

Protecting Traditional Land Use Areas by Hardening Trails



Porous pavement provides a hardened trail, allowing the fragile tundra to heal from unconfined ATV use.

Overview

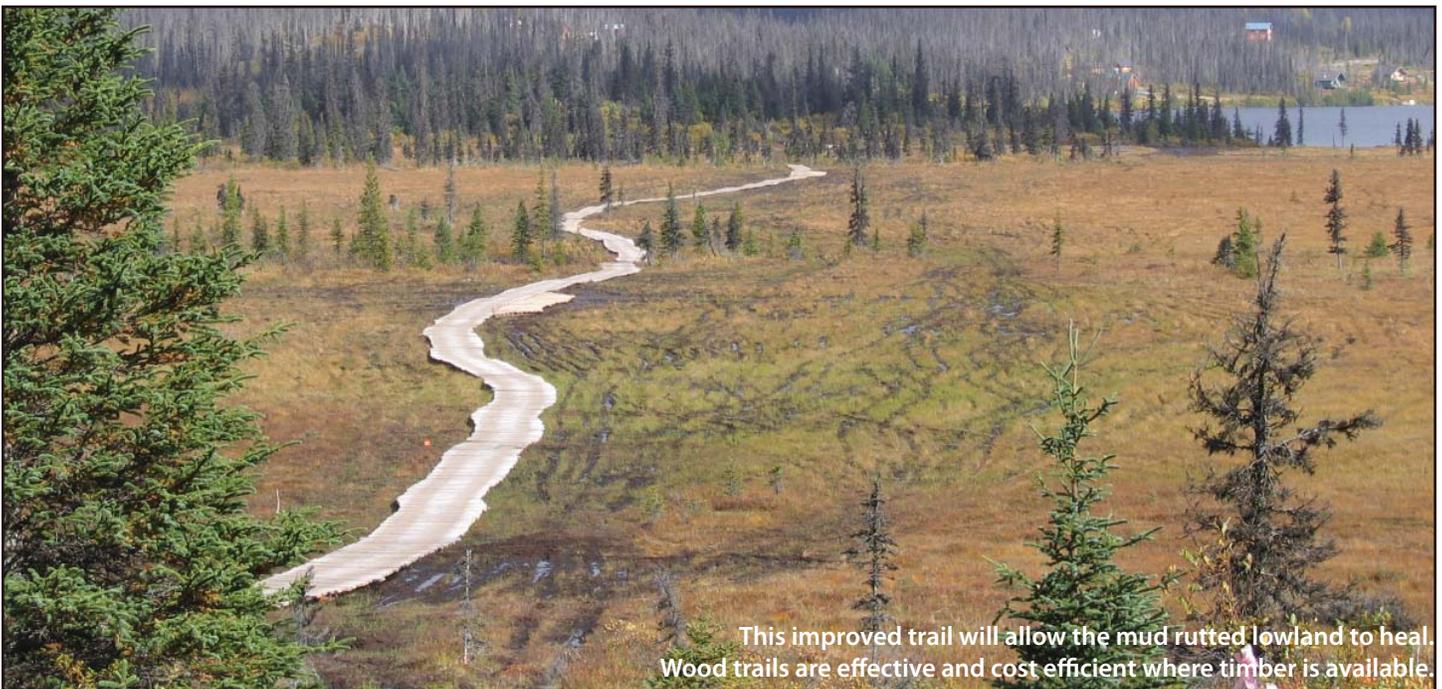
Hardened trails benefit tundra and wildlife by controlling all-terrain vehicle (ATV) damage. When ATVs stay on hardened trails, the tundra has an opportunity to heal previously-made ruts, waterfowl nests are protected from crushing wheels, and access to traditional hunting and gathering areas is maintained.

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service can provide communities technical and financial assistance for trails through the Farm Bill's Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) and Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).

Assistance

Contact your local NRCS office to learn how financial assistance contracts can benefit you and your community. Alaska Natives may receive greater financial assistance and are not subject to payment limitations.

Land eligible for financial assistance contracts include privately owned land suitable for fish and wildlife habitat development and improvement (such as traditional subsistence areas), and non-industrial private forestland including rural land that has existing tree cover or is suitable for growing trees. ANCSA Corporations and Native allotments are eligible as privately owned property.



This improved trail will allow the mud rutted lowland to heal. Wood trails are effective and cost efficient where timber is available.



Hooper Bay's Story

The land north of the Alaska Native village of Hooper Bay is rich in subsistence resources important to the Yupik people including migratory birds; harvest areas for blackfish, whitefish and needle fish; ponds for collecting greens; grasses for textiles; and blackberry, blueberry and salmonberry.

For centuries, local Yupik people traveled to this area by foot or by dog team. Today, the primary modes of transportation are all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), often referred to as Hondas. ATVs flush the nesting birds and make their nests vulnerable to predation. The vehicles also tear apart the fragile tundra and wetlands and destroy nesting habitat. It takes a long time for the tundra to heal when it is repeatedly subjected to uncontrolled and unconfined ATV use.

Although many community members utilize ATVs to access these traditional land use areas, the people also recognized the threat motorized vehicles pose to the tundra and their subsistence way of life.

Contact your closest NRCS office for more information. All numbers are area code 907

Anchorage	283-8732 x100
Aniak	479-3159 x1012
Bethel	479-3159 x1012
Craig	826-5690
Delta Junction	479-3159 x1010
Dillingham	842-3240
Fairbanks	479-3159 x1010
Glennallen	822-5111
Homer	235-8177 x103
Juneau	586-7220
Kenai	283-8732 x100
Kodiak	235-8177 x107
Mat-Su Valley	373-6492 x101
Nome	443-6096
State Office	761-7760

www.ak.nrcs.usda.gov

Hooper Bay Worked with NRCS

The residents of Hooper Bay approached NRCS with an idea to utilize technical and financial assistance through the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program to build one main trail between the village and the beach just south of Kokechik Bay. This managed trail would provide a sustainable path to traditional berry, greens, eggs, and fish harvesting areas while decommissioning secondary trails. The trail concept featured a clear trailhead and signs informing people to park their machines and walk onto the land.

Educating and informing the community about the trail and the benefits to the nesting birds and their habitat is a key component to the successful project.

Hooper Bay's Trail and Walkway

Hardening and improving the trail improved the tundra wildlife and plant habitat by concentrating ATV traffic. Managing use by creating an improved travel corridor protects greater expanses of connected, undisturbed, high quality tundra.

The trail now begins at the northeast edge of the village and will eventually traverse over five miles of Sea Lion Corporation land to the coastline. The trail is six feet wide and constructed with GeoBlock,[®] a porous plastic material.

Numerous local and federal agencies contributed in planning, design, and funding included the National Park Service and the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge.

