



For Immediate Release

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Media Contacts:

Taylor Raftery, Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation (907) 746-8757

Stuart Leidner, Alaska State Parks (907) 745-8935

Katie Sechrist-Gaynos, Alaska Department of Fish and Game (907) 267-2541

New Curry Ridge to Kesugi Ridge Trail Connector Expands Backcountry Access in Denali State Park

The completion of the Curry Ridge to Kesugi Ridge Trail Connector Project marks a significant milestone in enhancing recreational opportunities in the Mat-Su Borough. Spanning approximately 17 miles through the heart of Denali State Park, on the homelands of the Dena'ina People, this trail expansion dramatically increases backcountry access and connectivity.

The newly established Curry Connector Trail adds spectacular new day-hike and overnight trip options, and links up to the beloved 30-mile long K'esugi Ridge Trail, creating a roughly 50-mile backcountry trail opportunity which is largely above treeline.

The Curry Connector Trail begins at the Rocky Knob area, extending from the existing lower Curry Ridge Trail above K'esugi Ken Campground. It winds through alpine and subalpine terrain, offering breathtaking views of the Alaska Range while traversing ridges, lakes, and wetlands. It intersects an existing user-created route up and over Tarn Point, ending at the Cascade Junction above Byer's Lake. Users should be prepared for multiple, small stream crossings, and a ford of Troublesome Creek. The trail affords incredible views of the Alaska Range and a hearty sampling of the remote and scenic lands within Denali State Park.

Seventy-five percent of the project was funded by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Wildlife Conservation (ADF&G, DWC) through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Wildlife Restoration Program (Pittman-Robertson Act). Tax revenue collected from the sale of firearms, ammunition, and archery equipment is used to support public access to wildlife resources and improve hunter access.

This cooperative project was managed by the Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation in coordination with ADF&G, DWC and Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Parks and Recreation (DNR, DPOR). The project totaled over \$1.3 million, with 25% nonfederal matching funds provided by the Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation and Mat-Su Health Foundation, showcasing public-private partnerships leveraging community support to enhance public access to our natural resources.

For more information about this project and to support future projects, contact Taylor Raftery at Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation at 907-746-8757, traftery@matsutrails.org, or visit the foundation website at www.matsutrails.org. More information about this project and ADF&G's Hunter Access Program can be found on the ADF&G website at www.hunteraccess.adfg.alaska.gov.

About Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation: Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation (MSTPF) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to enhancing public access and enjoyment of trails and parks in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough. Since 2011, MSTPF has provided over \$2,300,000 in grant funding to various nonprofits and agencies, resulting in over 85 miles of new trails and 12 parks, the purchase of essential trail grooming and maintenance equipment, trail markers, interpretive signage, and necessary trailhead amenities like bathrooms.