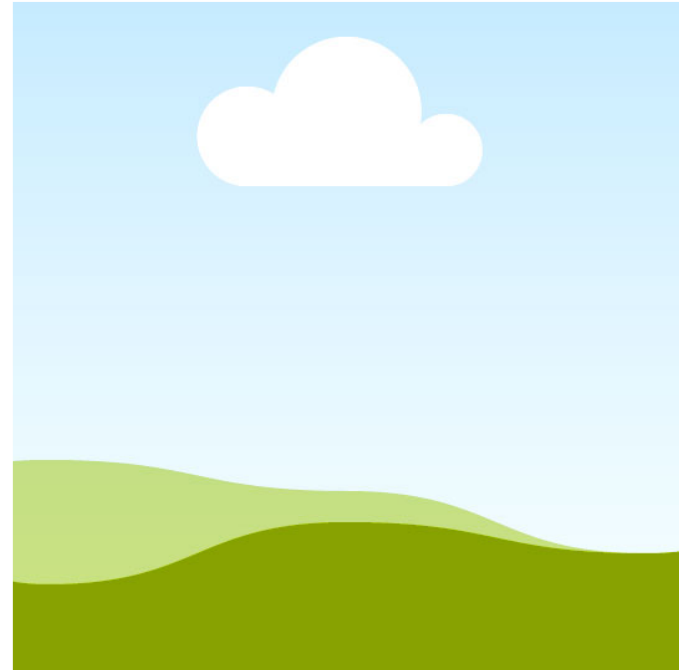
Within the Chugach National Forest, Cordova is nestled in a coastal temperate rainforest that stretches 1000 miles from the Canadian Border to the island of Kodiak. It has a total area of 61 square miles, over 23% of which is water. Sitting on Orca inlet in the southeast portion of Prince William Sound, Hawkins Island is directly to the west and to the east - the Copper River Delta - a 35 square mile wetland complex providing critical habitat for migratory birds, salmon and numerous other species of wildlife.

Located within the Chugach National Forest, Cordova and vicinity is the ancestral homelands of the Eyak **dAXunhyuu** ("the people"). The Copper River Highway (AK-10) begins at the Alaska Marine Highway ferry terminal and passes through downtown Cordova, connecting the majority of the city's 2600 residents through several small city or state maintained roads. The highway crosses over the Eyak River and proceeds to Merle K. Mudhole Smith airport at mile 13. It continues to the east across the Copper River Delta, then north crossing a series of bridges, eventually coming to an end at mile 50 and the Million Dollar Bridge. Erosion caused by shifting river currents created a washout at mile 36 in 2011 and has since been unpassable by wheeled vehicles.

Natural Environment



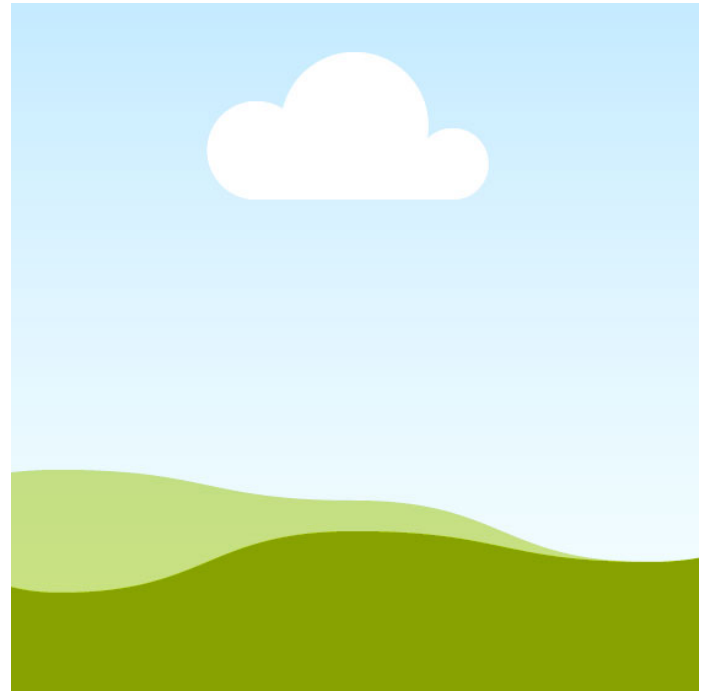
Ecology



Flora & Fauna

Historical & Cultural Aspects

Historical & Cultural Aspects



Historical & Cultural Aspects

Historical & Cultural Aspects

Early Trail Development & Management

Needs and Benefits of Trails

Current & Projected Community Needs

- Health and Wellness
 - An increase in screen time has created a disconnect to our outside world. Connecting with nature has many measurable health benefits. Studies show more time spent in green spaces reduces stress levels, cortisol levels, muscle tension, and heart rates - all leading to better cardiovascular health.
 - In addition to physical wellness, green spaces and a connection to nature plays an important role in mental wellness. There is a lower risk of depression and faster psychological stress recovery.
 - Trails and spaces for people to gather are more crucial in today's world with isolation being another epidemic we are facing. In coastal Alaska, the amount of rain can have a negative effect on mental health, and giving more space for individuals to gather with friends and get outside to connect with the community and nature is enough of a propellant to create a comprehensive trails plan.
- Youth Engagement
 - The many benefits of outdoor recreation aren't exclusive to adults. Youth have full access to the internet and social media, and it disconnects them from their peers and negatively affects their mental health. Having a space to disconnect and reconnect with peers is essential to any community. Recreation is crucial for the social-emotional development of youth. Having a system of trail and recreation sites outside creates socialization opportunities for youth.
 - There are several studies on the effects of regular engagement with nature and the positive development of kids and youth.
 - Youth who engage with nature are more physically fit and in better overall health. One hour outside in nature can lead to significant improvements in youth's overall moods. It can also increase self-esteem and problem-solving skills.
 - Youth who spend more time recreating outside have higher academic achievement and brain function. It also increases creativity while decreasing behavior problems due to an overall decrease in stress.
 - Youth who spend more time outside have a connection to and care for nature and this carries into adulthood. Time spent outside as a youth as well as having role models who care for the environment have a positive correlation to environmental stewardship in adults.

Needs and Benefits of Trails

Current & Projected Community Needs

- Economy
 - Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting are the primary industries. Cordova's economy relies heavily on commercial fishing. Fish harvesting and processing provides jobs to over half of the households in Cordova. The retail industry, public administration, healthcare and social assistance follow behind.
 - Trails and recreation are an important part of getting those people involved in the community and connecting them to the place they work in every day. There are several members of the community who would love to see more covered spaces and places to gather when it is raining out. Trails close to town are important for seasonal workers without transportation to get outside and recreate as well as see all Cordova has to offer. They are also important for families with kids. More covered spaces and trails within walking distance from town make it easy to get outside after work and school and create a healthy balance of incorporating time outside in nature with their hectic schedules.
 - Cordova's economy is heavily dependent on commercial fishing. The town doubles in size each season. With very little tourism, having a trail system is beneficial to the local retail and arts/entertainment industries.
- Transportation
 - Cordova has a lot of kids and people milling about and walking in the streets, with little traffic control especially in the summer months. Having more trails in town may reduce foot traffic in areas that don't have any sidewalks or good places to walk. It would be safer and give people more/safer opportunities to commute by bike or foot.
 - Developing trails in town would also give more hiking opportunities to people who may not have access to a vehicle or a way to get to some of the trails off the road. Developing trails closer to town also makes it more accessible to go for a walk at lunch or take the kids or dog on a hike during a busy day.

Overview of Planning Process



Planning Team

City of Cordova Parks & Rec; Cordova Trails Ad Hoc Committee

July 2021

Assess existing trails and conditions

January 2022 - October 2022

Values, Mission, Vision, Goals, Stakeholder Assessment; Public Outreach; Drafting Plan

Summer 2022 - Public Outreach Phase 1

Letter to land managers; Newspaper Announcements; Public Flyer and Online Surveys; Tabling at Local Events

Fall 2022 - Public Outreach Phase 2

Open House Meeting; Survey; Interactive Map; Meeting with Land Managers

Spring 2023 - Public Outreach Phase 3

March 2023

Design Charrette in Cordova attended by RTCA, Nancy Casey, Cordova Trails Ad Hoc Committee; Cordova Parks and Rec, Sheridan Alpine Association. Site walks to proposed covered shelter locations and proposed ski hill trails.

Summer 2023

Trails assessment

Public Involvement

Methods

Committee Meetings

XXXXXX

Stakeholder Meetings

XXXX

Results

Draft Review and Comments

XXXX



CORDOVA TRAILS

THE CITY OF CORDOVA TRAILS COMMITTEE IS CREATING A COMPREHENSIVE TRAIL PLAN.

WE WANT YOUR INPUT!

Our Vision
An inclusive, holistic, and well-managed local trail system that meets the diverse needs of the Cordova community and fosters connections through shared stewardship.

Plan Focus
We are looking at trail maintenance, improvement and development, increased accessibility and diversifying trail uses, funding opportunities, and trails advocacy.

Community Input
We look forward to engaging with the community to hear your thoughts. Follow the QR code to take a quick survey!

Contact Planning Team at:
cordovatrails@gmail.com

City of Cordova
ALASKA



Cordova Trails Open House

When Tuesday, September 20th, 11am to 8pm.
Speaker and raffle prizes start at 6pm.

Where The Cordova Center, Lower Atrium

The City of Cordova Trails Committee wants your input on the future of Cordova's trails!

- This event will be an opportunity to discuss your ideas for trails, write them down, and put them on the map.
- Bring the kids! A map coloring activity will be provided.
- Coffee, tea, and cookies provided 6pm to 8pm.

Featuring... A FREE BIKE GIVEAWAY
From Cordova Gear

And enter to win... A free night at a cabin!

Contact for more information or accommodations:
cordovatrails@gmail.com

City of Cordova
ALASKA

Can't make the event? Take the survey and use the interactive map!

Values

Community: We embrace the inclusive and diverse community of Cordova.

Stewardship: We steward our assets and resources thoughtfully.

Opportunity: We create opportunities to connect places, people, ideas, and resources.

Kinship with Life: We embody the instinctive need to seek out natural places for rejuvenation and connection



Mission and Vision

The Mission of The Cordova Trails Committee is to create, enhance, maintain, and fund a community-driven, inspiring, and varied trail system for the benefit of all Cordovans and visitors.

The Vision is to have an inclusive, holistic, and well-managed local trail system that meets the diverse needs of the Cordova community and fosters connections through shared stewardship.

Goals

Goal 1: More and Better Trails

Priority is given to finish existing trails, expand existing trail system and construct new trails

Goal 2: Inclusive Trails

Creating connectivity from dock to trails, through town walking paths. Increase trail accessibility for all user groups.

Goal 3: Partnership and Collaboration

Establish successful collaboration with community stakeholders for the stewardship of Cordova's trail system by working with landowners for example, FS, City, NVE, Sheridan, etc. Accommodate community desires and encourage community support. Establish a work plan, organize volunteer groups and advocate trail use through tourism.

Goal 4: Trail Organization, Management, and Maintenance

Facilitate a governance group charged with the oversight, implementation, and management of Cordova's trail system. Develop consistent design & classification standards, wayfinding, and signage for existing and new trails. Establish sustainable trail management (sustainable trail construction/design, workforce, funding), and maintain a trail inventory document.

Goal 5: Funding

Identify and secure the financial resources to maintain, expand, and develop Cordova's trail system now and into the future. Create a 5 year plan - including maintenance and identify funding sources. Keep a record of funding opportunities & associated filing system and create documents to help apply for grants

Existing Conditions

Trail Users

Hikers

Cordova is a hiker and backpacker friendly destination. The trail system is easily accessible from town. Cordova's trail systems offer a wide variety of trail difficulties for hikers of all abilities.

The trails access coastline, lakes, and a variety of ecosystems including, temperate, boreal, sub alpine, alpine and glacier. There is something for everyone! Climbers and paddlers also utilize the trail system to access crags, bouldering, frozen waterfalls, and rivers.

ATV

In Cordova All-Terrain Vehicles (ATVs), and motorcycles that are not licensed for use on the highways are the predominant off-road vehicles used. In most areas the organic material is 6-12 inches thick and acts as topsoil, beneath which lies a rocky gravel base. Due to their contribution to erosion and effect on plant life, trails supporting ATV use can most benefit from sustainable layout, surface hardening where required, and natural features that help to maintain trail alignment, while minimizing impacts on surrounding resources.

Bicyclists

The needs of trail bicyclists vary based on their experience and familiarity of the trail network. Casual trail bikers might prefer a wide trail that allows passing and side-by-side riding. Bicyclists may also prefer smooth, compact surfaces or paved surfaces with gentle to minimal slopes. Aggressive trail bikers, on the other hand, might enjoy more challenging trail experiences including the thrill of a narrow, single track trail, just wide enough to allow passage of one bicycle.

Existing Conditions

Trail Users

Skiers

Skiing is a primary form of winter recreation and will continue to grow as trail improvements and grooming efforts improve.

Thanks to the dedication and efforts of the Sheridan Alpine Association trails are becoming a reality. There are several areas that are being proposed for trail expansion and establishment.

There is world class backcountry skiing in and around Cordova and cabins to support shelter in these areas. There is a desire from the backcountry community to explore and expand areas within the Cordova Borough.

Snowmachiners

Snowmachiners technically do not require actual trails to operate, many snowmachiners prefer to operate along trails for orientation and familiarity. It is preferable for snow machines to operate along trails, minimizing the potential damage to vegetation with thin snow cover. Snowmachine trails consist of heavily compacted snow and are typically 10'-15' in width. General routes have been developed over time, though these routes change frequently due to conditions.

Snowshoers

Snowshoers typically prefer to walk on snow with at least an 8" base. Snowshoers use existing trails to gain access to the backcountry. Snowshoes perform poorly on ice and steep terrain. Therefore, most users prefer to walk along trails that have minimal changes in grade or go off-trail to maintain level elevations and avoid ice.

Subsistence Users

Existing Conditions

Trail Amenities

Signage

Municipal trails use color coded directional symbols to assist in navigation. The National Park Service and Forest Service trails each have their own signage. Alpine trails are not signed, and rock cairns are typically used but are not well developed, use caution!

Outhouses

Existing Conditions

Trail Amenities

Cabins

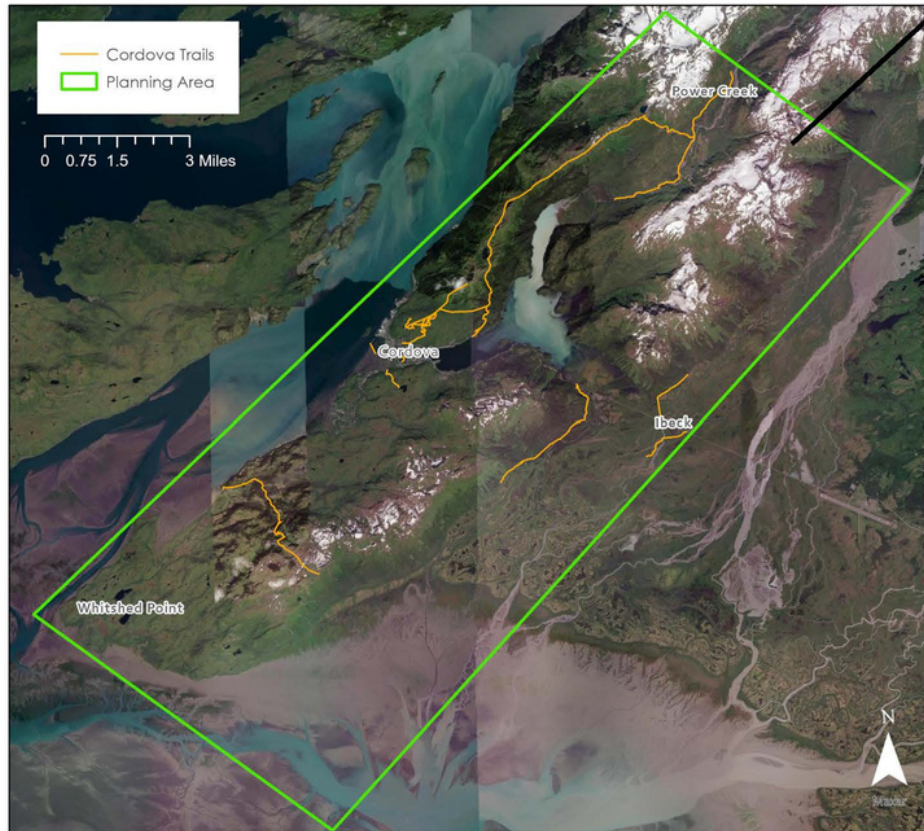
Trail Classification

Trail Classes are general categories reflecting a trails development, arranged along a continuum. The Trail Class identified for the Cordova trail system prescribes its development scale, representing its intended design and management standards. Deviations from any Trail Class descriptor may be established based on trail-specific conditions, topography, or other factors, provided that the deviations do not undermine the general intent of the applicable Trail Class. This matrix is based on the established system used by the United States Forest Service (USFS). All MOS trails will have an identified class and are maintained to such standards:



Cordova Formal Trails – Existing Condition

Cordova Planning Area Map



The area in green highlights the intended planning area for the Cordova Trails Plan. At the northern edge, the area includes Power Creek Trail, and at the southern end follows the trails off Whitshed Road.

The area currently includes a total of 17 formal trails, nearly 30 miles of maintained trails. There are multiple landowners across the planning area, namely US Forest Service, Eyak Corporation, State of Alaska, and the City of Cordova.

Below, each of the 17 trails are outlined in more detail with trail data and supporting map.

Cordova Formal Trails – Existing Condition

Breakwater Trail

The Breakwater trail provides the best access to Cordova's bustling harbor and views of ocean life right in town. The trail starts at a small day use site with a picnic table garbage receptacle. The 3-foot wide trail allows pedestrians to walk along the harbor's edge, ending with interpretive signage from Cordova Parks and Recreation Department and a bench for visitors to use. The trail is in close proximity to Cordova's amenities, as well as harbor restroom facilities. The maintained trail ends before the breakwater turns towards the northeast, at 0.25 mi.

Location	In-Town 60.54357, -145.76956
Land Ownership	City of Cordova
Management Agency	City of Cordova (Parks and Rec. Dept.)
Trail Length	0.23 mi
Elevation Gain	0 ft
Min/Max Altitude	0 ft
Trail Type	Terra
Class	4
Current Use	Pedestrian
Designed Use	Pedestrian
Managed Use	?
Prohibited Use	?
Trail Facilities	Harbor facilities include bathrooms; Signage featured at far North end of breakwater picnic table and garbage receptacle.
Color on Map	Purple



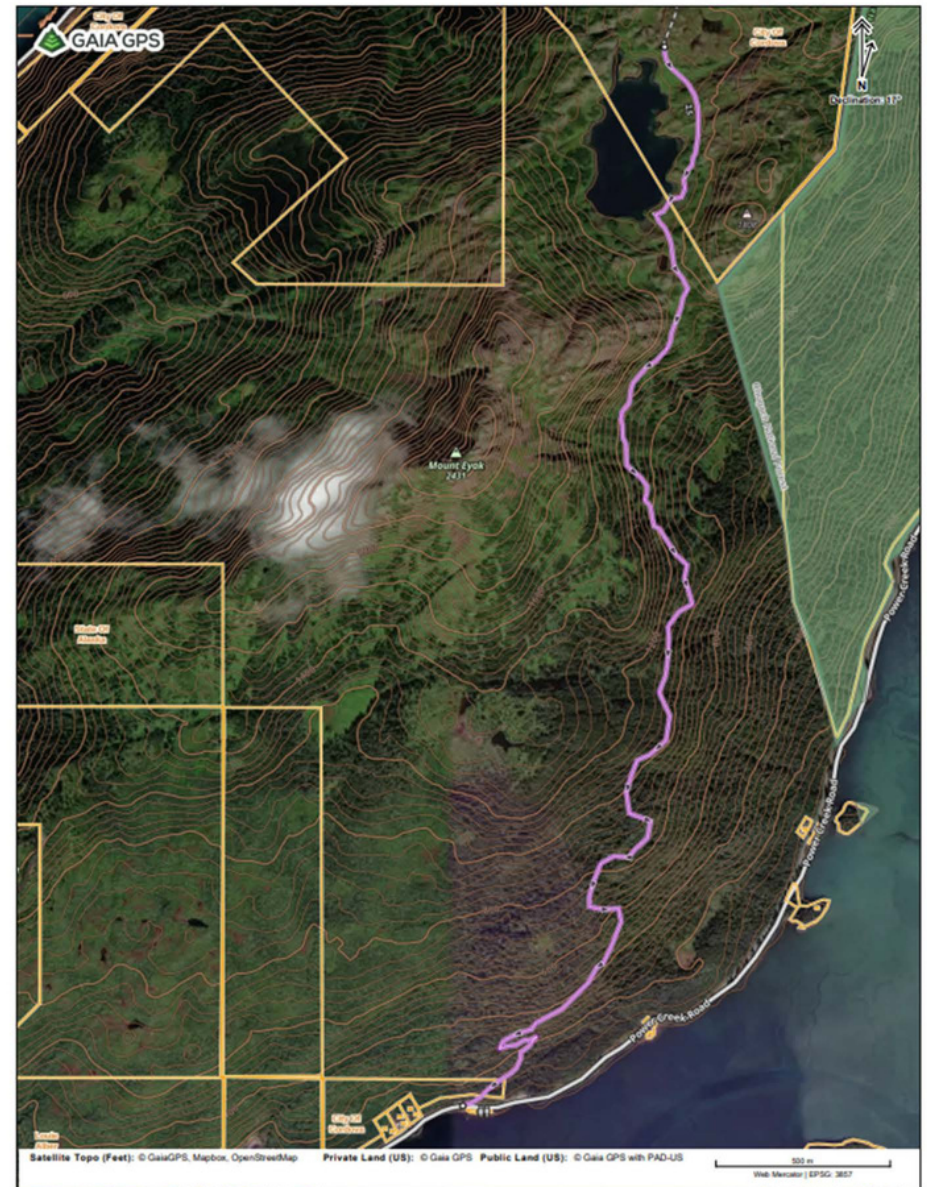
Cordova Formal Trails – Existing Condition

Crater Lake Trail

This trail begins at Skaters Cabin and vehicle pullout. The trail climbs a steep grade passing through mature spruce-hemlock forest to a picturesque alpine bowl where Crater Lake sits.

The first half climbs over rough, rocky sections with numerous switchbacks, and muddy areas as well as wood bridges. The second half continues to climb, but at a gentler grade, through hillsides that are abundant with wildflowers during the summer months. A bench is provided midway up the trail for a great view of Eyak Lake. At 1.2 miles O' Leary Loop Intertie Trail provides access to the Eyak Ski Hill Trail. At the lake the hiker has the option to access the Alice Smith Intertie or climb Mt. Eyak. The entire loop from Crater Lake trailhead to Power Creek trailhead is 12 miles ([USFS](#)).

Location	Mt. Eyak Area Trailhead at 60.54685, -145.70853
Land Ownership	State of Alaska
Management Agency	USFS
Trail Length	2.15 mi
Elevation Gain	1687 ft
Min/Max Altitude	Min 97 ft; Max 1520 ft
Trail Type	Terra
Class	3
Current Use	Hiking, Skiing
Designed Use	Hiking, Skiing
Managed Use	Hiking, Skiing
Prohibited Use	Bicycles, OHVs, Dog Sledding, Horses
Trail Facilities	USFS signage, City of Cordova Skaters Cabin with garbage receptacle and vault toilet.
Color on Map	Pink



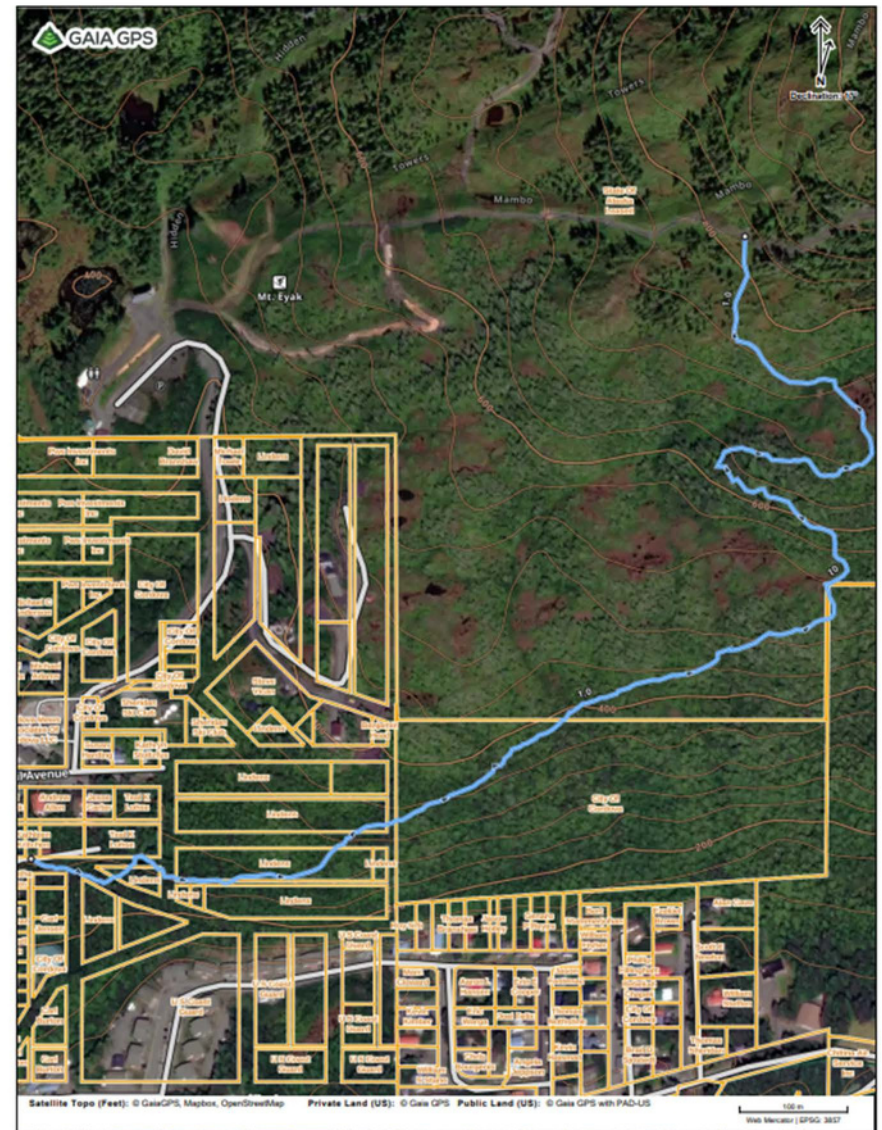
Cordova Formal Trails – Existing Condition

Include or remove??

Evergreen Trail

This historic trail begins where town meets the forest, passing through a mature spruce-hemlock forest before reaching open muskeg fields with stunning views of Cordova Harbor and Eyak Lake. The trail is a consistent, steady climb over rocks and roots, often crossing small inlets of flowing water. The trail brings hikers to the Mambo Ski trail, also to a flat area with a great viewpoint, looking south. **Eyak Mountain Trail** can be combined with the trails of the Mt. Eyak Ski Hill and further on to the Eyak Peak Trail, **O'Leary Loop Trail**, and on to Crater Lake trails for a more challenging loop.

Location	Mt. Eyak Area Trailhead at 60.54515, -145.75162
Land Ownership	State of Alaska
Management Agency	City of Cordova (leased)
Trail Length	1 mi
Elevation Gain	646 ft
Min/Max Altitude	Min. 236 ft ; Max. 732 ft
Trail Type	Terra
Class	3
Current Use	Hiking
Designed Use	Hiking
Managed Use	Hiking/Biking
Prohibited Use	
Trail Facilities	Parking lot at Trailhead; signage board at trailhead with and 8"x11" map
Color on Map	Blue



Cordova Formal Trails – Existing Condition

Eyak River Trail

This trail follows the west bank of the Eyak River for one quarter mile through mature Sitka spruce forest before opening into rolling muskeg meadows. At mile 1.5 the trail reunites with Eyak River for the remainder of the distance before reaching Mountain Slough. At the end of the trail the flora composition changes to a typical delta habitat of dense alder and grasses. This is a popular access site for anglers during the coho salmon season from August to mid-September. The trail is muddy and wet in places, especially after heavy rain. Portions of this trail are “17(b)” easements. [\(USFS\)](#)

Location	Out of Town, Copper River Highway
Land Ownership	Eyak Corp
Management Agency	USFS (easement)
Trail Length	3.20 mi
Elevation Gain	1031 ft
Min/Max Altitude	Min. 24 ft; Max. 194 ft
Trail Type	Terra
Class	3
Current Use	Hiking
Designed Use	Hiking
Managed Use	Hiking
Prohibited Use	Bicycles
Trail Facilities	Signage at trailhead; Parking available in a large pullout across the Copper River Highway
Color on Map	Green



Cordova Formal Trails – Existing Condition

Mambo Ski Trail

This wide ski route/trail leads up over rocky slopes that offer a great view of Eyak Lake and the Orca Inlet. A little less than $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile, the trail ends at Midway Shack where you can adventure towards the top of Tripod Hill and have a choice of going around the south end of Mt. Eyak to connect with the USFS Crater Lake Trail or make the steep climb to the top for an excellent panoramic view. The trail is designed for winter use but during the other seasons, you can see residents and visitors hiking and biking up the trail. During the winter, winter recreation users can ride the single seat chair lift to the top and shred down the trail. The Sheridan Alpine Association maintains the trails throughout the year and when snow is not on the trail, it has sections of gravel, grass, dirt, and woodchips with moderate to steep incline. Walking on the trail, hikers can find Alaskan berries to snack on along the corridor and picnic tables at the top of Midway Shack and Tripod Hill.

Location	Mt. Eyak Area Base of Run @ 60.54982, -145.74847
Land Ownership	State of Alaska
Management Agency	City of Cordova (lease); Sheridan Alpine Association
Trail Length	0.67 mi
Elevation Gain	788 ft
Min/Max Altitude	Min. 376 ft; Max. 1047 ft
Trail Type	Winter
Class	
Current Use	Downhill ski run, hiking, biking
Designed Use	Downhill ski run
Managed Use	Downhill ski run
Prohibited Use	?
Trail Facilities	Single seat chairlift; parking lot and ski hill amenities
Color on Map	Blue



Cordova Formal Trails – Existing Condition

Heney Ridge Trail

The first section of trail follows the contour of Hartney Bay and offers excellent birdwatching and wildlife spotting opportunities. Spawning salmon may also be viewed from mid-July to August. The first mile of trail is a “17(b)” easement.* The next two miles moderately climb through spruce-hemlock forest and muskeg areas scattered with wildflowers. The last mile is a steep climb onto Heney Ridge following rock cairns above treeline. Once on the ridge you are treated to spectacular views of the Copper River Delta, the Prince William Sound, and Kayak Island (on clear days). There are many unique wood structures to assist hikers with traversing the varied terrain. The trail is muddy and wet in places, especially after heavy rain ([USFS](#)).

Location	Out of Town, Whittshed Road
Land Ownership	Eyak Corp, State of Alaska, USFS
Management Agency	USFS (easement)
Trail Length	3.88 mi
Elevation Gain	2487 ft
Min/Max Altitude	Min. 14 ft; Max. 1894 ft
Trail Type	Terra
Class	3
Current Use:	Hiking
Designed Use	Hiking
Managed Use	Hiking
Prohibited Use	Bicycles, OHVs
Trail Facilities	USFS Signage at Trailhead
Color on Map	Orange

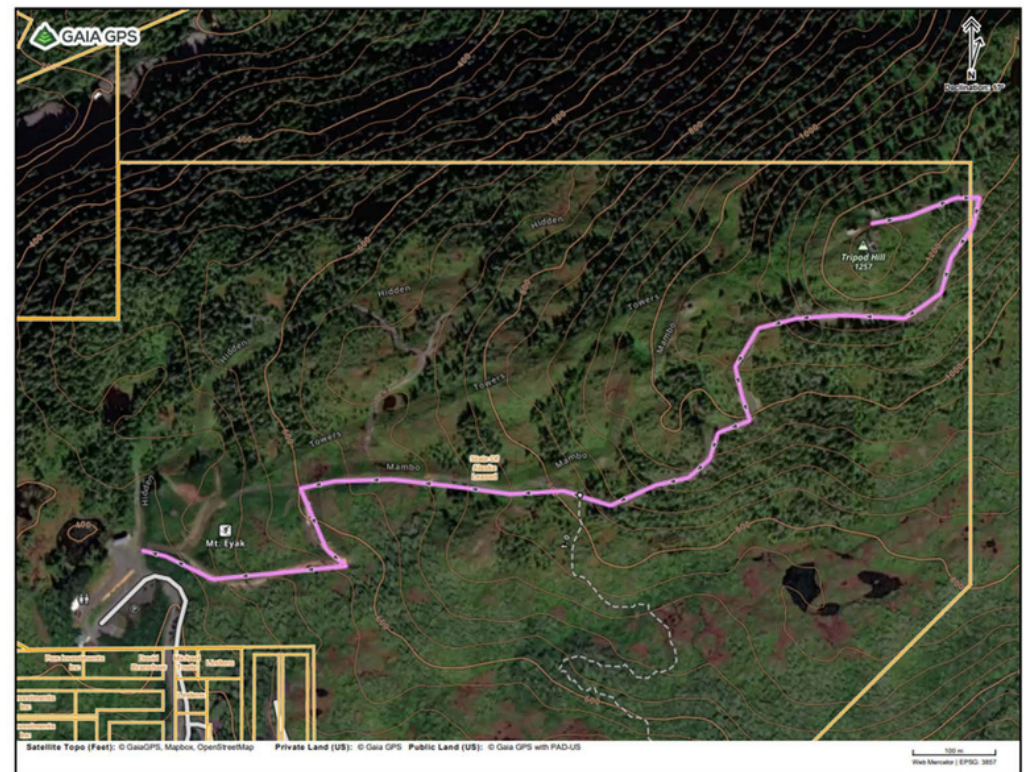


Cordova Formal Trails – Existing Condition

CAT Route @ Ski Trails

This route is maintained by the Sheridan Alpine Association (SAA) to serve maintenance needs in both summer and winter. It is open to visitors and provides great views of both Orca Inlet and Mt. Eyak from the top of Tripod Hill. The road is a fully gravel surface, bringing walkers to the top stop for the Mt. Eyak chairlift and the warming shelter. Users can find a picnic table at the summit of Tripod Hill for public use and great 360 degree views. The trail is designed for winter use but during the other seasons, you can see residents and visitors hiking and biking up the trail. During the winter, winter recreation users can ride the single seat chair lift to the top and shred down the trail.

Location	Mt. Eyak Area Base of Road @ 60.55063, -145.74075
Land Ownership	State of Alaska
Management Agency	City of Cordova (lease); Sheridan Alpine Association; End of CAT trail exits leased area onto State Land
Trail Length	0.59 mi
Elevation Gain	445 ft
Min/Max Altitude	Min. 756 ft; Max. 1183 ft
Trail Type	Winter and Road
Class	?
Current Use	Downhill ski run, hiking, biking
Designed Use	Downhill ski run and maintenance road
Managed Use	Downhill ski run
Prohibited Use	?
Trail Facilities	Single seat chairlift; parking lot and ski hill amenities
Color on Map	Pink

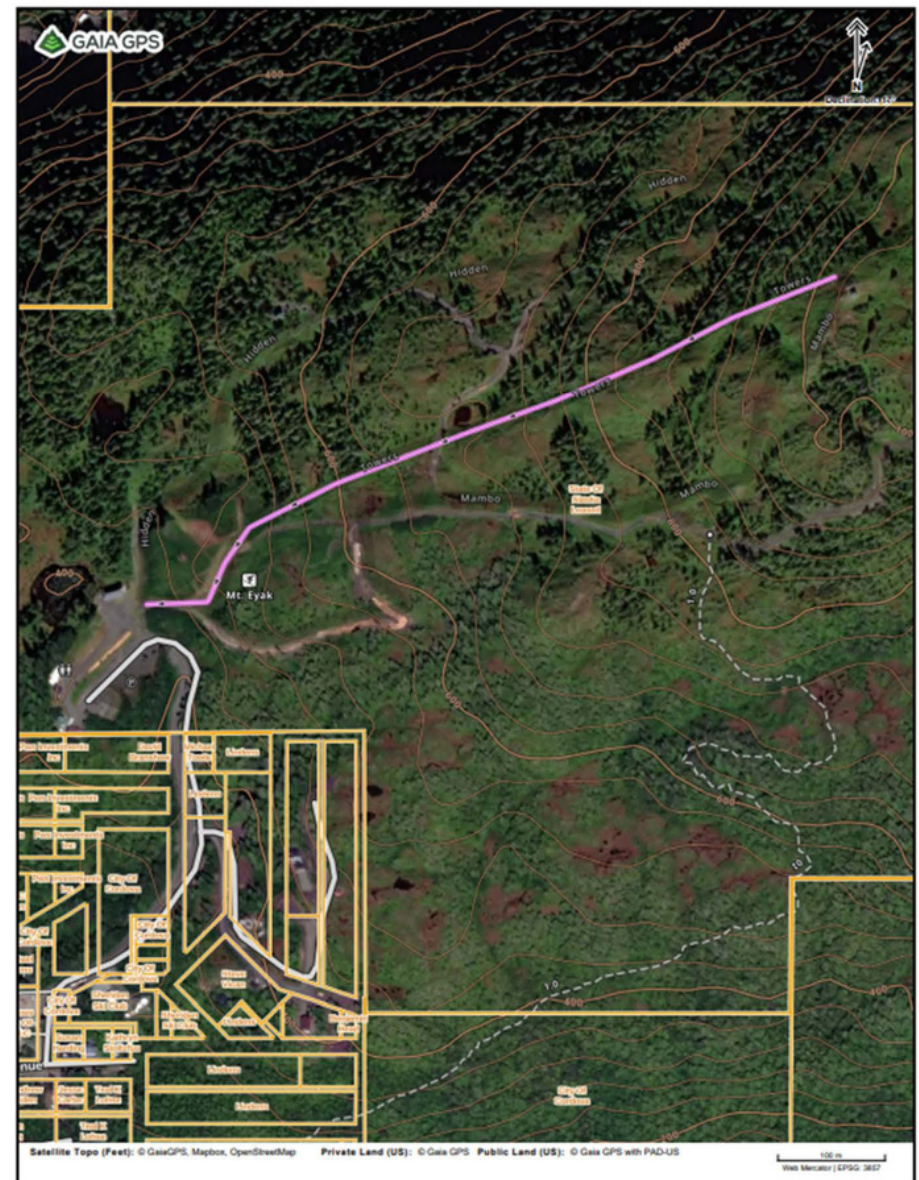


Cordova Formal Trails – Existing Condition

Towers Ski Trail

Running on the ground under the historic Mt. Eyak Chairlift, the Towers trail is the direct route up to the Midway Hut, the first place for skiers to dismount the lift. The trail is designed for winter use but during the other seasons, you can see residents and visitors hiking and biking up the trail. During the winter, winter recreation users can ride the single seat chair lift to the top and shred down the trail. The Sheridan Alpine Association maintains the trails throughout the year and when snow is not on the trail, it has sections of gravel, grass, dirt, and woodchips with moderate to steep incline. Walking on the trail, hikers can find Alaskan berries to snack on along the corridor and picnic tables at the top of Midway Shack and Tripod Hill.

Location	Mt. Eyak Area Base of Run @ 60.54985, -145.74947
Land Ownership	State of Alaska
Management Agency	City of Cordova (lease); Sheridan Alpine Association
Trail Length	0.46 mi
Elevation Gain	681 ft
Min/Max Altitude	Min. 374 ft; Max. 1033 ft
Trail Type	Winter
Class	?
Current Use	Downhill ski run
Designed Use	Downhill ski run
Managed Use	Downhill ski run
Prohibited Use	?
Trail Facilities	Single seat chairlift; parking lot and ski hill amenities
Color on Map	Pink

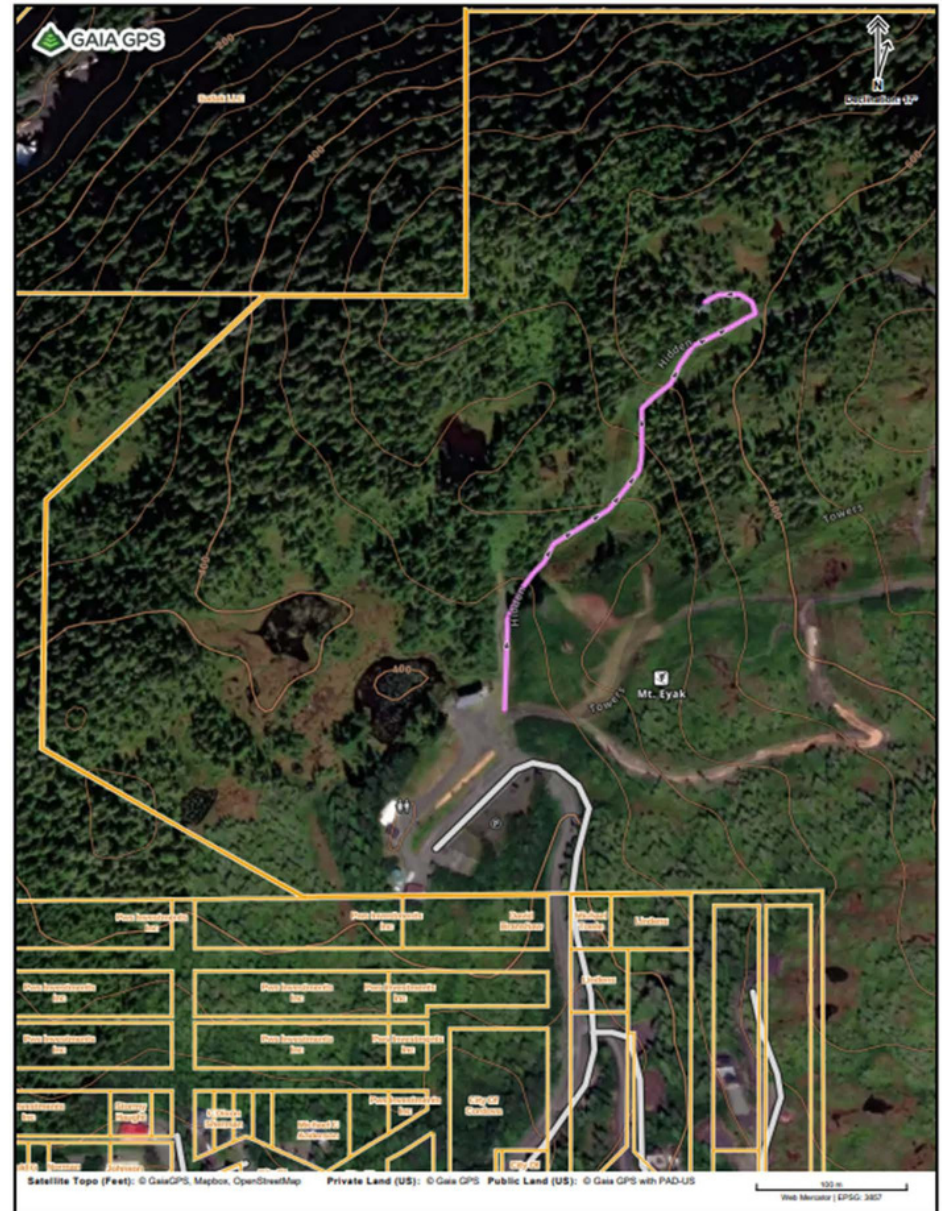


Cordova Formal Trails – Existing Condition

Hidden Cabin Trail

Originating at the Mt. Eyak Ski area base, this gravel trail ascends a part of the Hidden Ski Trail and culminates at the Hidden Cabin, maintained by Sheridan Alpine Association (SAA). The Cabin can be reserved through the SAA and is accessible year-round. It includes an outhouse, firewood, and the cabin facility.

Location	Mt. Eyak Area Base of Trail @ 60.54985, -145.74947
Land Ownership	State of Alaska
Management Agency	City of Cordova (lease); Sheridan Alpine Association
Trail Length	0.46 mi
Elevation Gain	330 ft
Min/Max Altitude	Min. 374 ft; Max 742 ft
Trail Type	Winter and Terra
Class	?
Current Use	Hiking
Designed Use	Hiking
Managed Use	Downhill ski run and Cabin access trail
Prohibited Use	?
Trail Facilities	Cabin and outhouse; parking lot and ski hill amenities
Color on Map	Pink



Cordova Formal Trails – Existing Condition

Odiak Pond Boardwalk

This out-and-back boardwalk trail takes visitors across Odiak Pond, walking over wooden boardwalks at the northeast corner of the pond after about 400ft of walking through the wooded area south of Cordova Community Medical Center. A covered pavilion at the center of the walk provides great viewing for pond-life, including birds, and features a picnic table for visitor use. The trail beings on the north side of Hollis Henrichs Park. Park facilities, including two restrooms, are provided at the trailhead.

Location	In-town Trailhead @ 60.54110, -145.75230
Land Ownership	City of Cordova
Management Agency	City of Cordova (Parks and Rec)
Trail Length	0.18 mi (one-way)
Elevation Gain	27 ft (total out and back)
Min/Max Altitude	Min. 20 ft; Max. 45 ft
Trail Type	Boardwalk
Class	5
Current Use	Pedestrian
Designed Use	Pedestrian
Managed Use	Pedestrian
Prohibited Use	?
Trail Facilities	Parking lot adjacent to Hollis Henrichs Park; Restroom facilities; elevated/uncovered pavilion in park; covered pavilion along boardwalk
Color on Map	Pink



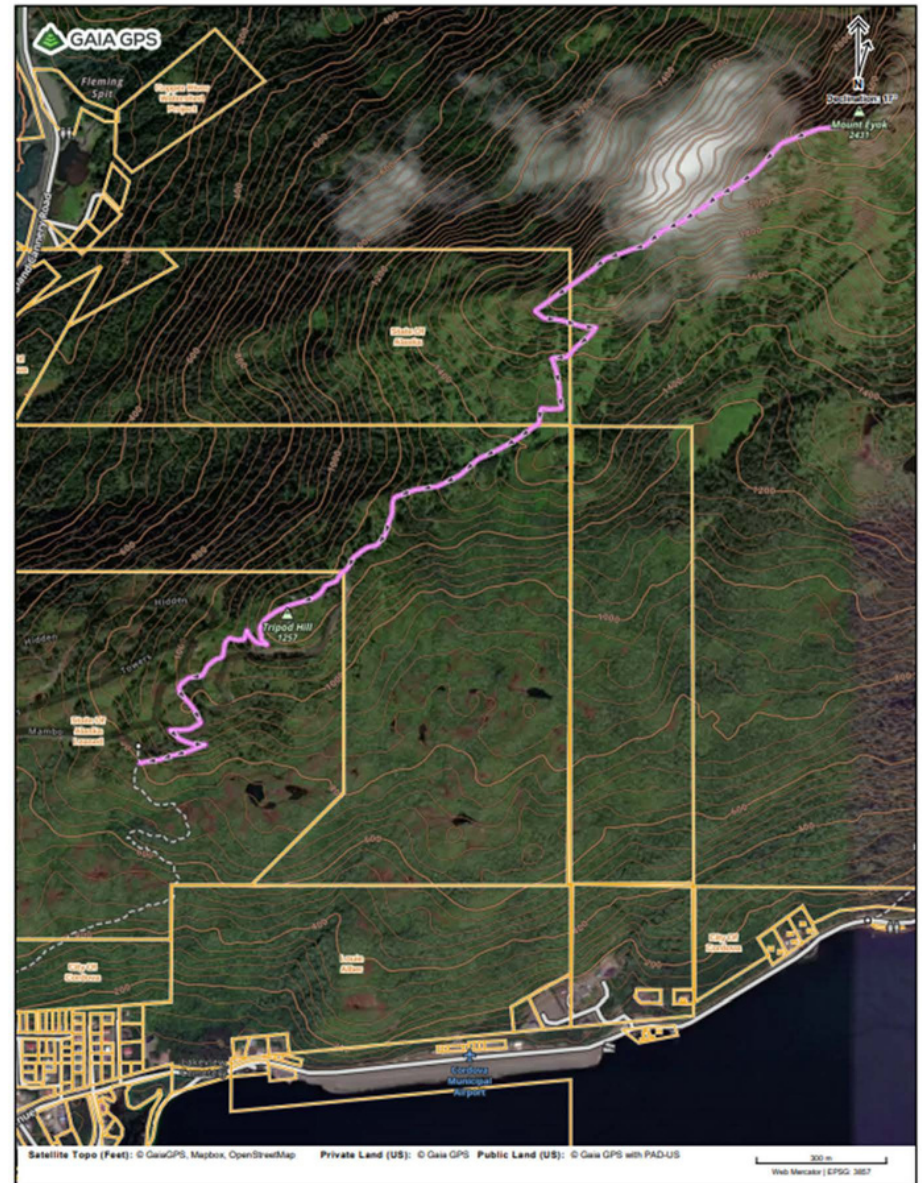
Cordova Formal Trails – Existing Condition

Mount Eyak Trail

The first mile and a half of this trail leads hikers uphill over open rocky slopes, muskeg meadows, and spruce forest while offering incredible views of Orca Inlet and Eyak Lake. The trail then splits leaving a choice between walking around the south end of Mt. Eyak (approx. 1.5 miles) to connect with the USFS Crater Lake Trail, or making the steep climb to the top for an excellent panoramic view ([USFS](#)).

Currently measured from summit of Mt. Eyak to End of Evergreen Trail @ 60.54998, -145.73975

Location	Mt. Eyak Area Min. Altitude @ 60.55008, -145.73964
Land Ownership	State of Alaska
Management Agency	City of Cordova (leased); Sheridan Alpine Association
Trail Length	1.95 mi
Elevation Gain	1507 ft
Min/Max Altitude	Min. 732 ft; Max. 2303 ft
Trail Type	Terra
Class	1
Current Use	Hiking
Designed Use	Hiking
Managed Use	?
Prohibited Use	?
Trail Facilities	Access via Evergreen Trailhead and Eyak Ski area
Color on Map	Pink



Cordova Formal Trails – Existing Condition

Power Creek Trail

*A lot of different numbers re: trail distance – good trail for Nicole or Dylan to get a track on.

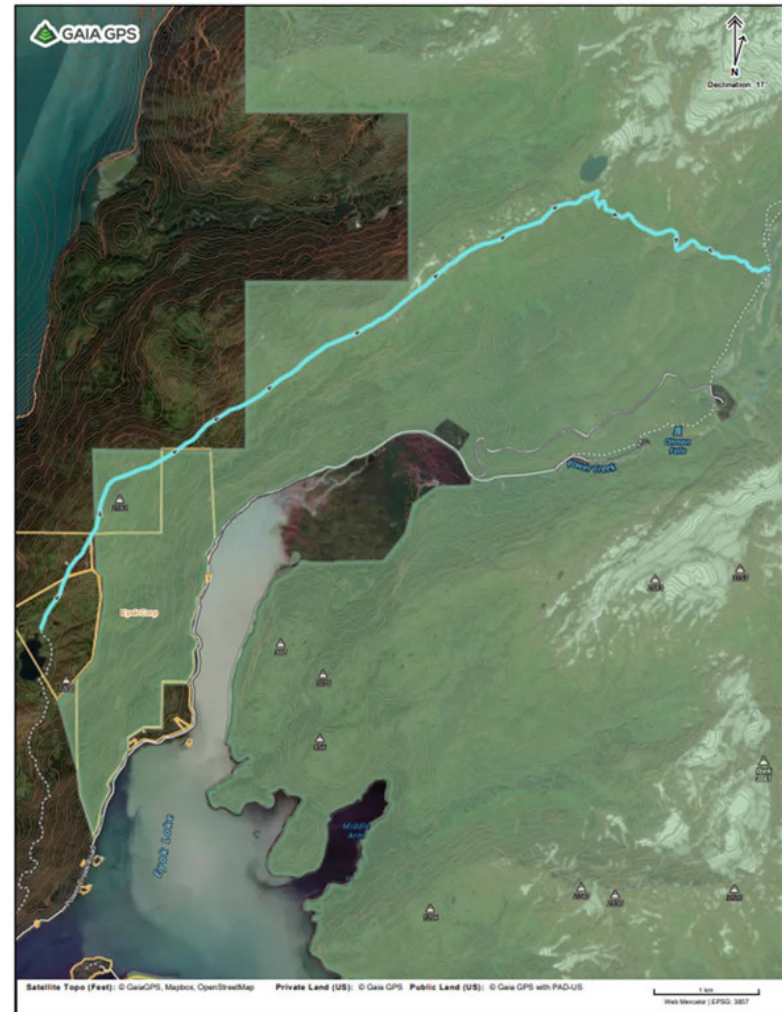
This trail follows the river through Power Creek drainage, then leads the hiker up several switchbacks. Midway, at the beginning of Surprise Valley, the recently built Cordova Electric Hydropower Dam can be seen. The last half of the trail follows the creek up the Power Creek Basin, passing by several beaver ponds and hanging glaciers to the Power Creek Cabin. The cabin site has wonderful panoramic views of the valley and surrounding mountains. At mile 3.0 the Alice Smith Intertie accesses the Crater Lake Trail. The entire loop from Power Creek trailhead to Crater Lake trailhead is 12 miles ([USFS](#)).

Location	Out of Town, Mt Eyak Area Trailhead @ 60.58780, -145.60900
Land Ownership	USFS
Management Agency	USFS (easement on 2.5 mi.)
Trail Length	4.2 mi
Elevation Gain	1564 ft
Min/Max Altitude	Min. 384 ft; Max 954 ft
Trail Type	Terra
Class	2
Current Use	Hiking
Designed Use	Hiking
Managed Use	Hiking
Prohibited Use	?
Trail Facilities	Parking area off Power Creek Road
Color on Map	

Cordova Formal Trails – Existing Condition

dense fog that can obscure the trail. The entire loop from Crater Lake trailhead to Power Creek trailhead is 12 miles (approximate time is 10 - 12 hours) [\(USFS\)](#).

Location	Out of Town, Mt Eyak Area
Land Ownership	USFS, Eyak Corp
Management Agency	USFS
Trail Length	5.8 mi
Elevation Gain	2789 ft
Min/Max Altitude	Min. 488 ft; Max. 2060 ft
Trail Type	Terra
Class	2
Current Use	Hiking and Skiing
Designed Use	Hiking and Skiing
Managed Use	Hiking and Skiing
Prohibited Use	Bicycles, Snowmachine, OHVs
Trail Facilities	Access via Crater Lake Trail and Power Creek Trail. Shelter (not pictured).
Color on Map	Blue



Ibeck North?

Ibeck South?

Cordova Formal Trails – Existing Condition

General Ski Area Map

Mt Eyak Ski Area offers alpine skiing and snowboarding on Mt Eyak above the town of Cordova, Alaska. Mt Eyak uses an historic 1939 American Steel and Wire single chair lift, as well as a rope tow on the beginner slope. The base elevation is 400 feet, rising to 1200 feet at the top of the single lift, for a vertical drop of 800 feet. The annual snowfall averages 350". With approximately 30 different trail options, including a new easy trail down the hill, the area offers something for everyone (mteyak.org). A ski area map, made by MapSynergy, gives an overview of the downhill ski trails maintained at Mt. Eyak. The Sheridan Alpine Association manages the ski area.



Recommendations

Prioritization

Prioritization of the maintenance and improvements to Cordova's trail system drafted in this plan are based upon consideration of the following variables, listed in descending order of importance:

- Public Safety
- Frequency of Trail Use
- Availability of Trail for Multiple Use, including ADA accessibility
- Proximity to Town
- Ease of Project Completion
- Expense/Availability of Funds

Top trail projects are identified as:

Proposed Projects

Proposed Project #1

Trail Name	xxxxxx
Use	walking/hiking
Class	x
Length	x
Partners	xx

Proposed Project #2

Proposed Projects #3

Proposed Project #4

Proposed Project #5

Proposed Project #6

Covered Spaces

Proposed covered space locations with a pedestrian and bicycle trail linking spaces along the coast.

Cordova Covered Spaces Project

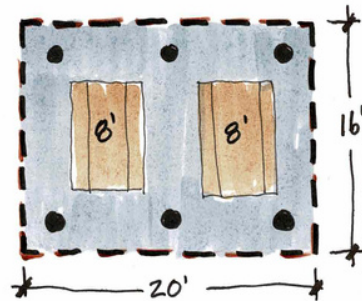
Proposed sites Fall 2022



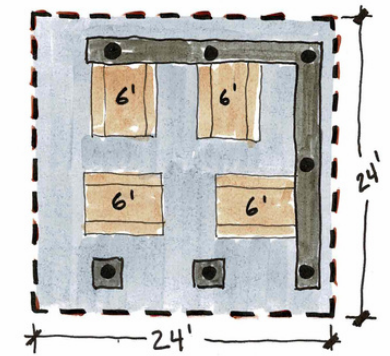
Map rendered 9/8/22 Kinsey Brown via Arc GIS online

Covered Spaces

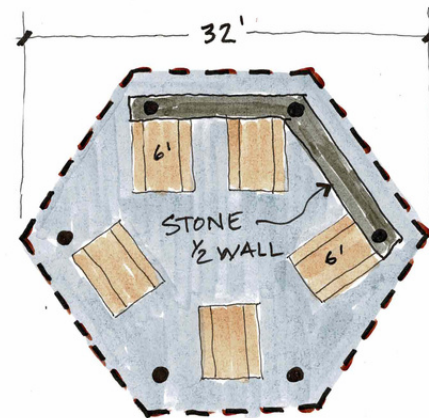
Covered Space Size Examples



Small



Medium

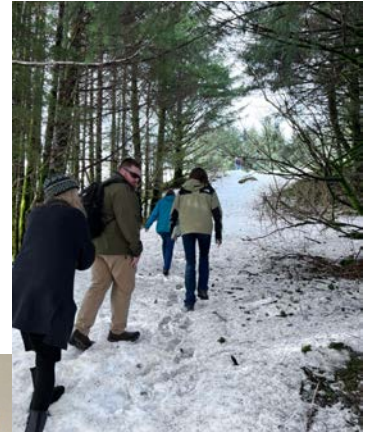



- Large

Covered Spaces

Charrette March 2023

The Cordova Trails Committee along with RTCA evaluate potential sites for Covered Space amenities during a site visit/charrette in March 2023. The sites are utilized for a multitude of activities including, sports, music, festivals, events, strolling, tourists, education, kayaking, biking, hiking, fishing, skiing, picnics, weddings, birding, sight-seeing, sunsets, and paddle boarding. A covered space and trail linkages at multiple locations would improve the accessibility and year round enjoyment for all user groups.

STRUCTURE

- Picnic/wedding/education.
- 1/2 walls - seating-
- 360° view - HEX/Square Hip
- 30-40 people

DAY USE?

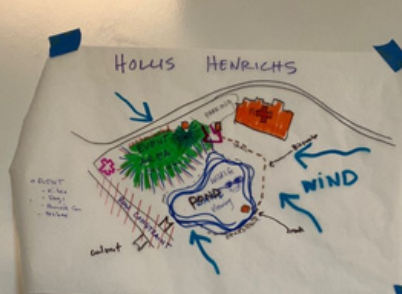
- 3-4 Picnic tables - mobile
- View - specific framed view
- Vandal-resistant, durable

SITE - LOWER - USFS

- Trail along roadway
- crosswalk
- Multiples users @ same time feeling like they have their own space.
- Upper → formidex parking up top
- Interp - Multiple - Eco, geology, veg. Cultural, wild life
- Loop Drive
- Loop TRAIL → using beach, woods, etc. (Bike friendly)

CON DES PI

SITE



STRUCTURE - Main one for Train Events


- BAND shell -
- Stage - raised
- 1/2 walls only if any
- Access From pkg. & all sides
- Maintenance - graffiti resistant
- Hex or Square (Hip)
- supervision - viewable
- removable wind screens
- drip lines?

Relationships

- Near parking
- Location that doesn't divide the site.
- High Dry

CON DES PI

SITE



STRUCTURE

- capacity → 3 picnic tables?
- 1/2 walls for seating.
- Gable shape -

SITE

- Upgraded paths - (3-4)
- ADA - stroller comfort.
- 5' wide
- removable Bollards
- Trail Head -
- Trash
- RR.?
- Parking - 6 spaces
- Trail to front only @ structure.
- wide cleared shoulders - Bearsafety
- Interp.

CON DES PI

SITE

CONNECT DESTIN PICNIC

SITE

HAR

FLEN

HOLI

Covered Spaces

Hartney Bay

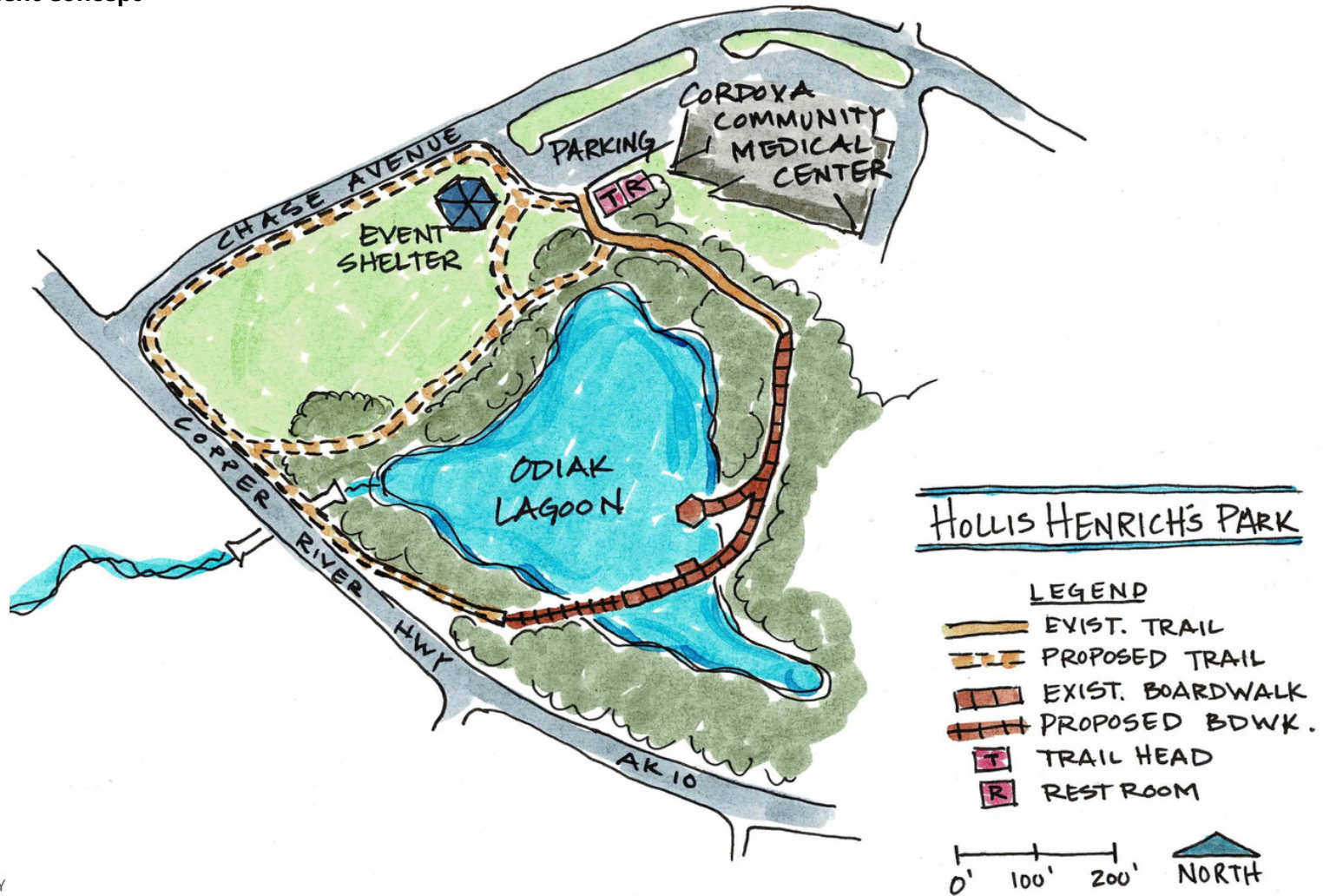
Site Development Concept



Covered Spaces

Hollis Henrich's Park

Site Development Concept



Implementation

Funding Opportunities

A limiting factor to any maintenance and construction is the availability of funding. Current trail maintenance and improvements are funded by XXXXXXXX

Potential sources for grant funding are:

- State Grants
- Foundation Grants
- Federal Highway Funds
- Public/Private Fundraising
- Cruise Lines/CPV Funds

Implementation

Financial Supporters

Individual Financial Supporters:

Amy and Paul Gloe
Jeramiah Beckett
Nicole Nothstine
David Rosenthal
Leif Stavig
Sharon Ermold
Deryn Carter
Galen Meyer
Mike Adams
Liz Senear
Bert Stammerjohan
Tanya Zastrow
Dottie Widman
Natasha Casciano
Kinsey Brown

Businesses Supporters:

Reluctant Fisherman Restaurant - Heart Wall supporting Artists
and The Cordova Trail and Covered Spaces Project 50/50
The Net Loft
Cordova Gear
Orca Adventure Lodge
Reluctant Fisherman Restaurant

Organization Financial Supporters:

Cordova Community Foundation, an Affiliate of the Alaska Community Foundation
<https://cordovacf.org/>

Organization Supporters offering general letters of support:

The Cordova Historical Society
Cordova Community Foundation, an Affiliate of the Alaska Community Foundation
[Cordova Chamber of Commerce](#)
US Forest Service, Cordova Ranger District
Cordova Destination Leadership Team
City of Cordova Parks & Recreation Commission
Copper River Watershed
Native Village of Eyak
Cordova Family Resource Center

Volunteers:

Liz Senear	Nancy Casey
Dave Zastrow	Paula Payne
Toni Bocci	Michelle Hahn
Helen Howarth	Duncan Chisholm
Dottie Widman	Toni Godes
Natasha Casciano	Ryan Schultze

Maintenance

This is by far the most important and usually the most neglected aspect of trail systems. Trails are exposed to constant environmental conditions and erosional factors. It is imperative that there is staff and a budget in place to support the trail system. Without this the system will rapidly fall into disrepair especially in this area. The Municipality, NPS and Forest Service all play a role in this.

Annual inspection & inventory of trail assets, especially multi use trails helps ensure that damage is minimized, risks are identified, and repairs can be made in a timely manner, enhancing safety and protecting investments as well as natural and cultural resources.

Maintenance

Routine Maintenance	Function	Frequency
Trail Triage	Essential trail failure repairs	Spring, summer, fall, post storm event
Condition assessment	Larger repair improvment planning	20% assets per year
Spring clearing and hazard assessment	Clear dead fall, identify and repair immediate hazards	May-June as trails clear, post storm event
Drain work, clear, repair, establish	Erosion control	Spring-summer, post storm event
Tread asessment, trail integrity, hazard removal, grade reversals, outslope repair	Trail durability, stabilization, erosion control	Summer-fall
Brushing	Improve sight lines, remove vegetative encroachment	Summer

Partnerships



National Park Service

XXXX



The Native Village of

EYAK

XXX



State of Alaska

XXX



US Forest Service

XXX

Appendix

Appendix

Appendix

Wish Lists, Community Concerns & Comments

Appendix

Wish Lists, Community Concerns & Comments

Appendix

Community Plans included in this planning process

Photos for use - Delete page when done

Cordova Trail Plan

Outline, Draft 1

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Acknowledgements

Contributors
Letter from Government
“Thank You”

Welcome

Plan Structure
How to Use Plan

Executive Summary

Brief overview of plan
Targeting intended audience
Include overview of planning area with map

Context

Provides an introduction

History ([Dave](#), [Wendy](#), [Toni](#))

Of planning area: *Relevant Cordova history/ culture*

Of trails in the planning area: *history of trails in Cordova*

✓ Geography ([Ryan](#))

Within the Chugach National Forest, Cordova is nestled in a coastal temperate rainforest that stretches 1000 miles from the Canadian Border to the island of Kodiak. It has a total area of 61 square miles, over 23% of which is water. Sitting on Orca Inlet in the southeast portion of Prince

William Sound, Hawkins Island is directly to the west and to the east- the Copper River Delta; a 35 mile (sq. mile?) wetland complex providing critical habitat for migratory birds, salmon and numerous other species of wildlife.

Located within the Chugach National Forest, Cordova and vicinity is the ancestral homelands of the Eyak **dAXunhyuu** ("the people".) The Copper River Highway (AK-10) begins at the Alaska Marine Highway ferry terminal and passes through downtown Cordova, connecting the majority of the city's 2600 residents through several small **C (capitalized in this context?)**ity or **S**State maintained roads. The highway crosses over the Eyak River and proceeds to Merle K. Mudhole Smith airport at mile 13. It continues to the east across the Copper River Delta, then north crossing a series of bridges, eventually coming to an end at mile 50 and the Million Dollar Bridge. Erosion caused by shifting river currents created a washout at mile 36 in 2011 and has since been unpassable by wheeled vehicles.

Demographics (Toni, Wendy?)

Who lives here? Who uses the trails (overview- specifics will be in existing cond.)?

✓ Economy (Dave, Wendy)

Describe the general economy of Cordova, how do recreation and trails fit in?

Existing Plans (Liz)

Provide information on relevant planning documents

- Cordova Comprehensive Plan
- FS Relevant Plans - 10yr Trail Challenge, Sustainable Trail Strategy
- State Plans
- Ski Hill

Making the Case for Trails

✓ Why Trails?

This section highlights why this plan is important.

Need & Benefits of Trails (Dave)

- Health & Wellness
- Youth (Is there a better term for here? - youth engagement?)
- Economic
- Transportation
- Culture & Heritage

MISSION, VISION, GOALS

✓ Our Mission

The Cordova Trails Committee creates, enhances, maintains, and funds a community-driven, inspiring, and varied trail system for the benefit of all Cordovans and visitors.

✓ Our Vision

An inclusive, holistic, and well-managed local trail system that meets the diverse needs of the Cordova community and fosters connections through shared stewardship.

✓ Goals

1. More & Better Trails - Do we want to edit this goal tagline?

Maintain, expand, and develop Cordova's trail system. (Isn't maintain and expand equivalent to develop - something about this wording I don't like) Continue to maintain and expand Cordova's trail system?

- Objectives (Sub- goals)
 - Strategies (or actions - what specific activities will accomplish these goals?)

2. Inclusive Trails

Increase trail accessibility for all user groups.

- Objectives
 - Strategies

3. Partnership & Collaboration

Establish successful collaboration with community stakeholders for the stewardship of Cordova's trail system.

- Objectives
 - Strategies

4. Trail Organization, Management, & Maintenance

Facilitate a governance group charged with the oversight, implementation, and management of Cordova's trail system.

- Objectives
 - Strategies

5. Funding

Identify and secure the financial resources to maintain, expand, and develop Cordova's trail system now and into the future.

- Objectives
 - Strategies

PLANNING PROCESS ✓

✓ Planning Team

City of Cordova Parks & Rec

Cordova Trails Ad Hoc Committee

Timeline

2021

- July – Assess existing trails and conditions

2022

- January – March: Values, Mission, Vision, Goals, Stakeholder Assessment
- April – September: Public Outreach
- October – December: Drafting Plan

Public Outreach

Phase 1: Summer 2022

- Letter to land managers
- Newspaper Announcements
- Public Flyer and Online Surveys
- Tabling at Local Events

Phase 2: Fall 2022

- Open house meeting
- Survey
- Interactive map
- Meeting with land managers

Phase 3: Spring 2023

EXISTING TRAIL CONDITIONS

✓ Trail Users

Describe in detail the various users of Cordova's trails

Summer

- Walkers, Hikers, Trail Runners, Bikers, Dog Walkers, Foragers, Fishing and Hunting Access, etc

Winter

- XC Skiers, Ice Skaters, Backcountry Skiers/ Splitboarders, Downhill Skiers/ Snowboarders, Skijoring, Kick Sledgers, Snowmachine, Snowshoers

In these sections are we going to refer to all users or the users that this plan addresses - i.e. are we talking about any ORV use on any of them and is there any hunting access. Would trappers use any of these trails.

Trail Type

- Standard/ Terra
- Snow
- Water

✓ Trail Classification

USFS Trail Classification Standards (*very commonly used*)

- Class 1 - Minimally Developed
- Class 2 - Moderately Developed
- Class 3 - Developed
- Class 4 - Highly Developed
- Class 5 - Fully Developed

✓ Existing Trails

- *Include tables with relevant details (Trail type, length, difficulty, etc)*
- *Descriptions of trails in paragraph form*
- *Map showing existing trails*

City of Cordova

Type	
Class	
Uses	
Length	
Management Agency	

Breakwater Trail

Evergreen Trail - Include or not?

Odiak Pond Boardwalk

Meals Reservoir Trail

Michael O’Leary Trail - *To become O’Leary’s Loop Trail*

Mount Eyak Trail - Under City or Ski Hill Assoc?

Ski Hill - Sheridan Alpine Association

CAT Route @ Ski Trails

Hidden Cabin Trail

Mambo Ski Trail

Towers Ski Trail

Chugach National Forest – Cordova Ranger District

Alice Smith Intertie Trail

Crater Lake Trail

Eyak River Trail

Heney Ridge Trail

Power Creek Trail

Ibeck North?

Ibeck South?

Implementation

Standards

Describe the desired standards for existing and future trail infrastructure

- Trails
 - Trail Management Objectives (TMO’s) -

- Sustainability
 - *Can refer to USFS sustainable trails guide, other trail organizations*
- Trail Naming
- Amenities
 - Covered Spaces
 - Shelters
 - Cabins
 - Signage
 - Parking

Selection Process

Selection Criteria / Prioritization Method

Describe how you are prioritizing projects

Recommendations

Proposed Projects

Complete & Improve Existing Trails

1. Breakwater Trail
- 2.

New Trails

1. Scout Lake Trail
- 2.

Ski Hill Complex

3. Expand opportunities at Ski Hill
 - a. Accessible trails
 - b. Bike trails
 - c. Loops
 - d. Amenities

Covered Spaces Project

1. Coastal trail concept
 - a. Trails
 - b. Coverings
 - c. Interpretive Signs

Amenities

- Covered Spaces, Shelters, Cabins, Benches
- Trailheads and parking, restrooms
- Signage, wayfinding, maps

Roles & Responsibilities

City of Cordova

Sheridan Alpine Association

Forest Service

Native Village of Eyak

Covered Spaces

Maintenance

Maintenance activities, schedules, costs

Type of Maintenance	Frequency	Estimated Cost

Funding

Existing Funding

Opportunities

Partnerships, Volunteers, Trails Advocacy

Trails Organization

Volunteer Program

- Trail Building
- Maintenance

Appendix

This section can include the detailed information supporting this document

Examples:

- *Public input details: survey results, comments received, etc*
- *Prioritization scores*
- *Trail design specifics, costing specifics*
- *Comprehensive list of all trails proposed*

- *Extra maps*