

POLICIES AND MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES - RECREATION AND HISTORIC TRAILS

POLICY

The state and the borough will reserve in public ownership (or otherwise insure public use of) important historic and recreational trails identified in this plan.

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

1. Trail Corridors

- a. The Iditarod Trail: Those portions of the Iditarod Trail in state and borough ownership will be protected by a public ownership corridor 1000 feet wide (500 feet either side of centerline). This width allows flexibility to reroute the trails within the corridor, combine motorized and non-motorized uses on separate trails within the corridor, and include a visual and sound buffer between the recreation corridor uses and adjacent uses. To minimize potential land use conflicts or the impact of the trail's existence on adjacent land uses, the corridor width may be expanded or reduced. These width adjustments, as well as rerouting of the trail corridor may be permitted in specific instances with the consultation and agreement of the Alaska Division of Parks. The Matanuska-Susitna Borough Trails Committee shall also be consulted if rerouting the trail corridor is proposed. Example: The trail corridor width could be reduced to 600 feet or less where the adjacent land use would not adversely impact the trail experience. Such adjacent uses might include farming, grazing, personal use or commercial timber harvesting, habitat manipulation, or similar low intensity uses. A corridor wider than 1000 feet may also be desirable in certain instances to incorporate high quality adjacent land features and scenery or where adjacent land uses such as high density residential, industrial, or commercial uses would adversely affect the trail.

No structures or equipment of a permanent nature should be placed within the trail corridor which could adversely affect the trail experience. Where necessary, trail crossings may be permitted to allow access to lands on both sides of the trail. Crossings should be limited to a few discrete areas rather than random crossings along the length of the trail.

- b. Other Recreation and Historic Trails: Other trails identified in this plan shall be retained in public ownership with a width of 300 feet (150 feet either side of centerline). This distance may be modified on a case by case basis with approval of the Division of Parks and the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Trails Committee. This width allows flexibility to re-route, separate motorized and non-motorized uses, and include a visual buffer. Re-routing of the trail corridor may be permitted to minimize land use conflicts with the provision that alternate routes provide opportunities similar to the original. Re-routing of trails on public land requires consultation with the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Trails Committee and the Alaska Division of Parks. The ADF&G shall also be consulted.

2. Land Management of Trail Corridors

- a. Where necessary for powerlines, pipelines or roads to cross trail corridors, crossings should be at 90° angles when feasible. An exception is when a trail corridor is deliberately combined with a public facility or transportation corridor. Land uses immediately adjacent to the trail corridor should not adversely affect the recreational enjoyment of the trail. Examples of negative effects are trees blown down within the corridor caused by removal of protective trees on adjacent land; pollution of streams that flow across or along the corridor caused by agricultural, industrial, resource extractive or residential development; and uncomfortable noise, light, dust, smoke or odor levels adjacent to trail corridor.
- b. Trail corridors are available for personal and selective commercial timber harvest only if such harvests protect or enhance the visual, sound, and other characteristics of the trail. Harvest practices, timing and transportation should be coordinated with the Alaska Division of Parks, ADF&G and the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Trails Committee.