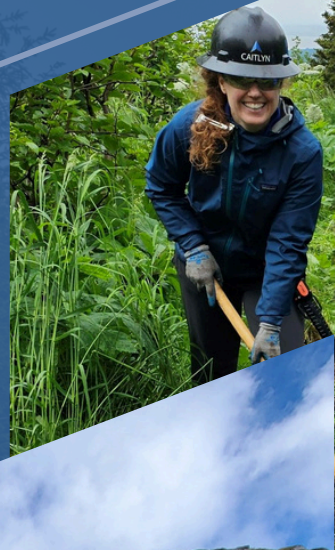


2024 ANNUAL REPORT



**ALASKA
TRAILS**

Our Mission:

Building trails for Alaska's people, communities, and economy.

Alaska Trails' office is located within Dena'ina Ełnena, the traditional homelands of the Dena'ina Athabascan people. We recognize that we recreate on the traditional and current homelands of many Alaska Native peoples - from the Koyokon of the Brooks Range to the Tlingit and Haida of Southeast. Alaska Native people have been stewards of these lands for thousands of years and we would like to give our recognition and show our appreciation to them, their land, and their continued stewardship.

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Letter from the Executive Director

As we look back on a successful 2024, Alaska Trails is planning for a bright future for trails in 2025 and beyond. Thanks to your support, we made great strides toward making trails better, safer and more fun. We hope you were able to get out and explore some new trails this year and have some on the list for 2025.

We are making significant and steady progress on the Alaska Long Trail and many other projects for land managers across the state, and we will keep that momentum going in the new year. Alaska Trails worked together with partners to secure more funding for the Alaska Long Trail in the FY2025 state capital budget while completing work on the Eklutna Lakeside Trail and making great strides in Indian Valley and Ram Valley access - all three of which received funding in FY2024. In addition, the Race Across Alaska Winter Challenge continues to raise both awareness and funding for the Long Trail, with over \$150,000 to date. You can learn more about the Long Trail on pages 6 and 7.

We are excited to be part of a growing trail community that is building, maintaining and promoting trails across our great state - both with our paid crews and volunteers. In 2024, our paid crews worked on popular

trails in Hatcher Pass, Chugach State Park, Chugach National Forest and the Mat-Su Borough.

In 2024, our amazing volunteers accomplished an astounding amount of trail work. Through 25 events, over 230 individual volunteer efforts contributed nearly 1500 hours, which equates to nearly \$50,000 in donated labor. Alaska Trail Stewards volunteers built and maintained over 25,000 feet of trail - all by hand!

We are prepping for a great 2025. Alaska Trails staff have been meeting with land managers to plan projects both for our paid trail crews and our volunteer events. Our staff has been writing grants and scoping projects so we can hit the ground running (once the snow melts). We are excited to continue building and maintaining sustainable trails.

Thanks again for your support of our work - by donating, volunteering, and supporting what we do. We look forward to making more strides for more trails in 2025 with your help.

Happy Trails!



Steve Cleary
Executive Director



2024 Paid Trail Crews

This year, Alaska Trails proudly employed a seasonal workforce of 11, forming two dedicated trail crews and a Youth Employment in Parks (YEP) Field Supervisor role. Impressively, eight of these individuals returned from previous seasons, reflecting their commitment to our mission. Together, the crews made significant contributions to improving trails across Alaska, ensuring better experiences for all trail users.

Crew Highlights

One of our crews tackled an ambitious variety of trail maintenance and construction projects across the state. These efforts included:

- Fox Run Singletrack Trail (BLM's Campbell Tract): Three weeks of trail construction, adding new singletrack for mountain bikers and hikers.
- Horsetail Falls Trail (Whittier): Building a scenic overlook platform to enhance visitor enjoyment.
- Chugach State Park (CSP): Much-needed brushing and drainage work on several priority trails such as the Lost Cabin Valley trail and the Wolverine trail culvert.
- Chugach National Forest (CNF): Seven weeks of collaboration to improve the popular Upper Winner Creek, Ptarmigan, and Lost Lake trails in Girdwood and Seward.



These accomplishments were achieved in close partnership with staff from CNF, CSP, and BLM, demonstrating the power of collaboration in preserving our natural landscapes.

Our second crew worked on trail improvement projects in Chugach State Park, the MatSu Borough, and MatSu State Parks. Key achievements include:

- Hidden Lake Trail (CSP): Constructed 90 feet of boardwalk, 145 feet of double-wide running plank, drainage structures, 105 feet of causeways, and revegetated 450 feet of social trails. This project was made possible by funding from Chugach Park Fund.
- Pioneer Peak Trail (MatSu): Built 336 feet of running plank to address persistent mud issues, installed crib steps to stabilize steep sections, added drainage structures, and reworked switchbacks to improve sustainability.
- Reed Lakes Trail: Hardened key trail sections to combat erosion caused by social trails, offering hikers a safer and more sustainable path while preserving the surrounding landscape.

Youth Employment in Parks (YEP) Success

Our YEP Field Supervisor, a former Crew Leader with the program, led park improvement efforts in Anchorage for 10 weeks. Three crews of students aged 16-19 successfully completed a range of projects which provided these young workers with meaningful job experiences that foster a connection to the outdoors. Our ongoing partnership with the YEP program is in conjunction with the Anchorage Park Foundation and we are grateful for their support and dedication to this program that has done so much to foster a sense of community in the next generation.

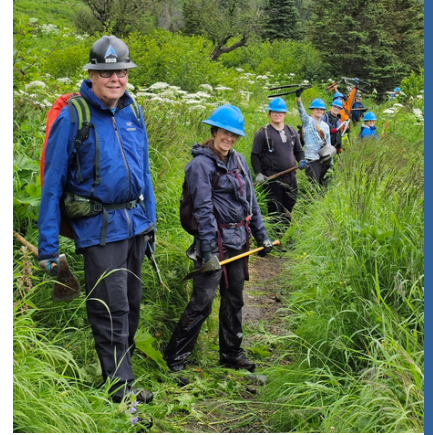
Looking Ahead

As we prepare for the 2025 season, we are inspired by the dedication and hard work of this year's teams. Their tireless efforts ensure that Alaska's trails remain accessible, sustainable, and enjoyable for generations to come.



Alaska Trail Stewards Improve Trails for All

In 2024, the Alaska Trail Stewards volunteers completed 25 events on trails from Turnagain Pass up to Hatcher Pass. Over 140 volunteers put in a total of 1478 hours of work, amounting to \$49,498 in volunteer labor! Volunteers brushed alder and other shrubs and trees away from the trails, improved drainage, and even built new trail structures.



Thanks to their hard work, over 25,000 feet of trail was built or maintained! These trails would otherwise remain in a state of disrepair.

In Chugach State Park, volunteers worked on the South Fork Rim Trail, Little O'Malley, Hemlock Knob, Flattop Sunnyside, Hanging Valley, South Fork Valley, Wolverine Bowl, and Near Point trails. In Chugach National Forest, volunteers made great improvements to the Horsetail Falls Connector Trail, the Trail of Blue Ice, and the Iditarod National Historic Trail. In the Mat-Su, volunteers improved Pioneer Peak and and Gold Mint trails.

In the Municipality of Anchorage, volunteers finished construction of the new mountain bike trails at Russian Jack Springs Park!



Curious about how to be a trail steward?
Learn more on our website:
www.alaska-trails.org/alaska-trail-stewards

Or contact our Volunteer and
Communications Coordinator:
maya.kaupe@alaska-trails.org

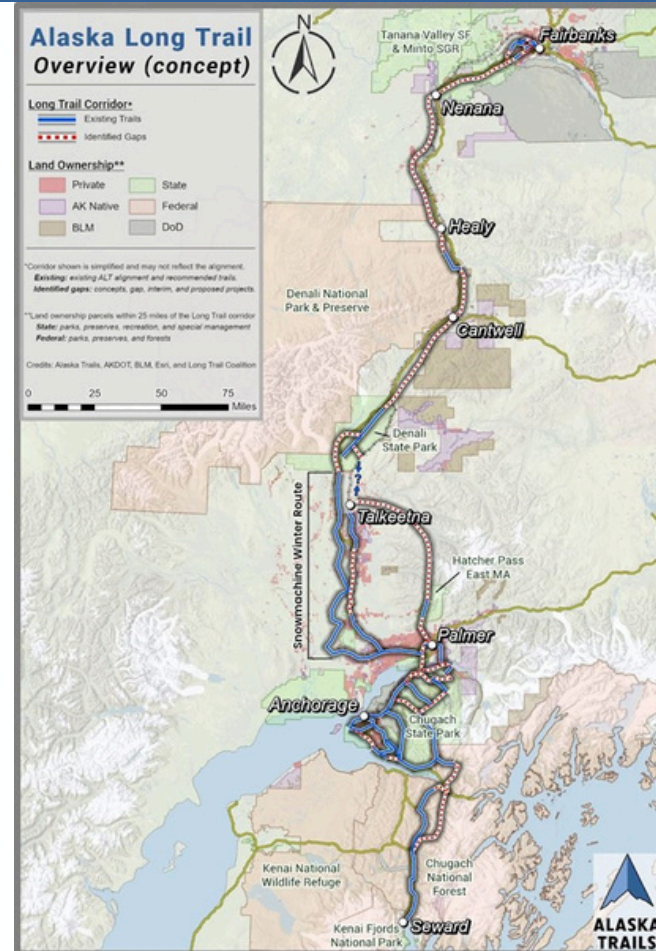
Alaska Long Trail Updates

We are happy to share the good news about the Alaska Long Trail (AKLT) progress in 2024.

Funding Updates

For three years in a row now, the AKLT projects have been receiving funding from the state capital budget - thank you to the state legislature and Governor Dunleavy! Special thanks go to the AKLT champion in the state legislature, Senator Bill Wielechowski, who was instrumental in securing **\$1.1M for Anchorage-area AKLT projects in FY'25 state budget**. This funding will make improvements to the Iditarod National Historic Trail in Girdwood, begin the realignment of the Flattop Trail, plan and design expanded trailhead parking at Arctic Valley, and design the Indigenous Gateway Plaza/AKLT gateway in downtown Anchorage.

Alaska Trails is grateful to Rasmuson Foundation and Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation for the funding received in 2024 for the planning of the AKLT route from Hatcher Pass to Talkeetna over the next couple of years. This is the next "frontier" in the development of the trail! Alaska Trails is also grateful to the Mat-Su Health Foundation for funding the survey and planning of the GPRa Traverse trail linking Government Peak Recreation Area and Skeetawk.





Project Updates

With the help of the previous years' state budget funding, our contractor Happy Trails completed repairs to drainage and erosion damage at Eklutna Lakeside Trail and built the first two miles of the Indian Valley trail, to be continued in 2025.

We are very excited about the work our partners, Chugach National Forest and National Forest Foundation, have accomplished over 2024 along the AKLT between Seward and Girdwood. Several bridges and new trail segments have been completed, moving closer to having a continuous route from Seward to Turnagain Arm.

The National Scenic Trail feasibility study for the AKLT is underway, led by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). BLM completed the initial public outreach and collected land manager feedback, with a plan to release the draft study to the public in the winter 2025.

Gratitude

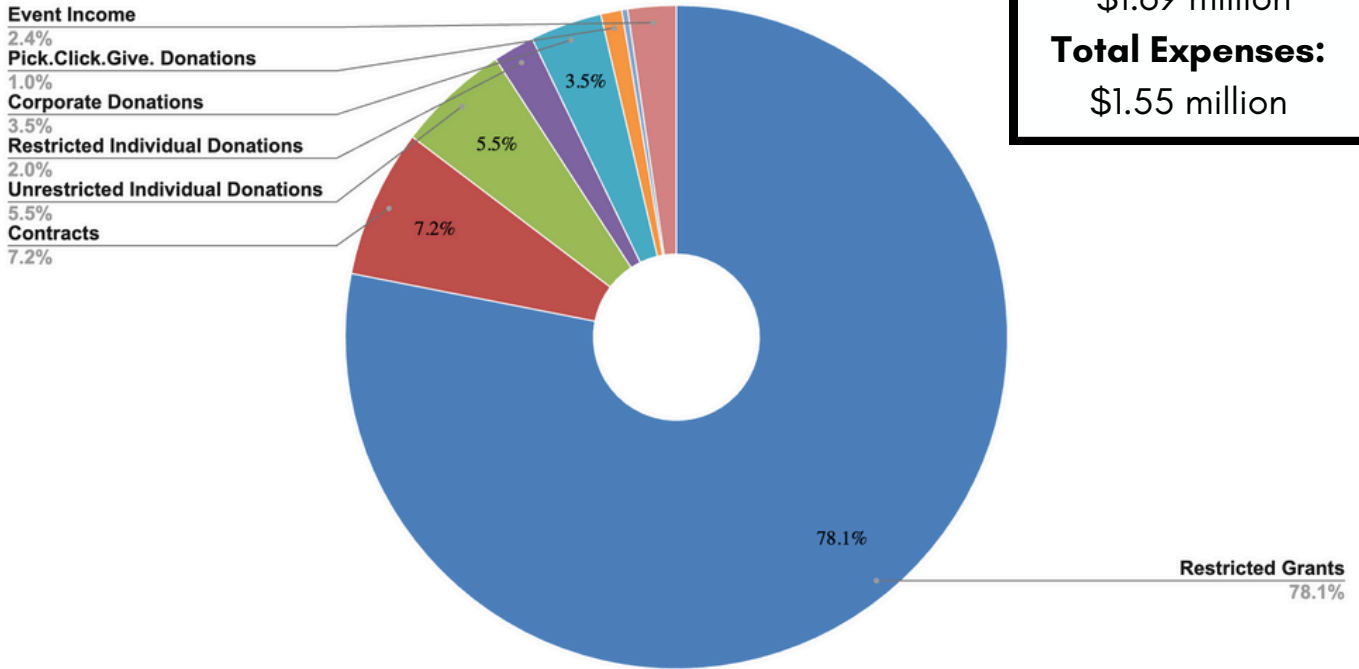
We are grateful for the grants and donations received for our Alaska Long Trail operational expenses in 2024. Thank you to:

- Rasmuson Foundation
- Race Across Alaska Winter Challenge
- Individual donors

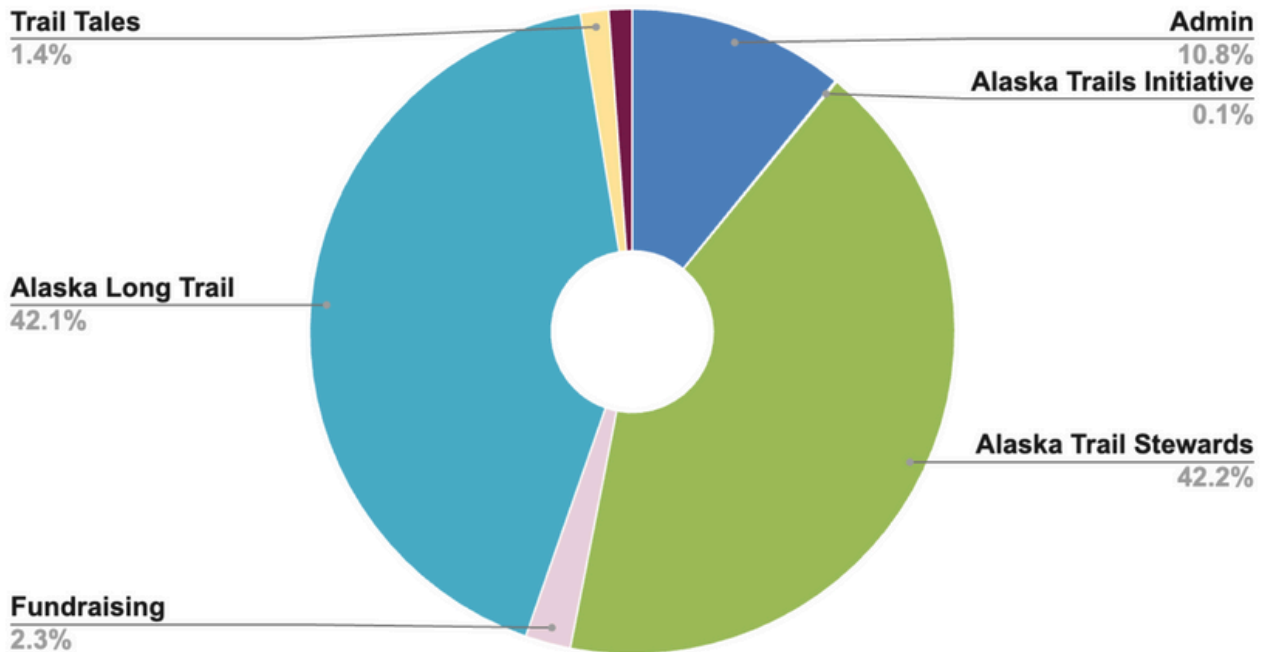
More information: www.alaska-trails.org/alaska-long-trail

Financials

Revenue Sources 2024



Expenses by Program 2024



Meet Our Team

Staff



Executive Director
Steve Cleary



Trails Program Officer
Ben Ervin



Deputy Director
Haley Johnston



Alaska Long Trail Project Coordinator
Mariyam Medovaya



Alaska Long Trail Mat-Su Coordinator
Sam Dinges



Volunteer and Communications Coordinator
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