



Guide to Nominating Trails Into the Fairbanks North Star Borough Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan



Fairbanks North Star Borough
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Guide to Nominating Trails to the FNSB Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan

The Fairbanks North Star Borough (Borough) Citizens Trails Advisory Commission (TAC) and the Borough Department of Parks and Recreation (P&R) provides this guide for trail users to nominate trails to the Comprehensive Recreational Trails Plan. The purpose is to describe how to have trails recognized in the Borough Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan and to explain what kinds of protection and restriction this plan provides. The following outline will help you decide what questions you must answer, what information you must gather, and how to present your proposal to the TAC.

So, you have a trail, which you would like to be officially recognized. What do you need to do to get the process started?

1. First, you need a map of your proposed trail. At a minimum, you will need an accurate sketch drawn on a USGS topographic map. Later, you will need to determine the land owners affected by your trail. Your map will help you determine this.
2. Next, you will need to gather support from other users of your trail. Letters of support from groups and individuals who use the trail will make your proposal much stronger.
3. Who can use the trail? The users that you have gathered earlier will help you to determine this. You can propose a use designation for your trail as follows:
 - a. Non-Motorized (N)
 - b. Multi-use (M) trail, or
 - c. Dual designation based on seasons.
4. You must decide what category your proposed trail should be. There are three categories of trails in the Borough, which Appendix 1 explains in detail. If you are not certain which category is appropriate the TAC will help you with this. The categories are as follows:
 - a. Category A – statewide or regional significance, on state or federal land.
 - b. Category B – community wide significance, on public and private land.
 - c. Category C – neighborhood or local significance, on public and private land.
5. Now for a tough one. Trails receive different levels of protection from future changes.
 - a. A “dedicated” trail receives maximum protection from relocation with future development and can be identified in any category of the Borough Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan. This kind of trail must have a

legal easement across all private and public (Borough, State, B.L.M.) lands over which the trail crosses. If you want the trail to receive this level of protection, you will need to get easements from all private and public landowners along the trail.

- b. The next level of protection is simply having the trail identified as one of the above categories in the Borough Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan. It is beneficial to list a trail in Category A or B, because a dedicated trail easement will be required in the course of any subdivision of land the trail crosses. Acquiring the remaining trail easements in Category A or B and all of the trail easements in Category C is usually done by negotiating with individual landowners. Because continuous easements may not exist for some of the trails in the Boroughs Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan, future disruptions may occur resulting in relocation or realignment of the trail. It is to your advantage to obtain as many trail easements as possible regardless of whatever Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan category you select.
6. Next, you will need to get a list of all landowners that your trail crosses. The Boroughs Land Database can help you with this. If you have selected either Category A or B, you will need to determine a list of all the properties that the trail crosses. You must contact the land owners to inform them that you are proposing a trail that crosses their land to be included in the Boroughs Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan. A letter is the best way to do this. You must complete this step at least two weeks before presenting your proposal to the TAC. It would be a good idea to include in your letter which meeting of the TAC that you expect to present your proposal. If you choose Category C, you only need to include the list of properties and owners that your trail crosses with your proposal. Appendix 2 and 3 contains samples you can use to complete this step.
7. After you have completed these six steps, you are ready to submit your proposal to the TAC. You can contact the Borough Department of P&R requesting the nomination be on the agenda for the next meeting of the TAC. (TAC meets the second Tuesday of each month at the Pioneer Park Centennial Center for the Arts Blue Room.) You will present your proposal to the TAC, so you will need to prepare at least 20 handouts. The TAC will consider your proposal, make a recommendation to the Mayor, and if supported, sent on to the Borough Planning Commission for a public hearing.
8. You, as well as other users of the trail, should plan to attend the Borough Planning Commission hearing to support your proposal. The Borough Planning Commission will make a recommendation and forward it to the Borough Assembly for final approval.
9. Again, you and others supporting the trail nomination should plan to attend the Borough Assembly meeting when your proposal is considered. If the Borough

Assembly approves the trail nomination, the Borough Department of P&R will add the trail to the Boroughs Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan.

This is a lot of work! Solicit some help from your fellow trail users. It will make your proposal stronger. You may have to use the TAC and P&R as a resource too. They will be happy to answer your questions and guide you through the process. Plan on several months to get through the entire process. It might also be a good idea to get a copy of the Borough Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan for reference from the Borough Department of Parks and Recreation Department.

Good Luck!

Appendix 1

Category A: These trails have a statewide or regional significance and are located primarily on state or federal land and are therefore intended for management by state or federal authority. An example of this category of trails is the Chena Hot Springs Winter Trail. These trails are required to be reserved as dedicated easements in the course of any subdivision of the land the trail crosses. Your trail will probably not be in this category.

Category B: These trails have a community wide significance, cross both public and private lands and are proposed to be managed by the Borough. Examples of this category of trails are the Skarland Ski Trail and the Equinox Marathon Trail. These trails are required to be reserved as dedicated easements in the course of any subdivision of the land the trail crosses.

Category C: These trails have a neighborhood or local significance and cross both public and private lands. This designation does help users to apply for grants for trail improvements and maintenance. Examples of this category of trails are the Cripple Creek Trail and the Twenty Three-Mile Slough Sleddog Trails. These trails are not required to be reserved as dedicated easements in the course of the subdivision of the land the trail crosses.

Appendix 2

Address
City, State, Zip
Telephone Number
Date

Landowner
Address
City, State, Zip

To Whom It May Concern:

The Citizens Trails Advisory Commission of the Fairbanks North Star Borough (Borough) will be hearing testimony concerning the nomination of the NAME OF TRAIL located LOCATION OF TRAIL for addition to the Borough Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan. I have attached a map with the trails for nomination outlined.

You may provide comments at the meeting of the Trail Advisory Commission on DATE at TIME at the Pioneer Park Centennial Center for the Arts Blue Room. You may also direct verbal or written testimony to the Trails Advisory Commission through the Trails Coordinator in the Borough's Department of Parks and Recreation. The Trails Coordinator can be contacted at 459-7401.

This meeting will be the first of several steps to nominate the trail for addition to the Boroughs Comprehensive Recreational Trails Plan. You will have other opportunities to testify on this nomination at future meetings of the Borough Planning Commission and Borough Assembly.

If you have any questions concerning this addition, you may contact me at YOUR NUMBER or email me at YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS. I look forward to your comments.

Sincerely,

YOUR NAME

Attachment: Map of YOUR TRAIL NAME

