

1 **Approved- Outdoor Recreational Trails Advisory Board (ORTAB)**  
2 **Meeting Minutes 2/3-4/2015**

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4 **ORTAB Members Present:**

5 Jeff Budd - Chair - Represents Southeast Alaska / Non-Motorized  
6 Mike Rearden - Represents Western / Southwest Alaska  
7 Ron Lurk - Represents Anchorage / Motorized / Diversified  
8 Mickey Todd - Represents Motorized Trail Users  
9 Seth Adams - Represents Fairbanks Area /Northern Area

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11 **DNR Staff Present:**

12 Claire LeClair - Alaska State Parks, Deputy Director and Chief of Field Operations  
13 Darcy Harris - Alaska State Trails Program Coordinator  
14 Steve Neel - Recreational Trails Grants Administrator  
15 Jean Ayers - Land & Water Conservation Fund Grants Administrator  
16 Justin Wholey - Alaska State Trails Program, Resource Specialist  
17 Tom Kain - Park Ranger, Seward

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19 **Public:**

20 Rick Northey - Caribou Hills Cabin Hoppers, President  
21 Janice Northey - Caribou Hills Cabin Hoppers, Secretary  
22 Steve Cleary - Alaska Trails, Executive Director  
23 Jack Kreinheder - Trail Mix Inc., President / Juneau Freewheelers Bike Club, Vice President  
24 Heather Rice - National Park Service - Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program  
25 Melinda Eggleston - Delta Junction Trails Association, Chair  
26 Bill Holt - Tsalteshi Trails Association, Maintenance and Operations Manager  
27 Chuck Kaucic - Wasilla Soil & Water Conservation, District Manager  
28 Kim Sollien - Great Land Trust, Mat-Su Program Director  
29 Geoffrey Orth - Stray Dogs LLC  
30 Kirsten Laulainen - Matanuska-Susitna Borough, Trails Program Coordinator  
31 Jack Mosby

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33 **Tuesday, February 3, 2015**

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35 **Introductions**

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37 ORTAB members, DNR staff, and the public introduced themselves. Some joined the meeting via  
38 teleconference. New board member Seth Adams was in attendance. Channel 2 News interviewed  
39 ORTAB Chair Jeff Budd before the meeting began.  
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## Board Elections

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### **Motion:**

Ron Lurk nominated Jeff Budd for the Chair position again. Mike Rearden seconded the nomination.

**Vote:** (5 yea, 0 nay) Motion Passed

Jeff Budd is Chair once again.

## Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) General Discussion

Jean Ayers (LWCF Grants Administrator) explained a little about the LWCF program. Congress passed a law to set aside or create new outdoor-recreation opportunities. Since program inception (1965), Alaska has had over 300 LWCF projects with 35 million dollars invested. The LWCF program has required an inventory of recreation resources available and recreation needs in Alaska; this is done every 5 years with surveys and is encapsulated in the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). Darcy Harris explained that Recreational Trails (RecTrails) grants and LWCF grants are mandated to be part of a local land-use/management plan or be identified in the SCORP.

Jean Ayers also explained that State of Alaska grants and non-profit/community grants are split into separate categories, and don't compete against each other. She also mentioned that there is less money available than there is money requested for this round.

Before the ORTAB discussed the individual projects, Jean Ayers thanked the board for their comments and sending in their scores. She also noted that numerical scores were only a starting point for the boards' discussion and they may consider other factors while discussing and ranking proposals.

One board member commented that returning applicants have an advantage over new applicants in their score from ORTAB, although both may be equally able to excel at executing a project. The member also noted that the LWCF grants could be scored more fairly if the applicant questionnaire and score sheet were better aligned.

One board member asked if the ORTAB was required to fully fund the projects they approved. Jean Ayers answered no, but said it was sometimes difficult or impossible for grantees to complete their projects with less funding than their requested amounts.

## LWCF Projects Discussion

(Projects are listed in the order they were discussed, not by a ranking.)

### **1. Tanana Lakes Recreation Area Phase IV**

**Applicant:** Fairbanks North Star Borough

**Average ORTAB Score:** 125

**Federal Request:** \$91,550

**ORTAB Discussion:**

One board member liked that the grant was easy to read and involved children. Another member said that the Tanana Lakes were very popular for recreation.

**ORTAB Recommended for Funding:** Yes

### **2. Duldida Park Upgrade & Accessibility Improvements**

**Applicant:** Municipality of Anchorage

**Average ORTAB Score:** 114

**Federal Request:** \$106,023

**ORTAB Discussion:**

One member questioned if the project was really ready, because construction wasn't scheduled until 2016. Another member noted many hedge words in the application. One ORTAB member said they took points off for the environmental inspection.

**ORTAB Recommended for Funding:** Yes

### **3. Cedars Trail Expansion**

**Applicant:** Metlakatla Indian Community

**Average ORTAB Score:** 102

**Federal Request:** \$50,000

**ORTAB Discussion:**

One member liked the special population designation. Several members had concerns that there was no environmental report. Also, one member noted that there was no evidence of budget, staff, or plan information.

**ORTAB Recommended for Funding:** Yes

120 **4. Tennis Court Rehab**

121 **Applicant:** Girdwood Service Area

122 **Average ORTAB Score:** 113

123 **Federal Request:** \$125,000

124 **ORTAB Discussion:**

125 One member liked that tennis, basketball, and skateboarding may take place, as well as tennis. Another  
126 member was concerned that the number of users were not reflected, and the project was the most  
127 expensive. One member mentioned that the tennis courts could only be used seasonally, and preferred  
128 the year-round Metlakatla project (Cedars Trail Expansion).

129 **ORTAB Recommended for Funding:** No

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131 **5. Matanuska River Parcel Purchase**

132 **Applicant:** City of Palmer

133 **Average ORTAB Score:** 99

134 **Federal Request:** \$85,000

135 **ORTAB Discussion:**

136 One member speculated that the property *could* be purchased for development, if not by LWCF. There  
137 was a concern about purchasing property in a floodplain, and members questioned if it was acceptable  
138 in the LWCF program. Another member noted that since land acquisition only has medium priority in  
139 scoring, that this project wasn't likely to get selected based on this scoring.

140 **ORTAB Recommended for Funding:** Yes, but at the reduced amount of \$80,696.

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142 **6. Butte Summit Acquisition**

143 **Applicant:** Matanuska-Susitna Borough

144 **Average ORTAB Score:** 104

145 **Federal Request:** \$60,000

146 **ORTAB Discussion:**

147 One member said that they scored this project high because of the erosion problems it addressed, and  
148 its applicability to the visible corridors category. Another member wanted more information about this  
149 project and noted inconsistencies in the application. An ORTAB member asked if the project intended to  
150 subdivide and sell the land, because the application was unclear to them. Kim Sollien from Great Land  
151 Trust clarified that the intent of the grant is to put a conservation easement on the land and to never  
152 develop it.

153 **ORTAB Recommended for Funding:** Yes, but at the reduced amount of \$50,000.

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160 **Motion:**  
161 Jeff Budd moved to fully fund Tanana Lakes (Rec. Area Phase IV), Duldida Park (Upgrade & Accessibility  
162 Improvements), and the Cedars Trail Expansion. The Matanuska River Parcel Purchase will be  
163 (recommended to be) funded at \$80,696, and the Butte Summit Acquisition is to (recommended to) be  
164 funded at \$50,000. Mike Rearden seconded.

165  
166 **Vote:** (5 yea, 0 nay) Motion Passed

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168 The ORTAB decided to only partially fund the Matanuska River Parcel Purchase and the Butte Summit  
169 Acquisition because of a shortage of available grant funds.

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171 The ORTAB noted that there was enough money to fund all of the LWCF projects submitted by the State  
172 of Alaska. These projects were all submitted by Alaska State Parks, Design & Construction. The projects  
173 included Isaak Walton KRSMA Water Well Replacement, Baranof Castle SHS Furnishings, South Denali  
174 Trails, Chilkat State Park Campground Rehabilitation, and Byers Lake Suspension Bridge.

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176 **Motion:**

177 Mike Rearden moved to accept all of the (State of Alaska) projects as they are. Ron Lurk seconded.

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179 **Vote:** (5 yea, 0 nay) Motion Passed

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181 The following is a list of LWCF projects that have been recommended for funding by the Outdoor  
182 Recreation Trails Advisory Board. Funding recommendation by the ORTAB does not guarantee that a  
183 project will be funded. The Director of the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation will consider the  
184 ORTAB's recommendations and decide which projects to tentatively approve. It is then up to the  
185 National Park Service whether or not to approve individual projects.

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187 **Non-State LWCF Projects Recommended for Funding (but not officially approved)**

188 Tanana Lakes Recreation Area Phase IV  
189 Duldida Park Upgrade & Accessibility Improvements  
190 Cedars Trail Expansion  
191 Matanuska River Parcel Purchase (partial funding)  
192 Butte Summit Acquisition (partial funding)

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194 **State LWCF Projects Recommended for Funding (but not officially approved)**

195 Isaak Walton KRSMA Water Well Replacement  
196 Baranof Castle SHS Furnishings  
197 South Denali Trails  
198 Chilkat State Park Campground Rehabilitation  
199 Byers Lake Suspension Bridge

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## General Discussion by DNR Staff

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Alaska State Parks Deputy Director, Claire LeClair, spoke to the board and announced that Ben Ellis would continue to be the Director of Alaska State Parks. She also said that the RecTrails administration matching funds are still included in the Governor’s budget.

Steve Neel explained that RecTrails was funded for only two-thirds of the current federal fiscal year, but the remaining third of the year may be funded at a later date (to fund the entire fiscal year). He also explained that there were more dollars requested than funding available for both funding scenarios (funding for two-thirds of the federal fiscal year and funding for the full year).

Steve Neel also noted that federal regulations had become more strict for the Alaska State Trails Program and its grantees. He said that the predicted end-date of a project must be adhered to, and that extensions from Federal Highways would likely not be given, even if there are funds left in the grant. He also said that “future-match” would not be allowed by federal highways for equipment-purchases. Steve Neel explained that this is when a large piece of equipment is purchased, and matching funds are labor to be carried out in the future. He said that one solution for equipment purchase is to write the labor into the scope of the project.

Steve Neel also explained that the “Buy America” provision would be enforced beginning with projects in the current applicant pool. This provision requires American Steel to be used in manufactured products purchased with RecTrails dollars. He said that it had been nearly impossible for manufacturers he had spoken with to indicate if steel was from American manufacturers; he noted that this is problematic. The only solution is to file for a waiver with Federal Highways, which no applicants have done as of yet.

Rick Northey stated that although he would prefer a foreign-made PistenBully to be purchased with his grant funds, he would gladly accept an American-made Tucker if necessary.

## RecTrails Projects from Non-State Entities

(Projects are listed in the order they were discussed, not by a ranking.)

### **1. Edmonds Lake / Mirror Lake Singletrack - Phase 1**

**Applicant:** Alaska Trails, Inc.

**Category:** Non-Motorized

**Funds Requested / Match:** \$49,000 / \$12,250

**Land Owner(s):** Municipality of Anchorage

**Project Discussion:**

The board generally liked this project, although one member thought \$50/hr. was expensive for wages.

242 **2. South Fork Overlook Trail Improvement**

243 **Applicant:** Anchorage Nordic Ski Club

244 **Category:** Diversified

245 **Funds Requested / Match:** \$19,838 / \$3,967

246 **Land Owner(s):** Chugach State Park

247 **Project Discussion:** One member noted that there was no letter from a youth group, so no points were  
248 given.

249

250 **3. Restoring KBay's Interpretive Trails - Phase 2**

251 **Applicant:** Center for Alaskan Coastal Studies

252 **Category:** Non-Motorized

253 **Funds Requested / Match:** \$22,704 / \$5,791

254 **Land Owner(s):** Seldovia Native Association and Center for Alaskan Coastal Studies

255 **Project Discussion:**

256 One member commented that this is a great project, with great maps, that teaches trail-building.

257

258 **4. Liewer Community Trail**

259 **Applicant:** Delta Junction Trails Association

260 **Category:** Non-Motorized

261 **Funds Requested / Match:** \$44,264 / \$13,626

262 **Land Owner(s):** Ronald R. Liewer and Delta / Greely School District

263 **Project Discussion:**

264 One member thought the heavy equipment time was excessive, although Melinga Eggleston noted that  
265 the time estimate was obtained from a trail-builder.

266

267 **5. Eaglecrest Mountain Bike Flow Trail**

268 **Applicant:** Juneau Freewheelers Cycle Club

269 **Category:** Non-Motorized

270 **Funds Requested / Match:** \$50,000 / \$12,500

271 **Land Owner(s):** Eaglecrest Ski Area (City and Borough of Juneau)

272 **Project Discussion:**

273 Jack Kreinheder clarified that match is to come Eaglecrest Ski Area in the form of crushed rock from their  
274 quarry.

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280 **6. Skyline Ridge Park Trail Restoration**

281 **Applicant:** Fairbanks North Star Borough Parks and Rec.

282 **Category:** Diversified

283 **Funds Requested / Match:** \$50,000 / \$12,500

284 **Land Owner(s):** Fairbanks North Star Borough

285 **Project Discussion:**

286 One member noted that the labor cost per hour seemed high. Another member explained that this is a  
287 popular area for motorized use (4x4 trucks), even though it isn't allowed. Motorized users have been  
288 known to remove barricades to access the area. The member also said that there were plans to change  
289 the allowed-uses to include motorized recreation.

290

291 **7. Koponen Homestead Trail**

292 **Applicant:** Friends of the Koponen Homestead

293 **Category:** Diversified

294 **Funds Requested / Match:** \$35,428.25 / \$8,857.06

295 **Land Owner(s):** Joan Koponen and Niilo Koponen (estate of)

296 **Project Discussion:**

297 Geoffrey Orth clarified that even though they have the minimum five year public access, but the  
298 Koponen's have a long history of allowing public access on their land.

299

300 **8. North Pole Beaver Springs Trail Upgrades**

301 **Applicant:** Fairbanks Soil & Water Conservation District

302 **Category:** Non-Motorized

303 **Funds Requested / Match:** \$26,871.21 / \$6,717.80

304 **Land Owner(s):** Fairbanks North Star Borough

305 **Project Discussion:**

306 One concern by a board member was that the project was expensive for improving such a short length  
307 of trail. Another member questioned if this is just a park beautification project.

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320 **9. Wasilla Creek Palmer Hay Flats Refuge Trail**

321 **Applicant:** Great Land Trust

322 **Category:** Non-Motorized

323 **Funds Requested / Match:** \$50,000 / \$10,000

324 **Land Owner(s):** DNR, Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge

325 **Project Discussion:**

326 Kim Sollien clarified that there was no labor in the budget, because there were other funding sources  
327 paying for that portion of the project. She also explained that an elevated boardwalk would be built  
328 instead of the bog bridge mentioned in the project narrative; the trail would end at the wetland, and  
329 trail markers would guide winter users to the trail on the other side of Wasilla Creek. Darcy explained to  
330 Kim that this is a change in scope from her original project, and that since the project was in the  
331 planning stages at the time of application submittal, it was acting as a placeholder, and unfair to other  
332 applicants.

333

334 **Motion:**

335 Mike Rearden moved to remove this application for consideration for this cycle, and encourage you (Kim  
336 Sollien) to reapply next year with your new scope of work so that we can reconsider it, because in  
337 fairness to the other applicants we haven't had a chance to review what you actually intend to do at this  
338 point. Ron Lurk seconded.

339

340 **Vote:** (5 yea, 0 nay) Motion Passed

341

342 The Wasilla Creek Palmer Hay Flats Refuge Trail project was removed from consideration from this grant  
343 cycle.

344

345 For future applications, one member advised the applicant to describe more users than just elementary  
346 school students, because their use will likely be limited.

347

348 **10. HoWL Trail Days across the Bay!**

349 **Applicant:** HoWL, Inc.

350 **Category:** Non-Motorized

351 **Funds Requested / Match:** \$50,000 / \$12,500

352 **Land Owner(s):** State of Alaska, DNR, Division of Parks

353 **Project Discussion:**

354 One ORTAB member liked the layout, maps, and budget. Another member noted that the supervisor  
355 was valued less than the volunteer labor for the kids, which seemed odd; the member also thought that  
356 a paid trail crew could likely work more efficiently than 85 to 135 volunteers performing a few hours of  
357 work each. Another member noted the value of youth development in this project, and that the trail  
358 work wasn't its only goal.

359

360 **11. Beaver Lake Trail Improvements - Foot Trail**

361 **Applicant:** Kodiak Island Borough

362 **Category:** Non-Motorized

363 **Funds Requested / Match:** \$45,456 / \$11,364

364 **Land Owner(s):** Kodiak Island Borough

365 **Project Discussion:**

366 Some board members thought this application seemed incomplete. One member liked the project, but  
367 noted that the problem of rogue ATVs was cited in the application, but no solutions were offered.

368

369 **12. Government Peak Trail Lighting Project**

370 **Applicant:** Mat-Su Ski Club

371 **Category:** Non-Motorized

372 **Funds Requested / Match:** \$50,000 / \$12,500

373 **Land Owner(s):** Matanuska-Susitna Borough

374 **Project Discussion:**

375 A few members mentioned that they were unsure what the \$50,000 was paying for, because specifics  
376 were not mentioned in the application. Some members also thought the budget was inadequate. Darcy  
377 Harris stated that Federal Highways would not accept the budget in its current state.

378

379 Edward Strabel clarified that there are multiple funding donors, and that RecTrails would pay for a  
380 portion of it. Darcy Harris explained that the budget and narrative would have to be filled in with  
381 specifics, for the grant to be acceptable by Federal Highways.

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383 The ORTAB told Edward Strabel that they were not comfortable having his project in the application  
384 pool anymore, because of the deficiencies in the budget and scope. The project was removed from the  
385 review pool.

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387 **13. Hungry Point Trail Extension**

388 **Applicant:** Petersburg Borough Parks and Rec.

389 **Category:** Diversified

390 **Funds Requested / Match:** \$41,750 / \$22,500

391 **Land Owner(s):** Petersburg Borough

392 **Project Discussion:**

393 One member thought that the budget was good, but 3 weeks of design for a 3 mile trail seemed  
394 excessive. Another member thought that the match seemed excessive for the project, and mentioned  
395 that there is much more administration and planning than actual trail work. Steve Neel noted that the  
396 amount of match quoted on the application must be accounted for (with more paperwork), so it is  
397 easier for applicants to put the minimum match needed.

398

399

400 **Motion:**  
401 Seth Adams moved to advise the applicants (Petersburg Borough Parks and Rec.) to reduce design and  
402 layout matching-funds by \$12,062.50 in order to meet only the minimum match. Mike Rearden  
403 seconded.

404  
405 **Vote:** (5 yea, 0 nay) Motion Passed

406  
407 The applicant will be advised to reduce their match on the budget to the minimum required level.  
408

409 **14. Sitka Storm Damage**

410 **Applicant:** Sitka Trail Works, Inc.

411 **Category:** Non-Motorized

412 **Funds Requested / Match:** \$40,041 / \$9,605

413 **Land Owner(s):** City and Borough of Sitka and United States Forest Service

414 **Project Discussion:**

415 Steve Neel mentioned that he had hiked the trail and it was wonderful.  
416

417 **15. A Picture Perfect Hike: An Interpretive Trail**

418 **Applicant:** Takshanuk Watershed Council

419 **Category:** Non-Motorized

420 **Funds Requested / Match:** \$20,111 / \$5,028

421 **Land Owner(s):** Haines Borough

422 **Project Discussion:**

423 One board member noted that trail work wasn't planned to begin until FY16. Steve Neel mentioned that  
424 this applicant currently had an open FY13 project (Pullen Creek). He said that they had spent about 5%  
425 administratively, and the project must closed by June 30<sup>th</sup>. One member commented that they could  
426 resubmit next year and still build the trail in FY16.  
427

428 **Motion:**

429 Seth Adams moved to tell the Takshanuk Watershed Council to resubmit for next year. Jeff Budd  
430 seconded. This motion was withdrawn and several members lowered their scores for this project.  
431

432 Takshanuk Watershed Council's project stayed in the applicant pool.  
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438 **16. Tsalteshi Trailhead Improvement Project**

439 **Applicant:** Tsalteshi Trails Association

440 **Category:** Diversified

441 **Funds Requested / Match:** \$50,000 / \$12,500

442 **Land Owner(s):** Kenai Peninsula Borough

443 **Project Discussion:**

444 One board member liked the ADA toilets and youth involvement. Another member liked how the  
445 application mentioned using equipment from a former RecTrails grant. One ORTAB member thought  
446 that purchasing toilets and a snowmobile with the same grant was odd.

447

448 **17. Denali State Park YCC**

449 **Applicant:** Upper Susitna Soil & Water Conservation District

450 **Category:** Non-Motorized

451 **Funds Requested / Match:** \$41,147.52 / \$10,344

452 **Land Owner(s):** State of Alaska

453 **Project Discussion:**

454 Board members had several complaints about this application including high administrative costs for  
455 work to be accomplished, and no letters of support from individuals or a youth group. Also, using a  
456 currently-owned tent for matching funds seemed inappropriate to one member.

457

458 **18. Government Peak Singletrack Phase 2**

459 **Applicant:** Valley Mountain Bikers and Hikers

460 **Category:** Diversified

461 **Funds Requested / Match:** \$39,562.50 / \$9,928.75

462 **Land Owner(s):** Matanuska-Susitna Borough

463 **Project Discussion:**

464 Board members noted that there was not enough detail in the project description, and the  
465 environmental review was old.

466

467 **19. Matanuska River Park Access Trail**

468 **Applicant:** Valley Mountain Bikers and Hikers

469 **Category:** Non-Motorized

470 **Funds Requested / Match:** \$34,257.30 / \$8,680

471 **Land Owner(s):** Matanuska-Susitna Borough

472 **Project Discussion:**

473 One board member thought the projected-use numbers seemed high, and questioned why a wall-ride  
474 feature couldn't be built in Alaska (rather than shipping one up from the lower 48 with the high freight  
475 costs). Another member thought that renting a skid steer for seven days for a 1/10<sup>th</sup> mile trail seemed  
476 excessive.

477

478 **20. CHCH Snow Cat**

479 **Applicant:** Caribou Hills Cabin Hoppers

480 **Category:**

481 **Funds Requested / Match:** \$100,000 / \$ 25,000

482 **Land Owner(s):** N/A

483 **Project Discussion:**

484 One board member thought that the support letters were great, and that the number of users were  
485 impressive. Rick Northey explained that the Cabin Hoppers were currently using old ski-grooming  
486 machines. He also mentioned that he visited the Tucker assembly plant in Oregon, and a PistenBully  
487 representative in the lower 48. He said that the PistenBully was the best machine for their (Caribou Hills  
488 Cabin Hoppers') purposes.

489

490 **Wednesday, February 4, 2015**

491

492 To satisfy the 30% Non-Motorized, 40% Diversified, and 30% Motorized requirements, and to spend as  
493 much of the RecTrails money as possible, the board moved projects into different categories.

494

495 **Motion:**

496 Mickey Todd moved to move the Watermelon Trail (Remediation application) to the diversified  
497 category. Mike Rearden seconded.

498

499 **Vote:** (5 yea, 0 nay) Motion Passed

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501 **21. Jim Creek Motorized Recreation Trails**

502 **Applicant:** Matanuska-Susitna Borough

503 **Category:** Motorized

504 **Funds Requested / Match:** \$100,000 / \$25,000

505 **Land Owner(s):** Matanuska-Susitna Borough

506 **Project Discussion:**

507 One board member thought it was good that the project would try to keep ATVs on trails. Another  
508 member thought that \$100,000 was a lot of money to work on only 3 miles of trail, but knew that trail-  
509 hardening could be expensive. Another concern by an ORTAB member was that the tree-removal  
510 schedule was in conflict with Fish & Game's recommendations.

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516 **22. Mid-Valley Motorized Trail Improvement**

517 **Applicant:** Mid-Valley Trail Club, Inc.

518 **Category:** Diversified

519 **Funds Requested / Match:** \$17,200 / \$4,300

520 **Land Owner(s):** State of Alaska

521 **Project Discussion:**

522 One board member mentioned that detail about the trail work is vague, and it sounded like the group  
523 just wanted some new equipment. Another member said that the Ravine Trail is a safety hazard, and it  
524 needs to be fixed; the member had seen many different user-groups on the trail (motorized and non-  
525 motorized).

526

527 **Motion:**

528 Seth Adams moved to move this project (Mid-Valley Motorized Trail Improvement) from the motorized  
529 (category) to the diversified category. Ron Lurk seconded.

530

531 **Vote:** (5 yea, 0 nay) Motion Passed

532

533 **23. Eska West ATV Trail Phase 2**

534 **Applicant:** Mat-Su Trails Council Inc.

535 **Category:** Motorized

536 **Funds Requested / Match:** \$100,000 / \$25,000

537 **Land Owner(s):** State of Alaska, DNR, Division of Mining, Land, and Water

538 **Project Discussion:**

539 Steve Neel noted that Phase II cannot begin until Phase I is complete, and that the applicant had spent  
540 about \$22,000 of \$50,000 on Phase I so far. One board member mentioned that the budget was not  
541 very good and there were no support letters from individuals.

542

543 **24. Bonfire Lake to Happy River Trail Maintenance**

544 **Applicant:** Iditarod Trail Committee

545 **Category:** Diversified

546 **Funds Requested / Match:** \$100,000 / \$25,800

547 **Land Owner(s):** State of Alaska

548 **Project Discussion:**

549 One member thought that the applicant was really just applying for equipment. Another member  
550 thought that the main benefit was to the race, and that there weren't many locals using this section of  
551 trail. One ORTAB member suggested partially funding this project at \$50,000. This would allow the  
552 applicant to purchase the snowmachines or the Centaur.

553

554 The board decided to move the project from the motorized category to the diversified category and  
555 fund them at \$50,000.

556 **25. 17b Easement Trail Tread Repairs**

557 **Applicant:** Island Trails Network, Inc

558 **Category:** Diversified

559 **Funds Requested / Match:** \$19,100 / \$7,762

560 **Land Owner(s):** Ouzinkie Native Corporation

561 **Project Discussion:**

562 One board member thought that an organization renting their own ATV for match didn't seem  
563 legitimate. Another member questioned how the geotex was originally laid, because it now needed to  
564 be replaced so soon. This project was flagged by the board to be put into the diversified category.

565

566 **Motion:**

567 Mickey Todd moved to move Island Trails to the diversified category (from the motorized category). Ron  
568 Lurk seconded.

569

570 **Vote:** (5 yea, 0 nay) Motion Passed

571

572 **26. ATV/Salmon Stream Crossing Training/Education**

573 **Applicant:** Wasilla Soil & Water Conservation District (WS&WCD)

574 **Category:** Motorized

575 **Funds Requested / Match:** \$6,500 / \$1,300

576 **Land Owner(s):** N/A

577 **Project Discussion:**

578 Some of the ORTAB members were confused about the specifics of the Project; Chuck Kaucic (WS&WCD  
579 District Manager) was able to answer their questions. He explained that he received a legislative grant  
580 for assessing salmon stream crossings in Matanuska Valley, and that grant was related to this grant  
581 application. He explained that his project was to train government, nonprofits, community groups,  
582 students, and locals, where and how to design salmon-stream crossings for ATVs, and also to discuss the  
583 latest technology and assessment tools.

584

585 **27. Mat Valley Moose Range Trail Bridges Upgrade**

586 **Applicant:** Wasilla Soil & Water Conservation District

587 **Category:** Diversified

588 **Funds Requested / Match:** \$51,685.15 / \$10,358

589 **Land Owner(s):** State of Alaska

590 **Project Discussion:**

591 One member noted that there was only one bid for equipment, and not the required three. Another  
592 member didn't think that Boy Scout labor was worth \$21/hr.

593

594

595 **28. Watermelon Trail Remediation**

596 **Applicant:** Homer Soil & Water Conservation District

597 **Category:** Motorized

598 **Funds Requested / Match:** \$ 36,630.95 / \$ 10,212

599 **Land Owner(s):** Kenai Peninsula Borough and DNR Division of ML&W

600 **Project Discussion:**

601 An ORTAB member commented that this was one of the three trails between the head of Kachemak Bay  
602 and Ninilchik that had legal easements. Another board member thought that they didn't provide a very  
603 good description of trail-users.

604

605 **Public Comment Period**

606

607 Jack Kreinheder (President of Trail Mix Inc. and Vice President of the Juneau Freewheelers Cycle Club)  
608 wanted to comment in anticipation of possible applicant-performance scoring for next year. We (Trail  
609 Mix) were frustrated by the changes that Federal Highways have made in the last couple of years.  
610 Federal Highways started requiring much more specific information for invoices; one of our invoices was  
611 rejected for our Mount Juneau project, and Federal Highway threatened to de-obligate funding for the  
612 project. At this time we had completed 80% of our project. Because of the rejected invoice, Federal  
613 Highways' system showed that we had not done work in the last year and they threatened to de-  
614 obligate the grant funds. In that scenario we would have had to pay back Federal Highways \$35,000.  
615 Steve Neel said Federal Highways had issues with their payroll accuracy, legibility, and match recording,  
616 but the main problem was the timeline; it was taking 6 months to a year to receive invoices from Trail  
617 Mix.

618

619 **RecTrails Projects from State Entities**

620 (Projects are listed in the order they were discussed, not by a ranking.)

621

622 **29. Bird Valley Motorized Trail-Maintenance**

623 **Applicant:** Chugach State Park

624 **Category:** Diversified

625 **Funds Requested / Match:** \$35,066.25 / \$5,293.94

626 **Land Owner(s):** Alaska State Parks

627 **Project Discussion:**

628 One board member mentioned that there were no support letters. Another member thought that the  
629 State shouldn't be required to get support letters because the State Park Advisory Boards are involved.  
630 Another ORTAB member also thought that a letter from the advisory board would be the perfect  
631 solution.

632

633

634

635

636 **Motion:**  
637 Mickey Todd moved to move Bird Valley to the diversified section (from the motorized category). Ron  
638 Lurk seconded.

639  
640 **Vote:** (5 yea, 0 nay) Motion Passed

641  
642 **30. Northern Trail Rehabilitation**

643 **Applicant:** Alaska State Parks, Northern Region

644 **Category:** Motorized

645 **Funds Requested / Match:** \$12,201 / \$1,224

646 **Land Owner(s):** Alaska State Parks

647 **Project Discussion:**

648 One member noted that these trails are very popular and receive lots of use.

649

650 **31. Stiles Creek Trail**

651 **Applicant:** Alaska State Parks, Northern Region

652 **Category:** Motorized

653 **Funds Requested / Match:** \$24,932 / \$2,999

654 **Land Owner(s):** Alaska State Parks

655 **Project Discussion:**

656 One board member thought that one day a week for project management seemed appropriate. Another  
657 member thought that a budget narrative could have helped this application.

658

659 **32. Northern Area Training & Assessment**

660 **Applicant:** Alaska State Parks, Northern Region

661 **Category:** Diversified

662 **Funds Requested / Match:** \$8,270 / \$1,224

663 **Land Owner(s):** Alaska State Parks

664 **Project Discussion:**

665 Steve Neel explained that trail crews used to receive a lump sum to spend as needed; now regions are  
666 required to submit individual grants for projects. He also explained that trail crews are allowed (by  
667 Federal Highways) to assess trail conditions and receive training.

668

669

670

671

672

673

674 **33. Lower Chatanika ATV Trail Map and Brochure**

675 **Applicant:** Alaska Div. of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, Interpretation and Education

676 **Category:** Motorized

677 **Funds Requested / Match:** \$50,000 / \$4,963

678 **Land Owner(s):** Alaska State Parks

679 **Project Discussion:**

680 One member said the requirement of a mock-up for a brochure seemed unnecessary, because it asked  
681 applicants to essentially create the brochure ahead of time. Other members thought that the cost for  
682 the project was high, the area seemed to have low-use, and that there was a lot of time budgeted to  
683 write a small amount of required text. One member though that the applicant may just want a new  
684 camera.

685

686 **34. Battery Point Trail Hardening**

687 **Applicant:** State of Alaska / DNR / DPOR (Haines)

688 **Category:** Non-Motorized

689 **Funds Requested / Match:** \$47,540 / \$4,532

690 **Land Owner(s):** Alaska State Parks

691 **Project Discussion:**

692 One member commented that the application was very brief. Another ORTAB member questioned if  
693 they really need *two* mechanical wheelbarrows for this project. Another member thought that a beam  
694 saw would be unnecessary, and other tools parks likely had could work almost as well. One member  
695 made a comment that the State should mention the future work that new pieces of equipment will  
696 accomplish (after the current grant).

697

698 **35. Kachemak Bay State Park: Saddle Trail Re-Route**

699 **Applicant:** Alaska State Parks, Kenai Area, South District, Kachemak Bay State Park

700 **Category:** Non-Motorized

701 **Funds Requested / Match:** \$49,996.25 / \$4,963.20

702 **Land Owner(s):** Alaska State Parks

703 **Project Discussion:**

704 One member asked about the use of motorized-wheelchairs on the Saddle Trail, because it was  
705 mentioned in the application (in regards to scoring points for helping people with disabilities). Another  
706 member confirmed that this would be impossible.

707

708

709

710

711

712 **36. Angel Rocks Rehabilitation**

713 **Applicant:** Alaska State Park, Northern Region

714 **Category:** Non-Motorized

715 **Funds Requested / Match:** \$22,515 / \$2,386

716 **Land Owner(s):** Alaska State Parks

717 **Project Discussion:**

718 One member commented that this trail was eroded, needed work, and that the cost of this grant is a  
719 bargain.

720

721 **37. Middle Fork of Campbell Creek Trail Improvement**

722 **Applicant:** Chugach State Park

723 **Category:** Non-Motorized

724 **Funds Requested / Match:** \$32,942 / \$3,233.25

725 **Land Owner(s):** Alaska State Parks

726 **Project Discussion:**

727 One member commented that it would be nice to have a support letter from the advisory board.

728

729 **38. Reclamation of Miller Point Lower Access Trail**

730 **Applicant:** DNR / DPOR / Kodiak District

731 **Category:** Diversified

732 **Funds Requested / Match:** \$ 35,695 / \$ 3,295.50

733 **Land Owner(s):** Alaska State Parks

734 **Project Discussion:**

735 Two members though that the grant didn't seem complete. One ORTAB member thought that this was  
736 just a grant for a tractor, and not a trail project, because it only mentioned creating 200 feet of trail.

737

738 **39. Trail Repairs & Equipment**

739 **Applicant:** Mat-Su Area, Denali State Park

740 **Category:** Diversified

741 **Funds Requested / Match:** \$ 47,885 / \$ 4,776.39

742 **Land Owner(s):** Alaska State Parks

743 **Project Discussion:**

744 One member commented that the math on the budget was off and the project seemed incomplete.

745

746 Steve Neel explained that the Mat-Su office consistently turned in billing requests that he could not send  
747 to Federal Highways the first time around. They currently have three projects still open, and adding new  
748 projects would raise the possibility of more complications.

749

750

751 **40. Red Shirt Lake Trail Repairs**

752 **Applicant:** Division of Parks, Mat-Su, Nancy Lake

753 **Category:** Non-Motorized

754 **Funds Requested / Match:** \$ 40,198 / \$ 4,010

755 **Land Owner(s):** Alaska State Parks

756 **Project Discussion:**

757 One ORTAB member liked the mention of future-use for the motorized-toter.

758

759 **41. Piedmont Point Historic Bunker Trail Re-Route**

760 **Applicant:** DNR / DPOR / Kodiak District

761 **Category:** Non-Motorized

762 **Funds Requested / Match:** \$8,000 / \$723

763 **Land Owner(s):** Alaska State Parks

764 **Project Discussion:**

765 One board member had an issue with building a trail next to a cliff where a trail had already eroded  
766 away. Another member noted that the new location of the trail is next to a sturdy rocky cliff edge. A  
767 member also noted that there was no public notice or a letter from a youth-group.

768

769 **42. South Denali Visitor Center Complex Trails Phase 1**

770 **Applicant:** Alaska State Parks- Design & Construction

771 **Category:**

772 **Funds Requested / Match:** \$46,029.47 / \$3,970.53

773 **Land Owner(s):** Alaska State Parks

774 **Project Discussion:**

775 One member gave the budget a zero because there was no bid; only an engineer’s estimate. Another  
776 ORTAB member commented that this was a poor application.

777

778 One ORTAB member commented that there didn’t seem to me a motorized corridor through this  
779 parking lot, but one was promised by Parks. The member also noted that the motorized corridor was a  
780 separate issue from the grant application, and had no influence on scoring the project.

781

782 **Funding Recommendation Discussion**

783

784 ORTAB discussed how to categorize the projects and to spend as much of the RecTrails money as  
785 possible; they also had to satisfy the 30% Non-Motorized, 40% Diversified, and 30% Motorized  
786 requirements. To accomplish these goals, the board moved projects into different categories. There  
787 weren’t enough motorized projects, so to fill up the categories, some multiple-use non-motorized  
788 categories were moved from “non-motorized” to “diversified,” and some diversified projects with  
789 motorized-use were moved to “motorized.” \*The project descriptions in this document reflect which  
790 category they were moved into. Steve Neel clarified that projects in the “diversified” category could

791 include non-motorized projects that provide multiple-uses. One member noted that the State can have  
792 all of its applications funded, and can get the full 50% of the money.  
793 One member brought up the possibility of not choosing to fund projects from Mat-Su State Parks this  
794 grant cycle.

795

796 **Motion:**

797 Mike Rearden moved that we withdraw those three applications (South Denali Visitor Center Complex  
798 Trails Phase 1, Red Shirt Lake Trail Repairs, and Trail Repairs & Equipment) from the state process and  
799 move those funds into the pool of ones that are private individuals and communities. Ron Lurk  
800 seconded.

801

802 The ORTAB was concerned that Mat-Su State Parks currently has three outstanding projects. The ORTAB  
803 was also concerned that Mat-Su Parks would not submit adequate and proper paperwork, and the  
804 board wanted them to continue and finish their current projects, and get them done. The ORTAB will  
805 then consider their projects next year if they complete their current ones. They didn't want to burden  
806 Mat-Su State Parks with extra projects this year and cause more problems. The ORTAB also noted that  
807 the "South Denali Visitor Center Complex Trails Phase 1" project did not have a budget that Federal  
808 Highways would accept; it had only an engineer's estimate.

809

810 **Vote:** (4 yea, 0 nay, 1 missed the vote) Motion Passed

811

812 After the last motion, the percentages were evened out so that every category was adequately  
813 represented with \$50,000 left over. Steve Neel said that the obligation limitation is 94 or 95 percent, so  
814 this was as close as they were going to get to maximize the money spent.

815

816 Steve Neel explained that RecTrails was currently funded for only two-thirds of the current federal fiscal  
817 year (through May) for \$ 936,554.00. He said that the remaining one-third of the year may be funded at  
818 a later date. The ORTAB decided that there was a good chance that Federal Highways would end up  
819 funding the whole federal fiscal year, so they chose to make their recommendations based on the  
820 projected amount for the entire fiscal year of \$1,404,831.00. This recommendation would mean that  
821 about two-thirds of the approved projects could be funded initially, and in the future, the other one-  
822 third of the projects could be funded, if the funding becomes available.

823

824 **Motion:**

825 Mike Rearden moved to accept the final budget that we (ORTAB) are going to provide to the Director (as  
826 described by the spreadsheet that was being worked on during the meeting). Mickey Todd seconded.

827

828 **Vote:** (5 yea, 0 nay) Motion Passed

829

830

831

832 The following is a list of RecTrails projects that have been recommended for funding by the Outdoor  
833 Recreation Trails Advisory Board. Funding recommendation by the ORTAB does not guarantee that a  
834 project will be funded. The Director of the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation will consider the  
835 ORTAB's recommendations and decide which projects to tentatively approve. It is then up to Federal  
836 Highways whether or not to approve individual projects.

837

838 **Non-State RecTrails Projects Recommended for Funding (but not officially approved)**

839 Edmonds Lake / Mirror Lake Singletrack - Phase 1  
840 South Fork Overlook Trail Improvement  
841 Restoring KBay's Interpretive Trails - Phase 2  
842 Liewer Community Trail  
843 Eaglecrest Mountain Bike Flow Trail  
844 Skyline Ridge Park Trail Restoration  
845 Koponen Homestead Trail  
846 North Pole Beaver Springs Trail Upgrades  
847 HoWL Trail Days across the Bay!  
848 Beaver Lake Trail Improvements - Foot Trail  
849 A Picture Perfect Hike: An Interpretive Trail  
850 Sitka Storm Damage  
851 Hungry Point Trail Extension  
852 Tsalteshi Trailhead Improvement Project  
853 Denali State Park YCC  
854 Government Peak Singletrack Phase 2  
855 Matanuska River Park Access Trail  
856 CHCH Snow Cat  
857 Jim Creek Motorized Recreation Trails  
858 Mid-Valley Motorized Trail Improvement  
859 Eska West ATV Trail Phase 2  
860 Bonfire Lake to Happy River Trail Maintenance (partial funding)  
861 17b Easement Trail Tread Repairs  
862 ATV/Salmon Stream Crossing Training/Education  
863 Mat Valley Moose Range Trail Bridges Upgrade  
864 Watermelon Trail Remediation

865

866 **State RecTrails Projects Recommended for Funding (but not officially approved)**

867 Bird Valley Motorized Trail-Maintenance  
868 Northern Trail Rehabilitation  
869 Stiles Creek Trail  
870 Northern Area Training & Assessment  
871 Lower Chatanika ATV Trail Map and Brochure  
872 Battery Point Trail Hardening

873 **Continued: State RecTrails Projects Recommended for Funding (but not officially approved)**

- 874 Kachemak Bay State Park: Saddle Trail Re-Route
- 875 Angel Rocks Rehabilitation
- 876 Middle Fork of Campbell Creek Trail Improvement
- 877 Reclamation of Miller Point Lower Access Trail
- 878 Piedmont Point Historic Bunker Trail Re-Route

879

880 **LWCF Scoring Improvement**

881

882 One recommendation was to rewrite the questionnaire so it aligned with the score sheet. Another idea  
883 was to reduce the amount of points that the per-capita share was worth (It is currently worth 10 points).

884

885 **RecTrails Scoring Improvement**

886

887 The board expressed interest in having applicants combine attachments so there were only one or two  
888 documents to look through, making applications easier to grade. They also talked about making this  
889 requirement worth points. One member thought a “budget narrative” would be helpful for ORTAB to  
890 understand projects better. Another board member thought a letter from a State Park advisory board  
891 should be all that is required for State Parks’ support letters and public notice. One member thought  
892 that since a lack of land authorization for a project disqualified it, that it should not be scored, but  
893 instead placed in the threshold questions. Another member thought that fewer scoring boxes would  
894 make the scoring more efficient, that the applicants should be required to define acronyms, and that  
895 part of the narrative could require disclosing whether equipment from past RecTrails grants would be  
896 used. One member thought the board could have a teleconference to update the score sheet after  
897 sending suggestions to Darcy Harris.

898

899 **Alaska State Trails Program Funding Update**

900

901 Darcy Harris explained that after the Alaska Trails Initiative ended, that less money was available for the  
902 administration of the Alaska State Trails Program. The Legislature added \$200,000 to the budget for  
903 administration, and this allowed \$1.5 million to come into the state annually for trail projects. She said  
904 that this money was still in the governors’ budget.

905

906 ORTAB members said that they would draft a letter to send to past grantees. This letter would  
907 encourage past grantees to send letters of support for the Alaska Recreational Trails Program to their  
908 state and federal representatives, if they found the program to be valuable. Ron Lurk and Jeff Budd will  
909 draft and send a letter to past grantees and applicants.

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### **ORTAB Member Discussion**

Darcy Harris explained that Federal Highways required having an advisory board that represented both motorized and non-motorized trail-users, but there was not a specific number of members that were required. She also told the board that Andy Morrison (ORTAB/SnowTRAC Liaison) decided not to be on the advisory board (ORTAB) anymore, although he had not yet put this in writing. The board also decided to bring in two new members, and that it would be appropriate for each member to try and find applicants. ORTAB thought that having one or two teleconferences between yearly in-person meetings would be valuable, and asked Darcy if she could host them.

### **Project Funding Limit Discussion**

One board member suggested raising the amounts that applicants can apply for, in the hopes of fewer grants while still using as much of the funding as possible; the current number of grants being administered may become unsustainable.

#### **Motion**

Ron Lurk moved to raise the diversified (project funding limit from \$50,000) to \$75,000. Mike Rearden seconded.

**Vote:** (5 yea, 0 nay) Motion Passed

#### **Motion**

Jeff Budd moved to adjourn.

**Vote:** (5 yea, 0 nay) Motion Passed

-Meeting Adjourned at 4:30pm-