

APPENDIX A: NORTHERN REGION

This appendix includes maps and narrative that summarize the results of the Chugach State Park Access Inventory for the Northern Region of Chugach State Park. Access is categorized as *Improved Access*, *Unimproved Access*, *Traditional Access*, and *Potential Access*. Where a particular access point presents particular challenges or problems, it is noted as being *problematic*. All access considered in this inventory is depicted on maps included at the end of the appendix. Access is highlighted in yellow and includes access points and road and pedestrian corridors. *Parcels of Concern* are highlighted in pink and represent areas where platting of roads and easements to the Park boundary can provide future *Neighborhood Access*. Recommendations and References are included for each site when appropriate.

Hunter Creek, Pioneer Ridge Area (Map p. 31)

N1 Hunter Creek

Traditional Access, problematic.

Hunter Creek is located near the end of Knik River Road, in the vicinity of the bridge crossing Hunter Creek or in T16N, R 3E, Section 25 to the west at approximately Mile 9.6 of Knik River Road. The west side of the creek has a steep rock wall and access on this side of the creek apparently is via Azuree Avenue through a private parcel where the owner is reportedly charging users to access through his land. An existing trail runs through cottonwoods and a lightly forested area on the east side of the creek. Elevations initially on the west side are fairly steep. This area is used for light hunting in the fall with some use by mountain climbers. Alternate access to Hunter Creek drainages can be acquired via Hunter Creek Pass or by landing on a gravel airstrip in the West Fork of Hunter Creek. This provides access to a wilderness area of the Park. Access in this area connects with the "Hunter Creek Trail #104 of the Chugach State Park Trail Plan.

References: Chugach State Park Master Plan and Chugach State Park Trail Plan.

N2 Pioneer Ridge Trailhead

Improved Access.

The Pioneer Ridge Trailhead is located at approximately Mile 3.9 of Knik River Road in T16N, R3E, Section 9. The Trailhead is located in a wooded setting off Knik River Road identified by a parking lot and sign. This Trailhead enjoys moderate use by hikers and climbers of 6,398 foot Pioneer Peak. This is a moderate to difficult hike that provides access to Pioneer Peak and The Pioneer Ridge Trail. Views of Knik Glacier, Mt. Goode, Marcus Baker, the Knik River, the Matanuska-Susitna Valley, Bold Peak, and the Eklutna Glacier are available from the higher elevations of Pioneer Ridge.

N3 Goat Creek

Potential Access.

This access point is located at Mile 5.4 of the Old Glenn Highway in T16N, R2E, Section 16. The Trailhead is located on a narrow parcel containing large cottonwoods. There is a road into the parcel and room for approximately 2 vehicles to park. Buildings on the parcel have deteriorated to the point where they are no longer useful nor hazardous. The site provides access to Pioneer Peak and the Goat Creek Drainage. Use of the site to access the Park may require access across other private lands.

References: Chugach State Park Master Plan and Chugach State Park Trail Plan.

N13 Pioneer Falls

Traditional Access.

This site is located across the Old Glenn Highway from a private campground. A sign that marks the site of Pioneer Falls is posted on the highway. The site has gently sloping terrain through a cottonwood forest with little understory and an unmaintained trail to the falls. The site is relatively clean and undisturbed. It is apparently used by local residents and guests of the campground across the street. This Trailhead offers a short easy hike to the falls, which are picturesque and far enough from Old Glenn Highway, that the destination is quiet and pleasant.

Recommendations: Monitor use and consider parking and trail maintenance in consultation with area residents should use and funding warrants.

Eklutna, Thunderbird Falls (Map p. 33)

N4 Mount POW

Traditional Access, problematic.

This Trailhead is located on Eklutna Lake Road in T16N, R1E, Section 35. The Trailhead is located on a steep hillside. Mount POW is climbed each Veterans Day from Eklutna Lake Road to honor POWs/MIAs. Traditional access to the Park has occurred through Mental Health Trust Lands allowing veterans and their organizations access to a memorial site for specific events. There is no developed parking and no other facilities. Private land is located nearby. Users need to obtain approval of Mental Health Trust officials to direct the public onto trust land. Care should be taken to respect rights of adjacent landowners.

Recommendations: Work with the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) Project Engineer on 2003 road paving project to locate and develop a 5-10 car parking area. Work with veterans group to locate, design and build a low maintenance trail. Work with Mental Health Trust Lands office to address access via Trust lands.

N5 Eklutna Lake

Improved Access.

The Eklutna Lake Trailhead provides diverse landscapes and recreational opportunities. The area experiences heavy use on weekends and relatively light use on weekdays. All use is expected to increase beyond the capacity of the facilities after Eklutna Road is paved in the summer of 2003. Private recreational facilities exist and will likely expand on large tracts of private lands in the area. Recreational uses include vehicle camping, group camping and picnicking, canoeing, kayaking, fishing, hiking, horseback riding, mountain climbing, snowmobiling, cross country skiing, glacier traversing, public use cabin and hut use, ice skating, biking, hunting (bow), backpacking, and dog mushing. Eklutna Lake provides a wide variety of outdoor recreation experiences for visitors of all levels of outdoor experience and desire. Popular destinations via bicycle, four-wheeler or foot include Bold Ridge, Twin Peaks, East Fork Eklutna River Trail, Bold Peak, and the Eklutna Glacier. For those desiring more adventure, the Whiteout Glacier Traverse begins at this major Trailhead. The Lakeside Trail is an old road and as such accommodates many different users with minimal conflicts. The area has high scenic value with low avalanche hazards for most activities in the winter. The area has a high

degree of management control due to the controlled and limited road access. Overflow use on weekends and holidays are creating a need for more day and overnight facilities.
Reference: Chugach State Park Master Plan and Chugach State Park Trail Plan

N5a Eklutna Road

Unimproved Access.

The area along the road within the Park is generally steep forested hillside. This access is currently not heavily used as a destination. Eklutna Lake provides more convenient access and parking. However, trails and potential access along the Eklutna Road may become more popular following the 2003 upgrade. Access to nearby parklands for hiking and climbing may be desirable and provide a less congested destination than the Eklutna Lake Trailhead during peak use periods. Currently there is no parking and no shoulder on this gravel road.

Recommendations: Work with DOT&PF to develop informal parking areas or pullouts on north side of road. Assist Eklutna, Inc. with informal management information regarding their lands in the area.

N6 Thunderbird Falls

Improved Access.

The Thunderbird Falls Trailhead is located off the Old Glenn Highway south of the bridge over the Eklutna River in T16N, R1W, Section 25. This Trailhead provides access to gentle birch and spruce forested terrain with steep and dangerous cliffs above the river. This is a popular destination for Anchorage residents for scenic viewing of the waterfalls and ice climbing in the winter. This Trailhead provides an opportunity for visitors with lower physical conditions or skill levels to get into the Park in a safe setting and is popular with families with small children. The trail provides a very short, accessible walk into some of the Park's quietest birch and cottonwood forest. There have been some problems with youth parties and vandalism of facilities.

Recommendations: Pave and upgrade all facilities. Consider paving the trail with galvanized steel staircases on steeper trail sections and down to the river. Several informal picnic sites could be developed.

References: Chugach State Park Master Plan and Chugach State Park Trail Plan

Peters Creek Area (Map p. 35)

N7 Big Peters Creek

Unimproved Access.

This site is also known as Upper Peters Creek. Existing use is minimal and mostly by local residents. Uses include summer hiking, biking, fall hunting of moose and small game, winter snowmobiling, skiing, and snowshoeing. This site provides access to a relatively pristine valley with high scenic values, varied terrain, and good wildlife habitat. The Peters Creek Trailhead provides access to Mount Eklutna and Bear Mountain, located above the community of Peters Creek. These trails are popular with local residents and while not heavily traveled, they provide a relatively easy destination for local residents. Very limited parking is available along the roadway. The existing road/trail is outside the section line easement across a 40 acre private parcel. The current landowner has allowed use of the trail through his property. There is a need for an

easement for existing trail (1/4 mile) as this is not necessarily a permanent solution. Present right of way could be used but terrain is poor for road construction.

Recommendations: Acquire a 1/4 mile easement to build a road into the Park where a trailhead can be developed with a cabin or campsite for a caretaker. Manage 700-acre Conservation Fund donated lands consistent with donor's intent. When trailhead is built add directional signs on all roads to direct visitors to the Park.

Reference: Chugach State Park Master Plan and Trail Plan.

N8 Ptarmigan Valley Improved Access.

Access is located off the Glenn Highway, near old gravel pit. Site consists of gentle birch/spruce forested terrain with a west facing aspect that provides access to alpine uplands. Winter use includes cross country skiing, hiking and snowmobiling. Summer use includes hiking and hunting. The Ptarmigan Valley Trailhead is the starting point for the Ptarmigan Valley trail, a gentle walk through the forest where one can expect to see moose, porcupine, wolverines, jays, and a variety of other birds. The trail is designed for snowmobiles, and is wide and relatively brush free. The trail peaks at the base of Roundtop, where hikers can continue toward Blacktail Rocks.

Recommendations: Landscape Trailhead and pave roads and parking lots. Construct picnic site, shelter and group use area. Coordinate management and use with Municipality lands across the highway (Loretta French Park).

References: Chugach State Park Master Plan and Chugach State Park Trail Plan

N9 Meadow Ridge Court Road Unimproved Access.

This access point is located in northwest Peters Creek, and is an east-west trending platted road to the Park. The site is a forested area containing moderate to steep slopes. Currently there appears to be very little use, which is primarily walking access for neighborhood residents. This site could provide good local neighborhood access.

Recommendations: Revisit site once a year; insure that plats of adjacent land are noticed to Chugach State Parks in order to ensure that plats recognize existing road easements. Public need should be evaluated before investing resources.

N10 Frosty Country Road Unimproved Access.

This access point is a platted subdivision road located in northwest Peters Creek, at the intersection of Meadow Lake Circle and Frosty Road. This site contains a birch forest backing up against the base of Bear Mountain. The terrain is generally steep; however, the access point itself is relatively flat and provides a good potential local neighborhood access point. Current use is minimal and appears to be primarily local neighborhood access on foot.

Recommendations: Status should be reviewed annually.

N11 Scimitar Subdivision Unimproved Access.

This access point is located in T15N, R1W, on the section line between Sections 10 and 11 at the end of Thornton Street, Big Peters Creek. The section line parallels the Park to the east. The area is forested, with fairly steep slopes at beginning of the access point into parkland. Existing use is unknown. The area may be used by local residents but currently

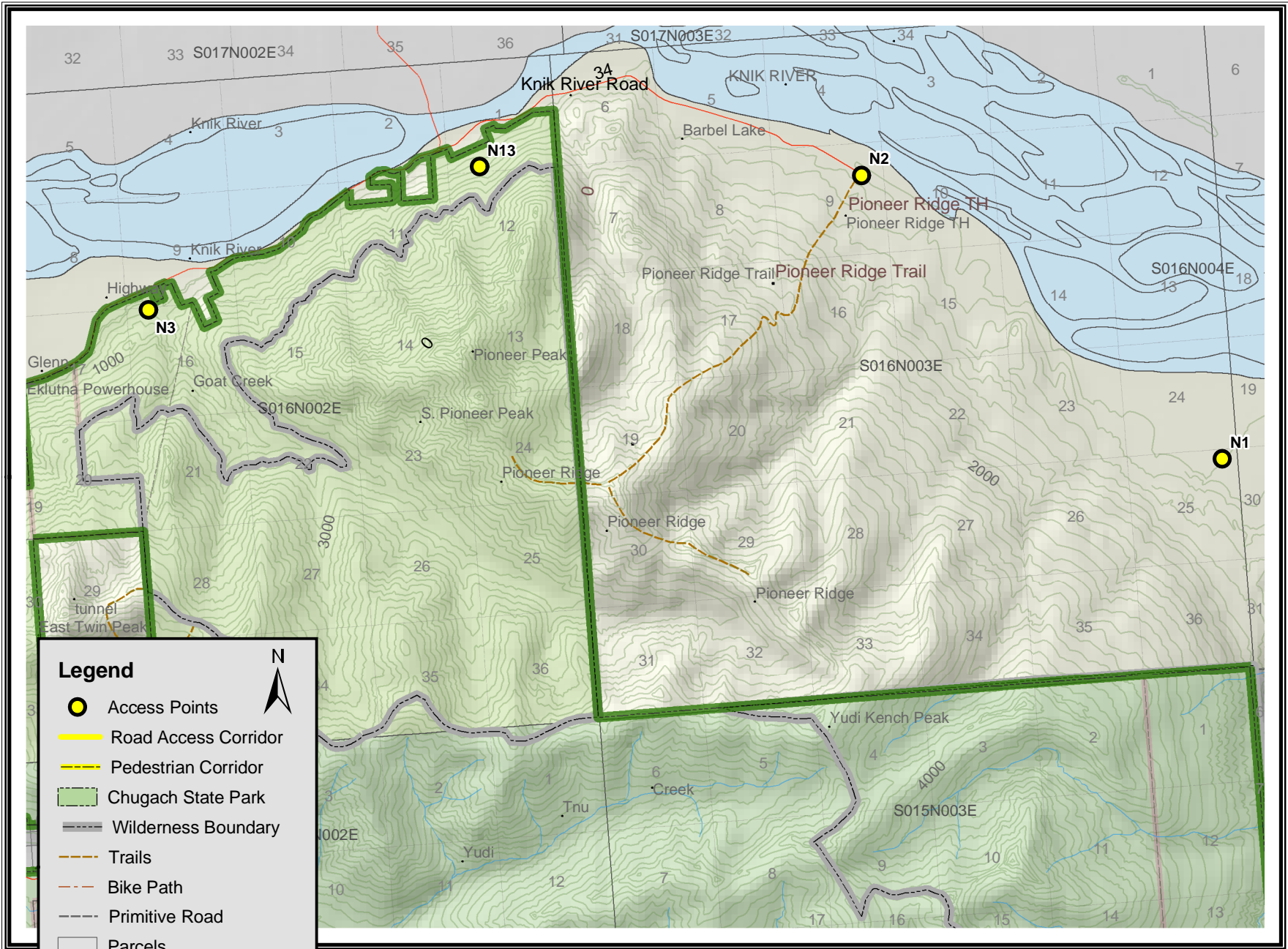
does not show signs of heavy use. This site provides alternate access to Big Peters Creek Valley.

Recommendations: Monitor use. Retain section line easement.

N12 Canyon Drive

Traditional Access, problematic.

Access is a platted road located in T15N, R1W, Section 20, in Peters Creek. The site is located by following Amonson Road to Canyon Drive. The Canyon Drive site is mostly cottonwood forest with relatively steep terrain, and provides access to a hidden ice-plugged lake. Chugach State Park is on the far side of the lake. Access is tolerated and parking is very limited.

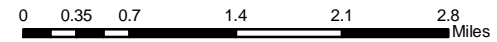


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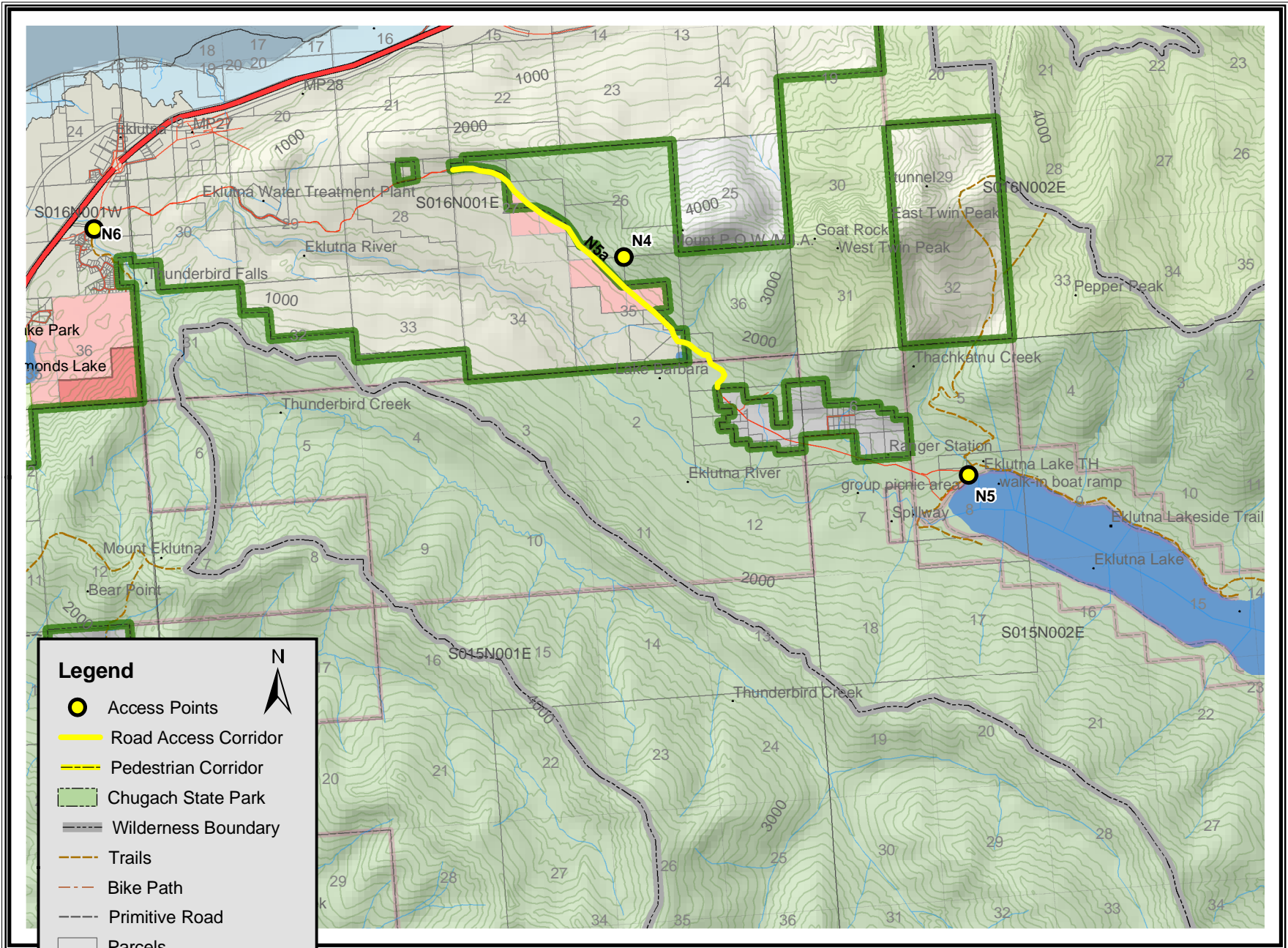
- Access Points
- Road Access Corridor
- Pedestrian Corridor
- Chugach State Park
- Wilderness Boundary
- Trails
- Bike Path
- Primitive Road
- Parcels
- Parcels of Concern
- HLB Parcels of Concern
- Parks
- Military Lands

Data Sources:
 MOA: Roads, Trails, Streams, Parks, Parcels, CSP
 IMUS: Trails, Cultural Features, Natural Features, CSP Boundary
 DNR: Contours, Shaded relief Township and Section line grid

Chugach State Park Access Inventory
Hunter Creek, Pioneer Ridge



This map is prepared by the Alaska Department of Natural Resources for planning purposes only. Not all access points represented on this map are reserved public access. Chugach State Park users should access Chugach State Park via marked trailheads only.

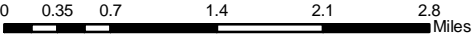


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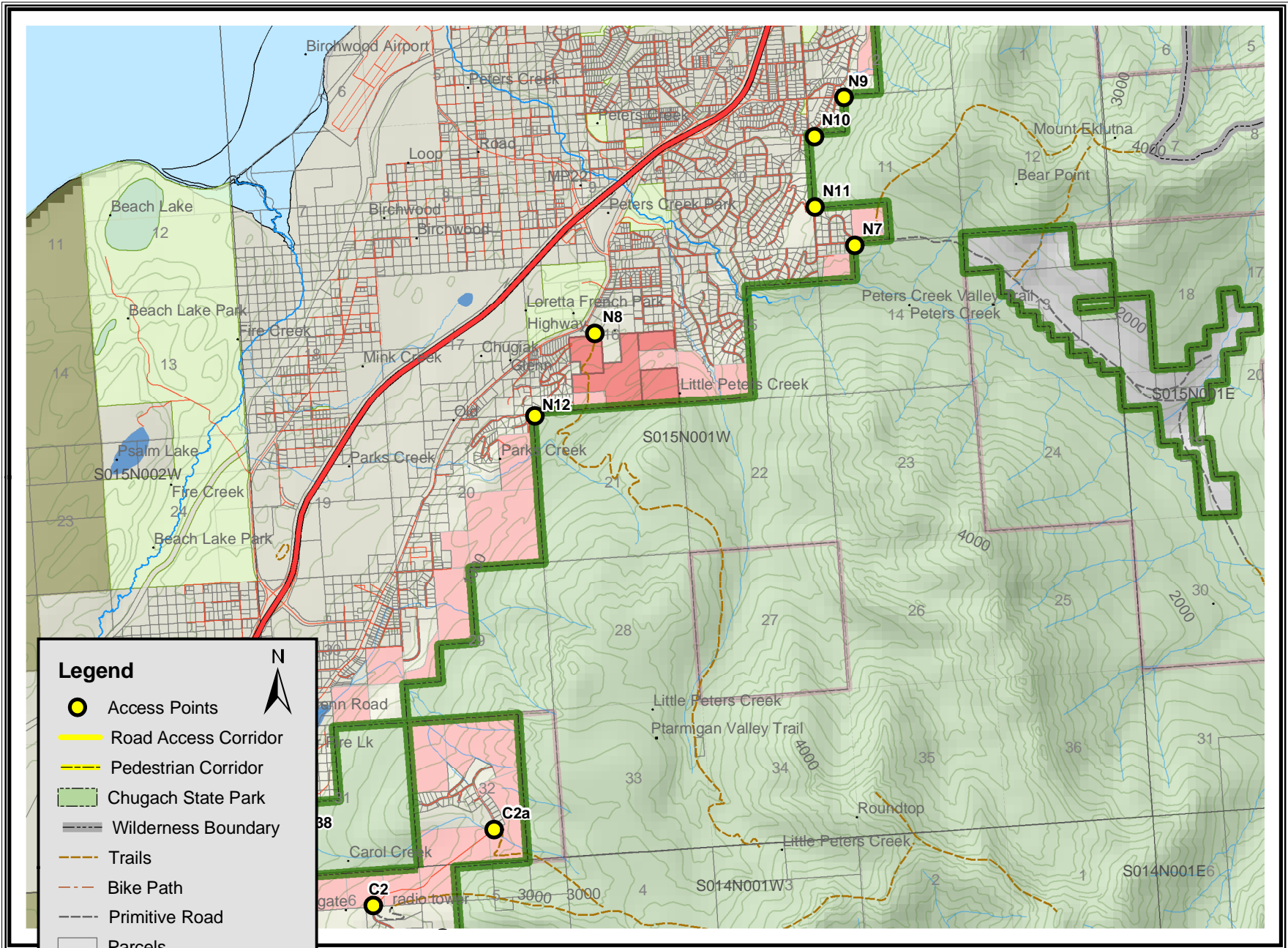
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Chugach State Park Access Inventory
Eklutna, Thunderbird Falls



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Legend

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Chugach State Park Access Inventory
Peters Creek
 0 0.25 0.5 1 1.5 2 Miles

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