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Picture taken from Isberg Road



Picture taken from Isberg Road



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Existing Trail



## INTRODUCTION

This Master Plan outlines the Fairbanks North Star Borough's (FNSB's) plan for the future development and use of the Isberg Recreation Area. The Isberg Recreation Area (IRA) is a 420-acre site located east of Cripple Creek Road and north of Isberg Road. It is approximately 12 road miles from Downtown Fairbanks. The area is currently undeveloped with the exception of some existing recreational trails. Like many areas of the Borough, the surrounding Cripple Creek/Chena Ridge Area has grown in population over the last twenty years. The Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB) Department of Parks and Recreation seeks to develop an open area for outdoor recreation that focuses on recreational trails. This area will be developed to serve the surrounding neighborhoods, individual trail enthusiasts and organizations, and the community of Fairbanks.

In 2004, at the urging of over 12 local trail organizations, the Fairbanks North Star Borough Assembly rezoned the area from Rural Estates-2 to Outdoor Recreation and in January 2006, the Fairbanks North Star Borough Assembly appropriated funding for the creation of a Master Plan for this area.

## PURPOSE OF THE MASTER PLAN

The purpose of the Master Plan is to provide the FNSB with a long-term planning guide for developing the Recreation Area including a site plan with proposed trail layout and designated uses, design standards, and recommendations for future development. The plan will be useful as a tool for guiding the development and communicating the intent of the Recreation Area to funders, partners, and the community.



Typical Low Land Area

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE RECREATION AREA

1. Develop a physical and ecologically sustainable multiuse trail system.
2. Minimize adverse impacts to the environment.
3. Optimize connections to existing trails within the FNSB.
4. Serve the needs of a variety of motorized and non-motorized recreational users.
5. Provide for a loop trail system where possible, with varying lengths throughout the system.
6. Design trails and amenities with safety as a paramount concern and attempt to:
  - a. minimize vehicular crossings,
  - b. maximize the separation between roads and trails, and
  - c. maximize sight distances at trail intersections.
7. Minimize impacts to adjacent landowners from trespass, loss of privacy, damage, or other property loss.



## RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PLANS

### Existing Plans

#### *Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan, Fairbanks North Star Borough*

The FNSB Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan (CRTP) was first adopted in 1985. The plan identifies trails within the Borough and is intended to facilitate the incorporation of trails with other land development activities. The (CRTP) was reviewed as a part of this master planning process with the intent of finding ways to connect the IRA trails with other existing trails on the west side of Fairbanks. The 100-Mile Loop Trail, which is identified in the FNSB Comprehensive Trail Plan, passes through the IRA and will provide access to recreational opportunities outside the neighborhood.

#### *Alaska Recreational Trails Plan, State of Alaska, Department of Natural Resources*

The Alaska Recreational Trails Plan was reviewed for possible connections from the IRA trails to a statewide trail network. None were identified.



Power Line Trail

### Future Plans

The Alaska State Parks is drafting standards, classifications, and construction/maintenance guidelines for planning and designing trails throughout the state. The State is modeling their document in part on the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources new *Trail Planning, Design, and Development Guidelines*. This book was used as a reference when developing the Isberg Recreation Area Master Plan recommendations.

## Planning Process

### Investigation Phase

In the initial phase of developing the Master Plan, Design Alaska reviewed and compiled relevant design and construction criteria for similar trail-based recreation areas. Aerial photography, soils maps, and site visits were conducted in order to study and identify terrain units such as muskeg areas, lowlands, uplands, and streams along with existing trail locations. Comments received from the public by the Department of Parks and Recreation were also reviewed in order to understand the historical context of the proposed recreation area. Adjoining property information was also gathered in order to identify the number and location of residences adjoining the proposed recreation area, the existing rights of way and easements that can be connected to the recreation area, and to evaluate future development potential of the area. Existing roads and utilities were also identified. Based on historical population growth and development in the area, potential future levels of service were also evaluated. The information compiled during the Investigation Phase was compiled into an Investigative Report and submitted to FNSB Department of Parks and Recreation on November 13, 2006



### **Concept Layout Phase**

In the Concept Layout phase the general vision for the Isberg Recreation Area was developed. Initial planning was accomplished by Design Alaska, Inc. and the Department of Parks and Recreation.

Once a preliminary vision was developed, a public meeting was held to present the concept and receive public comment. Comments from the public meeting were evaluated in relation to the goals and objectives of the IRA. The resulting products of this phase were an area map showing proposed trails and amenities for the recreation area and a report detailing the types of trails and facilities to be included.

### **Trail and Facility Layout Phase**

Public and agency comments were assembled and applied to the concept plan to generate a detailed map of the number, type, and location of trails and facilities. The map and report were presented in a second public meeting as components of the draft master plan and comments were gathered from the public at the meeting and for a two week period following the meeting.



The Comeau Trail in the Chena River State Recreation Area

### **Final Master Plan**

In compiling the Final Master Plan, construction cost estimates were compiled by Design Alaska and reviewed by Borough Staff. A revised site plan with trails and amenities was also prepared after reviewing and incorporating comments received throughout the public process.



Typical Low Land Trail

### **PUBLIC PROCESS**

The Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB) recognizes the value of public input and encouraged public comment throughout the master planning process. After the Investigation Phase was complete, two public meetings were held specifically to allow the public to view and comment on the developing plan. The first meeting was held on December 7, 2006 as part of the Concept Layout Phase. Comments from this first public meeting were reviewed and the site concept was revised. During the Trail and Facility Layout Phase, updated trail and facility concepts were drafted. The revised

plan was presented to the public on March 19, 2007. Comments continued to be received until March 31, 2007. Throughout the process the site plans and concepts were posted to the FNSB website and updated as the plan developed. Official public comments were received via email and submitted as written comments during the public meetings. What follows is a summary of public comments received during the two comment periods during the planning process.



## **The 1st Public Meeting: Summary of Public Comments**

### ***Current Uses***

Based on the comments received, the predominant trail uses appear to be nordic skiing, snow machining, skijoring, snowshoeing, and walking/hiking.

A number of people commented that their predominant year-round use of the area was dog walking. It was additionally noted that residents use the area for non-trail uses such as berry and mushroom picking.

### ***Trails & Parking***

Among the comments made, several themes can be discerned, including:

- desire for segregation of speed without disregarding any one user group
- interest in segregated trails for special uses such as mountain biking or varying levels of difficulty
- support for erosion control, including addressing thawing and degradation due to unsustainable trails across wetlands
- desire to maintain the existing trails and incorporate them into the overall trail system
- planning for increasing levels of use
- provide for safe experience for all users, especially children
- desire for developed parking areas
- limit lighting to protect aurora viewing and to keep the area rustic



Upper Power Line Trail  
Looking to the East

### ***Other Comments***

Several people commented on the micro climate that exists in the area. The upper portions of the area are sometimes 20 degrees warmer than the lower portions. Many of the respondents expressed the desire that the Isberg Recreation Area be expanded through the Borough acquisition of Tax Lot 1904 and Graceland Subdivision. It was also suggested that some user groups would be interested in volunteering with both the construction and the maintenance of the trails.

### ***Tables***

Appendix C includes a list of the comments and recommendations received by e-mail / letter and at the public meeting. The number of similar comments was tabulated in the right-hand column. (The number of comments in the *User Group* section was tabulated when these activities were mentioned in the e-mails (once for each e-mail). The number of users represented in the e-mail could be a whole family or an individual.)



## **The 2<sup>nd</sup> Public Meeting**

The second public meeting was conducted as an open house at the Pioneer Park Centennial Center for the Arts on March 19, 2007. Updated Trail and Facility concepts were displayed throughout the exhibit hall and Parks and Recreation Staff along with Planners from Design Alaska were on hand to present information and answer questions.

A comment form was provided as a handout and feedback was received directly from members of the public at this meeting. Following the meeting, additional comments were received via e-mail / letter. See Appendix D for Comment Summaries.

### ***Overall Public Comment Themes***

- Maintain rustic experience and rural atmosphere
- Maintain and enhance connectivity to surrounding neighborhoods and trails
- Maintain the existing trails as multiuse
- Segregate non-compatible trail uses to protect users and trail tread
- Consider seasonal trail use segregation
- Provide safe off street parking
- Do not light the trails
- Provide minimal lighting at parking area
- Acquire adjoining private property to increase recreation area size
- Allow dog walking
- Protect wildlife habitat
- Utilize warmer temperatures the higher elevation offers
- Plan for increased use
- Utilize available volunteers to work on recreation area infrastructure
- Design to be children friendly
- Develop loop trails with various levels of difficulty and varying lengths.

## **MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Trails**

#### ***Overview and Goals***

The site plan is depicted in Appendix A and consists of recommended trails and facilities. This site plan depicts a total of 14.1 miles of trails in the Isberg Recreation Area system that are accessible to both local residents and the community and suited to a variety of users. The trails are to be safe, sustainable and durable.

The proposed trail system within the Isberg Recreation Area has been developed with consideration of public input, natural features, safety, and sustainability. With these parameters in mind, 4 classes of trails have been established for the Isberg Recreation Area: Motorized Multiuse trails, Non-motorized Multiuse trails, Non-motorized Single Track trails and Interpretive trails.



The majority of the trails proposed in the IRA are designated as “Multiuse”. This reflects the variety of current and potential users of the trail system. The classifications and their lengths within the Isberg Recreation Area are as follows:

Motorized Multiuse Trails	3.8 miles
Non-motorized Multiuse Trails	8.7 miles
Non-motorized Single Track Trails	miles to be determined
Interpretive Trails	1.6 miles

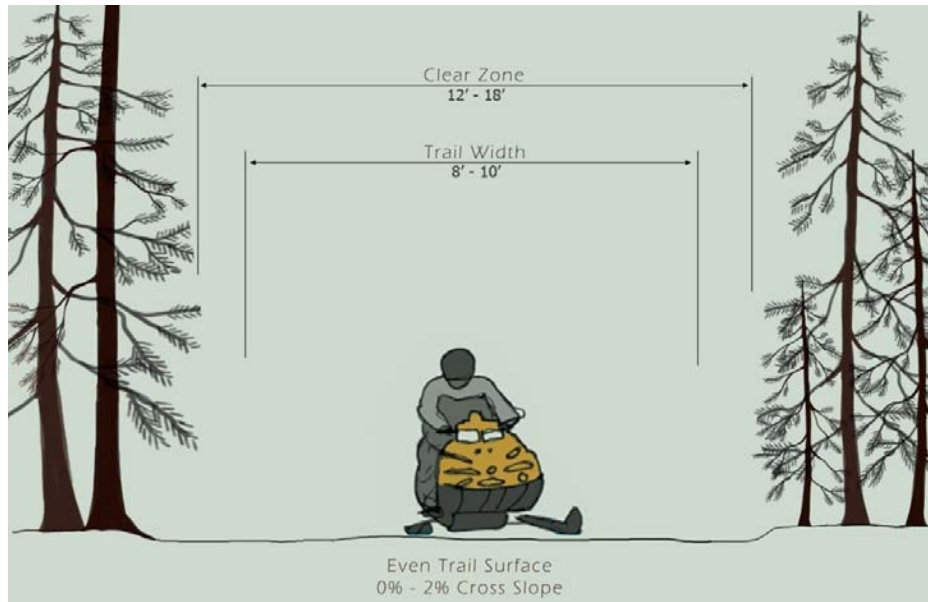
Existing trails should be designated as either non-motorized multiuse or motorized multiuse and may need to be improved or rerouted where existing or potential erosion is a concern or where intersecting trails predicate the need for clearing of sight distances.

### Trail Classifications

The Trail Classes proposed for the IRA have been defined in order to accommodate a variety of trail users and levels of use while still preserving the rustic nature of the area. Public comments and investigation of the current and projected uses of the recreation area were considered and trail classification systems from other agencies were referenced.

#### Motorized Multiuse Trails

Motorized multiuse trails are proposed to provide access through the Recreation Area. The trails will be designed for motorized users, although non-motorized users may utilize these trails as well. Motorized multiuse trails will provide a route through the Recreation Area in order to access the surrounding areas and the larger regional trail network. The intent is to provide motorized users the ability to pass through and enjoy the Recreation Area while enroute to other destinations. These trails will connect to other trails as part of the looped trail system within the Isberg Recreation Area and will be accessible from the primary parking lot at Oboe Court.

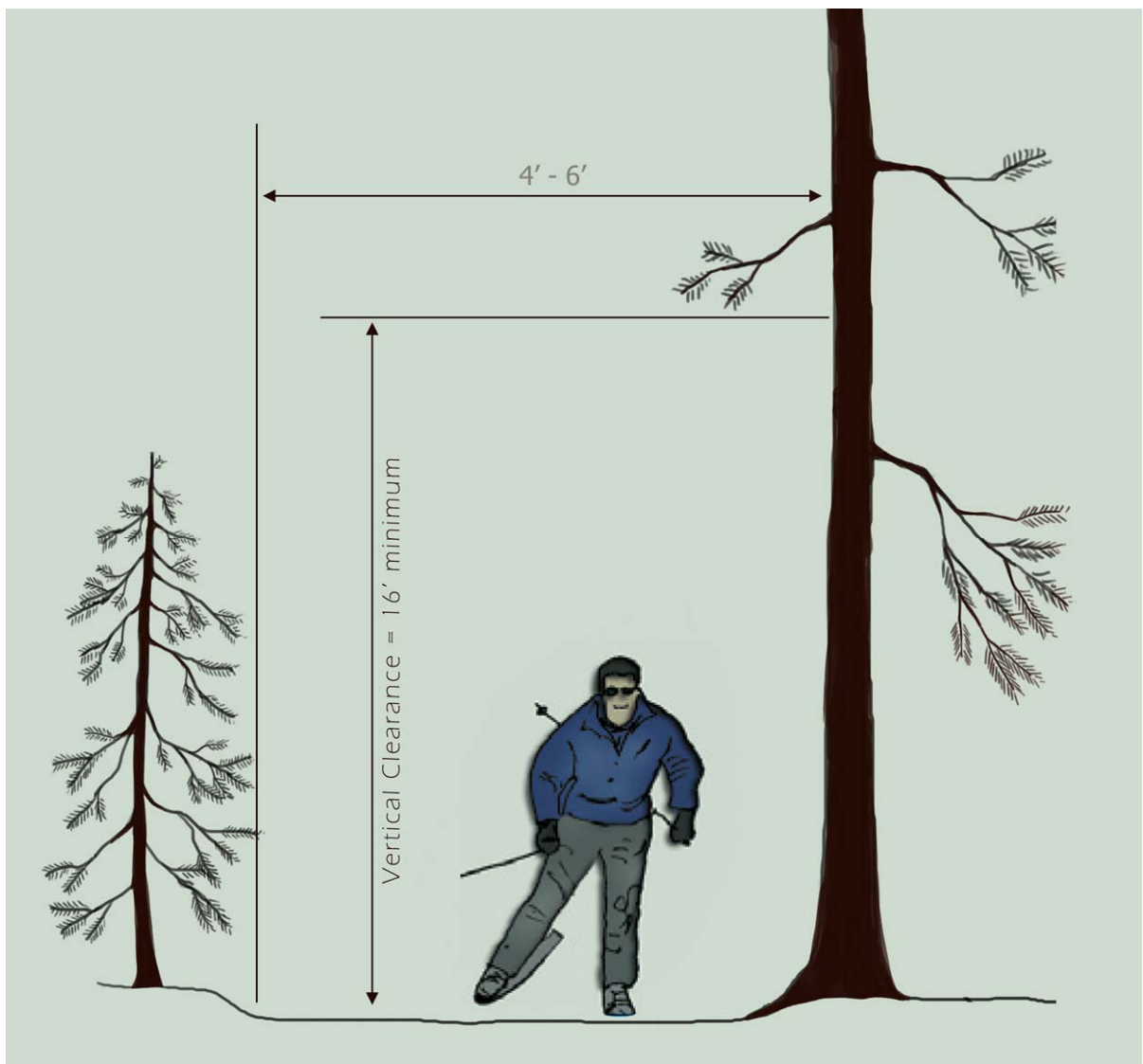




### *Non-motorized Multiuse Trails*

Non-motorized multiuse trails fulfill the next level within the trail system. These trails will provide a variety of destinations and routes for non-motorized users and also connect to the motorized multiuse trails.

Non-motorized multiuse trails are intended to provide a series of loops with many options for interconnectivity with other loops which will allow for a variety of distances and user experiences. Compared to the motorized multiuse trails, trail tread widths will be narrower and sightlines shorter. Steeper grades will be allowed on short sections on some of these trails. On grades and curves where skiers may “snowplow”, side clearance should increase to 4-5 feet on each side of the path.



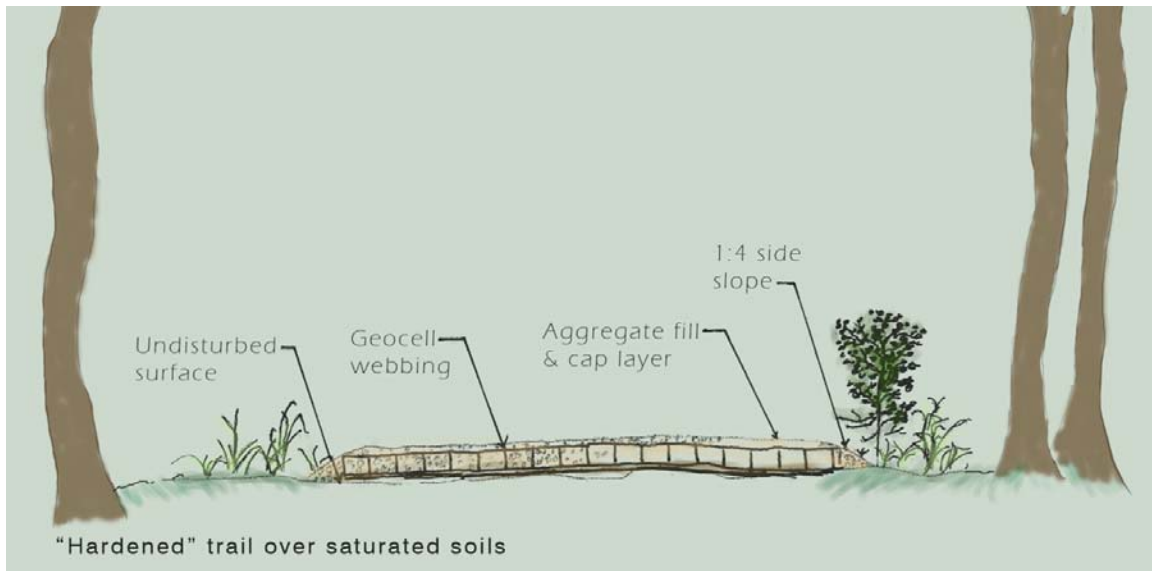


### ***Non-motorized Single Track Trails***

Non-motorized single track trails fulfill the third level within the trail system. These trails will be developed with a narrow “single track” tread which will allow for a more challenging trail experience for hikers, bikers or more advanced skiers. Due to the minimal ground disturbance and clearing required for these trails, they are not depicted on the site plan. Specific locations, trail layout, and construction will be coordinated with the Parks and Recreation Department working together with various user groups. It is anticipated that these trails will start and end within the recreation area boundaries at various points along the multiuse trail network.

### ***Interpretive Trails***

Interpretive trails will be developed to allow access to points of interest such as a pond or a wetland for educational and informational purposes. The trails will be hardened or boardwalk will be constructed to allow for accessibility.



### ***Other User Specific Trails***

It is possible for the Isberg Recreation Area to accommodate additional user-specific trails which aren't identified or defined in the Master Plan Recommendations. Requests for additional trails will be reviewed by the Parks and Recreation Department for their compatibility with the Isberg Recreation Area Master Plan and the existing trails on the ground. These requests will also be evaluated to ensure they do not adversely affect the natural resources and rustic nature of the area and to ensure they are planned and constructed for sustainability.

Part of the trail system in the lower portion of the Recreation Area abuts land designated by the Fairbanks North Star Borough as a possible future school site.



The trails in this area will be intentionally designed for elementary aged users. An interpretive nature walk is proposed to be built nearby for use by school groups.

**Trail Classes**

CLASS	CHARACTERISTICS
MOTORIZED MULTIUSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8 to 10-foot wide trail surface</li> <li>• 2 to 4-foot wide side clearance</li> <li>• 16-foot vertical clearance</li> <li>• Maximum hill grade 10 to 12%</li> <li>• Relatively smooth surface, no ruts</li> <li>• Occasional widening to 12 to 18-feet for passing zones</li> <li>• Sightlines: 50 feet min., 100 feet max.</li> </ul>
NON-MOTORIZED MULTIUSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 to 6-foot wide trail surface</li> <li>• 2 to 4-foot wide side clearance</li> <li>• 16-foot vertical clearance</li> <li>• Maximum hill grade 10 to 12%, with short sections (100-150 feet) up to 18%</li> <li>• Sightlines: 50 feet min., 100 feet max.</li> </ul>
SINGLE TRACK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12-24-inch wide trail surface</li> <li>• 12-18-inch wide side clearance</li> <li>• 10-foot vertical clearance</li> <li>• Target grade &lt;12%, with short sections (&lt;200 feet) up to 25%</li> <li>• 3 to 6-foot design turn radius</li> </ul>
INTERPRETIVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 36-inch minimum surface width</li> <li>• 18-24-inches wide side clearance</li> <li>• 10-foot minimum vertical clearance</li> <li>• Hardened surface or boardwalk</li> <li>• Max. grade 5%</li> <li>• Sightlines: 100 feet max.</li> </ul>

**Accessibility**

Where appropriate, trails should be designed to conform to the Americans with Disabilities Act Guidelines. Specifically, the Interpretive Trails should be designed in such a manner. Trail surfaces should be hardened to provide for smoother operation of wheelchairs and eliminate obstacles.

**Standards and Structures**

All new construction or reconstruction will utilize sustainable trail design and construction techniques.



Sustainability applies to the design, construction, management and maintenance of the trail. While paved or hardened trails are generally more sustainable than natural surfaced trails, the desire to have a rustic and unimproved atmosphere in this recreation area dictates that natural surfaced trails be used to the greatest extent possible.

The trail designs for the motorized and non-motorized multiuse trails should follow current practices for sustainable natural trails. Trail designs should consider the inevitable effects of compaction, displacement and erosion of the trail treads. Erosion can be mitigated by prudent use of cross-slope, grades, and water drainage points along the trails.

### ***Clearing and Lookout Points***

There are several opportunities within the recreation area for scenic vistas along the trails on the upper slopes. These lookout points should be slightly off of the main trail tread and screened from the trail by vegetation. After final trail layout and improvements are completed, the location of these lookouts will be identified and can be constructed. Approximately two lookout points could be provided along the upper trails.

### ***Motorized Passing Zones***

At least 2 passing zones should be constructed on the portion of the 100-Mile Loop trail which passes through the Recreation Area. Passing lanes should be about 20 to 50 feet long and provide adequate clearance for snowmobiles or ATV's to pull over and let others pass.

### ***Trail Lighting***

No trail lighting is planned.

### ***Bridges and Boardwalks***

Some bridges and boardwalks may need to be constructed for the Interpretive Trails over damp or occasionally flooded areas. Boardwalks can also be constructed as part of a wetland exploration/educational point of interest or along a shore line for an observation deck. Decking should be either treated wood or composite decking from recycled plastics. The boardwalks should be raised and supported on screw anchor piers or driven posts to allow for adjustment in the event of frost heaving. Boardwalks and bridges should be from 6 to 8 feet in width, with the more heavily trafficked areas being wider if necessary.

### ***Trail Hardening***

Soft portions of the trails, especially in low lying areas may be hardened to prevent erosion and allow continued year-round use. Hardening could consist of applying geotextile or geoblock materials under adequate gravel fill. (A surface course of fine, crushed aggregate will provide durability and smoothness to the surface.) This treatment could be considered on soft sections of motorized trails and even on some soft sections of non-motorized trails.



100 Mile Loop



## **Trailhead Facilities**

### *Overview and Goals*

Trailheads are those points where trails begin or exit at the Isberg Recreation Area boundary. Users will enter the trail system from one of the trailheads and therefore each trailhead should contain identifying markers for the Recreation Area, name of trail, and any structures necessary to restrict access for the designated uses of that trail.

Trailheads should also include a trail map to notify users who are entering the recreation area. The map should display a mark to orient users to their location on the trail system. Nearby, there should be a trail marker post with both the name of the recreation area and the name of the trail that commences from that point.

All trail intersections should have trail marker posts with the trail name engraved into the wood.

Every parking area will have a trailhead, but not all trailheads will be parking areas.



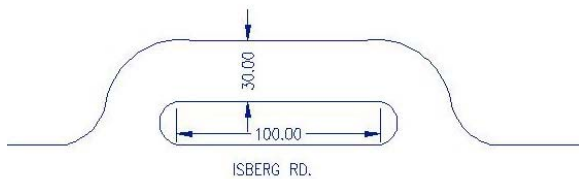
Primary Parking Area Concept Plan



**Parking**

This Master Plan recommends developing a primary parking area near the intersection of Oboe Court and Isberg Road. The area could provide a major access point to the recreation area and facilities such as a restroom, trash bin, information kiosk, and bike rack. A staging area, including anchor points for small dog teams and a ramp for recreational vehicle loading/unloading could also be provided. There should be parking for 20 vehicles, including some parking for vehicles with trailers. There should also be an area for children to play.

The Master Plan also recommends three secondary parking areas; one along Cripple Creek Road, one along the upper portion of Isberg Road, and another in the planned cul-de-sac at the end of Hoedown Way where it borders the green belt reserved in Tract N. These secondary parking areas should contain trash bins, information kiosks, and serve as trailheads. The intent is that the secondary parking areas provide parking for those using a localized portion of the trail system or serve as a pick-up point for users traversing through the Recreation Area. These parking areas should also serve to distribute the trail users throughout the recreation area to help protect the rustic feel of the area. The secondary trailhead off of Isberg Road and in the cul-de-sac at the end of Hoedown Way would allow trail users to directly access the higher elevations of the recreation area during the winter when the inversion can significantly affect the temperatures. The secondary parking areas should be separated from the through roads by a ditch to keep trail users, especially children, separated from through traffic. These parking areas should allow parallel parking for at least five vehicles. The secondary parking area provided in the cul-de-sac at the end of Hoedown Way could provide parking for more than 5 vehicles.



Secondary Parking Concept Upper Section Isberg

All parking areas should be constructed to support H-20 rated traffic loads. Parking area surfaces should be graded with a minimum of 3% cross slope for gravel surfaces and 2% for paved surfaces. The minimum depth of non-frost susceptible gravel fill should be determined by geotechnical studies during design. This Master Plan assumes that the parking area will be gravel surfaced with a minimum of 3 feet of fill and 3:1 side slopes.

**Staging**

The Master Plan recognizes that skijoring and dog sledding with small dog teams is a current winter activity in the Recreation Area, especially in the lower portion. The primary parking area is planned to have bollards spaced radially for hitching of teams. The radius point of the bollard spacing should be directed at a trailhead for ease of starting for mushers and skijorers.

An adequate turning area for vehicles with trailers should be provided in the main parking area. The traffic flow through the parking area should be a loop which returns back to the parking lot entrance. Secondary parking areas should be a pull-through design with a 24-foot lane and 12 feet of parking area on the side furthest away from the road.



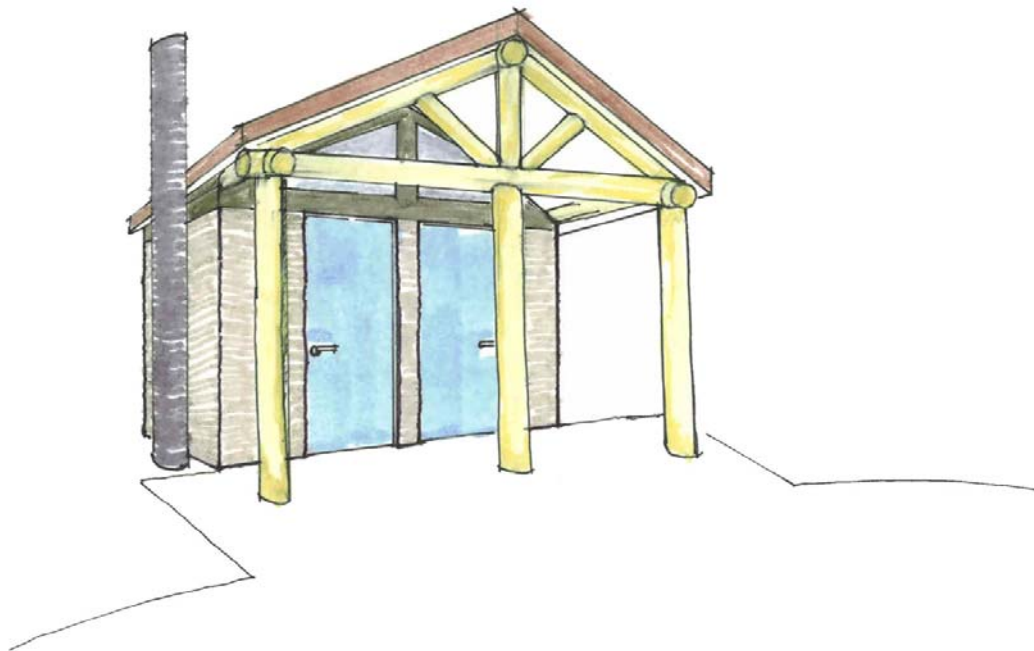
Ramps for loading and unloading ATV's and snowmachines should be constructed at the main parking area. The ramps should be constructed of squared beams placed in a "U" shape. The interior of the "U" should be filled with compacted gravel. Vehicles should be able to back up to the ramps and load or offload their snowmachine or ATV. Direct access to a motorized multiuse trail will be nearby.



Bear-Proof Trash Receptacle

### ***Restrooms***

Restroom facilities should eventually be provided at the main parking area. The facility presented in the planning process is a prefabricated unit that rests on a concrete vault capable of being pumped periodically. The basis of design for this Master Plan is a Romtec Industries Model 1018, SST Aspen Pioneer double restroom with post and beam covered entry. The posts and beams would be made of logs to provide a more rustic and park-like setting.



### ***Lighting***

Limited parking area lighting at the Primary Trailhead may be appropriate when considering safety for trail users during the extended hours of darkness in the winter. Minimal lighting should be used to reduce impacts of potential light pollution to the surrounding community.

### ***Accessibility***

Parking, restrooms, staging areas, and trailheads should be designed to conform to the Americans with Disabilities Act Guidelines. Surfaces should be hardened to provide for smoother operation of wheelchairs and eliminate stumbling hazards.



### ***Other Amenities***

Trash bins - Garbage receptacles should be provided at the parking areas. This Master Plan recommends a Robinson or Dunkin Bear-Proof receptacle considering the remote nature of the Recreation Area and the frequency of maintenance. A large, commercial-style dumpster should not be provided in order to discourage dumping of household garbage or turning the Recreation Area facility into a solid waste transfer station.

Bicycle racks - A bicycle rack could be provided at the main parking area and be considered for the secondary parking areas if future use dictates the need.

### **Signage**

#### ***Overview and Goals***

Trail signs should be as unobtrusive as possible. Trail signs could consist of a 4-inch by 4-inch cedar post with distinctive markings on the top and trail names routed vertically into the side. A symbol indicating trail difficulty may also be routed into the side.



#### ***Trail Intersections***

Trail intersections should be designed to provide visibility and allow safe crossing of trail traffic. Sight triangles will be cleared to allow a minimum of 50 feet clear visibility for each multiuse trail coming into the intersection. Grades at intersections should be reduced to a maximum of 6% for 30 feet. Faster through-trials should be provided greater sight clearances and advance warning so that traffic may slow before the intersection.



#### ***Interpretive Signs***

Interpretive signs can be provided along the Interpretive trails and at vistas or other points of interest on the other trails. FNSB Parks & Recreation Staff should work closely with user groups and educators to develop signs. Interpretive signs should be similar to informational kiosk signs but without the roof covering.

#### ***Informational Kiosks***

Informational Kiosks should be provided at each trailhead. The signs should be wooden with a “plexi-glas” covered bulletin board visible from two sides. The kiosks could contain a trail map, trail descriptions and difficulty ratings, trail etiquette, and information on flora and fauna in the area. Other information such as event schedules, advisories (such as trail closures or updates), and contact information for comments should be included as needed.



## **Other Considerations**

### ***Road Crossings***

There are no roads within the Isberg Recreation Area. However, there are two locations where platted trails in adjacent subdivisions cross Isberg Road and will connect to trails within the Isberg Recreation Area. Trail crossing warning signs should be posted at these trail crossings.

### ***Wetlands***

Large portions of the Recreation Area contain wetlands. While this will generally not be a consideration in the winter, summertime use of the trails within wetlands may require the use of boardwalks on the Interpretive Trails and other forms of tread hardening for other trails. Some seasonal closure of trails may be necessary in extremely wet or sensitive areas. All trail development in excess of ½ acre which involves placement of fill within the wetland areas will require a Corps of Engineers Wetland Permit. In addition, all trail and parking area construction will be required to address storm water runoff into wetlands.



100 Mile Loop

### ***Stream Crossings***

There are no major stream crossings within the Recreation Area however, there are numerous gullies in both the upland and lowland portions which will hold water or may be extremely soft during wet seasons or periodic rainfalls. Crossings at these gullies and depressions will consist of culverts and gravel fill or simple treated lumber bridge structures. If practical, existing trails may be rerouted in order to bypass these unsustainable trail locations.

### ***Access Control***

Physical barriers to restrict access to non-motorized trails should be placed at all non-motorized trailheads on the perimeter of the Recreation Area. Barriers could consist of posts spaced close enough to block an ATV or snowmobile yet open enough to allow pedestrian access. Motorized trailheads should be designed in such a way to allow for ATV and snowmachine access, but restrict larger off-road motorized vehicles.



Power Line Trail

### ***Potential Recreation Area Expansion***

Public comment strongly supported expanding the recreational opportunities in the area by acquiring adjacent vacant parcels or at minimum securing trail easements in order to expand the trail system. In particular, Tax Lots 1902 and 1904 (a.k.a. Contentment Estates) and Tax Lot 1907 (a.k.a. Graceland Subdivision) were mentioned as possible additions to the Recreation Area.



### ***Connections to trails outside Isberg Recreation Area boundaries***

It was noted that there are numerous trails which extend beyond the boundaries of the Isberg Recreation Area. These trails have varying levels of protection and legal standing. The layout and design of the trail system proposed in this Master Plan takes into consideration these current connections and the potential for future connections. Two of these trails, the 100-mile Loop Trail and the Chena FE Ditch Trail are in the Borough's Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan, but currently are not legally platted on the private property which abuts the Recreation Area to the North and East. These trails exhibit signs of regular traffic even though they cross private property. Legal protection of these trails would be required of the property owner per FNSB Code Title 17 if they chose to subdivide the property.

On the eastern border of the Recreation Area, a trailhead has been recommended where an existing trail connects the Isberg Recreation Area with the ROW for Isberg Road along a section line easement. There is evidence of regular trail traffic to and from the Isberg Recreation Area traveling along this section line easement and continuing north along the ROW for Isberg Road up to the intersection with Chena Ridge Road.

On the southern border in the adjoining subdivisions, a number of tracts of land were reserved to allow for neighborhood connector trails. Trails proposed in the Master Plan allow for reasonable connections from these trails into the Isberg Recreation Area.

### **Phasing/Implementation Plan**

#### ***Construction Priorities***

The development of the Recreation Area is divided into two categories: Primary and Secondary.

Primary priorities include:

- Protection of existing trails. This includes erosion, rutting, and braiding mitigation/prevention on the 100-Mile Loop Trail and the Power Line Trail. Where necessary, certain sections of trail may need to be rerouted to more sustainable locations.
- New trail development, including construction or enhancement, and trail markers.
- Interpretive Trails. An Interpretive Trail near the main parking area should be constructed early in the Recreation Area development. As additional funds become available and use dictates, a second Interpretive Trail near the Cripple Creek Road pull-out will be constructed.
- Main parking area.

Secondary Priorities include:

- Secondary parking areas.
- Acquisition of lands adjacent to the Isberg Recreation Area for expansion as they become available. Acquisition of legal access to the Isberg Recreation Area via the F.E. Ditch Trail and other neighborhood connection points.



***Construction Cost Estimates***

Trail System	\$371,622
Main Parking Area	\$109,370
Secondary Parking Areas	\$205,816
Site Improvements	\$299,383
<b><u>TOTAL</u></b>	<b><u>\$986,191</u></b>

Estimate details and assumptions are found in the appendix C.

***Phasing***

Development should be phased based on the primary and secondary priorities established above and driven by public and community involvement and funding availability. The development will be flexible to the extent that individual trails may be established before other trails because of public interest and usage. The Isberg Recreation Area is viewed as a community asset and, as such, development will be driven by the desires, needs and actions of the community.

***Funding Sources***

Funding opportunities for the Recreation Area include State and Federal grant opportunities, grants from Foundations and Corporations, donations from Clubs, Organizations, and from Borough Assembly appropriations.

**Operations and Maintenance**

***Management/Maintenance Responsibility***

The FNSB Department of Parks and Recreation will be primarily responsible for management and maintenance of the Isberg Recreation Area. Volunteer assistance from users and special interest groups will be encouraged and coordinated by the Department. No full-time staffing presence is anticipated at the Isberg Recreation Area.

Management and maintenance efforts by the Department will include:

- Restroom facility pumping and cleaning.
- Trash collection.
- Parking lot plowing in winter.
- Repair of damaged facilities.

Other maintenance which can be coordinated using volunteer labor:

- Trail maintenance.
- Repair and maintenance of trail markers.
- Preparation of educational information for the Information Kiosks.



## ***Operations***

### Hours of Operation and Access Control

- The facility is intended to be open to the public at all times. No access control is planned other than barriers to motorized traffic at the non-motorized trailheads. Seasonal use restrictions on some trails may be applied in order to prevent damage to soft trail surfaces and protect the tread from severe rutting or erosion. The most likely season for such restrictions would be spring as the top layer of trail surfaces thaw, but the frost layer is still relatively shallow below the surface. This combination of conditions often leads to poor drainage and saturated soils which are highly susceptible to rutting and displacement by high impact trail users. Such restrictions will be implemented by the Department of Parks and Recreation and will be continually evaluated and adjusted based on need.

### Trail Information

- Trail information will be prepared by Department staff and posted on the informational kiosks. Notification of trail conditions can be prepared by specific trail use organization volunteers and submitted to Department staff for posting on the kiosks.

### Announcements

- Announcements of trail closures, or advisories will be prepared and posted by Department staff. Notification of upcoming events (e.g. skijoring races) can be prepared by volunteers and submitted to Department staff for posting on the kiosks.

### Brochures

- Informational brochures about the Recreation Area and the trails, sights, flora, and fauna can be prepared by volunteers and submitted to the Department for posting.

### Trail Etiquette

- The multiuse nature of the Isberg Recreation Area trails requires that all users be courteous and respectful toward other users. Trail etiquette education will promote the safe and enjoyable use of the area by all. Trail etiquette and rules should be permanently posted on all informational kiosks.

### Vendors

- Vendor concessions at the Isberg Recreation Area is an option that will need to be considered on a case-by-case basis. The potential may exist for such concessions as bicycle rentals, nature tours, or dogsled rides, however, the Isberg Recreation Area is being developed primarily as a community asset and for members of the local community. The rustic and local theme of the area may not be as conducive to vendors as a more developed recreation area might be, such as the Chena Lake Recreation Area.

### Events Management

- The Isberg Recreation Area is already the site of several organizational events each year. Development of the area will encourage further use by organizations for races, picnics, educational field trips, etc.



- Parks and Recreation staff will be the contact for organizations that are planning events at the Isberg Recreation Area. Events will be scheduled in advance so as not to adversely impact the area and to prevent conflicts with multiple simultaneous events.

#### Volunteer Coordination

- The Parks and Recreation staff will oversee volunteer efforts planning, construction and maintenance throughout the Recreation Area.

#### Costs

- Operation and maintenance costs are expected to be minimal. Trail grooming and maintenance costs will be greatly reduced by relying on volunteer labor from organizations and the community using the trails. Equipment Use Agreements could be implemented whereby grooming and maintenance equipment is purchased by the Borough for use by volunteer organizations to maintain the trails in return for the opportunity to have exclusive use of the trails for special events.



Courtesy of Alaska Skijoring and Pulk Association