



**KACHEMAK BAY STATE PARK
COTTONWOOD-EASTLAND UNIT UPDATE
SEPT. 27, 2022**

During 2022 Alaska State Parks has been working on addressing access issues in the Cottonwood-Eastland unit of Kachemak Bay State Park. This undeveloped unit of the park is located on the north side of Kachemak Bay and is accessible from East End Road near Homer, AK. Visitors have historically accessed the park through a subdivision and residential area off of Ratone Street and Elmer's Way to hike along social trails within the park.

After conducting a public process and working with the park advisory board to evaluate suitable locations for developing a trailhead, Alaska State Parks supports a short-term solution to access the park via borough land near mile 17 East End Road. Vehicles are currently able to park off the road and volunteers have cleared a trail that leads a short distance to the state park.

The park management plan recommends a long-term solution that the park acquire management authority for general state land near mile 17 East End Road and develop a trailhead and parking lot. Currently, the Department of Natural Resources is working on an Interagency Land Management Assignment (ILMA) that will give the park authority to manage this parcel.

In August 2022, Alaska State Parks received a proposal from the Friends of Kachemak Bay State Parks to construct a hiking trail in the Cottonwood Eastland management unit. Public comments were solicited and generally in support of this proposed trail which is also identified for future development in the park management plan.

Park staff have reviewed the proposed trail alignment and are currently working with the Friends of Kachemak Bay State Parks on slight modifications to the alignment which will provide a sustainable design that will help protect park resources and reduce future maintenance costs. The hiking trail alignment will be designed so that it may be improved in the future to meet equestrian trail standards. Once the final alignment is determined cost estimates will be prepared for seeking funding for construction.

For more information, please contact Chief Ranger Jason Okuly at (907) 226-4688 or by email at Jason.Okuly@alaska.gov

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