

Turnagain Pass Master Plan

Engagement Summary

JULY 2023

Prepared for:

Turnagain Pass Master Plan Project Management Team

Prepared by:

DOWL

Talli Vittetoe | Public Involvement



U.S. Department of Transportation
**Federal Highway
Administration**

TURNAGAIN PASS MASTER PLAN



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1. ACRONYMS

- ADA.....Americans with Disabilities Act
- ATIA.....Alaska Travel Industry Association
- ATV.....all-terrain vehicle
- CNFAIC.....Chugach National Forest Avalanche Information Center
- DOT&PF.....Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
- EMS.....emergency medical services
- KMTA.....Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm National Heritage Area
- TPMP.....Turnagain Pass Master Plan
- The Pass.....Turnagain Pass
- USDOT.....United States Department of Transportation
- USFS.....United States Forest Service
- WFLHD.....Western Federal Lands Highway Division

TURNAGAIN PASS MASTER PLAN



2. PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Turnagain Pass Master Plan (TPMP) provides a long-term guide for future corridor improvements with a focus on safety and recreational access. The plan will evaluate existing conditions, system needs, projects, conceptual design, cost estimates, and implementation actions. The TPMP is a collaborative effort between the United States Forest Service (USFS), Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF), and the Western Federal Lands Highway Division (WFLHD).

The planning area is the Seward Highway (Alaska Highway) between Milepost 56 and Milepost 75 and existing recreational access facilities within the corridor (trailheads, parking lots, pull outs, etc.).



Figure 1: Master Plan Area

Goals for the Turnagain Pass Master Plan include:

1. Develop a joint vision for the Turnagain Pass corridor between the USFS, DOT&PF, and their partners.
2. Identify current needs, forecasting future needs, and creating a prioritized list of projects to address these needs.

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3. Increase the long-term sustainability, safety, and access to the Chugach National Forest for travelers and users.

Additional opportunities for improvement in the planning area include:

1. Improve capacity at recreation sites between seasons.
2. Improve connections between facilities, including trail networks and multi-modal connections.
3. Improve pullouts and parking areas along the corridor.
4. Address snow removal and management needs at recreation sites.
5. Improve long-term operations, including funding opportunities.

3. ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

The objective of this engagement effort is to work directly with the interested public and regulatory bodies to communicate the goals of the project and gather input required for advancement through the project milestones, and to fulfil relevant federal, state, and local requirements for public involvement. The key communication objectives for this project were to:

- Develop an Engagement Plan.
- Identify all stakeholders interested and impacted by the master plan.
- Identify potential concerns in the planning area.
- Determine communication strategies that include a process for seeking out and considering the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and minority households, who may face challenges accessing employment and other services.
- Address opportunities for environmental justice.
- Maintain a detailed stakeholder register.
- Maintain a detailed comment log.
- Engage with the community and stakeholders via interviews and public meetings.
- Consult with Tribal agencies.
- Develop media communications and online project information.
- Regularly communicate the progress of the project to stakeholders.

3.1 Stakeholder Identification & Outreach

Stakeholder identification is the process of identifying all people and organizations impacted by the Master Plan, documenting relevant information regarding their interests, involvement, and impact on the success of the Plan. Project stakeholders are persons and organizations such as the government agencies, businesses, and the public that are actively involved in the Master Plan, or whose interest may be positively or negatively affected by the completion of the Plan. Stakeholder outreach included communication via email notifications. In addition, the engagement team reached out to stakeholders via focused group interviews to answer the following questions:

- How do you use Turnagain Pass?
- When do you visit Turnagain Pass? How often? How do you access the places you go?
- What do you like best about Turnagain Pass?
- When you visit Turnagain Pass, why do you choose to go there over other places?

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- What challenges do you experience? When? How often?
- What would you improve about Turnagain Pass?

The following stakeholder interview meetings were held over Microsoft Teams. Meeting summaries from each interview are included in the appendix.

Group	Invited Organizations	Organizations with Attendees	Date
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Alaska Trails ▪ Alaska Outdoor Alliance ▪ Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm National Heritage Area (KMTA) ▪ Iditarod National Historic Trail Alliance ▪ Alaska Recreational Management, Inc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Alaska Trails ▪ Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm National Heritage Area (KMTA) 	06/05/2023
Biking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Singletrack Advocates ▪ Arctic Bicycle Club ▪ Bikewood 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Singletrack Advocates 	06/06/2023
Motorized	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chugach Backcountry Freeriders ▪ Anchorage Snowmobile Club 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chugach Backcountry Freeriders ▪ Anchorage Snowmobile Club 	06/07/2023
Commercial Guides – Motorized	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Alaska Wild Guides ▪ Glacier City Snowmobile Tours ▪ Alaska Backcountry Access 	No attendees (rescheduled)	06/08/2023
Commercial Guides – Non-motorized	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sundog Ski Guides ▪ Red Raven Guides ▪ Alaska Guide Collective ▪ Alaska Bike Adventures ▪ Kenai Backcountry Adventures ▪ Chugach Adventures ▪ IdidaRide Sled Dog Tours 	No attendees	06/09/2023
River Guides	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Swift Adventures ▪ Turnagain Kayak ▪ Chugach Outdoor Center ▪ Chugach Adventures ▪ NOVA Alaska Guides ▪ Alaska Packraft School 	No attendees	06/12/2023
Public Safety & Avalanche	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chugach National Forest Avalanche Information Center (CNFAIC) ▪ Friends of CNFAIC ▪ Alaska Avalanche School ▪ Whittier Police ▪ Girdwood Fire Department ▪ Alaska State Troopers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chugach National Forest Avalanche Information Center (CNFAIC) 	06/14/2023
Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Alaska Travel Industry Association (ATIA) ▪ Cruise Line Agencies of Alaska ▪ Premier Alaska Tours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Alaska Travel Industry Association (ATIA) 	06/16/2023
Commercial Guides - Motorized	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Alaska Wild Guides 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Alaska Wild Guides 	06/28/2023

3.2 Open House Meetings

Due to the distance between the communities in proximity to Turnagain Pass, public open house meetings were held in person at the following locations:

- Moose Pass Sportsman’s Club on Friday, June 2, 2023, from 4:00 – 6:00 PM
- Girdwood Community Room on Tuesday, June 13, 2023, from 5:00 – 7:00 PM
- REI Anchorage on Thursday, June 15, 2023, from 4:00 – 6:00 PM

The meeting format was open house style, with no formal presentation. Attendees were greeted at a sign in table with a project fact sheet detailing the Master Plan overview, background and history, goals and themes, tasks, and engagement opportunities. Project boards lined the perimeter of the room, and an aerial roll plot was set up in the center of the room for participants to mark up. Comments were collected on written comment forms and an aerial roll plot. Members of the project team were available throughout the meetings to answer questions and gather input on the vision and current challenges for safety and recreation in Turnagain Pass. Meeting summaries for each open house are included in the appendix.

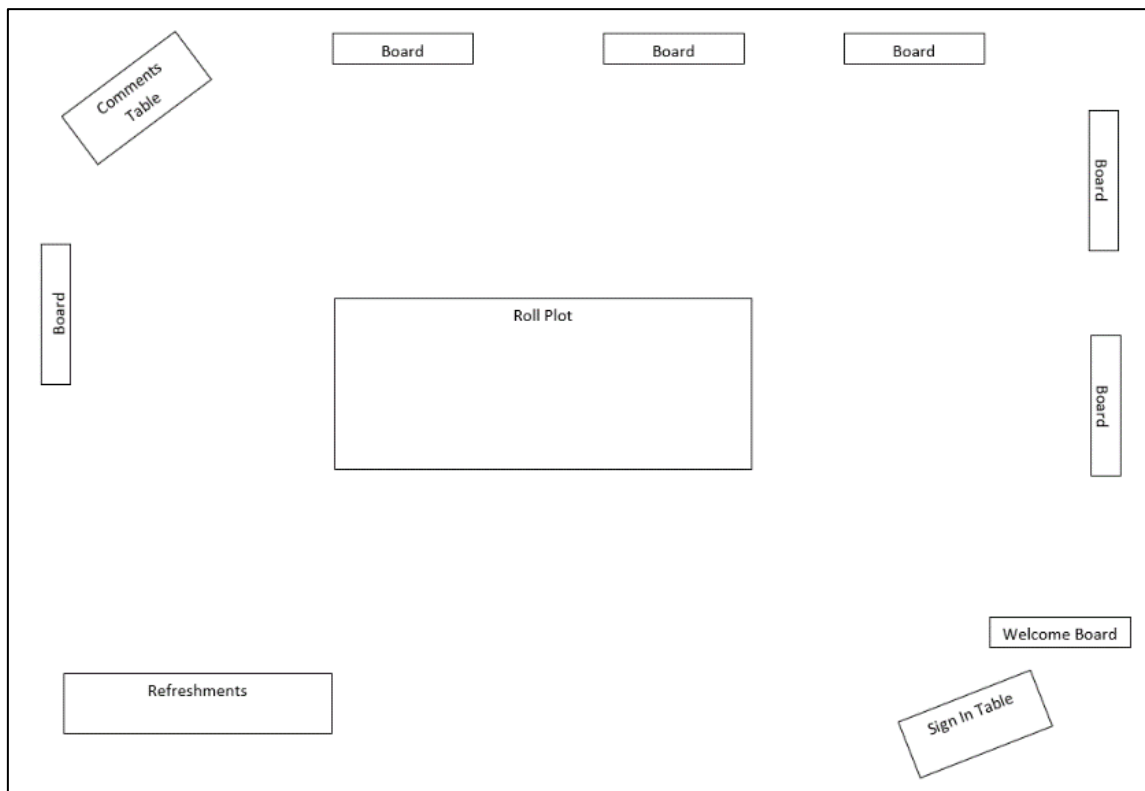


Figure 2: Open House Floor Plan

TURNAGAIN PASS MASTER PLAN



3.2.1 Display Boards

Welcome to the
**Turnagain Pass
Master Plan**
Public Open House
JUNE 2023

Master Plan Focus Area

The Master Plan focus area is Seward Highway (Alaska Highway 1) between Milepost 56 and Milepost 75 on the Kenai Peninsula (Turnagain Pass). It includes all existing recreational access facilities within the corridor (trailheads, parking lots, pull outs, etc.)

Background & History

- Seward Highway traverses through Turnagain Pass. It is part of the National Highway System (NHS) connecting Seward and the Kenai Peninsula to Anchorage and locations north.
- Turnagain Pass is frequented by residents and visitors traveling to the myriad of recreation and other destinations on the Kenai Peninsula.
- In the summer months Turnagain Pass sees little recreation use, while in the winter, the area experiences high visitor use, including snow machine riders and backcountry skiers.
- Infrastructure in the area struggles to meet visitor demand, particularly with parking and snow removal.

Goals & Themes

Goals Include:	Additional Themes Include:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Developing a joint vision for the Turnagain Pass corridor. 2. Identifying current needs, forecasting future needs, and creating a prioritized list of projects to address these needs. 3. Increasing the long-term sustainability, safety, and access to forest lands for travelers and users. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improving capacity at recreation sites between seasons. 2. Improving connections between facilities, including trail networks and multimodal connections. 3. Improving pull outs and parking areas along the corridor. 4. Addressing snow removal and management needs at recreation sites.

TURNAGAIN PASS MASTER PLAN



Engagement

We want your input on how you use Turnagain Pass. We are looking for feedback on what works and what needs improving:

- Issues
- User conflicts
- Incompatible uses
- Any ideas for improvements
- New recreation, facility, or access opportunities

Consider the following as you leave comments:

- How do you use Turnagain Pass?
- When do you visit Turnagain Pass? How often? How do you access the places you go?
- What do you like best about Turnagain Pass?
- When you visit Turnagain Pass, why do you choose to go there over other places?
- What challenges do you experience? When? How often?
- What would you improve about Turnagain Pass?

We want your feedback!

Project Contacts:

- Cole Grisham, AICP | WFLHD Project Manager | (202) 839-1409
- Joselyn Biloon | DOT & PF Kenai Area Planner | (907) 269-0508
- William Brennan | USFS Recreation Planner | (907) 754-2351
- Renee Whitesell, PTP | DOWL Project Manager | (907) 865-1161
- Holly Spoth-Torres, PLA | Huddle AK Recreation Planning & Public Engagement | (907) 223-0136
- Talli Vittetoe | DOWL Public Involvement | (907) 865-1185

Website:
www.turnagainpassmasterplan.com

SCAN ME!

Scan this code with your smartphone camera to view the StoryMap and submit comments on the Turnagain Pass area map.



3.3 Tribal Consultation

Tribal consultation was conducted in accordance with the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) Tribal Consultation Plan, as well as applicable federal land management agency policies. Tribal consultation included a letter to Tribal governments identified within the planning area. The letter outlined the project, requested the Tribal government's preferred engagement method, and described any additionally planned engagement opportunities. Tribal governments were contacted by a follow-up phone call as well. The following Tribal agencies were included in outreach:

- Chugach Alaska Corporation
- Cook Inlet Tribal Council
- Cook Inlet Region, Inc.
- Kenaitze Indian Tribe
- Kenai Natives Association, Inc.
- Ninilchik Natives Association, Inc.
- Salamatof, Inc.

Tribal consultation letters are included in the appendix.

TURNAGAIN PASS MASTER PLAN



APPENDIX



OUTREACH MATERIALS | Flyer

Flyers were sent to all stakeholders to distribute within their organizations and were posted in various locations in the communities near Turnagain Pass.

What is your vision for Turnagain Pass, Alaska?



Turnagain Pass, the corridor surrounding the Seward Highway from approximately MP 56 to MP 75, is only an hour outside of Anchorage and is an area familiar to the many residents that travel between their homes and fishing and recreation destinations on the Kenai Peninsula.

The Western Federal Lands Highway Division, the U.S. Forest Service, and the State of Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, have identified the need for a Turnagain Pass Master Plan. This plan will create a long-term vision for Turnagain Pass, with modifications and capital improvements expected in the 20 years following the plan completion, with a focus on safety and recreation.

Join us at the following meetings:

- **Friday, June 2, 2023, 4:00 – 6:00 PM**
Moose Pass Sportsman's Club
33675 Depot Road, Moose Pass, AK
- **Tuesday, June 13, 2023, 5:00 – 7:00 PM**
Girdwood Community Room
250 Egloff Drive, Girdwood, AK
- **Thursday, June 15, 2023, 4:00 – 6:00 PM**
REI Anchorage
500 E Northern Lights Blvd, Anchorage, AK

Meeting materials will be available on the project website beginning June 2, 2023. Comments can be submitted during the meetings, online, or in writing.

We need your help!

How do you use the Turnagain Pass corridor? What are potential issues and opportunities that exist in the Turnagain Pass area?

Come meet the project team and share your thoughts.



Visit www.turnagainpassmasterplan.com to join the email list to receive updates, make a comment, and to learn more about the project.



OUTREACH MATERIALS | Fact Sheet

Fact sheets were available at each open house.

Project Fact Sheet | June 2023
Turnagain Pass Master Plan



Master Plan Overview

The Turnagain Pass Master Plan will provide a long-term guide for future corridor improvements with a focus on safety and recreation access. The plan will evaluate existing conditions, system needs, projects, conceptual design, cost estimates, and implementation actions.

The master plan area is Seward Highway (Alaska Highway) between Milepost 56 and Milepost 75 and existing recreational access facilities within the corridor (trailheads, parking lots, pull outs, etc.).



Background

Seward Highway traverses through Turnagain Pass and is part of the National Highway System (NHS) connecting Seward to Anchorage and additional locations north. The Seward Highway also provides connection to the Sterling Highway south of Turnagain Pass, which is the main route to locations on the Kenai Peninsula. Turnagain Pass is frequented by residents and visitors traveling to the myriad of recreation and other destinations on the Kenai Peninsula. In the winter months, the area experiences high visitor use, including snow machine riders and backcountry skiers, while in the summer months the area sees little recreation use. In the winter, the infrastructure in the area struggles to meet visitor demand, particularly with parking and snow removal.

Goals for the Turnagain Pass Master Plan Include:

- Developing a joint vision for the Turnagain Pass corridor.
- Identifying current needs, forecasting future needs, and creating a prioritized list of projects to address these needs.
- Increasing the long-term sustainability, safety, and access to Chugach National Forest lands for travelers and users.

Additional Themes Include:

- Improving capacity at recreation sites between seasons.
- Improving connections between facilities, including trail networks and multi-modal connections.
- Improving pullouts and parking areas along the corridor
- Addressing snow removal and management needs at recreation sites.
- Improving long-term operations, including funding opportunities.

Tasks

The following tasks will be completed over the next several months as part of the process of developing the Turnagain Pass Master Plan:



Share Your Thoughts!

The project team wants to hear your input on how you use Turnagain Pass. We're looking for feedback on what is functioning well, and any challenges in the area. Please note any issues, user conflicts, incompatible uses, and any ideas for improvements or new recreation, facility, or access opportunities.

Consider the following as you leave comments in the interactive map below:

- 1 How do you use Turnagain Pass?
When do you visit Turnagain Pass? How often?
How do you access the places you go?
- 2 What do you like best about Turnagain Pass?
- 3 When you visit Turnagain Pass, why do you choose to go there over other places?
- 4 What challenges do you experience? When?
How often?
- 5 What would you improve about Turnagain Pass?



Scan this code with your smartphone camera or visit www.turnagainpassmasterplan.com to provide feedback.

POINTS OF CONTACT:

Western Federal Lands Highway Division (WFLHD)
Cole Gisham, AICP, Project Manager / Transportation Planner

State of Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF)
Joselyn Bilon, Kenai Area Planner

US Forest Service (USFS)
William Brennan, Recreation Planner

DOWL

Renee Whitesell, PTP, Project Manager
Jessica Smith, AICP, Senior Transportation Planner
Talli Villalob, Public Involvement
(907) 562-2000

Huddle AK

Holly Spoth-Torres, PLA, Recreation Planning & Public Engagement

www.turnagainpassmasterplan.com

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS

AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

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4041 B STREET, ANCHORAGE, AK 99503

Order #: W0038297

Cost: \$591.4

STATE OF ALASKA
THIRD JUDICIAL DISTRICT

Lisi Misa being first duly sworn on oath deposes and says that she is a representative of the Anchorage Daily News, a daily newspaper. That said newspaper has been approved by the Third Judicial Court, Anchorage, Alaska, and it now and has been published in the English language continually as a daily newspaper in Anchorage, Alaska, and it is now and during all said time was printed in an office maintained at the aforesaid place of publication of said newspaper. That the annexed is a copy of an advertisement as it was published in regular issues (and not in supplemental form) of said newspaper on

05/21/2023, 05/28/2023

and that such newspaper was regularly distributed to its subscribers during all of said period. That the full amount of the fee charged for the foregoing publication is not in excess of the rate charged private individuals.

Signed Lisi Misa

Subscribed and sworn to before me
this 30th day of May 2023.

Jada L. Nowling

Notary Public in and for
The State of Alaska.
Third Division
Anchorage, Alaska

MY COMMISSION EXPIRES
2024-07-14

Jada L. Nowling
ELECTRONIC NOTARY PUBLIC
STATE OF ALASKA
MY COMMISSION EXPIRES 07/14/2024

Western Federal Lands Highway Division

TURNAGAIN PASS MASTER PLAN PUBLIC MEETINGS

The State of Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) and the U.S. Forest Service, with the support of the Western Federal Lands Highway Division, have identified the need for a Turnagain Pass Master Plan. This plan will create a long-term vision for Turnagain Pass, with modifications and capital improvements expected in the 20 years following the plan completion, and a focus on safety and recreation.

We need your help!

How do you use the Turnagain Pass corridor? What are potential issues and opportunities that exist in the Turnagain Pass area? Come meet the project team and share your thoughts.

Join us at the following meetings

- * Friday, June 2, 2023, 4:00 – 6:00 PM
Moose Pass Sportsman's Club
33675 Depot Road, Moose Pass, AK
- * Tuesday, June 13, 2023, 5:00 – 7:00 PM
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250 Egloff Drive, Girdwood, AK
- * Thursday, June 15, 2023, 4:00 – 6:00 PM
REI Anchorage
500 E Northern Lights Blvd, Anchorage, AK

Meeting materials will be available on the project website beginning June 2, 2023. Comments can be submitted during the meetings, online, or in writing.

Visit www.turnagainpassmasterplan.com to join the email list to receive updates, make a comment, and to learn more about the project.

The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by DOT&PF pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated April 13, 2023, and executed by FHWA and DOT&PF.

The Alaska DOT&PF operates without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability regardless of the funding source, including Federal Transit Administration, Federal Aviation Administration, Federal Highway Administration, and state funds. Full Title VI Nondiscrimination Policy: dot.alaska.gov/tvj_statement.shtml.

To file a complaint, go to: dot.alaska.gov/cv/rtts/titlevi.shtml. For individuals requiring TTY communications, please contact Alaska Relay 711 or 1-800-770-8973.

Pub: May 21, 28/2023

OUTREACH MATERIALS | Peninsula Clarion Legal Ad

Legal advertisements were published in the Peninsula Clarion on May 20, 2023, and May 27, 2023.

PUBLISHER'S AFFIDAVIT

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
STATE OF ALASKA

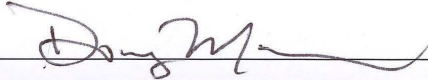
} SS:

Doug Munn being first duly sworn, on oath deposes and says:

That I am and was at all times here in this affidavit mentions, Supervisor of Legals of the Sound Publishing / Peninsula Clarion, a newspaper of general circulation and published at Kenai, Alaska, that the advertisement, a printed copy of which is hereto annexed was published in said paper on the dates listed below:

Public Meeting
05/20/23
05/27/23

x



SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN before me on this

10th day of June, 2023.



NOTARY PUBLIC in favor for the State of Alaska.

My commission expires 3/6/2024.

Elizabeth A. McDonald
Notary Public, State of Alaska
Commission #200306009
My Commission Expires March 6, 2024

Western Federal Lands Highway Division

TURNAGAIN PASS MASTER PLAN PUBLIC MEETINGS

The State of Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) and the U.S. Forest Service, with the support of the Western Federal Lands Highway Division, have identified the need for a Turnagain Pass Master Plan. This plan will create a long-term vision for Turnagain Pass, with modifications and capital improvements expected in the 20 years following the plan completion, and a focus on safety and recreation.

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Meeting materials will be available on the project website beginning June 2, 2023. Comments can be submitted during the meetings, online, or in writing.

Visit www.turnagainpassmasterplan.com to join the email list to receive updates, make a comment, and to learn more about the project.

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The Alaska DOT&PF operates without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability regardless of the funding source, including Federal Transit Administration, Federal Aviation Administration, Federal Highway Administration, and state funds. Full Title VI Non-discrimination Policy:

dot.alaska.gov/tvi_statement.shtml.

To file a complaint, go to: dot.alaska.gov/cvirts/title-vi.shtml. For individuals requiring TTY communications, please contact Alaska Relay 711 or 1-800-770-8973.

OUTREACH MATERIALS | Alaska Public Media Radio Ad

Radio advertisements were aired on KSKA-FM 91.1 Public Radio from May 29, 2023, to June 15, 2023.

SCRIPT #1:

Western Federal Lands Highway Division is hosting a series of in-person public open house meetings for the Turnagain Pass Master Plan. The plan provides a long-term guide for the future corridor planning actions with a focus on safety and recreation. The first public meeting is Friday, June 2, 4 to 6pm in Moose Pass at the Sportsman’s Club. Meeting materials, public comments at turnagainpassmasterplan.com This message sponsored by the Western Federal Lands Highway Division.

SCRIPT #2:

Western Federal Lands Highway Division is hosting a series of in-person public open house meetings for the Turnagain Pass Master Plan. The plan provides a long-term guide for the future corridor planning actions with a focus on safety and recreation. The second public meeting is Tuesday, June 13, 5 to 7pm at the Girdwood Community Room. Meeting materials, public comments at turnagainpassmasterplan.com This message sponsored by the Western Federal Lands Highway Division.

SCRIPT #3:

Western Federal Lands Highway Division is hosting a series of in-person public open house meetings for the Turnagain Pass Master Plan. The plan provides a long-term guide for the future corridor planning actions with a focus on safety and recreation. The third public meeting is Thursday, June 15, 4 to 6pm, at Anchorage REI. Meeting materials, public comments at turnagainpassmasterplan.com This message sponsored by the Western Federal Lands Highway Division.

OUTREACH MATERIALS | Constant Contact Email Invite

An email notification was sent via Constant Contact to the project contact list on May 18, 2023



Turnagain Pass Master Plan Public Meetings



JUNE 2023

The State of Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) and the U.S. Forest Service, with the support of the Western Federal Lands Highway Division, have identified the need for a Turnagain Pass Master Plan. This plan will create a long-term vision for Turnagain Pass, with modifications and capital improvements expected in the 20 years following the plan completion, and a focus on safety and recreation.

We need your help!

How do you use the Turnagain Pass corridor? What are potential issues and opportunities that exist in the Turnagain Pass area? Come meet the project team and share your thoughts.

Date	Time	Location
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Tuesday, June 13, 2023	5:00 - 7:00 PM	Girdwood Community Room 250 Egloff Drive Girdwood, AK
Thursday, June 15, 2023	4:00 - 6:00 PM	REI Anchorage 500 E Northern Lights Blvd Anchorage, AK

Meeting materials will be available on the project website beginning **June 2, 2023**. Comments can be submitted during the meetings, online, or in writing.

Visit www.turnagainpassmasterplan.com to join the email list to receive updates, make a comment, and to learn more about the project.

Project Area



Key Project Contacts

Western Federal Lands Highway Division (WFLHD)

Cole Grisham, AICP, Project Manager/ Transportation Planner

State of Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF)

Joselyn Biloan, Kenai Area Planner
David Post, Central Region Planning Manger

US Forest Service (USFS)

William Brennan, Recreation Planner

Huddle AK

Holly Spoth-Torres, PLA, Recreation Planning & Public Engagement

DOWL

Renee Whitesell, PTP, Project Manager
Jessica Smith, AICP, Senior Transportation Planner
Talli Vittetoe, Public Involvement

Phone: (907) 562-2000

Website: www.turnagainpassmasterplan.com

Thank you for your interest in this project!

OUTREACH MATERIALS | Constant Contact Email Reminder

An email notification was sent via Constant Contact to the project contact list on June 1, 2023.



REMINDER:
Join us for the Turnagain Pass Master Plan Public Meetings



JUNE 2023

The State of Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) and the U.S. Forest Service, with the support of the Western Federal Lands Highway Division, have identified the need for a Turnagain Pass Master Plan. This plan will create a long-term vision for Turnagain Pass, with modifications and capital improvements expected in the 20 years following the plan completion, and a focus on safety and recreation.

We need your help!

How do you use the Turnagain Pass corridor? What are potential issues and opportunities that exist in the Turnagain Pass area? Come meet the project team and share your thoughts.

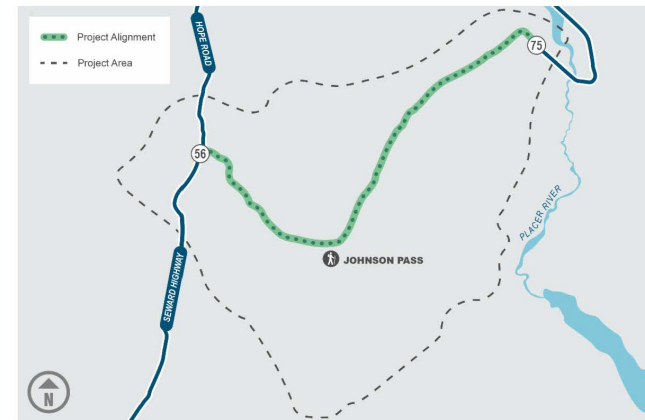
Date	Time	Location
Friday, June 2, 2023	4:00 - 6:00 PM	Moose Pass Sportsman's Club 33675 Depot Road Moose Pass, AK
Tuesday, June 13, 2023	5:00 - 7:00 PM	Girdwood Community Room 250 Eglhoff Drive Girdwood, AK
Thursday, June 15, 2023	4:00 - 6:00 PM	REI Anchorage 500 E Northern Lights Blvd Anchorage, AK

Meeting materials will be available on the project website beginning **June 2, 2023**. Comments can be submitted during the meetings, online, or in writing.

Visit www.turnagainpassmasterplan.com to join the email list to receive

updates, make a comment, and to learn more about the project.

Master Plan Area



Key Project Contacts

Western Federal Lands Highway Division (WFLHD)
 Cole Grisham, AICP, Project Manager/ Transportation Planner

State of Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF)
 Joselyn Biloan, Kenai Area Planner
 David Post, Central Region Planning Manger

US Forest Service (USFS)
 William Brennan, Recreation Planner

Huddle AK
 Holly Spoth-Torres, PLA, Recreation Planning & Public Engagement

DOWL
 Renee Whitesell, PTP, Project Manager
 Jessica Smith, AICP, Senior Transportation Planner
 Talli Vittetoe, Public Involvement

Phone: (907) 562-2000
Website: www.turnagainpassmasterplan.com

Thank you for your interest in this project!

OUTREACH MATERIALS | Constant Contact Thank You Email

An email notification was sent via Constant Contact to the project contact list on June 20, 2023.



Thank you for attending the Turnagain Pass Master Plan open houses!



Couldn't make it?

Visit www.turnagainpassmasterplan.com to join the email list to receive updates, make a comment, and to learn more about the project.

We want your feedback!

Whether you attended one of the open houses or not, we want to hear from you on the conditions and opportunities in Turnagain Pass. You may submit a comment at a specific location by using the Map Link found in the [StoryMap](#), or by emailing Cole Grisham at nicholas.grisham@dot.gov.

Master Plan Area



Key Project Contacts

Western Federal Lands Highway Division (WFLHD)

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Jessica Smith, AICP, Senior Transportation Planner

Talli Vittetoe, Public Involvement

Huddle AK

Holly Spoth-Torres, PLA, Recreation Planning & Public Engagement

Phone: (907) 562-2000

Website: www.turnagainpassmasterplan.com

Thank you for your interest in this project!

DOWL | 5015 Business Park Boulevard, Suite 4000, Anchorage, AK 99503

Unsubscribe_rrau@dowl.com

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OUTREACH MATERIALS | Moose Pass Messenger

Open house information was posted to the Moose Pass Messenger, an online bulletin board.



POSTED BY: TVITTETO@DOWL.COM

TURNAGAIN PASS MASTER PLAN PUBLIC MEETINGS

[TurnagianPass_Flyer_V2.pdf](#)

The State of Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOTandPF) and the U.S. Forest Service, with the support of the Western Federal Lands Highway Division, have identified the need for a Turnagain Pass Master Plan. This plan will create a long-term vision for Turnagain Pass, with modifications and capital improvements expected in the 20 years following the plan completion, and a focus on safety and recreation.

We need your help!

How do you use the Turnagain Pass corridor? What are potential issues and opportunities that exist in the Turnagain Pass area? Come meet the project team and share your thoughts.

Join us at the following meetings

· **Friday, June 2, 2023, 4:00 – 6:00 PM**

Moose Pass Sportsman's Club
33675 Depot Road, Moose Pass, AK

· **Tuesday, June 13, 2023, 5:00 – 7:00 PM**

Girdwood Community Room
250 Egloff Drive, Girdwood, AK

· **Thursday, June 15, 2023, 4:00 – 6:00 PM**

REI Anchorage
500 E Northern Lights Blvd, Anchorage, AK

Meeting materials will be available on the project website beginning June 2, 2023. Comments can be submitted during the meetings, online, or in writing.

Visit www.turnagainpassmasterplan.com to join the email list to receive updates, make a comment, and to learn more about the project.

The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by DOTandPF pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated April 13, 2023, and executed by FHWA and DOTandPF.

The Alaska DOTandPF operates without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability regardless of the funding source, including Federal Transit Administration, Federal Aviation Administration, Federal Highway Administration, and state funds. Full Title VI Nondiscrimination Policy: dot.alaska.gov/tvi_statement.shtml.

To file a complaint, go to: dot.alaska.gov/cvlrts/titlevi.shtml. For individuals requiring TTY communications, please contact Alaska Relay 711 or 1-800-770-8973.

OUTREACH MATERIALS | Tribal Consultation Letters

Tribal consultation letters were mailed on June 28, 2023.



Western Federal Lands Highway Division
 610 E. Fifth Street
 Vancouver, WA 98661
 Phone 360-619-7700
 Fax 360-619-7846

June 23, 2023
 Sent Via Electronic Mail

In Reply Refer To: HFT-17

Re: Turnagain Pass Master Plan, Initiation of Consultation

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Western Federal Lands Highway Division (WFLHD) is developing the Turnagain Pass Master Plan (TPMP), in partnership with the State of Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) and the United States Forest Service (USFS) to identify ways to better meet the needs of the recreational users accessing USFS recreation lands from the Seward Highway (MP 76-56), in the area known as Turnagain Pass. The plan will create a long-term vision for Turnagain Pass, with modifications and capital improvements expected in the 20 years following the plan completion.

As part of this effort, WFLHD, DOT&PF, and USFS respectfully request your government's participation in the development of this plan to create a sustainable path forward for continuous use of the Turnagain Pass use area. In accordance with guidance provided under the U.S. Department of Transportation Tribal Consultation Plan, the WFLHD, DOT&PF, and USFS wish to engage with your government in meaningful and timely discussions as part of the plan development process, and we welcome and encourage your participation. The TPMP, when enacted, may have implications to resources of Tribal concern, and any information you provide as part of the plan development process will be documented and maintained.

The success of the study is dependent on the project team's continuous, comprehensive, and cooperative coordination with local Tribal communities such as yours. The project team therefore seeks to better understand:

1. How your government would like to engage in the study development.
2. How you would like to be engaged by the project team.
3. How the proposed engagement methods below align with you needs and interests.
4. If you would like to initiate government-to-government consultation with FHWA.

https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/docs/DOT_Tribal_Consultation_Plan.pdf

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 Initiation of Consultation Letter
 Page Two

Engagement Approach. The project team envisions a series of engagement methods. A project website has already been established by WFLHD at www.turnagainpassmasterplan.com. WFLHD will be responsible for updating this website with project updates and meeting notices as needed.

The project team will conduct stakeholder group meetings with identified tribal representatives and other key informants. The anticipated stakeholder group meetings will include up to four (4) meetings with Native Villages and Alaska Native Associations. The exact dates, locations, and format of the meetings will be established through direct communication with you. The intent of these meetings is to keep the project team abreast of changing issues and stakeholder perspectives as the project progresses. Stakeholder group meetings may be held in-person or electronically, as determined by the stakeholders.

Study Area. The project area, shown in Figure 1, is the Seward Highway (Alaska Highway 1) between Milepost 56 and Milepost 76 on the Kenai Peninsula. The project area also encompasses adjacent land uses within 100 feet on either side of the right-of-way centerline and includes all existing recreational access facilities within the corridor (trailheads, parking lots, pull outs, etc.). The Seward Highway runs through Turnagain Pass approximately one hour south of Anchorage and is part of the National Highway System (NHS) connecting Seward to Anchorage and interior Alaska. The Seward Highway also provides connection to the Sterling Highway south of Turnagain Pass, which is the only road route to locations on the Kenai Peninsula.

Turnagain Pass is frequented by residents and visitors traveling to the myriad recreation and other destinations on the Kenai Peninsula. In the winter months the area experiences high visitor use, including snow machine riders and backcountry skiers, while in the summer months the area sees little recreation use. In the winter, the infrastructure in the Turnagain Pass area struggles to meet visitor demand, particularly with parking.

Figure 1: Project Area



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 Initiation of Consultation Letter
 Page Three

The TPMP will provide long-term guidance for future corridor planning actions with a focus on safety and recreational access. The plan will include existing conditions, system needs, project prioritization, conceptual design and cost estimates, and implementation actions. Goals for the project area include:

1. Developing and preserving a joint vision for the Turnagain Pass corridor recreational access.
2. Identifying current recreational access needs, forecasting future needs, and creating a prioritized list of projects to address these needs.
3. Increasing the long-term sustainability, safety, and access to forest lands for travelers and users.

Additional themes include:

1. Improving year-round capacity at recreation sites.
2. Improving connections between facilities, including trail networks and multi-modal connections.
3. Improving pullouts and parking areas along the corridor.
4. Addressing snow removal and amenity management needs at recreation sites.
5. Improving long-term operations, including funding opportunities.

We appreciate your government's partnership in this study to ensure that we understand the unique nature of the project area's relationship with Chugach Alaska Corporation, establish open and continuous lines of communication, and ensure we can work together to involve all parties who might be impacted by the study's findings and recommendations.

I invite you to reach out to Cole Grisham, Project Manager for this study, at nicholas.grisham@dot.gov or (202) 859-1409 to discuss your preferred engagement as well as any questions or concerns you might have about the study. Cole's team will also follow up with a phone call to your office about the project as well.

Thank you very much for your time. We look forward to creating a meaningful working relationship with you to help adequately address the concerns of all public land users.

Sincerely yours,

Kevin L. McLaury
 Digitally signed by KEVIN
 LORIN MCLAURY
 Date: 2023.06.23
 13:18:54 -0700

Kevin L. McLaury, PE
 Director
 Western Federal Lands Highway Division

4. STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW MEETING | GENERAL

Monday, June 5, 2023, 2:00 – 3:00 pm, via Teams

4.1 Attendees

Jessica Smith	DOWL
Kendal Ramage	DOWL
Holly Spoth-Torres	Huddle AK
Rachel Blakeslee	Kenai Mountain Turnagain Arm National Heritage Area Corridor (KMTA)
Jessa West	Kenai Mountain Turnagain Arm National Heritage Area Corridor (KMTA)
Haley Johnston	Alaska Trails
Mariyam Medovaya	Alaska Trails
Nick D’Allessio	Remarkable Adventures

4.2 Summary

Jessica Smith (DOWL Transportation Planner) opened the meeting and welcomed participants, introduced the team, shared an overview of the project background and history, and invited participants to provide comments on issues and improvements in the Turnagain Pass corridor.

4.2.1 How Turnagain Pass is Used

Participants in this meeting primarily use Turnagain Pass for backcountry skiing, avalanche courses, snowmachining, hiking, packrafting, cross-country skiing, walking trails in the summer, youth outdoor education and programming, and as a transportation corridor.

Nick D’Allessio (Remarkable Adventures), a backcountry ski guide based in Girdwood, Alaska, noted that his season ranges from two to seven days per week from November to May. Nick instructs avalanche courses in early winter and skiing in mid- to late winter. He has a permit for both sides of the pass but does not typically take clients to the west side of the pass once it is opened to motorized travel. He does not provide transportation for his clients, and his permit

TURNAGAIN PASS MASTER PLAN



only allows for three vehicles to park per trip. In the summer he primarily uses the pass for hiking and packrafting.

Haley Johnston (Alaska Trails) uses the pass in the summer months for berry picking, packrafting (from Granite Creek and Bertha Creek campgrounds, the six-mile raft launch, or Ingram Creek), and running and biking on the Iditarod National Historic Trail. In the winter she uses the pass multiple times a week. She uses the pass as a transportation corridor but does not use the corridor for the restroom facilities like many travelers, due to poor restroom maintenance. She noted that the Alaska Long Trail has a vision for the area to create a multimodal trail with improvements to current paved bike and pedestrian paths and the addition of bridges to paths to support usability. She commented on the limited trail infrastructure in the area and noted the desire to make the space more available to recreators.

Rachel Blakeslee (KMTA) noted that the Turnagain Pass corridor is in the KMTA corridor, and that without this access there is no way to connect communities to historical sites. Outdoor schooling and outreach for their program requires use of the Pass. Rachel suggested that with more facilities, they would be able to add more to their programming instead of just passing through the Turnagain Pass corridor.

Mariyam Medovaya (Alaska Trails) uses Turnagain Pass to cross-country ski from the main parking lot on the east side, as well as walking the trails in the summer from the main parking lot on the west side. She noted that the Alaska Long Trail perspective would be snowmachines on the west side of the pass and skiing in the winter, along with summer hiking on the east side.

4.2.2 Challenges

Remarkable Adventures stated that one of the biggest challenges facing the Pass is the way plowing has been approached in recent years. During his 15 years here, he has noticed a large change in plowing practices. There are days that after driving to locations in the Pass with his clients, he discovers there is no parking, and he is not able to conduct his business. He noted that the permit from the National Forest Service allows for parking at any lot, but there is only a three-car capacity at the Tincan Creek lot. Limited parking causes safety concerns. He also noted that snowbanks limit visibility when driving in and out of parking lots.

KMTA noted a lack of infrastructure to provide education to children, with no visitor center or structures to stop and instruct and enjoy recreation. They commented that improved restrooms and infrastructure will help with engagement, accessibility, and education, and suggested creating user-friendly trails and access locations beyond the scope of what has been done. They asked the team to consider where the funding and maintenance will come from in the long term.

4.2.3 Desired Facilities, Improvements, and Suggestions

- Additional skiing access is not needed, but instead safe skiing access and well-maintained parking areas.
- Focus on designing parking lots that are easier to be maintained by the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF), including larger lots with two points of entry.

TURNAGAIN PASS MASTER PLAN



- Snow removal equipment dedicated to the Pass parking lots.
- Use Vail Pass model as an example for parking and user fees.
- Consider applying user fees if the funds could be dedicated to improving plowing.
- Rehabilitation of Pit 62 with added physical infrastructure for learning.
- Better interpretive trail information at trailheads and parking lots.
- Better-serviced restrooms.
- Additional bridges.
- A trail segment from Muskeg Meadows Trailhead to Ingram Creek, connecting the pedestrian separated pathway along the Portage curve.
- New bike path between the Granite Creek and Twenty-Mile Valley.
- Separated bike path along the entire corridor and improved paved paths.
- Public use cabin at Center Ridge Trailhead.
- Focus more recreation in the southern areas of the Pass instead of the northern areas, that are already more developed.
- Trails off the Iditarod Trail going up into the Alpine area that are focused for hikers.
- Building or facility in Turnagain Pass for outdoor education and instruction.
- Covered areas, like a picnic shelter or similar, for outdoor youth programming.

5. STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW MEETING | BIKING

Tuesday, June 6, 2023, 2:00 – 3:00 pm, via Teams

5.1 Attendees

Cole Grisham	Western Federal Lands Highway Division (WFLHD)
Holly Spoth-Torres	Huddle AK
Talli Vittetoe	DOWL
Janice Tower	Singletrack Advocates
Lee Bolling	Singletrack Advocates

5.2 Summary

Holly Spoth-Torres (Huddle AK) opened the meeting, welcomed participants, introduced the project team, shared an overview of the project including background and history, goals and themes, project tasks, and then invited participants to provide comments on issues and improvements in the Turnagain Pass corridor.

5.2.1 How Turnagain Pass is Used

Participants in this meeting primarily use Turnagain Pass for road cycling, fat tire biking, backcountry skiing, mountain biking in Johnson Pass, packrafting, and as a transportation corridor.

Janice Tower (Singletrack Advocates) spends a lot of time in Turnagain Pass backcountry skiing and is a year-round user of the Pass. She hopes that this master plan will improve facilities and safety and create more opportunities for versatile user groups.

Lee Bolling (Singletrack Advocates) noted that there are limited high alpine biking opportunities in the Chugach National Forest and added that he believes there is a lot of potential in Turnagain Pass for additional biking or multi-use trails.

5.2.2 Challenges

Janice noted that she regularly bikes from Anchorage to Seward and finds the Pass to be dangerous for two reasons. First, the speed of traffic. Second, the shoulders are not wide enough, and there is not enough space between the rumble strips and the dirt. She noted that where a separate bike path is provided, she prefers to cycle there. She also noted that in Anchorage, it's difficult to build black diamond singletrack trails, and would like to see more of a range of riding terrain for mountain biking in the Pass.

Lee noted the lack of hiking and mountain biking trail development. He stated that right now Johnson Pass is the most popular place for mountain biking in the Pass, but there is more that could be developed.

5.2.3 Desired Facilities, Improvements, and Suggestions

- Consider adding singletrack high alpine trails (see Figures 3 and 4).
- Widening of road shoulders to improve safety for cyclists.
- Consider adding a separate paved, multi-use path through the length of the corridor.
- Improve connectivity between trails and create safe places to cross the road.
- Widen existing parking lots and creating more places for recreators to park in the winter.
- Additional hiking trails, specifically up on the ridges.
- Develop a pull-off at the Kenai Welcome Sign into a larger parking lot to serve as a trailhead for high-alpine summer trails.
- Consider developing a summer trail that goes from the Kenai Welcome Sign up the ridge to Pyramid Peak and down to the snowmachine lot, with a few more difficult routes feeding down to the same lots (see Figures 3 and 4).
- Consider developing a summer trail up the left side of the Center Ridge saddle that comes out at Lyon Creek.
- Develop loop trails in the Pass, instead of point-to-point.
- Develop groomed trails for skiing and fat tire biking near Granite Creek.
- Develop hiking trails off the Turnagain Pass Trail or Iditarod Trail providing access into the ridges.
- Creating multi-use trails where bikers and hikers can coexist.
- Develop packrafting facilities at Six-Mile and Granite Creek.

Holly closed the meeting by encouraging Janice and Lee to continue to share project information with their membership.

5.3 Sketches from Lee Bolling



Figure 3: Potential singletrack routes lined in white.



Figure 4: Potential singletrack routes lined in white, downhill routes shown by red arrows.

6. STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW MEETING | MOTORIZED

Wednesday, June 7, 2023, 2:00 – 3:00 pm, via Teams

6.1 Attendees

Holly Spoth-Torres

Talli Vittetoe

Lisa Agnew

Sam Schilling

Lawrence Agosti

Vicki Gerken

Michelle LaRose

Brooke Estes

Huddle AK

DOWL

Anchorage Snowmobile Club

Anchorage Snowmobile Club, Chugach
Backcountry Freeriders

Anchorage Snowmobile Club

Anchorage Snowmobile Club

Anchorage Snowmobile Club

Chugach Backcountry Freeriders

6.2 Summary

Holly Spoth-Torres (Huddle AK) opened the meeting, welcomed participants, introduced the project team, shared an overview of the project including background and history, goals and themes, project tasks, and then invited participants to provide comments on issues and improvements in the Turnagain Pass corridor. **Lawrence Agosti (Anchorage Snowmobile Club)** asked who started this project and what events prompted the initiation of the Turnagain Pass Master Plan. Holly responded by outlining the agencies in the project team and provided a brief history of safety and recreation concerns in the Pass.

6.2.1 How Turnagain Pass is Used

Participants in this meeting primarily use Turnagain Pass for snowmachining but expressed interest in expanding recreation use if more summertime facilities were available, especially for mountain biking or summertime motorized use. Holly asked for clarification on the snowmachine up-track on why and how it got there. **Sam Schilling (Anchorage Snowmobile Club)** responded that the up track is the easiest and safest spot for snowmachines to get up on the ridgeline.

6.2.2 Challenges

Lawrence noted safety concerns at the pullouts near Tincan, where there is little visibility once snow builds up, narrow access points, and cars backed up into the highway. He added that often cars are backed up nearly three feet over the white lines. Lawrence noted that the restroom facilities in Turnagain Pass are not well maintained.

Holly asked participants if the Moto Lot was big enough to meet capacity needs. **Sam** responded that the lot would be big enough if the full lot were to be plowed. Most of the time, the lot is not plowed fully, and cars begin to stack up and line the shoulders of the road.

Lawrence commented that snowmachine riders are limited to one side of the canyon, while all other recreators do not have limits. **Lisa Agnew (Anchorage Snowmobile Club)** asked why the west side of the Pass is not open to motorized use in the summer, like it is in the winter. Lawrence responded that environmental concerns limit motorized use in the summertime.

6.2.3 Desired Facilities, Improvements, and Suggestions

- Widen Seward Highway and widen parking lot access points.
- Consider improving the road geometry near the Tincan lot to improve safety and visibility.
- Consider moving parking lot access away from bends in the road where there is low visibility when large snow berms are present.
- Improved plan for snow removal and maintenance.
- Chugach Backcountry Freeriders and Anchorage Snowmobile Club would like to explore plowing trailhead parking lots in Turnagain Pass, with potential funding from grants with the snow machine clubs.
- Improved restroom facilities.
- Consider adding cameras pointed at parking lots for recreators to see parking lot capacity and weather conditions before driving to the pass.
- Alternate parking lots for use so that plows can stick to a plow schedule.
- Moving restrooms out of the center of parking lots to make plowing easier and open more area for vehicle and trailer parking.
- Consider reaching out to the plow operators who plow these lots for feedback on redesign.
- Creating a summertime multi-use trail from Grandview to Turnagain.
- Consider identifying one motorized use corridor in the winter connecting Turnagain to Grandview.
- Developing mountain bike trails.
- Identify areas to develop a motorized terrain park for summertime use.

TURNAGAIN PASS MASTER PLAN



- Consider opening more locations for dispersed camping.
- Improve event facilities by adding pavilions, grills, picnic areas, public use cabins, etc.

7. STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW MEETING | PUBLIC SAFETY AND AVALANCHE

Wednesday, June 14, 2023, 2:00 – 3:00 pm, via Teams

7.1 Attendees

Holly Spoth-Torres

Talli Vittetoe

John Sykes

Huddle AK

DOWL

Chugach National Forest Avalanche
Information Center (CNFAIC)

7.2 Summary

Holly Spoth-Torres (Huddle AK) opened the meeting, welcomed participants, introduced the project team, shared an overview of the project including background and history, goals and themes, project tasks, and then invited the participant to provide comments on issues and improvements in the Turnagain Pass corridor. **John Sykes (CNFAIC)** was the only participant in this meeting and noted interest in the project as Turnagain Pass is the Avalanche Center's main forecast area.

7.2.1 How Turnagain Pass is Used

John primarily uses Turnagain Pass as a seasonal employee of the United States Forest Service (USFS) doing field work for the Chugach National Forest Avalanche Information Center (CNFAIC), and for personal recreation by mountain biking, hiking, and backpacking.

He stated that CNFAIC provides avalanche advisories in Turnagain Pass almost daily. Field work includes four service employees who use trailheads to access areas within their zoning forecast via skis or snow machines. The most used lots are Johnson Pass, Center Ridge, and the Moto Lot. CNFAIC does not directly respond to emergency rescue calls but has assisted in several rescues over the years when they are in the area.

7.2.2 Challenges

John stated the biggest operational challenge for CNFAIC is insufficient parking and plowing and noted that days when the Pass is unsafe to drive due to lack of plowing, are often the days that would be high priority for collecting field data. The most hazardous times in backcountry recreation is commonly the same times that road conditions are unsafe to drive and park.

CNFAIC would like to use the Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF) weather station for precipitation and wind recordings, but the station has been inoperative for years. They rely heavily on other weather stations in the area for information to improve weather modeling.

John shared that there is a rescue cache on the back side of the restrooms at the Moto Lot. In the winter, the cache gets buried to the point that it could take hours to get to it the case of an emergency.

John noted the limited access to tree skiing. If tree skiing routes were maintained, skiers would have somewhere to go when the ridges are in dangerous condition.

John noted the challenge of alders, cow parsnip, and devil's club in trail maintenance and stated that he would rather see resources allocated to improving the existing trail systems for the whole summer, rather than build more trails that cannot be maintained.

7.2.3 Desired Facilities, Improvements, and Suggestions

- Increased funding opportunities to keep Turnagain Pass plowed.
- Improved parking and plowing at the Tincan Trailhead.
- Increase the number of access points between the Johnson Pass Trailhead and the Hope Junction.
- Redesign lots to increase plowing efficiency.
- Repair the DOT&PF weather station.
- Develop and maintain tree skiing routes.
- Add bridges at Ingram Creek between the Kenai Peninsula Sign and Eddie's.
- Improved cell phone coverage in the corridor.
- Redesign the rescue cache at the Moto Lot in a powered facility, with a warming hut.
- Develop a summer multi-use trail from Center Ridge to Lyon Creek or Bertha Creek.
- Clear alders from the up track to improved safety and access to alpine terrain.
- Improve trail maintenance for existing trail facilities before developing additional trails.
- Install backcountry access (BCA) avalanche transceivers at every trailhead in Turnagain Pass to remind people to carry avalanche rescue equipment and check if transceiver is working.

8. STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW MEETING | TOURISM

Friday, June 16, 2023, 2:00 – 3:00 pm, via Teams

8.1 Attendees

Holly Spoth-Torres

Talli Vittetoe

Jeff Samuels

Huddle AK

DOWL

Alaska Travel Industry Association (ATIA)

8.2 Summary

Holly Spoth-Torres (Huddle AK) opened the meeting, welcomed participants, introduced the project team, shared an overview of the project including background and history, goals and themes, project tasks, and then invited the participant to provide comments on issues and improvements in the Turnagain Pass corridor. **Jeff Samuels (ATIA)** was the only participant in this interview.

8.2.1 How Turnagain Pass is Used

Jeff primarily uses Turnagain Pass as a transportation corridor, for foraging, mountain biking, and hiking.

He noted that he has not heard discussion on using Turnagain Pass as a potential destination for ATIA members in the future but shared his thoughts on the iconic Alaskan landscape that the Pass offers.

8.2.2 Challenges

Jeff commented that the campgrounds in the Pass are small and have few amenities. He indicated that he would likely travel there in the summertime for the weekend from Girdwood if the campgrounds had more to offer. He noted the need for better connections between campgrounds and trailheads.

8.2.3 Desired Facilities, Improvements, and Suggestions

- Daily public restroom maintenance. Consider a public-private-partnership agreement to make this happen.

TURNAGAIN PASS MASTER PLAN



- Improved safety for travelers along the roadway.
- Adequate funding for the Silvertip and Girdwood stations.
- Permanent facility for outdoor education.
- Preserve the wild and scenic characteristics of the corridor.
- Improve cell phone service.
- Improve connections between trailheads and campgrounds.
- Develop interpretive trails in the area that detail weather, cultural, and geological history in Turnagain Pass.

9. STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW MEETING | COMMERCIAL MOTORIZED

Monday, June 26, 2023, 3:00 – 4:00 pm, via Teams

9.1 Attendees

Holly Spoth-Torres

Talli Vittetoe

Amanda Clayton

Huddle AK

DOWL

Alaska Wild Guides

9.2 Summary

Holly Spoth-Torres (Huddle AK) opened the meeting, welcomed participants, introduced the project team, shared an overview of the project including background and history, goals and themes, project tasks, and then invited the participant to provide comments on issues and improvements in the Turnagain Pass corridor. **Amanda Clayton (Alaska Wild Guides)** was the only participant in this interview.

9.2.1 How Turnagain Pass is Used

Amanda primarily uses Turnagain Pass to coordinate snowmachine tours out of Bertha Creek from early-December to mid-January, and to pack raft near Granite Creek in the summer. Alaska Wild Guides uses the pullout after Bertha Creek Campground to start their snowmachine tours. Tours are out-and-back day trips that head south towards Lynx Creek, often visiting the historic cabin, before returning. Alaska Wild Guides uses Turnagain Pass to operate snowmachine tours until there is enough snow for them to safely take their clients to Spencer Glacier. The tours cover approximately 14 miles, and all trails are maintained by Alaska Wild Guides.

9.2.2 Challenges

Amanda noted the lack of safe creek crossings near Johnson Pass and commented that Alaska Wild Guides builds snow bridges to cross the creeks. She noted that the narrowness of winter trails makes passing other users difficult. She mentioned that there are few trails in the north side of the pass, which causes congestion at the summit and in the south portion of the pass.



Amanda noted collision concerns at the cross-country ski trails near Granite Creek that are located on the motorized side of the Pass.

Amanda commented on the limited parking at Tincan Trailhead and Granite Creek Campground.

9.2.3 Desired Facilities, Improvements, and Suggestions

- Consider additional bridges at creek crossings near Johnson Pass.
- Additional funding for groomed trails.
- Improve cell phone service in the Pass.
- Consider developing trails near the Kenai Peninsula Welcome Sign.
- Consider allowing summertime ATV use on the motorized side.
- Additional semi-permanent warming structures for users to meet and get warm.
- Consider adding charging stations for electric snowmachines.
- Consider adding public use cabins in Johnson Pass.
- Improve markers and signage at historic trails.
- Additional parking at Tincan Trailhead and Granite Creek Campground.

10. MOOSE PASS OPEN HOUSE MEETING SUMMARY

Friday, June 2, 2023, 4:00 – 6:00 pm, Moose Pass
Sportsman's Club

The open house meeting was held in person at the Moose Pass Sportsman's Club. The first attendees arrived on time at 4:00 pm. The meeting format was open house style, with no formal presentation. Attendees were greeted at the sign-in table with a project fact sheet detailing the Master Plan overview, background and history, goals and themes, tasks, and engagement opportunities. Project boards lined the perimeter of the room, and an aerial roll plot was set up in the center of the room for participants to mark up. A table was set up to collect written comments, but no participants filled out comment forms. All comments were documented on the aerial roll plot.

Members of the project team were available throughout the meeting to answer questions and gather input on the vision and current challenges for safety and recreation in Turnagain Pass (the Pass).

Twelve (12) people signed in, including members of the project team.

10.1 Summary of Comments Received During the Open House

Winter Season:

- Consider grooming cross country skiing and fat biking trails from the Center Ridge Trailhead or the Granite Creek Campground loop.
- Concerns with lack of viable parking west of the Johnson Pass Trailhead in the wintertime.
- Concerns with safety due to limited parking at the Tincan Trailhead.
- Snow Removal:
 - Consider rehabilitating current parking lots and designing new parking lots that are easy for Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) to plow, with two entrances where possible and wide entrances (Upper Ingram Trailhead is a good example of an easy lot to plow).
 - Concerns that if additional parking is added to the corridor, it will not be useful without a constructive plan for snow removal.
 - Concerns that the following lots are not plowed in the winter: Silvertip, Johnson Pass, Betha Creek, and the weather station.

TURNAGAIN PASS MASTER PLAN



- Concerns for safety due to large pools of standing water on the road near Gulch Creek, especially during the shoulder seasons.

Summer Season:

- Trail Development:
 - Consider adopting and maintaining historic mining trails for hiking use. Look into working with Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm (KMTA) National Heritage Area for grant programs.
 - Consider developing the Lynx Trail.
 - Consider adding interpretive trails in the corridor.
 - Consider adding trails on the west side of the pass near Center Ridge Trailhead for mountain biking.
 - Consider using the old roadbed near Bertha Creek for bike paths.
- Concerns with safety when road biking this section of Seward Highway.
- Concerns about the pass having the most parking available in the summertime, with the least summer trail systems.
- Concerns that recreational mining is not well-regulated, and there is difficulty in preventing the area from being depreciated.

Facilities:

- Consider adding structures in the corridor for outdoor learning education when there is inclement weather i.e., yurts, pavilions, and buildings.
- Consider creating a downloadable podcast series to listen to while driving through the corridor with the history of Turnagain Pass, facts, and experience ideas, with physical structures where participants can stop along the way. KMTA offers to assist in materials and production.
- Consider adding a picnic table and pavilion at the Moto Lot.
- Consider constructing a Center Ridge public use cabin. Trail building and limited summer access are the largest challenges to physical structures at Center Ridge.
- Restroom maintenance:
 - Concerns that Center Ridge is the main restroom stop.
 - Consider adding more restroom facilities.
 - Complaints about poor restroom maintenance and upkeep in all seasons.
- Consider using the gravel pit at Mile 62 for additional parking, trailheads, etc.
- Concerns with the lack of cell phone service in the corridor.
- Consider redesigning the weather station so the cameras work year-round.

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- Consider adding public cameras pointed at parking lots so recreators can view capacity prior to driving to the Pass.
- Consider expanding the parking at the Johnson Pass Trailhead if the Alaska Long Trail connects there.
- Evaluate the challenges to reservation systems at campgrounds before requiring reservations for camp spots:
 - People can book a spot for several weeks or an entire season and not show up.
 - People rarely go through the process of cancelling their reservations when they cannot attend.
 - Camp sites sit empty, although reserved, for a majority of the season.
- Consider first-come camping at campgrounds in the corridor or establishing a check-in cut off time, even if reservations are made.
- Concerns about limited Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) access.
- Concerns about road maintenance:
 - Striping.
 - Drainage and storm issues.
 - Limited visibility due to fog.
 - Insufficient lighting in the corridor.

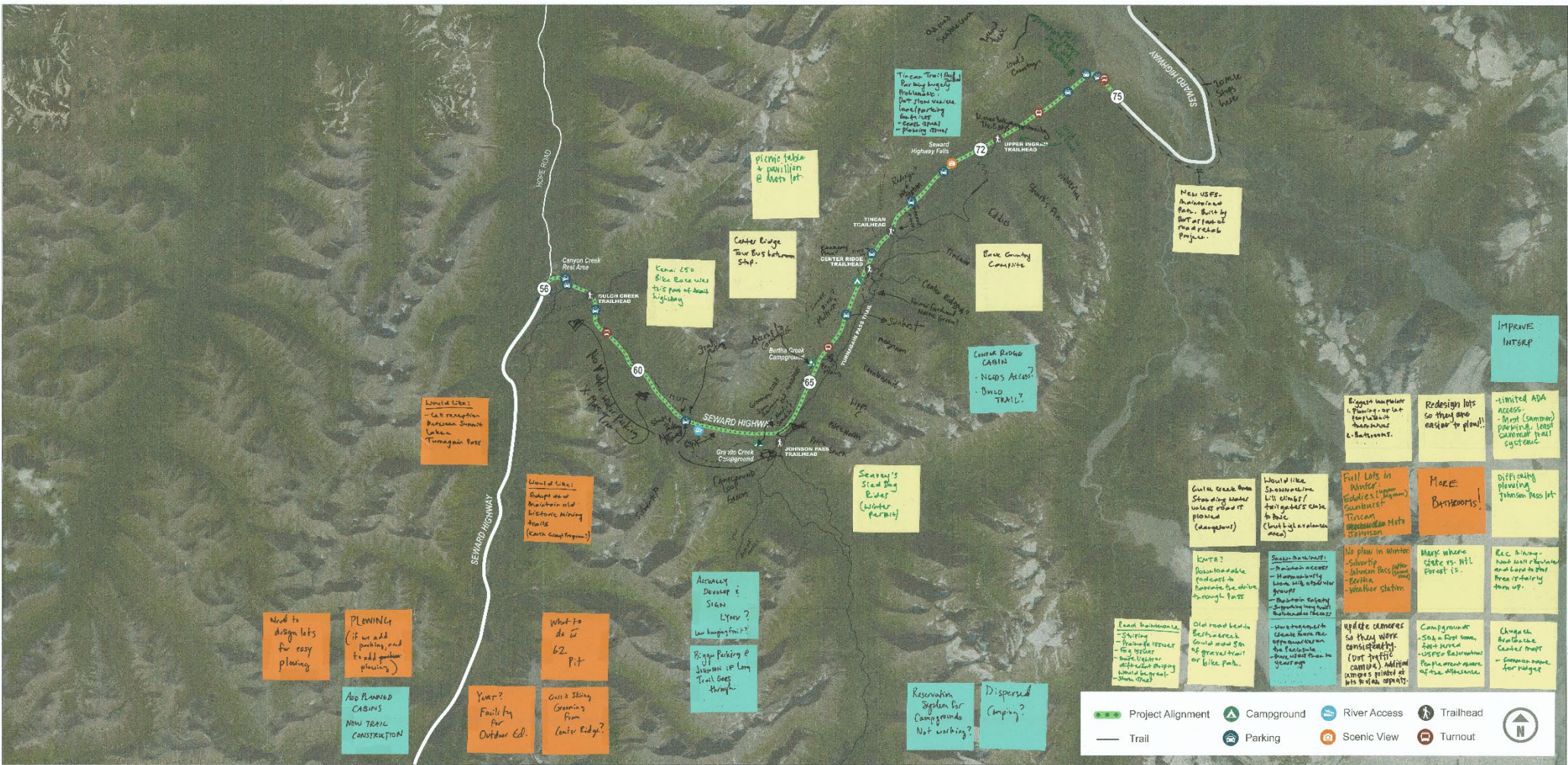
10.2 Action Items

Updates to aerial roll plot:

- Add United States Forest Service (USFS) planned public use cabins.
- Mark backcountry campsites.
- Name Moto Lot on the map.
- Add multi-use trail.
- Label the winter up-track.
- Mark State and National Forest boundaries.
- Add common names for ridges (Chugach Avalanche Center maps).
- Update and review trails.



MOOSE PASS OPEN HOUSE MATERIALS | Roll Plot



11. GIRDWOOD OPEN HOUSE MEETING SUMMARY

Tuesday, June 13, 2023, 5:00 – 7:00 pm, Girdwood
Community Room

The open house meeting was held in person at the Girdwood Community Room. The first attendees arrived on time at 5:00 pm. The meeting format was open house style, with no formal presentation. Attendees were greeted at the sign in table with a project fact sheet detailing the Master Plan overview, background and history, goals and themes, tasks, and engagement opportunities. Project boards lined the perimeter of the room, and an aerial roll plot was set up in the center of the room for participants to mark up. Four participants filled out written comment forms at a comment table. Additional comments were documented on the aerial roll plot.

Members of the project team were available throughout the meeting to answer questions and gather input on the vision and current challenges for safety and recreation in Turnagain Pass (the Pass).

Forty-one (41) people signed in, including members of the project team.

11.1 Summary of Comments Received During the Open House

Winter Season:

- Snow Removal:
 - Concerns with poor plowing of ski lots.
 - Concerns with narrow access points.
 - Concerns with poor plowing of the weather station lot.
 - Consider rehabilitating current parking lots and designing new parking lots that are easy for the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) to plow.
 - Consider improved maintenance at the Johnson Pass Trailhead.
- Nordic Skiing:
 - Consider developing Nordic ski trails for higher elevation snow near Center Ridge or Sunburst.
 - Consider allowing the Girdwood Nordic Ski Club access to groom near Center Ridge in low snow years.

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- Consider cutting trails through the alders for winter ski corridors.
- Consider more trails in the Johnson Pass area. Participants noted that the installed bridges have been helpful.

Summer Season:

- Trail Development:
 - Consider mountain bike trails through Seattle Ridge and Pyramid Peak that connect to the all-terrain vehicle (ATV) trails in God's Country.
 - Consider mountain bike trails that connect to the Iditarod National Historic Trail.
 - Consider multi-use trails to Eddie's for summertime use.
 - Consider a multi-use trail from the Alaska Railroad stop at Spencer Glacier to the Johnson Pass Trailhead.
 - Consider extending the paved bike trail through the corridor, including funding for maintenance (brushing and re-surfacing).
 - Consider upgrading the Turnagain Pass Trail.
 - Consider a multi-use trail system starting at the Kenai Peninsula welcome sign.
 - Consider hiking trails to peaks on the east side of the Pass.
 - Consider a 30-mile singletrack route for enduro motorcycles.
- Concerns with interfering with mining claims in the Pass, as mining has the longest recreational history in Turnagain Pass.

Facilities:

- Complaints about poor restroom maintenance:
 - Consider adding restroom facilities with flushable toilets.
 - Consider removing all restroom facilities.
 - Consider year-round restroom facilities that are cleaned and maintained.
- Consider maintaining the existing facilities before new infrastructure is added.
- Consider adding parking lots in the following areas:
 - Silvertip Twin Peaks.
 - North side of Seward Highway near Granite Creek campground.
 - Tincan Trailhead. One participant requested bathroom facilities at Tincan, as well.
- Consider allowing guide services to use the proposed Tincan parking lot.
- Consider adding rest areas comparable to those in the lower 48.
- Consider designating target practice areas in the Pass.

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- Consider developing the Granite Creek Recreation Area for recreation use.
- Consider adding pet waste stations at trailheads and campgrounds.
- Equestrian use:
 - Concerns with parking lots sizes that are unable to accommodate horse trailers.
 - Consider developing more dispersed camping locations.
 - Consider developing connecting trails between campgrounds and trailheads.
 - Participants noted that the easiest locations to bring horses are the Johnson Pass and Ingram Creek Trailheads.
- Emergency Medical Services:
 - Concerns about safety due to lack of cell phone service in the corridor. Participants requested adding cell towers or Starlink facilities in the corridor.
 - Concerns about safety due to lack of funding for rescue services.
 - Consider improving signage at pullouts and trailheads for locating injured persons.
 - Consider adding emergency phone stations to parking lots and trailheads.
- Consider leaving Turnagain Pass as it is, with no updates to facilities.

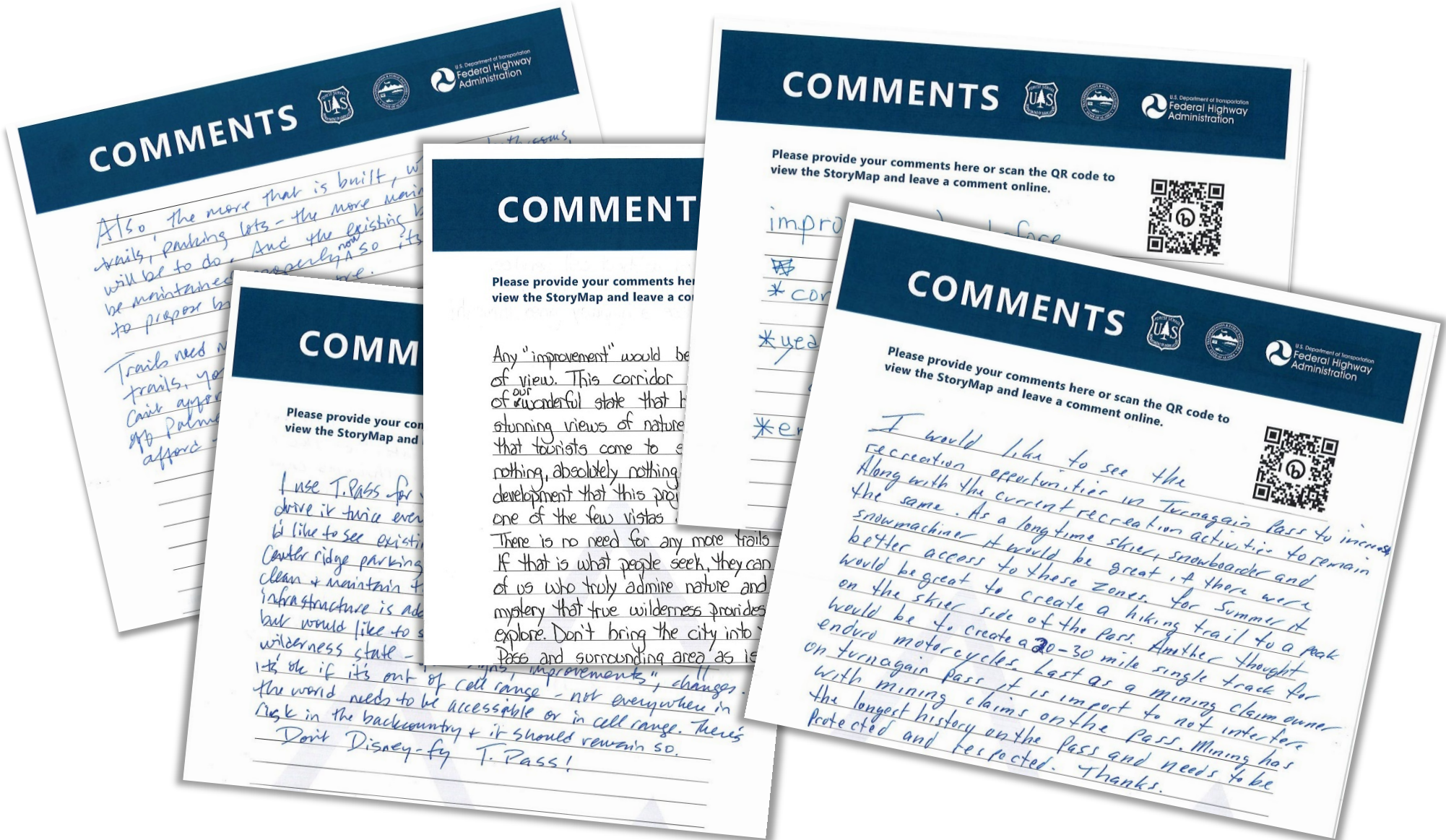


GIRDWOOD OPEN HOUSE MATERIALS | Roll Plot



GIRDWOOD OPEN HOUSE MATERIALS

Contact information has been anonymized.



12. ANCHORAGE OPEN HOUSE MEETING SUMMARY

Thursday, June 15, 2023, 4:00 – 6:00 pm, REI Anchorage

The open house meeting was held in person at REI Anchorage. The first attendees arrived at 4:05 pm. The meeting format was open house style, with no formal presentation. Attendees were greeted at the sign in table with a project fact sheet detailing the Master Plan overview, background and history, goals and themes, tasks, and engagement opportunities. Project boards lined the perimeter of the room, and an aerial roll plot was set up in the center of the room for participants to mark up. A table was set up to collect written comments, but no participants filled out comment forms. All comments were documented on the aerial roll plot.

Members of the project team were available throughout the meeting to answer questions and gather input on the vision and current challenges for safety and recreation in Turnagain Pass (the Pass).

Sixteen (16) people signed in, including members of the project team.

12.1 Summary of Comments Received During the Open House

Winter Season:

- Consider developing Nordic ski trails.
- Snow removal concerns with infrequent plowing.
- Concerns with icy and unsafe road conditions for vehicles, especially at corners and curves along the corridor.

Summer Season:

- Trail Development:
 - Consider singletrack mountain bike trails in the high alpine area.
 - Consider a mountain bike trail loop around Center Ridge from the Center Ridge Trailhead.
 - Consider using the existing bridges at Center Ridge for summertime trail development.
 - Consider connecting ridgelines from the Turnagain Pass Trail.
- Concerns that the road shoulders are too narrow for cyclists to safely ride through the Pass.

TURNAGAIN PASS MASTER PLAN



- Consider developing the area near the Kenai Peninsula welcome sign as a day-use recreation area.

Facilities:

- Consider improving signage and facilities at Gulch Creek.
- Complaints about poor restroom maintenance.
- Consider keeping restrooms open year-round at Canyon Creek.
- Consider improving put-in and take-out facilities for pack rafters and kayakers near Granite Creek Campground.
- Consider improving maintenance of the paved bike path to repair root bulges and cracks.
- Consider adding turn outs near Pete’s North and Pete’s South.
- Emergency Medical Services (EMS):
 - Concerns about lack of cell phone service in the corridor.
 - One participant noted that as a restaurant owner in Girdwood, she receives a lot of EMS requests for people in the Pass.
- Consider fixing the 511 cameras.
- Consider opening a gas station or lodge type development.
- Consider extending the paved bike path through the corridor.
- Consider adding parking at Tincan Trailhead as close to existing access as possible.
- Consider rehabilitating existing parking facilities to address safety concerns.
- Consider adding trailer signs for ski access.
- Consider adding parking places for every ridge in the Pass.
- Consider maintaining the alders for summer trails and for ski corridors in the winter.



COMMENT LOG

Contact information has been anonymized.

Date Received	Comment	Response	Response Date	Responder
5/16/2023	<p>Hi, thanks for including me on this project.</p> <p>I've accepted the interview meeting on June 9th. If it's possible in your schedule for it to be earlier that would be preferred on my end as I will be visiting family on the east coast. Either earlier that day on the 9th or earlier that week on June 5 or 6th before my trip.</p> <p>Either way I'll plan on making this meeting happen, this is an important issue that I would like to be a part of in any way possible.</p>	<p>Thank you for your willingness to participate. We have a stakeholder meeting on June 5 at 2:00 PM as well. Would that date be better for your schedule?</p> <p>Best,</p> <p>Talli Vittetoe</p>	5/17/2023	T. Vittetoe
5/16/2023	<p>Hey Talli,</p> <p>Appreciate the invite for the meeting. Unfortunately I will be on contract in the mountains during the set meeting time and will be missing it. Any chance that it will be recorded and where can we have access to that? Do you have a rough idea if and when other opportunities for such commercial users/ guides to comment and/or interview?</p>	<p>Thank you for your interest in the Turnagain Pass Master Plan. We have several stakeholder meetings scheduled, and are wondering if you'll be out the whole week or just during the scheduled meeting on June 9?</p> <p>Regardless, we'd appreciate your feedback. In the meetings we'll have a conversation about how Turnagain Pass is used, discussing things that are working well and the area's challenges. The following questions will guide discussion:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.How do you use Turnagain Pass? 2.When do you visit Turnagain Pass? How often? How do you access the places you go? 3.What do you like best about Turnagain Pass? 4.When you visit Turnagain Pass, why do you choose to go there over other places? 5.What challenges do you experience? When? How often? 6.What would you improve about Turnagain Pass? <p>If you're able to respond to those questions in writing, I'll be sure your responses are relayed to the project team and included in analysis. Additionally, meeting summaries for the stakeholder interviews will be posted on the project website following the meeting at www.turnagainpassmasterplan.com</p>	5/23/2023	T. Vittetoe
5/20/2023	<p>Hello Talli,</p> <p>Thank you for including the avalanche center in these meetings/interviews. I'll be traveling but should be able to be on the call as it's a Teams format. Unfortunately, I'll miss the in person meetings.</p> <p>Looking forward to discussing the TPMP at 2pm on June 14! Exciting stuff.</p>	<p>Thank you for your willingness to participate. Your feedback will be helpful in developing a plan. If you feel there's anyone else in your organization that the meeting invite should be extended to, let me know and I can add them to the call.</p> <p>All the best,</p> <p>Talli Vittetoe</p>	5/22/2023	T. Vittetoe
6/1/2023	<p>Hi please prioritize more mountain biking trail in this plan. Thanks!</p>	<p>Thanks for the input! We'll add it to our notes.</p>	6/1/2023	C. Grisham

STAKEHOLDER REGISTER

Contact information has been anonymized.

First	Last	Title	Entity Name	City	State
Andre	Achee	Director of Public Safety	Whittier	Whittier	AK
Lisa	Agnew			Moose Pass	AK
Brenda	Ahlberg	Emergency Manager	Kenai Peninsula Borough		
Lori	Aldrich	Environmental Program Manager	AK Department of Environmental Conservation	Anchorage	AK
Elizabeth	Appleby	Senior Planner	Municipality of Anchorage	Anchorage	AK
Jennie	Armstrong	Representative	State of Alaska	Anchorage	AK
Charlene	Arneson		Whittier Planning Commission	Whittier	AK
Mike	Ausman			Girdwood	AK
Robert	Begich	Fishery Biologist	AK Department of Fish and Game	Soldotna	AK
Lesley	Bender			Girdwood	AK
Joselyn	Biloon				
Judith	Bittner	Chief	State Historic Preservation Office	Anchorage	AK
Rachel	Blackeslee	Executive Director	Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm National Heritage Area	Girdwood	AK
Breauna	Blanning	Administrative Assistant	City of Soldotna Public Works	Soldotna	AK
Lee	Bolling		Singletrack Advocates		
Lee	Bolling	President	Singletrack Advocates	Anchorage	AK
Chris	Brehmer			Anchorage	AK
William	Brennan				
Barbara	Bureau			Hope	AK
Eric	Burg	Environmental Program Specialist	AK Department of Environmental Conservation	Soldotna	AK
Roger	Burleigh				
Bob	Butera			Anchorage	AK
Andrew	Carmichael	Director	City of Soldotna Parks & Recreation	Soldotna	AK
Sean	Case	Deputy Chief	Anchorage Police Department	Anchorage	AK
Erlinda	Cayabyab	Environmental Services	AK Department of Transportation & Public Facilities	Anchorage	AK
Matt	Claman	Senator	State of Alaska	Anchorage	AK
Eric	Clarke	Park Specialist	AK Department of Natural Resources	Soldotna	AK
Steve	Cleary	Executive Director	Alaska Trails	Anchorage	AK
Melis	Coady	Executive Director	Alaska Avalanche School	Anchorage	AK
Tucker	Coleman			Anchorage	AK
Betsy	Connell				
Julie	Coulombre	Representative	State of Alaska	Anchorage	AK
Barbara	Crews				
John	Crouse	Wildlife Physiologist	AK Department of Fish and Game	Soldotna	AK
John	Czarneszki	City Planner	City of Soldotna	Soldotna	AK