



Master Interpretive Plan

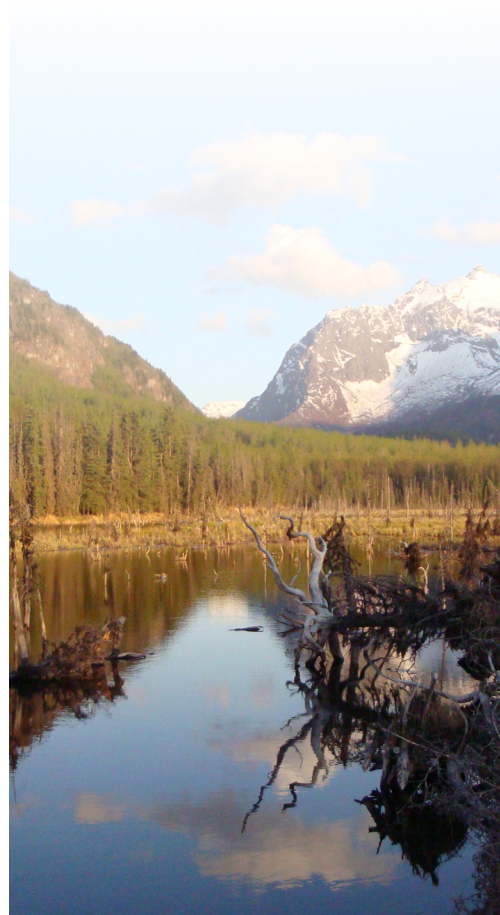




Photo courtesy of Colin Tyler

Many thanks to Colin Tyler Photography whose photos will be credited throughout the document.

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RIISING TO THE CHALLENGE

Overcoming winter, the season of death in temperate and subtropical climates, is a major survival challenge for many species.

KEY BIRDS

- Golden-crowned Kinglet
- Red-breasted Nuthatch
- Winter Wren
- White-throated Sparrow
- Winter Wren
- White-throated Sparrow

MAKING IT TO ADULTHOOD

Winter is a time of high mortality for young birds. Many species have evolved strategies to survive, such as staying in the nest longer, being fed longer, or migrating to warmer areas.

THE GREAT MIGRATION

Many birds migrate south in winter to escape the cold and find food. This is a time of high mortality, but those that survive are more likely to reach adulthood.



CENTER STAGE

Wildlife viewing is the one thing you can't miss in Denali National Park and Preserve. The park is home to a wide variety of birds, including the Golden-crowned Kinglet, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Winter Wren, and White-throated Sparrow.

KEYSTONE SPECIES

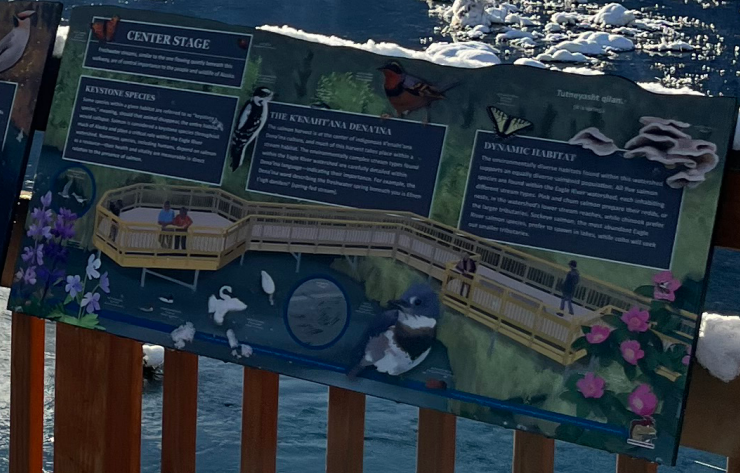
Golden-crowned Kinglet, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Winter Wren, and White-throated Sparrow are keystone species in the park. They play a vital role in the ecosystem by eating insects and other small animals.

THE KINAFATANA DENVINA

The Kinafatana Denvina is a wooden walkway that provides a safe and easy way to view the park's wildlife. It is located in the heart of the park and is a popular spot for bird watching.

DYNAMIC HABITAT

The park's dynamic habitat is home to a wide variety of birds. The habitat is constantly changing due to the park's unique climate and geography.



i. Executive Summary

Friends of Eagle River Nature Center (FERNC) worked with the Alaska Department of Parks and Outdoor Recreation's Interpretation and Education Staff (I&E) in 2024 and 2025 to complete their first Master Interpretive Plan for the nature center, located within the Eagle River Valley in Chugach State Park. The scope of this plan is to review static signage and interpretation that lies outside the nature center and on the trails managed and maintained by FERNC and its staff.

To launch the planning process, an internal core planning team was appointed, and a series of site visits were completed with former and current FERNC employees. These visits helped I&E understand the setting, location, site visitors, and programming efforts. This plan reflects their best efforts to support current and future informational and interpretive messages implemented at this site.

- **Mission Statement:** A mission for the plan was created and is to act as an anchor for all recommendations made and any reviews of the plan in the future. A mission and vision help drive all plan goals, objectives, and ultimately, all recommendations implemented.
- **Visitor Experience:** The concept of the overall visitor experience was discussed and ideas were documented for improving visitor experiences on-site.
- **Recommendations:** Site visits led to discussions between FERNC staff and I&E on untapped potential to create recommendations focused on the naturalist program's needs, the visitor experience, the natural resources in the Eagle River valley, and history of the area. A series of design recommendations accompanied by a set of design guidelines was also completed for the development of orientation and wayfinding signage as well as the interpretive graphics and panels.
- **Interpretive Themes:** With the full planning team's participation, an extensive set of themes were developed that summarizes the messages and the supporting stories that FERNC would like to share with its visitors to reveal meanings and history of the site.

This plan guides FERNC employees, volunteers, and docents to improve interpretation and wayfinding on site. The implementation of the plan to be completed over a five-year period. This plan can be referenced regularly at FERNC staff meetings and updates considered in in future work plans. The plan is meant to be used as a living document that is reviewed and revised as needed to move ERNC forward in providing an engaging, thoughtful, and extraordinary guest experience.



Eagle River Nature Center Management Area and Trails

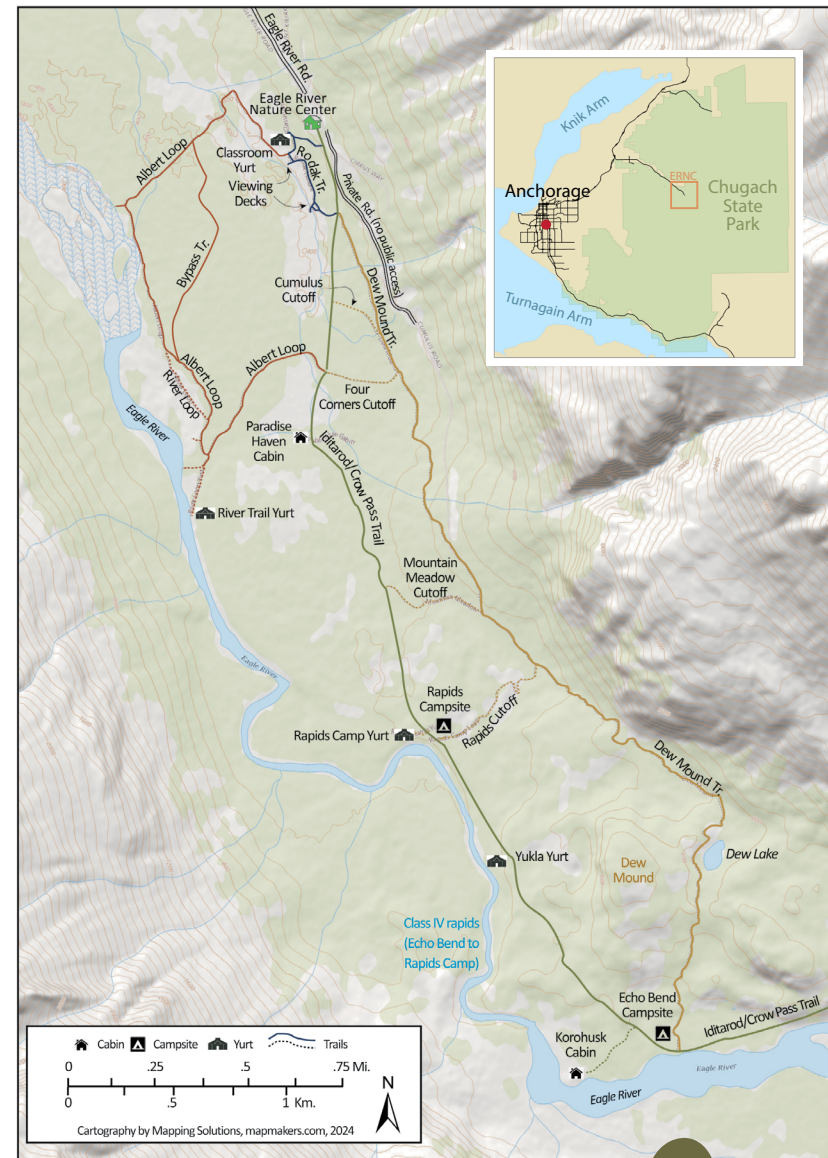
ii. Eagle River Nature Center Location

Chugach State Park (CSP) in Southcentral Alaska encompasses roughly half a million acres of wilderness adjacent to Anchorage, Alaska's largest urban area. Friends of Eagle River Nature Center (FERNC) leases and manages nearly 12 miles of trails and surrounding areas within CSP on behalf of Alaska State Parks. FERNC-managed land runs along the Eagle River valley toward Crow Pass, which is traversed by the Iditarod National Historic Trail (INHT).

The center itself is a quaint log cabin frequented by locals, other Alaskans, and many out-of-state and international visitors. Inside the nature center, one can explore the several interpretive displays, talk with front desk docents, or shop in a small store. Guests are encouraged to get outside and hike anywhere along the additional trails connected to the center, where they have opportunities to see local wildlife and grand views. The center is also the trailhead for northern access to Crow Pass Trail, a popular 23-mile hike between Eagle River and Girdwood over Crow Pass.

Map insert right: Chugach State Park, approximately 495,000 acres, is the fourth largest state park in the United States. Southcentral Alaska is an area of diverse landforms and rugged topography, bound on the north and west by the Alaska Range, and on the east by the Chugach Mountains and Prince William Sound.

The region contains extensive shoreline, abundant lakes, massive glaciers, and ice fields. The park's western boundary is the Chugach Mountain Range. The park is further defined by the Knik Arm on the north, Turnagain Arm on the south, and Upper and Lower Lake George and the Chugach National Forest on the east. Within minutes of the park are the communities of Anchorage, Eagle River, Chugiak, Palmer, Wasilla, Indian, Bird, Girdwood, the village of Eklutna, and Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson.



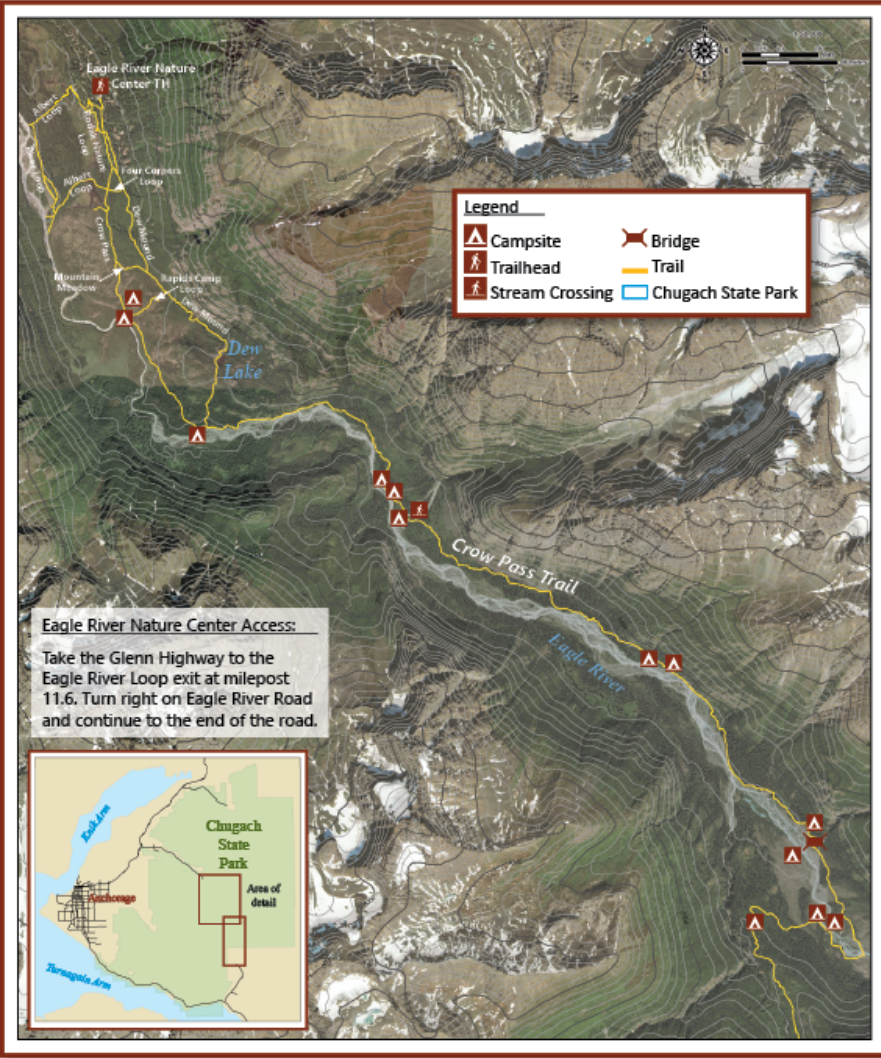
Crow Pass Trail is part of the INHT, a 1,000-mile trail from Seward in the south to Nome in the north that includes another 1,400 miles of side trails and connecting trails. Today's trail users move in the footsteps of the First Alaskans, explorers, prospectors, and adventurers who traveled these trails before them.

FERN is a nonprofit organization operating through an agreement with the Department of Parks and Outdoor Recreation (DPOR, or Alaska State Parks). FERN is the only organization in CSP to offer year-round outdoor educational opportunities for the public, both guided and self-guided. The center's staff hosts field trips for hundreds of school children in both the Anchorage and Matanuska-Susitna Borough school districts. Additionally, FERN manages two public-use cabins (PUCs) and three yurts available for year-round reservation.

Access to the Eagle River Nature Center:

From the Glenn Highway at Milepost 11.6, take the exit for Eagle River Loop Road. Continue on the Loop Road until you reach Eagle River Road. Turn right onto Eagle River Road and continue 10 miles to the end of the road.

Map insert right: At the east end of Eagle River Road, the nature center sits at the heart of Chugach State Park. FERN manages the center, trailheads, ~12 miles of trails, PUCs, and yurts.



iii. Abbreviations

ABA: The Architectural Barriers Act

ADA: The Americans with Disabilities Act

CSP: Chugach State Park

DPOR (Alaska State Parks): Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation

ERNC: Eagle River Nature Center

FERN: Friends of Eagle River Nature Center

INHT (Iditarod): Iditarod National Historic Trail

I&E: DPOR's Interpretation and Education Unit

MIP: Master Interpretive Plan

PUC: Public-use Cabin

NAI: National Association for Interpretation

USFS: United States Forest Service



Photo courtesy of Steve Neel



CH 1: INTRODUCTION

i. History

The Eagle River Nature Center (ERNC) is situated in Eagle River Valley, within the homeland of the Dena'ina people. The valley has a long human history, and its resources, travel routes, and seasonal abundance have shaped human relationships with this landscape over time. The broader Eagle River area is strongly connected to Dena'ina history, language, and place, but the archaeological record for the valley remains incomplete. Additional survey and study are needed before site-specific conclusions can be made about earlier pre-contact occupations and cultural change in the ERNC area.

The Dena'ina name for Eagle River is Nuk'elehitnu. Historical documentation specifically records use of the mouth of Eagle River as a fishing area, underscoring the importance of salmon to the watershed and to Dena'ina use of the broader area.¹

Early American explorers in search of gold prospects reached Eagle River in the late 1800's.

Crow Creek Mine was established in the late 1890s on the southern end of Crow Pass Trail; the ERNC is on the other, northern, end.

Gold mining prompted the Alaska Road Commission to survey the route from Seward to Nome, later known as the Iditarod Trail, in 1908. Now, Crow Pass Trail is an official portion of the Iditarod National Historic Trail (INHT).

In 1912, Congress made Alaska a territory of the United States; Alaska became a state in 1959.

In 1970, Chugach State Park (CSP) was signed into law to provide recreational opportunities and to protect the extraordinary geological, flora, fauna, and historic resources of the Chugach Mountains.

The main nature center building dates to the late 1960's, when it was the homestead of John and Freida Barclay. In 1971, they opened the Paradise Haven Lodge and served burgers and beers to all those adventurous enough to take a ride to the end of the road. In April of 1980, John accepted an offer from the state to buy the log cabin lodge and surrounding property.



¹Zimmerman, 1994

Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation (DPOR) converted the Paradise Haven Lodge into a working visitor center and ranger station. Eagle River Visitor Center, as it was first called, was open to the public in 1981. “We designed the visitor center to entice people to go into the park and explore what it had to offer,” said retired DPOR superintendent Dale Bingham in an Alaska magazine article for the center’s 25th anniversary.

While Alaska was awash in funds from oil development in the early 1980s, the state paved the road to the center and employed a staff of five there. In the early 1990s, oil prices crashed. This brought budget cuts that shuttered the building most of the year. By 1993, the visitor center was open to the public for just three months of the year, interpretive positions were cut, and natural history education was discontinued.

In 1995, Asta Spurgis, along with Carole and Dick Lloyd, formed a nonprofit to revitalize the center for the community. In 1996, the Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation (DPOR, or Alaska State Parks) awarded this new non-profit, the Friends of ERNC (FERNC), a permit to run the center. The visitor center was reopened under its current name, the Eagle River Nature Center.

FERNC started with a handful of supporters and a budget of \$30,000. In 2025, it grew to over 2,000 members with a budget of \$430,000. The organization has built new trails, added public-use facilities, and enlisted a dedicated corps of staff and volunteers who maintain infrastructure and share natural history both in the center and on the trails. Currently, there are four full-time staff members and two part-time staff.

After ten years of successful operations, DPOR extended the concession contract for another 25 years in 2005.

For the past 28 years, the facility has been open year-round and FERNC provides extensive programming to the public, private and public K-12 schools, and various community organizations. FERNC manages the main visitor facility, over 12 miles of trails (including the salmon and beaver viewing decks), five public-use overnight facilities, a classroom structure, a trail maintenance shop, and volunteer housing. In this time, FERNC has turned the center and the land around it into a beloved and familiar place for locals and a destination for visitors from around the world.



ii. Supporting Missions and Visions of DPOR and FERNC

This Master Interpretive Plan (MIP) supports the missions and visions of DPOR, the land manager, and FERNC, the managing agency.

DPOR

Mission

DPOR provides outdoor recreation opportunities and conserves and interprets natural, cultural, and historic resources for the use, enjoyment, and welfare of the people.

Vision

DPOR envisions an affordable and accessible system of parks that provide diverse, safe, year-round, high-quality, family-orientated, outdoor recreation experiences; statewide programs that enhance the enjoyment and stewardship of the state's outdoor recreation, natural, historic, and cultural resources; and a dedicated, professional staff that fully meets the needs of the public.

FERNC

Mission

FERNC's mission is to further the educational and interpretive opportunities available to park visitors; promote the preservation, protection, and enhancement of the historical, natural, and recreational resources within CSP; provide for the daily operation of the nature center; assist in implementing park improvements; enhance safety awareness; and promote educational programs compatible with the mission of the ERNC.

Vision

Provide connections to nature through education, resource protection, and outdoor opportunities.



iii. MIP Purpose and Parameters

Interpretation is a purposeful approach to communication that facilitates meaningful, relevant, and inclusive experiences that deepen understanding, broaden perspectives, and inspire visitors to engage with the natural, cultural, and historic resources in the world around them.

Interpretation happens at many levels at the nature center. **This plan focuses solely on the outdoor visitor experience.**

Existing interpretation on the trail system around the nature center was installed over decades. While the signs and other material are thematically consistent (all discuss aspects of natural history), many are faded, and their varied art styles are sometimes recognizable as having been popular decades ago.

New interpretive materials should:

- provide unguided visitors with a coherent and engaging experience; and
- support naturalists who lead guided walks.

The plan is designed to be implemented over a ten-year period. A cohesive look and feel across each phase of new signage will help bridge the years, fostering a consistent experience while building the ERNC's identity.

The ERNC planning team, currently the ERNC's director and chief naturalist, are tasked with implementing the MIP.

The ERNC MIP:

- Identifies the needs and demographics of current and potential visitors in order to foster plan relevance and adaptability. This plan is designed to be flexible so it can accommodate changing demographics.
- Identifies updates needed to orientation and wayfinding signage around the facility and at trailheads and along the trails.
- Identifies themes for interpretive signage around the nature center grounds that support the



center's programs and its independent visitors.

- Establishes what amount of signage is appropriate along the Rodak Nature Trail, Albert Loop Trail, Dew Mound Trail, and Crow Pass Trail.
- Recommends a phased approach to upgrades, prioritizing signage, projects, and improvements.
- Provides a formal document to use as a basis for seeking funds to revamp the center's aging signage.

iv. MIP Planning Process, Mission, Goals, and Objectives

Planning Process

Work on this plan began in the Fall of 2024 with an initial site visit. The planning team was made up of both DPOR's Interpretation and Education Unit (I&E) staff members (the unit manager, natural resource specialist, and Alaska Conservation Corps employee) and ERNC staff (director and chief naturalist). A signage inventory was created by DPOR staff while ERNC staff began taking resource inventories; resources are discussed in Chapter 2. The signage inventory is in Appendix B.

From the winter of 2024 to the spring of 2025, I&E and the ERNC planning team developed the first draft of the plan. The goals, objectives, and recommendations in this plan represent a consensus of those involved in the planning process.

In the summer of 2025, the planning team reviewed the draft.

The winter of 2025 was targeted for FERNC to work to adopt the plan through its board.

The planning foundation—purpose, goals, objectives, themes, standards—will remain constant over the life of the plan. The plan, however, is meant to be a flexible guide for developing outdoor signage and interpretation. Specific recommendations may need to be updated as staffing, funding, or resource conditions change. The plan should be revisited annually, updated after five years, and reviewed and updated again at ten years. Reviews ensure that new technologies can be incorporated and implementation plans remain achievable while also continuing to meet visitors' expectations



and interests.

Mission

Establish a long-range vision for enhancing the visitor experience by providing educational opportunities through the improvement, development, and maintenance of orientation, safety, and interpretive media while maintaining the intrinsic value of the park and supporting ERNC's current and future programs.

Goals and Objectives

The overarching goal for this MIP is to develop ERNC orientation, safety, and interpretive media to support memorable experiences that deepen the connection between people and the natural world.

The goals for ERNC **orientation, safety, and interpretive media** are that they will:

- give visitors clear wayfinding information,
- foster a deep appreciation for the natural world,
- share Dena'ina people's connection with Eagle River valley,
- emphasize the importance of preserving Alaska's unique ecosystems,
- create opportunities for visitors to engage with the park's past, present, and future,
- share basic safety information with visitors to empower them to recreate safely.

Stewardship is a central theme running through all materials, either directly or indirectly.

Signage will be clear, accessible, and engaging.

Signage goals and objectives will be SMART:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Relevant



Photo courtesy of Lauren Wells

- Timely

Goal 1: Provide clear, accessible wayfinding and interpretive signage that orients visitors and engages them in the natural world around them throughout the year.

1a) Structures and signage welcome and orient visitors to CSP, the nature center, the Crow Pass/Iditarod Trail, and within the nature center's trail system.

Objective A: Visitors will first encounter signage that makes clear they are in CSP.

Objective B: Visitors will next encounter signage that makes clear they have arrived at the ERNC.

Objective C: Visitors will next encounter signage that explains they have arrived at an access point to Crow Pass and the INHT.

Objective D: Wayfinding signage will clearly direct arriving visitors towards the upper trailhead to the south side (right) of the center.

Objective E: There will be wayfinding signage at each trail intersection and safety locator markers.

Objective F: Media will be visible all year, not seasonally obscured by brush or snow.

Objective G: Media designs will be accessible per industry best standards: they will be adjusted for color-blindness visibility; they will display Trail Access Information when possible (see Chapter 4.iii.); and they will be written to a sixth grade reading level.



1b) Interpretive materials will pique visitors' imaginations using stories of the interactions between flora and fauna in the ecosystem around them, helping them understand the valley's natural history.

Objective H: Visitors understand the significance behind visual signs of animals found around them, such as squirrel middens from the spruce cones they dissect for food, or the rubbed spots on a tree from a bear scratching itself.

Objective I: Visitors are aware of valley denizens that they rarely, or can't, see, such as bats, owls, fish, insects, and fungi, and have a sense of their place in the valley's ecosystem.

1c) Visitors gain an understanding of the geology and hydrology of the Eagle River valley.

Objective J: Visitors can identify a glacial erratic and relate how it got to where it did.

Objective K: Visitors can identify signs of glaciation that formed the valley, including a remaining hanging glacier.

Objective L: Materials share the special hydrology of Eagle River: e.g., the warm spring and benefits of this spring to the river system.

1d) Visitors understand they impact the natural environment and learn ways they can protect it by minimizing their impact.

Objective M: Signage promotes responsible outdoor practices. Visitors will see at least three Leave No Trace or other stewardship messages by the time they depart any trailhead.

- Stewardship message examples:
 - Bear safety
 - Moose safety
 - Pet etiquette; leashing dogs and picking up after pets
 - Boot brushes; minimizing the spread of invasive plants
 - Backcountry travel safety

Objective N: Most messages will be framed in a positive way, "Do this because it helps protect



Photo courtesy of Kristina Smolenski

flora/fauna,” rather than, “Don’t do X, Y, or Z because it’s illegal/against the rules/will incur a fine.”

Objective O: Visitors can give at least one reason why a policy is in place, for example, why it is important for dogs to be leashed (active bird nesting, safety in bear country, safety of dogs around moose, etc.)

Objective P: Stewardship support materials include dog poop stations and boot brush stations at trailheads.

Goal 2: Visitors will have a sense of Dena’ina language, history, and presence in the area.

No information regarding Dena’ina people, language, culture, etc. will be shared without contacting culture bearers, and language experts with the Eklutna Tribe. Additionally, more archeological surveys are needed of the area to discover how the Dena’ina and earlier cultures used this area. Implementing and interpreting cultural information may mean patiently seeking to build a relationship concerning overall education around the nature center and how subject matter experts and culture bearers might like to be involved. This plan acknowledges culture bearers may prefer not to be involved and instead point the center to respected sources such as Shem Pete’s Alaska, The Territory of the Upper Cook Inlet Dena’ina.

Objective A: Indigenous place names have been recognized in other parts of CSP and a goal could be to include placenames in messaging or on signage.

Objective B: Signage will share stories of the Dena’ina and their relationship to the land and wildlife.

Objective C: Interpretive materials will include Dena’ina names for places, flora, fauna, expressions, etc. when known/available.

Objective D: Interpretive materials will include information about the historical, traditional,



and present-day use and significance of the area to the Dena'ina people.

Goal 3: Visitors will have a window into the more recent history of the valley and Crow Pass before the park was established.

Objective A: Signage could include mining history in the valley.

Objective B: Interpretive materials will share how Crow Pass became part of the INHT, and that one use of the trail was as a mail route.

Objective C: Interpretive materials can share the history of the nature center building as a homestead and its relationship with CSP.

Goal 4: Formalize and enrich the relationship between DPOR and FERNC by developing this interpretive plan as a publicly available model of a DPOR-nonprofit relationship for the potential benefit of other Alaska nonprofits.

Objective A: Obtain approval of this MIP from the FERNC board (see Appendix A).

Objective B: Have the CSP Regional Management review and approve the MIP.

Objective B: Post this MIP online for other nonprofits who may be interested in learning more about the model of interpretive cooperation between the ERNC and DPOR.





CH 2: OVERVIEW OF RESOURCES

The ERNC is a remarkable destination! As the gateway to CSP, it provides both locals and visitors with access to one of the most diverse and scenic landscapes in the region.

The center's location, nestled between the towering Chugach Mountains and the boreal forests of the Eagle River Valley, is perfect for those who wish to experience the raw, unspoiled nature of Alaska. From the stunning views of the Chugach Range to the salmon viewing deck to the thrilling opportunity of spotting wildlife like brown bears fishing for spawning salmon, the Eagle River Valley provides an unforgettable experience.

Whether someone is hiking, wildlife watching, or learning about the area's natural history, it's a must-visit for anyone looking to explore the wilderness of Alaska in an educational and accessible setting. The educational programs and interpretive exhibits at the center help visitors gain a deeper understanding of the natural and cultural history of the region, enhancing the overall experience.

i. Natural Resources

Geology: The ERNC sits in a glacially formed valley. Visitors have an opportunity to observe several glacial features and evidence of the geologic timescale from various places along more than 12 miles of trails south of the center. If visitors were to travel many miles down the Crow Pass Trail and into the rugged terrain of surrounding mountains, they could even visit the Eklutna Ice field.

Wetlands and Hydrology: ERNC trails provide access to wetlands, rivers, and riparian ecosystems. Beaver activity in the area has a unique impact on the water flow and hydrology of the surrounding valley. Warm upwelling from springs also keeps some waterways in the area open year-round, making it a rich waterway no matter the season.

Fauna: Eagle River Valley supports a wide variety of native wildlife, from mega-fauna like bears to micro-fauna like invertebrates (see Appendix E).

- **Mammals:** ERNC is well known among locals, tourists, outdoor recreationists and photographers alike as a wildlife viewing hotspot. Brown bears, black bears, moose, Dall sheep, lynx, and wolf are just a few of these charismatic big game



Photo courtesy of Jessi Goldman

animals. Smaller mammals such as red squirrels, river otters, beavers, bats, ermine, snowshoe hares, and porcupines can be seen as well. ERNC prioritizes wildlife safety in interpretation and visitor education. Recent activity on and around the Rodak Trail by beavers has created a fantastic opportunity for visitor education around keystone species, ecosystem changes, wildlife management, and human interactions.

- **Birds:** Upwards of 70 avian species can be spotted at ERNC during breeding seasons, on migratory routes, or year-round. Most notably, the American dipper, or water ouzel (*Cinclus mexicanus*), is commonly seen to the excitement of many birders. ERNC supports citizen science efforts around birds. This includes observing nesting boxes for swallows and owls, supporting the annual Christmas Bird Count, and supporting partnerships with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, and Audubon Alaska.
- **Amphibians:** The most northerly amphibians is found in wetland environments around ERNC. Visitors can hear the wood frogs (*Rana sylvaticus*) in the spring as they emerge from hibernation.
- **Fish:** Visitors to ERNC have a unique opportunity to observe the life cycle of salmon from start to finish. Under the salmon viewing deck runs a spring-fed creek. In the spring and early summer, alevin emerge from the stream bed and are often seen in the fry stage from the deck. In the late summer and fall, salmon return from the ocean to their natal stream bed to complete their lifecycle. While all five species of Pacific salmon have been reported, visitors are most likely to see sockeye and coho.
- **Invertebrates/Insects:** Numerous butterflies and moths grace CSP, as well as bees, hornets, lady beetles, hummingbirds, clearwing moths, birch shield bugs, white-spotted sawyers, a few types of ants, and other insects.

Flora: Eagle River Valley supports a wide variety of native flora. On the center's trail system, visitors pass through many ecosystems ranging from boreal forest to wetland to subalpine meadow. Current interpretation aims to provide visitors with basic identification skills for common plants found around the center. New signage could be enhanced to identify patterns found in nature in the variety of native plants. Visitors looking to deepen their knowledge of native flora can participate in a program or workshop.



Collection/Subsistence: Berry and mushroom foraging is available on designated trails. Foraging is not permitted on the Rodak or Albert Loop trails or around the main building, both areas covered by this interpretive plan.

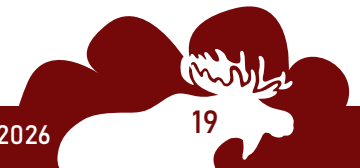
Gardens:

- **Pollinator:** The pollinator garden features varieties of mostly native plants important to native pollinators of Alaska. It highlights the importance of pollinator relationships and identifies pollinators native to Alaska.
- **Other Gardens:** Around the main building, native plants are labelled with common, Dena'ina, and scientific names.

ii. Inside ERNC

As this document plans for interpretation outside the center, it will not focus on changes or recommendations to the interpretive programming run by ERNC's naturalists. This section acknowledges and illustrates center offerings besides the static interpretation and signage around the center and along the trails that educate and guide visitors.

- **Docents at front desk:** Visitors are greeted at the main desk by staff or trained docents. They answer questions, provide trail information pertinent to the ERNC and CSP, and sell memberships and other store items.
- **Store:** At the center's small souvenir and snack store, people can buy cards and postcards with beautiful photos of the area and wildlife around the center. Drinks, locally made products, guidebooks, maps, and other items pertinent to our area are also on sale.
- **Naturalists on Deck:** Depending on the schedule, visitors might encounter docents, volunteers, or staff members out on the trails who can respond to questions. They may also join a program or discussion.



- **Interpretive materials:** The nature center houses permanent and rotating educational displays. Many displays are original to the center when it was built in the 1980's under Alaska State Park management. Most displays are hand-made.
- **Educational programming:** Programs are available year-round, both indoors and on the trails. The main building is the base for all our naturalist-led programming.
- **Close-up corner:** A place for visitors to see and touch furs, bones, rocks, fossils, and other miscellaneous specimens related to the area.
- **Little explorer's corner:** This space is for pre-K to early elementary visitors to sit, read, and create. Seasonally appropriate children's books, coloring pages, and toys are available.



iii. Immediate Exterior around ERNC

Front of Building: Located out front of the nature center, there is a fee station, maps, a trail-conditions board, a kiosk with notices about events and other information, a water fountain, bear proof trash bins, outdoor latrines, and a public coin-operated pay phone that can still be used for local calls.



Back of Building:

- **Back Deck:** This deck is an ADA-accessible area that can be explored on foot or by wheelchair. It also serves as an area used for programs and classes.
- **Interpretive Materials:** A sculptural rendering of Eagle River stretches across the entire wall sheltering one end of the deck. It is enhanced with small flora and fauna ID panels.
- **Picnic Tables:** Tables are available for lunch or as a teaching space.
- **Trailhead Kiosk:** A kiosk shares trail, bear safety, and other information. There is also a dog-poo bag dispenser.



iv. Outdoor Recreation

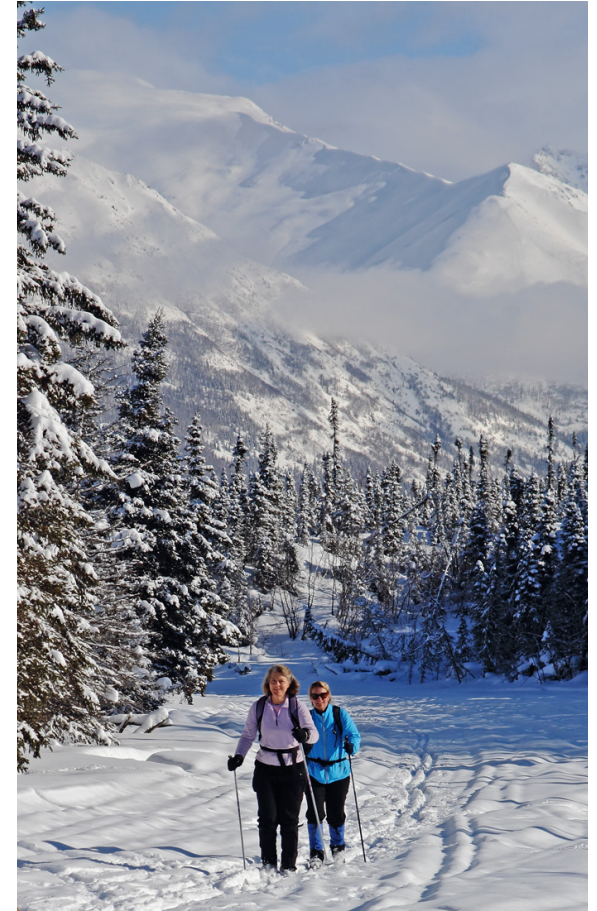
FERNC manages nearly 12 miles of trails that support a wide range of activities. This includes access to Crow Pass Trail, a segment of the INHT. CSP and the United States Forest Service (USFS) are the primary managers for Crow Pass Trail; ERNC maintains the first three miles of the northern end. The center also has educational videos and courses about traversing Eagle River and Crow Pass.

- **Day-use:** The two-mile Rodak Nature Trail and three-mile Albert Loop are commonly used by day visitors.

The Rodak Nature Trail features two viewing decks.

The Albert Loop, which runs along Eagle River, closes from late July to early November due to bear activity around the fall salmon run.

- **Shelter-building Area:** This is an area for visitors to explore, build, and interact with the land in a more hands-on way than is encouraged on other parts of the trail. This area is used primarily for guided visits.
- **Photography:** Photography (and even videography) is a popular, and often serious, hobby or business of many of our guests and visitors. More signage is needed about stewardship, safety, and regulations. Often, photographers get too close to nesting birds or bears. Additionally, wedding announcement/baby shower photographers often use confetti cannons that leave litter behind after photoshoots.
- **Biking:** Biking is not allowed on ERNC trails. There is just one exception for fat-tire biking which is only allowed seasonally (November 15 through March 31) and only on the lower Albert Loop to access the Eagle River corridor.



- **Walking, Hiking, Trail Running:** In addition to health benefits, hikers benefit from orientation and wayfinding signage, wildlife safety information, and interpretive displays, with boot brushes and messaging on Leave No Trace and dog-walking stewardship planned for the future.
- **Wildlife Viewing:** Salmon and beaver viewing decks are available on the Rodak Trail; there are views of Eagle River on the Albert Loop and Crow Pass Trail; there are valley views from up on Dew Mound; and almost anywhere you turn, wildlife viewing and photography can happen from any trail including viewing the opposite slope using scopes. See the Fauna subsection of Natural Resources, above, for a description of wildlife that might be spotted from the center or its trail system.
- **Rock Climbing/Ice Climbing/Alpinism:** ERNC does not maintain any rock-climbing routes or trails to climbing areas. Climbers create social trails to Dew Mound for rock climbing, and to ice climbs further out on Crow Pass Trail. ERNC also does not maintain any trails to alpine climbs; again, people traversing Crow Pass or going into the backcountry of CSP make their own way.
- **Kick Sledding:** Kick sledding is permitted on ERNC trails. When conditions allow, kick sledding can be a wonderful way to get around the trails or to haul your gear out to a PUC or yurt.
- **Skiing/Snowshoeing:** ERNC only grooms for skiing when the snowpack allows, and only on limited trails. Many visitors ski or snowshoe on their own around ERNC.
- **Dog Mushing:** While dog sledding is permitted on ERNC trails, we don't often see many recreators taking part. Be aware that ERNC trails are multi-use trails and are highly trafficked by large groups, young families, and visitors with dogs that should (but might not be) on a leash.
- **Backcountry Camping:** ERNC maintains the Group Tent Site at Rapids Camp (reservation only) and two sites at Echo Bend (first come/first serve basis). Otherwise, backcountry/leave-no-trace camping is allowed anywhere at Echo Bend and beyond.



v. Recreating on Eagle River

- **Packrafting/Kayaking:** The river is popular with paddlers. It may be helpful to develop signage that shares basic boating safety information and maps rapids and calmer sections of the river.
- **Fishing:** It is best to consult ADF&G on updated fishing regulations and closures. Fishing is allowed the whole length of the river, however there are closures on salmon fishing during certain times of the year.

vi. PUC and Yurt Rentals

Two backcountry public-use cabins and three yurts are available year-round for public rental, offering an option for those who want to extend their stay and immerse themselves further in nature.

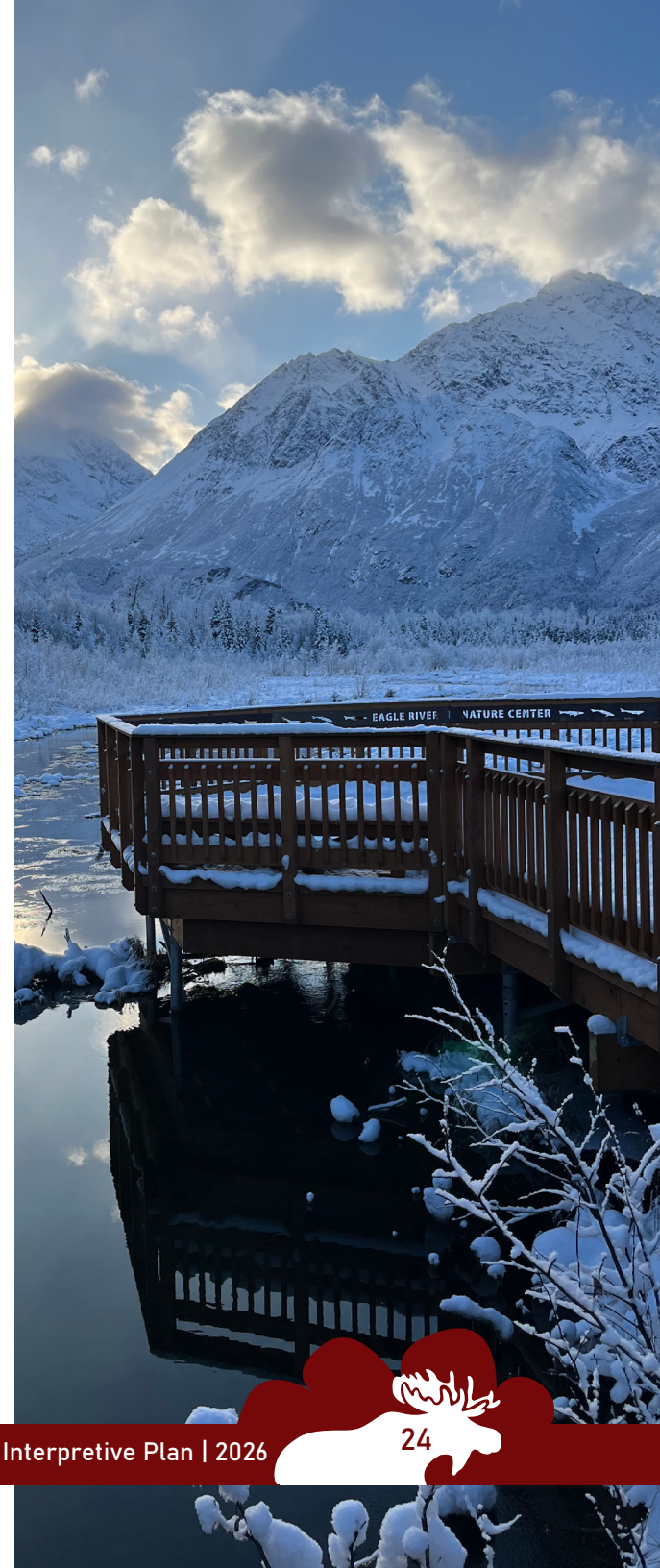
- **Paradise Haven Cabin:** This cabin sleeps a maximum of eight people and is one and a half miles from the Nature Center Trailhead.
- **Korhohusk Cabin:** The cabin sleeps a maximum of six people and is about three miles from the Nature Center Trailhead.
- **River Trail Yurt:** This yurt sleeps a maximum of four and is one and a half miles from the Nature Center Trailhead.
- **Rapids Camp Yurt:** This yurt sleeps a maximum of six and is just under two miles from the Nature Center Trailhead.
- **Yukla Yurt:** This yurt sleeps a maximum of six and is two miles from the Nature Center Trailhead.



vii. Public-Use Event Rental Spaces

FERNC offers a few locations for special event rentals and research activities.

- **Salmon Viewing Deck:** The salmon viewing deck provides an iconic space for educational programs, weddings, small ceremonies, and photos.
- **Classroom Yurt:** A 30-foot diameter yurt, about a tenth of a mile from the nature center, is used for FERNC's educational programs and is often rented for private meetings, parties, etc.
- **Research:** ERNC supports citizen science and research projects such as owl and swallow nesting boxes, annual bird counts, songbird surveys, student research projects, and DOT trail transportation surveys, etc. Visitors can learn about current outdoor research efforts through lectures offered year round.





CH 3: VISITOR EXPERIENCE

i. Visitor Demographics

The ERNC has limited data on visitor demographics because neither they nor DPOR conduct comprehensive visitor surveys and counts. In part, this is due to low staffing levels and the park being open and available for users outside ERNC operational hours. ERNC does have some concrete data about resource usage and anecdotal insights. These include:

- parking lot fees paid,
- PUC and yurt revenue and volume,
- attendee counts from programs, including nature walks and events in the nature center, and
- general staff observation and feedback.

From this, ERNC has several years of data about seasonal usage highs and lows, and the observation that the largest visitor demographic generally matches the population in the surrounding Eagle River community. Another important group, however, is the many visitors from schools in the greater Anchorage and Matanuska-Susitna areas that ERNC serves; the schools in the Anchorage School District especially are highly diverse. Still, more detailed visitor demographic information would be valuable for interpretive planning, so ERNC may wish to explore ways to develop a richer data set.

Although there is a significant gap in the center's user information without official visitor surveys and visitor counts, the basic visitor information available creates a foundation for interpretive planning.

In any case, interpretive goals prioritize inclusivity and creating learning opportunities for a wide array of visitors.

Visitors generally fall within four categories:

- Naturalist-guided groups (some public and private school groups, private organizations)
- Self-guided groups (military, other school groups, summer camps, etc.)
- Individual visitors (families, tourists, recreators, facility renters, etc.)
- Individuals or groups with commercial permits for hiking/birding/photography



They can also be sorted by the type of interaction they seek. For example, are they interested in personal interaction with docents or naturalists? Or, are they simply interested in engaging with the natural environment and displays on their own?

Proposed signage has been developed with all these categories in mind.

ii. Visitor Flow

The infrastructure that informs visitor flow at ERNC could be more robust. While returning visitors might understand the preferred visitor flow, new visitors are often confused and unsure of what to do and where to go.

Special care should be given to visitor flow at the upper parking lot. There should be no question, from a visitor's perspective, what they need to do regarding paying for parking, and then where they need to go to get to trails behind the center. Visitors should be guided away from using the private road on the north side of the center.

Similarly, visitors to the overflow lower parking lot should not have to climb back to the upper parking lot or go to the back end of the parking lot to pay for parking. Easing this process will help with compliance and make it easier for guests with less mobility.



Case Study Example: More Older Visitors on the Horizon

While Alaska in 2024 had the fewest seniors in the country, and one of the lowest percentages of seniors in its population, the state's older population is growing fast. Between 2012 and 2022 the percentage change in the 49th state's senior population was the highest in the nation at 68.8 percent.

As for out-of-state visitors, the number of Americans ages 65 and older is projected to increase from 58 million in 2022 to 82 million by 2050 (a 47 percent increase), and the 65-and-older age group's share of the total population is projected to rise to 23 percent from 17 percent. The US population is older today than it has ever been.

Planning for a greater number of older visitors simply makes sense.

Sources: Consumer Affairs, Population Reference Bureau

iii. Visitor Introduction and First Experiences

ERNC and its surrounding trails and access to the state park offers an abundance of all-season recreational, educational, and community opportunities. Visitors include teachers and students and program or special event participants, but overwhelmingly visitors are independent users seeking access to the trails and CSP. Either way, these visitors and groups require gathering spaces and amenities.

Independent visitors can use the trails while adhering to park etiquette standards. They most likely make up the majority of ERNC area visitors (and add up to 40 percent of the annual revenue through parking fees).

All visitors should be well oriented and wildlife aware—realizing both where they are going and that they are entering bear country...and moose, coyote, wolf, wolverine, beaver, etc. country!

Hikers and walkers should be encouraged to remain on the main trails and practice stewardship of the resource. Dog walkers should be prepared to pick up after their pets and remain compliant with on-leash requirements, especially in active wildlife and nesting areas. Skiers visiting will be aware that the trails are not groomed specifically for skiing and are multi-use.



Photo courtesy of Colin Tyler Photography

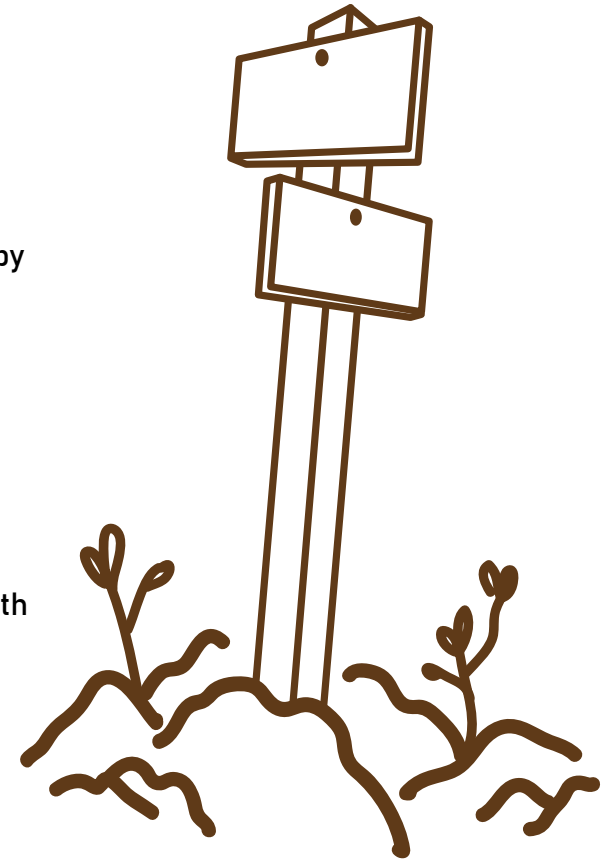


iv. Visitor Amenities

Trash receptacles that are accessible and regularly maintained can prevent littering. Bear-resistant receptacles are recommended in additional locations if picnic tables are installed. This can minimize improper handling of food and trash that can create management issues by attracting bears and habituating them to find food.

One or more one-stop **“doggie bag” stations** would aid in responsible pet and park care and encourage stewardship of dog walkers. To give the “why,” pet signage can explain that dog poop, beyond unpleasant odors and visual pollution, can spread health hazards like harmful bacteria to wildlife, and into Eagle River and the larger watershed. Leash laws and pet responsibility/safety information would be centralized at this station.

To address and manage invasive plant species, **boot brush stations** are recommended at both main trailheads. They could serve as effective mitigation and as an educational opportunity, via signage or in-person with naturalists.





CH 4: ACCESSIBILITY

To state the obvious, not all park visitors have the same levels of mobility and vision. To best serve a wide range of visitors, this interpretive plan can align signage with national best practices for accessibility. Even if few visitors experience a constraint, intentional design with all parties in mind leads to an elevated experience for all visitors.

Accessibility considerations will gain greater weight in coming years as our local, state, and national populations skew older.

i. Mobility

Visitors may find uneven terrain and hills difficult for a variety of reasons including life stage (toddlers, women in late pregnancy, elders), injuries, health conditions, the use of assistive technology (crutches, prosthetics, wheelchairs), and more. Add these groups together, and they comprise a significant portion of total visitors.

For example, most trailheads have orientation and safety information included so people can assess just how far they can go as a group. Without complete and wholistic information, a group including a visitor with a wheelchair might head out to the Salmon Viewing Deck, not realizing that the incline for the return is steeper than they expected without many places to stop and rest. This could affect the user's experience, and that of their whole group.



Photo courtesy of Colin Tyler Photography

ii. Vision

Visitors also experience a range of visibility constraints when it comes to signage. Color blindness, or color vision deficiency, may inhibit a guest's ability to discern important features on orientation maps. Color blindness affects roughly eight percent of the population.

Some visitors with visual impairments may be able to discern text or images when there is high contrast signage and larger font sizes. Use of tactile signage or braille can enhance the experience for visitors with blindness and partial blindness. Although the blind and visually impaired comprise under one percent of the population, tactile signage can also enhance the experience for the sighted as well, including children and people who are neurodiverse.

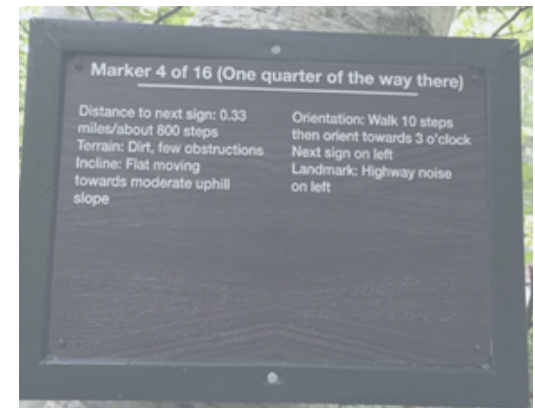
Such signage directly benefits visitors with limited visibility; it also enhances the experience of those traveling with them. For example, in a class of 30 students, roughly two will experience some sort of color blindness. By having signage that those two students can see too, the entire class's experience, including teachers, naturalists, and/or chaperones, is not diminished. See Appendix D for details.

For those who experience visual impairment, accommodations can be life-expanding.

Upper photo: Bill Irwin was the first blind person to hike the Appalachian Trail (AT) alone but for a guide dog.

Lower photo: A sign with high-contrast text and braille designed for hikers with visual impairment by Team FarSight, a nonprofit "empowering the blind and visually impaired to take the path less traveled." Trevor Thomas, the first blind person to through-hike the AT, founded the organization to "inspire the blind and visually impaired to step outside their comfort zones through backcountry experiences to promote greater self-reliance and independence in everyday life."

The nonprofit offers hiking workshops to blind and visually impaired people of all ages. "Out here I feel normal," Thomas told *The Denver Post* in 2016 about trekking the trail. "Out here I'm just like everyone else. Nature is the great equalizer. It treats us all the same."



iii. Trail Access Information

A national standard for trailhead signage, part of the Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) Accessibility Standards, has been developed to provide visitors with the information they need to decide whether they have the ability, or the desire, to walk a particular trail.

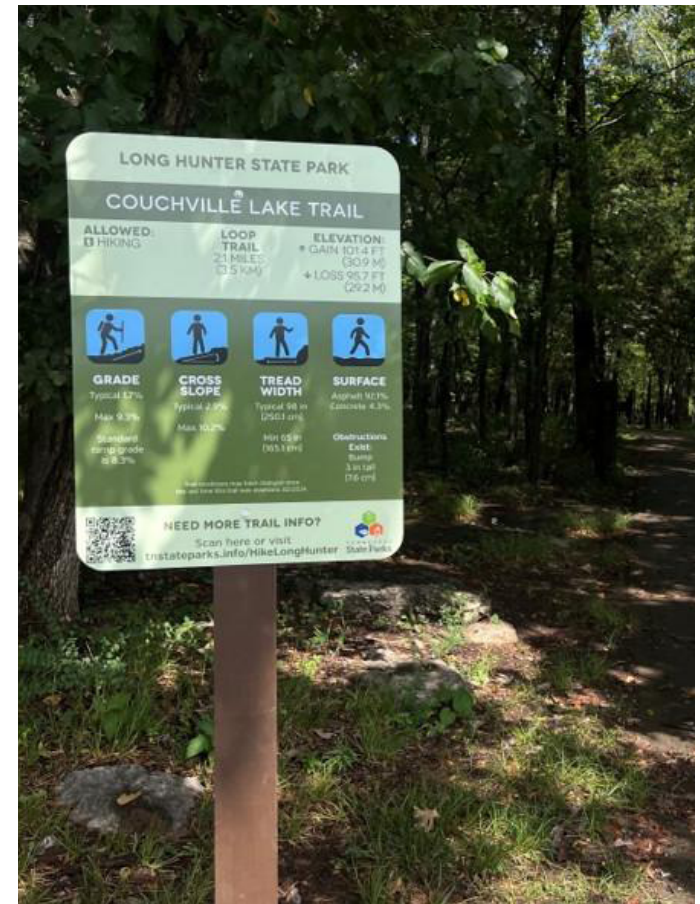
Known as Trail Access Information (TAI) signs, the information categories they share are:

- Length
- Grade (steepness; typical and maximum)
- Cross slope (slant to the side; typical and maximum)
- Width (typical and minimum)
- Surface (how uneven, how compact)

A DPOR employee recalls visiting ERNC when using a wheelchair while recovering from an illness. He looked online and saw the trail to the salmon viewing deck was rated “accessible.” He was able to make his way down, but the grade was such that on the return that he repeatedly had to rest. The trip back to the center took an hour and a half.

He is an emphatic champion of TAI signage with it he would’ve had the information he needed to make an informed decision.

Several states are adopting or have adopted this methodology, including California, Nevada, and Tennessee.



This is an example of signage in Tennessee that shows the TAI categories, including the date of assessment and the caveat that conditions may have changed since then. Tennessee State Parks also shares the information online:

<https://tnstateparks.com/accessibility/trail-info>

View Park Trails

Boardwalk Loop Trail

Trail Snapshot

- Trail Length: 0.1 mi (0.2 km)
- Trail Type: Loop
- Activities Allowed: Hiking
- Trail Surface:
 - 89.3% Wood decking
 - 10.7% Soil
- Elevation:
 - Gain: 2.0 ft (0.62 m)
 - Loss: 5.9 ft (1.78 m)
- Grade:
 - Average: 1.1%
 - Maximum: 13.0%
- Standard Ramp Grade: 8.3%
- Cross Slope:
 - Average: 1.2%
 - Maximum: 4.0%
- Tread Width:
 - Average: 47 in (120.4 cm)
 - Minimum: 44 in (111.8 cm)
- Obstructions:
 - Staircase - Height: 7 in (17.8 cm); No remaining tread
 - Step - Height: 3 in (7.6 cm); No remaining tread
 - Step - Height: 3 in (7.6 cm); No remaining tread

Warning: Trail conditions may have changed since 03/2024 when this trail was assessed. Maximum grades and cross slopes may vary. Obstructions less than 2 in (5.1 cm) or outside of the tread area 48 in (121.9 cm) wide by 80 in (203.2 cm) high were not reported. Minimum clearance width boundaries were at least 6 in (15.2 cm) high.

Other examples of TAI information can be highly detailed, like in this example, or more simplified

Connector Trail Outer Loop to Earthworks & Nature Trail





CH 5: RECOMMANDATIONS

This plan covers all signage involved in meeting visitors' needs: welcoming, orientation, wayfinding, safety, informational, and interpretive.

i. Existing Signage and Interpretation

The existing signage at this site has been inventoried in Appendix B and includes all types of signage: Welcoming, Orientation, Directory, Informational, and Interpretive.

An evaluation of existing signage finds a few primary issues: there is a mix of art and informational styles from different timeframes over the years; some are notably weathered; and some refer to landscape features (e.g. a view, or a beaver dam) that are no longer visible, making them less relevant for the visitor.

ii. Recommendations

MIP recommendations for development at the ERNC should be realistic, achievable, and budget-friendly while showcasing the uniqueness of the site. Visitors from outside of Eagle River should see a well-cared-for site that reflects the time, effort, and money that the community has put forth. New interpretation should enhance the visitors' experience, providing opportunities for visitors to connect intellectually and emotionally to the resource. They should not obstruct views or overpower the site.

New interpretation should meet current standards and best practices in the professional field of interpretation. Kiosks and signage should align with both Alaska State Park standards and the aesthetic of the nature center, giving the site a cohesive look which indicates careful planning and stewardship. Design recommendations and recommendations on cohesive signage are covered in Appendix F.

Recommendations will work best once completed as a whole. Until then, there will be gaps in and visitors' expectations may not be fully met. Recommendations are not listed in order of implementation importance. Phases can be undertaken as funding becomes available through fundraising, grants, or cost-sharing with agency partners.

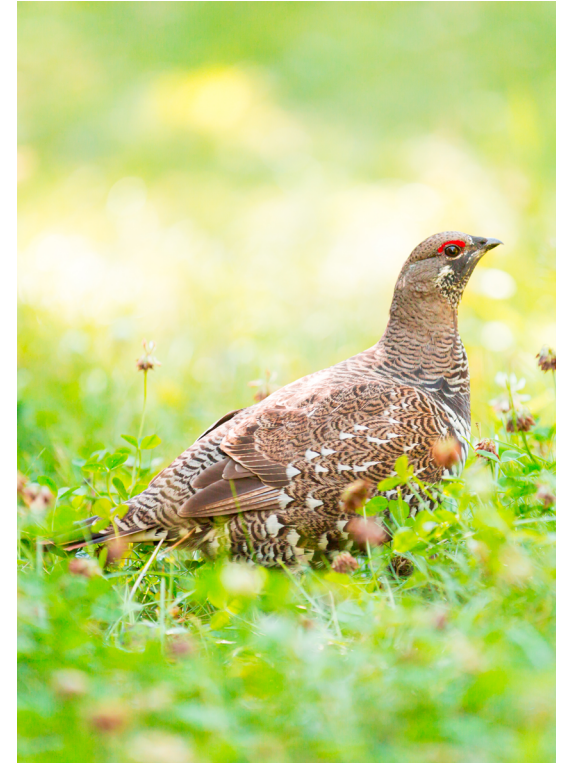


Photo courtesy of Stephanie Lentfer

For safety, this plan encourages FERNC to consider assigning mile marker and/or emergency locator numbers to wayfinding posts. These could potentially be helpful in health and safety emergencies, in acknowledgment of the risks inherent in recreating outdoors.

Safety signage will be especially important given that not all visitors understand that they are truly in a wilderness area, regardless of the presence of the nature center and other buildings, the presence of other people, and the wide, well-maintained appearance of the trails. The buildings, people, and clear, wide trails can create a false sense of security.

Recommendations are grouped by locational zones:

Zone 1: Encompasses a visitor's arrival on site and their experience before leaving their vehicle.

Zone 2: Includes the parking lots and the area within 100-200 feet of each parking lot. This includes parking lot flow and structures, trailheads, and the exterior of the nature center.

Zone 3: Is the area within a mile of the parking lot, including shorter trail systems and viewpoints. Primarily, this refers to the Rodak Trail and the Crow Pass Trail segment from the parking lot to the "Four Corners Cutoff" (the junction of the Crow Pass Trail with the Rodak and Dew Mound trails).

Zone 4: Contains the trail systems, viewpoints and amenities beyond Zone 3. This could include the Albert Loop, Bypass Trail, Crow Pass/Iditarod trails, and Dew Mound Trail. Staff members recommend that areas more than a mile in distance from the nature center not be given an interpretive program although signage may still be required for some areas. This preserves the wilderness feeling found when hiking on the trails.



a. Zone 1: Welcoming Signage Improvements

Status: The current signage that is visible on the approach to ERNC, and once parked, is minimal; it is inadequate in terms of clearly and coherently establishing the center's identity and welcoming visitors.

The park entrance sign as visitors approach the facility is easy to overlook. Having the ERNC name and "Iditarod Trailhead" in the same size font waters down the site's identity.

At the time of writing this plan, the damaged concrete wall with the nature center name had been replaced and with a rock wall with a reflector fence to denote the end of the road. This new fence will hopefully minimize vehicles from running into the wall and creating damage.

There is no large, clear identification signage on the nature center itself. Strengthening welcoming and initial identification signage will immediately inform visitors they have arrived and create a sense of place unique to ERNC.

Four upgrades are recommended:

1. Updating the park entrance sign with a custom sign that is re-worded to welcome people to the nature center will better identify the arrival location and call attention to the nature center as access to CSP.



An example of a custom park entrance sign. More details in Appendix F, Design Guidelines.

2. Another important upgrade is to place a raised and lighted or reflective sign in the concrete island that can be seen year-round, regardless of snow volume. This will hopefully have the added benefit of reducing the risk of vehicle collisions as it would be visible from a greater distance. See examples from Kincaid Park or Northern Lights ABC School in Anchorage (photos at upper and center right).

3. Placing the nature center's name on the building itself is imperative, above the front entry and/or along the wall to the right under the eaves. A metal sign with cut-out letters, similar to the metal signage at the salmon viewing deck, could be backlit. A reflective background could be placed behind the cut-out letters to catch the eye. This would be a highly effective way to use limited electricity and the nature center's existing structure (photo lower right). The metal could be treated or painted or left raw like the signage at the salmon viewing deck. The sign could incorporate the FERNC logo.



Photo courtesy of Bear Tooth Theatrepub & Grill

b. Zone 2: Orientation Signage Improvements

Status: Adding additional guiding signage can ensure new visitors don't feel disoriented, and reassure more seasoned users in bad weather.

This section includes bulletin boards, trailhead improvements, and wayfinding signage. Clear orientation signage will improve visitor flow and steer guests in the directions that FERNC would like to encourage.

At the upper parking lot, new visitors may not be sure how to reach the trailhead. There is one trailhead icon sign with an arrow, but its location may be overlooked. As a result, some visitors end up walking along the private road that parallels the Rodak/Crow Pass trail before cutting over to the actual trail.

In the upper parking lot, it is easy to find the electronic fee payment station to pay for parking. In the lower parking lot, users pass the payment station and must return to it to pay. Also in the lower parking lot, there is an orientation kiosk at the trailhead with a map and room for a bulletin board on the back side. This signage is new and adequate.

Clarifying the location of some amenities, such as the restrooms, is needed.

Seven upgrades are recommended:

1. In the upper parking lot, this plan recommends creating a clear pathway between the lot and the upper trailhead to welcome visitors and steer people away from the back of the facility and the access road.

To catch visitors' attention and channel them to the right of the nature center, wayfinding signage with arrows can supplement other more artistic elements. These could include vertical structures such as an archway, and on the ground, etched tiles, flagstones, or insets in concrete such as animal tracks and human footprints. Perhaps tracks made from the same material as the sign could be placed on the side of the center, leading from the sign to the right and around the corner of the center; this would have the advantage of being visible year-round.



2. Another recommendation is placing an indigenous placename marker to the right side of the facility to acknowledge area's Dena'ina name. It will also act as a beacon of interest calling people to the right side of the facility.

3. Landscape design can enhance visitor flow around the right side of the nature center. Review the current landscape looking for barriers to visitor flow: Is there a tree exactly where you'd like people to walk? Solutions could be creating a welcoming, curved pathway around the tree or removing the tree.

4. Orientation kiosks that include maps are 'first stops' at all trailheads and are essential in meeting visitor expectations. Consider moving the large kiosk at the back of the Nature Center to a better location (a more defined 'trailhead') and renewing it with a large-scale map of the area plus a smaller bulletin board that can be updated by staff.

5. An additional Type-A interpretive kiosk for orientation at the upper trail is recommended to focus primarily on introduction of and historical information about the Crow Pass/ Iditarod trails.

6. In the lower parking lot, the Type-A kiosk at the beginning of the trailhead beyond the parking lot is in good condition, as is the orientation signage, but it needs to be reset to be at the same level as the trail. Currently the kiosk is set low, which creates a hazard for taller visitors, especially in winter when the snow is built up around the kiosk. The orientation panel itself is new. In addition to Rodak Trail orientation, the current orientation panel includes interpretive information about cottonwood trees as "grandmother tree" lies nearby.

Additionally, moving the older fee station (iron ranger) for lower parking lot users to the trailhead would provide a way to collect parking fees from visitors who don't want to walk back to the electronic fee station at the beginning of the parking lot. Many visitors don't carry cash, so upgrading it to an fee station would provide even more convenience for visitors who could then pay with cards or phones; it would also likely gather more fees.

7. The final recommendation for these areas would be to place boot brush stations at each trailhead to reduce the spread and introduction of invasive species which could be costly to manage or eradicate once introduced.



c. Zone 2: Informational Signage Improvements

Status: There is minimal signage in both the upper and lower parking areas other than the location of handicapped parking spaces. Any information painted on the parking lots' pavement is covered several months of the year, so placing simple signage at roughly eye-level will make information available year-round.

On arrival at a facility, brief informational signs can answer visitors' immediate questions and convey top-priority information the center would like to share, in the first few moments of their experience. Immediate questions include: When is the center open? Where should I park? What amenities are available? Where are they? Where am I? Where can I go? Information the FERNC would like to share right away could include messages such as, 'Dogs should be leashed.'

Other information can wait a few moments and be shared at the next step — likely simply on the other side of the center. Examples could be, What can I do here? What am I looking at? What do I need to know before I move on?

However, messaging effectiveness is diluted by “sign clutter.” By posting only the key messages needed at each stage of the visitor experience, signage will be most effective.

Informational messaging is often conveyed via icons and arrows on replicable aluminum signs.

Three upgrades are recommended:

8. Upper parking lot: Edit the parking lot signage to ensure that key questions are answered and basic information is provided, such as parking directions, fee information, visitor flow directions, etc. Any additional messaging should be placed in the bulletin board, reducing sign litter and consolidating important messaging.

9. Perform the same review for the lower parking lot although this area may have other questions, such as restroom access, parking fee information, etc.



10. The final recommendation is for new informational signage that complements the Zone 2 Orientation wayfinding signs. This would continue to encourage general visitor flow the correct way around the nature center toward the upper trailhead. This would include signage to discourage flow around the back left of the visitor center.

d. Zone 2: Interpretive Signage Improvements

Status: Interpretive signage around the nature center shows a mixture of styles, fabrication methods, and ages. Examples include handmade plant ID and pollinator signs; an older INHT sign; a large bulletin board and chalkboard that is rarely used; a beautiful but somewhat weathered sculptural artwork of Eagle River and smaller interpretive species panels that are rarely used around the art installation.

Recommendations for new interpretive signs were proposed to enhance ERNC interpretive programs, and their subjects and suggested locations are laid out in Appendix G. Incorporating design elements to be used in all new signage will help develop a cohesive identity for the nature center and are identified in Appendix F.

11. This recommendation will be to remove handmade interpretive materials and upgrade interpretive signage at the ERNC upper deck to enhance interpretive programs.

a. New/Additional interpretive enhancements discussed during working group site visits include, but are not limited to (see Appendix F):

- Replacing handmade garden/plant ID signage with professional plant ID markers (possibly including scientific name, Dena'ina name, and cultural, traditional, and modern uses).
- Replacing or updating the viewshed panel/peak ID panel that had been removed for people who do not wander beyond the nature center.
- Reworking the sculptural artwork of Eagle River to orient it in the proper direction and make repairs.
- Remove the Flora and Fauna panels, potentially replacing them with fewer, potentially tactile or accessible panels that interact with visitors and with programs.

“Less is More” Strategy: Reducing visual clutter ensures that essential information stands out. Cluttered, complex, or excessive signs are often ignored or cause confusion, reducing their impact.



e. Zone 3: Rodak Trail Signage Improvements

Status: There is a mix of signage and interpretation along this trail. Some signs are now over 25 years old and no longer meet National Association for Interpretation (NAI) standards or industry best practices. The interpretation at the beaver deck is over 10 years old, and the landscape has changed to the point that this signage is no longer relevant at its given location.

Interpretive signage at the salmon viewing deck is new as of 2024. The low-profile design fits well along the deck and meets visitor expectations. The Eagle River Nature Center signage on this deck, decorated with salmon cutouts, is now the most photographed image of the park. Continuing the design aesthetic of the interpretive panels and the metal signage where appropriate is an opportunity create a rich, cohesive feel across the site.

Updated interpretive materials on the Rodak Trail can be designed to support both independent travelers and center naturalists. This provides an opportunity to create new interpretive programming as well as signage that connects themes to the resource being experienced at each sign location.

Six upgrades are recommended:

1. As we know beaver activity will continue around the center, it is recommended that the beaver overlook interpretation receive an update. Lower profile signage can be used on the overlook itself, similar to the salmon viewing deck.
2. A second recommendation will be to remove the decades-old interpretive signs. New signage will have subjects that relate to what a visitor can experience at that specific location.
 - a. In addition to the beaver and bear recommendations specifically called out in this section, additional interpretive enhancements discussed during working group site visits include, but are not limited to (see Appendix G):
 - Updating the signage about glaciation, possibly in the same location the current glaciation sign is. However, it needs updated to be updated to specifically discuss glaciation in the Eagle River Valley.



Photo courtesy of Colin Tyler Photography



- Interpreting erratics and how they arrived in the valley at the site of an erratic.
- Discussing squirrels, middens, and their role in the ecosystem in ‘Squirrel Alley.’
- Creating new signage near the wetlands about bird migration, nesting, watching (raptors, dippers, swallows, etc.) and the importance of dogs on leash.
- Interpret the bear back-scratching post.
- Creating new bat houses and interpretation about bats.
- Replacing the two older signs with one or two new panels closer to the Dew Mound Trail junction, with subjects that fit the location.

b. Trailside signage should be low profile signs on a post or a railing (e.g. Type D or Type E—see Appendix F).

3. Due to the incline from the lower parking lot down to the viewing decks, it is important to have more resting spots along the incline. For example, at the junction of the Rodak and the side trail to Volunteer Staff Housing, or where the two older signs will be removed closer to the Dew Mount Trail junction.

4. Placing wayfinding signage at every junction along this trail will likely meet or exceed visitor expectations.

5. Also important to wayfinding is assigning mile marker and/or emergency locator numbers to each wayfinding post.

6. As a final recommendation, place bear safety information at the intersection with the Albert Loop near the Classroom Yurt trail (see also Albert Loop recommendation #1).



photo courtesy of Colin Tyler Photography



Photo courtesy of Daniel Belovarac

f. Zone 4: Albert Loop Trail Signage Improvements

Status: The brochure-led geology walk is no longer in use. Posts along this trail that once belonged to that interpretive walk still exist and should be removed. There is currently no bear-awareness signage at this trail although this trail is closed for several weeks each summer due to high bear activity in the area.

Although no new interpretive signage is recommended, both bear safety and wayfinding are the primary objectives for the recommendations made for this trail.

Additional recommendations for the segment of this trail that meets the Crow Pass Trail at the Four Corners Cutoff are noted later under Crow Pass/Iditarod trail improvements.

Four upgrades are recommended:

1. Bear safety interpretive signs at the intersection of the Albert Loop, Rodak, and Classroom Yurt trails, and where Albert Loop meets the Crow Pass Trail at Four Corners, are a high priority for ERNC staff. The loop trail is closed at these locations from late July through October when bears feed on salmon returning to spawn. Because interpretive signs are more effective than informational signs at engaging trail users, interpretation about the seasonal closure is more likely to minimize risk-taking, encourage positive visitor behavior, and reduce potential incidents.
2. Add signage at River Trail Yurt and snowmachine access about Eagle River flooding stages and limited snowmachine access, noting the Albert Loop is closed during certain times of the year.
3. Be sure wayfinding posts are placed at every intersection to address wayfinding while meeting visitor expectations. Additional information can be placed on these posts at yurt sites (e.g. “Do not approach without a reservation” signage).
4. Also important to wayfinding is assigning mile marker and emergency locator numbers to each wayfinding post.



Photo courtesy of Colin Tyler Photography



g. Zone 4: Crow Pass Trail and the INHT Signage Improvements

Status: This trail is very popular with backcountry visitors and people interested in the INHT. There is currently no interpretation along the Crow Pass Trail. There are only two, older INHT informational signs by the nature center and out near the Four Corners trail junction that should be recreated and relocated together along this trail.

There are newer wayfinding posts at key intersections, and these are important to maintain. Safety and wayfinding remain a priority for signage along this trail.

Although there are interpretive recommendations for the segment of this trail from the trailhead to the Four Corners Cutoff, interpretation should not extend beyond that trail junction to preserve the wilderness characteristic of the trail as much as possible.

Five upgrades are recommended:

5. Interpretive signage is recommended along this trail primarily in the early segment from the trailhead to the intersection with the southern end of the Rodak Trail and Dew Mound Trail. There are four benches along this trail segment and plenty of interesting features. Although these subjects are recommended, they remain to be refined in an interpretive activity to create the most meaning to area visitors, fulfill plan interpretive themes, and maximize use by ERNC during ongoing programming. Interpretive signs in this area will reach visitors coming from the Albert Loop as well as Crow Pass/Iditarod trail users. This meets visitors on their climb back to the nature center, giving them places to ponder and learn on their way.

a. Interpretive recommendations discussed during working group site visits include, but are not limited to (see Appendix G):

- An introductory Crow Pass/Iditarod sign is recommended at the Type A kiosk in Zone 2; interpretation on this segment of trail could go deeper into cultural use or history of the Eagle River Valley and Crow Pass.



Photo courtesy of USFS

- This trail has thriving meadows full of flowers, pollinators, and mushrooms that can be interpreted in numerous ways.
- There are potential culturally modified trees along this trail that warrant being studied.
- Older birch and cottonwood line the trail and draw interest. Both trees have significant roles in the habitat and have cultural and historical uses that can be interpreted.
- Plan authors do not recommend additional interpretive signage beyond this major cutoff, to preserve the wilderness quality along the trail

6. To support ERNC interpretive programs, this plan recommends placing an interactive or play feature along this trail for younger students or adding interactive interpretive signs at the play area. Stops along the feature could lead to new interpretive signage and keep young visitors active and engaged on the uphill climb/downhill run of this segment of trail. (e.g. ERNC staff recommend a ball run of sorts that could also be used to educate about running water).

7. As recommended across all trail junctions, add wayfinding posts at every cutoff/bypass, especially every remaining intersection to/from the Echo Bend Campsite. This will meet visitor expectations by helping them get where they want to go. Additional information can be placed on these posts at yurt sites (e.g. “Do not approach without a reservation” signage).

8. As noted, assigning mile markers and/or emergency locator numbers to each wayfinding post is also important for wayfinding goals.



Photo courtesy of Kristian Smolenski

h. Zone 4: Lower Priority: Dew Mound Trail Signage Improvements

Status: There are no signage or interpretive recommendations for this trail. Wayfinding and safety are the primary objectives along this trail.

Four upgrades are recommended:

9. As recommended above, place wayfinding posts at every intersection.
10. Replace and improve tree blazes along this route to aid in wayfinding, especially in the winter when the trail itself cannot be seen. Possibly develop small reflective signs for route finding.
11. Consider adding minimal back-country safety and camping signage at Echo Bend Campground. This could include a sign about Albert Loop Trail closures for those putting in at Echo Bend to float the rapids in the fall. This could also include orientation, Leave No Trace, bear awareness, or fire safety messages.
12. Assigning mile marker and emergency locator numbers to each wayfinding post is a final recommendation for this trail.





CH 6: INTERPRETIVE THEMES

i. Benefits of Interpretation

Freeman Tilden, a legend in the field of interpretation, summed up the value of interpretation with a quote from a National Park Service (NPS) administrative manual in his book, *Interpreting our Heritage*:²

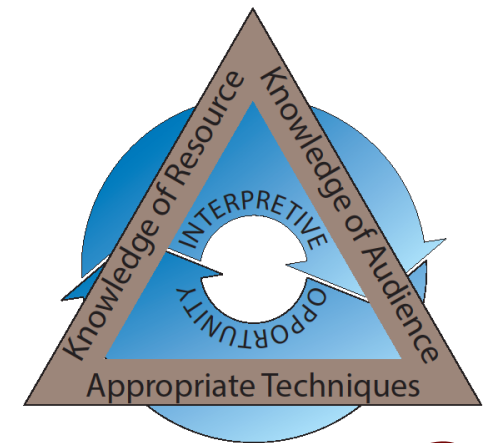
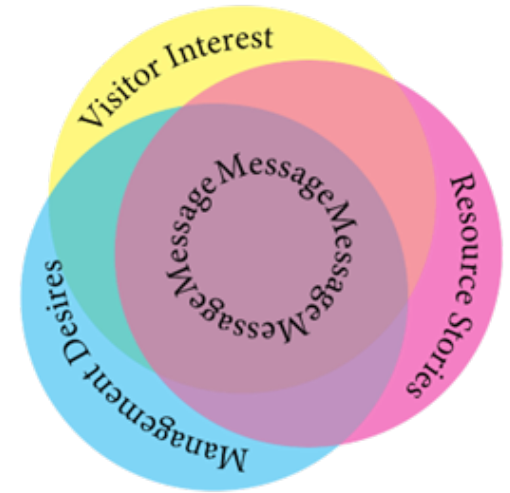
“Through interpretation, understanding;
through understanding, appreciation; through appreciation, protection.”

Interpretation goes beyond providing facts and information: it provides an opportunity to connect resources, facts, or whatever is being interpreted to our own life experiences. NAI states that interpretation is a process “that forges emotional and intellectual connections between the interests of the audience and meanings inherent in the resource.”

One way of portraying the elements needed to create a valuable, enjoyable experience while translating the meanings of a resource is the **Interpretive Equation**: $(KR + KA) AT = IO$,³ where KR is an interpreter's knowledge of a resource, KA is their knowledge of their audience, and AT represents appropriate techniques for sharing that knowledge. Together, they add up to an opportunity for interpretation, IO.

The elements of this equation underlie every successful interpretive display, exhibit, or program.

A key part of the ERNC mission is to further interpretive opportunities for park visitors. Carefully planned interpretation of natural, cultural, and historical resources within the area will bring about a greater understanding of the area, promoting stewardship. Orientation panels, bulletin boards, and potentially an event board, are also part of the interpretive suite of assets in this plan that foster appreciation of this unique place. This appreciation will nurture pride in this community asset and fosters responsible recreation within the park, protecting the site for future generations of Eagle River residents and area visitors.



²Freeman Tilden, *Interpreting Our Heritage* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1977), 38.

³From the Foundations of Interpretation Curriculum Content Narrative (NPS).

ii. Themes

Interpretive themes are ideas, concepts, and stories that provide the foundation for all interpretive products, guiding every facet of interpretive program development and delivery. Although they do not include everything that may be interpreted, they do address the ideas that are essential to visitors' understanding and appreciation of an area's importance. Themes can be complex when used in high level planning, or simple for a bear safety and awareness sign.

From an interpretive plan for Historic Centreville Park, Centreville, VA:

“The Civil War posed difficult choices for Centreville between Union and Secession, for slave owners and enslaved, and for civilians forced to either flee or endure occupying armies.”

A CoPilot summary that would work as the theme for an interpretive panel:

“The dugong is more than just a marine mammal; it embodies a rich tapestry of cultural significance that spans various societies.”

A program theme:

“Vampire bats are not as scary or threatening as we imagine.”

The themes detailed later in this chapter provide the basis for interpretation around ERNC and offer direction to naturalists, designers, planners, managers, and partners.

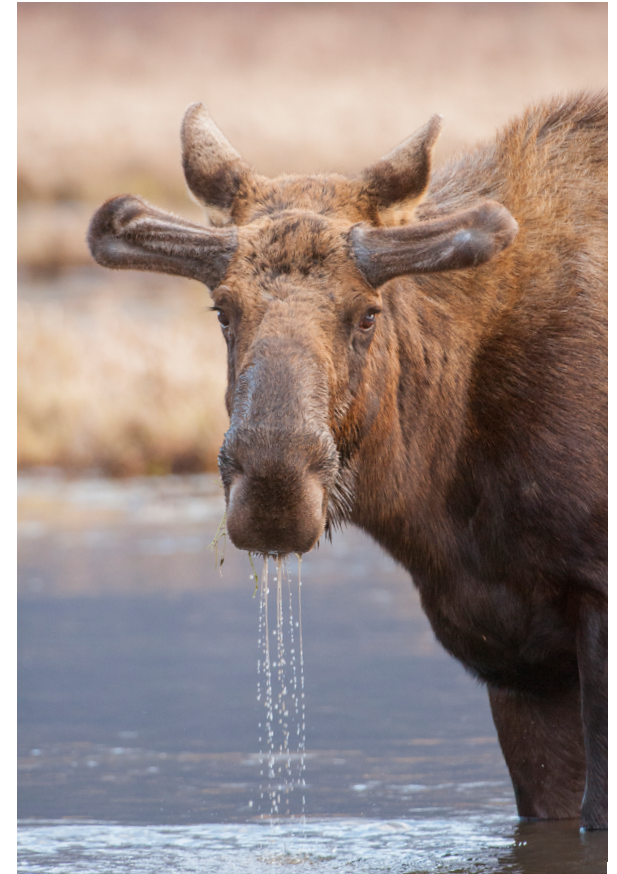


Photo courtesy of Colin Tyler Photography

DPOR developed a series of panels for the community of Willow, Alaska. They were placed along a nature trail that celebrated Shem Pete. A central theme was also to highlight the Dena'ina language, regardless of panel topic. The signs had different topics, but all shared visual and textual elements that tied the designs together, with the Dena'ina language as a foundational concept in every panel.

The Dena'ina words, labels, or phrases are from "Shem Pete's Alaska: The Territory of the Upper Cook Inlet Dena'ina" and other respected Dena'ina resources.

SH-HEM PETE TRAILS
UPPER COOK INLET DENA'INA MEMORIAL PARK

Convergent Evolution

Independent of each other, beavers and muskrats developed similar features—and habits—to adapt to similar environments.

Beavers build lodges out of tree trunks, branches, twigs and mud. When beavers cut down their lodges, muskrats reuse them.

Muskrats build much smaller lodges out of sticks and twigs. Both lodges feature underwater entrance.

The larger beaver uses just head alone to cut a hole. They have the ability to easily crush the water with their paddle like tails as they dive to safety.

While eating, much of the beaver's mouth is usually outside, including the rat-like tail. Muskrats will usually dip underwater, leaving little oxygen in their water.

Beaver
Castor canadensis

Muskrat
Fiber zibicicus

So, how do you tell them apart?

Evolving with many features in common, it might be hard to differentiate between these furry, semi-aquatic rodents. The simple answer is SIZE. Where a muskrat weighs two-four pounds, a beaver can weigh upwards of 30-70 pounds. Big difference! But, at a distance, with nothing to compare it to, it still might be difficult.

Fiber like feet make beavers efficient swimmers. They walk distribute all from their glands through their fur trapping them warm and dry.

Muskrats do not have webbed feet, but rather have developed hairs growing along their feet that help them efficiently paddle through water.

K'enyu'a qan-Beaver lodge
Undadi ben en' at K'enyu'a qan ghenchu.=
At the last lake I came upon a beaver lodge.

The Shem Pete Trails were developed for the Willow Trail Committee, Willow Area Community Organization, and the Alaska Trail and Park Foundation with the help of the State of Alaska.

Illustrations by James Ford and James Ford and Susanna Hoshida at: <http://www.honest-artist.com>

SH-HEM PETE TRAILS
UPPER COOK INLET DENA'INA MEMORIAL PARK

The Susitna Story

The following is an abbreviation of a story Shem Pete often told.

These are his words...

I am Shem Pete. I came from Susitna Station. That's where I born. My father was a chief. He had an older brother. He could really make medicine.

He used to say, "Susitna Station will disappear. The grass will be tall. The Dena'ina at Susitna will disappear."

They said to him, "Maybe about 600 Dena'ina live there. A lot of people."

He repeated, "Susitna will disappear. Everyone will disappear."

They got mad at him. They pretty near clubbed him!

"Twenty or thirty children are born every year. How could they disappear?" they asked.

"Susitna Station will disappear. Only the Americans will be there. Do you hear me?"

"Not! We won't disappear! There are lots of people. How could they disappear?"

"No, I see only grass," he told them again. "Americans are coming in groups. There will be many Americans here, just like sand... You fellers will be all over, just scattered like little berries between those white people." And he said this, "People do not realize what will become of this earth. Turn to this land!"

He saw what was going to happen.

"The Americans will fly outside somehow, like geese. Only the Dena'ina will be able to go back into the country. You should save your matches, bullets, and axes... everything you can to save yourselves... Then only you will remain here. For sure the Americans will leave... There will just be clouds in their tracks. You go to the mountains and there you will save yourselves."

That is what he said, how he warned people. Things happened just like that. He had known the fu would happen. One by one they would die. Now everyone at Susitna is gone. Nothing.

"It will happen in this way. Do you understand me?" he used to say. When I too have died, you will hear my language and you will save yourselves with my words.

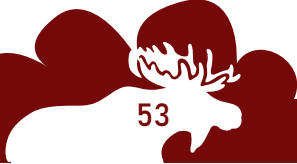
Okay, I have said enough.

Jan gu ch'eghichagh.
We cried today.

The Shem Pete Trails were developed for the Willow Trail Committee, Willow Area Community Organization, and the Alaska Trail and Park Foundation with the help of the State of Alaska.

Illustrations by James Ford and James Ford and Susanna Hoshida at: <http://www.honest-artist.com>

See also Appendix C:
Developing Interpretive Themes



Welcome/Orient: Set the tone and a “sense of place.” Welcoming and orienting visitors is active. It is engaging, informative, and sets a positive tone for new and returning visitors.

Panel title examples:

- Welcome to the Rodak Trail (this newer orientation panel already exists at the lower parking lot trailhead)
- Park Entrance Sign
- Following in Others’ Footsteps
- “Oh, the Places We Will Go!”
- You Have Arrived! Now What?

Stewardship/Safety: Want to help keep yourself, your pets, and wildlife safe? You can, by taking responsibility for learning and following basic safety and stewardship steps.

Panel title examples:

- Decoding Moose Behavior
- Is Leashing Your Dog Worth the Hassle?
- Respecting Bear Boundaries
- Pro Tips for the Backcountry
- Safety Tips for Traveling Nuk’elehitu
- Want a close up? Get a bigger lens.

Recreation/Wellness: ERNC’s decks and trails connect us with landscapes and experiences that rejuvenate the mind, body, and spirit.

Panel title examples:

- Locally-Sourced Soul Food
- A Poem-in-Place: Stop, Look, Listen... Think
- Benefits and Uses of Native Plants on the Rodak



Wild Fauna and Flora: ERNC lies within the home of wildlife both large and small; when we visit, we are in a wild place where we can respectfully observe them and the signs of their presence. This theme addresses the tension between enjoying and respecting wilderness and its denizens, one example being photographers, addressed in the first panel.

Panel title examples:

- Want a Close-Up? Get a Bigger Lens.
- Does a Bear Scratch in the Woods? Signs Say Yes.
- Putting the Phenology Puzzle Together
- The Midden: A Squirrel's Storage and Waste Facility
- Predator-Prey Cycles at Work
- The Connection Between a Small Fish and a Huge Forest: The Salmon-Forest Cycle

Natural Wonders: Look around—the mountains, glaciers, forests, rocks, and streams, and river all have stories to tell about this valley. Interpretive messages can teach us how to read the stories in this landscape.

Panel title examples:

- Patterns in Nature: The Fibonacci Sequence
- Open Water in Winter: Eagle River's Special Source
- Trees over Time: Signs of Forest Succession
- Glacial Push Power
- The Mighty Mushroom

Historical Significance: Waves of people over the centuries have found different things to value in this valley, each with their own impact on the land.

Panel title examples:

- The Many Uses of Birch Bark: Dena'ina uses from Yesteryear and Today
- Travel Through Time in Timeless Footsteps
- Mushing the Mail
- It's Official: CSP's Founding Shows Alaskans Value This Wilderness



Photo courtesy of Trina Smith

c. Using Static Interpretation to Deliver Messages and Themes

Panels are a constructive way to achieve many, but not all, interpretive goals. In a discussion of themes, many points will be better addressed through in-person programs and interpretation; there is no substitution for in-person programming. However, carefully planned static interpretation can enhance visitor experiences and relay themed messages and goals, whether the user is visiting the site on their own or is led by a seasoned docent.

d. Creating Engaging Interpretive Media

When considering static interpretation to relay important messages at your site, consider these factors:

- **Does it relate to a theme in the MIP:** Most interpretive panel write-ups ask, what goal or theme is this panel meeting? Does this sign advance our mission, or detract from it? If a panel doesn't illustrate a theme, it becomes sign litter—creating unnecessary production and maintenance costs.
- **Choose the tone for panel titles:** There are many ways for titles to be engaging. They may be serious, matter-of-fact, or whimsical. Don't be afraid or disdainful of humor—it is possible to be funny or light and still convey correct information that's not "dumbed down." Humor can also be incredibly effective at attracting attention and creating warmth, lowering the walls of worry or cynicism visitors may bring with them on their visit into an otherwise-peaceful setting. It can also spark willingness to read on.

Whichever method you choose, if it's clear and engaging, readers are more likely to continue to the next level of detail. The general guideline is that if you can catch someone's attention for three seconds, they'll be willing to give you 30 seconds. If you can hold their attention that long, they'll be willing to give you three minutes. And that is all we aim for in an outdoor setting where people have come because of what's around the panels.



- **Longer isn't better.** The same instinctive avoidance of humor can steer experts towards a feeling that “more is better” when it comes to text. In fact, often the reverse is true—see the point above. At most, you might capture someone’s attention for a maximum of three minutes.

“White space” isn’t just empty space—it’s doing a job. That job is creating breathing room around image focal points and text components. This space helps visitors follow a flow through the material while taking in the images and text.

- **Meet people where they're at:** This refers to accessibility—physically and intellectually. Keep even the fourth-level text, like photo captions, to no smaller than 18-20 point font (depending on whether the font runs large or small). In addition to visitors who experience low visibility, plenty of people will have forgotten their reading glasses in the car.

Keep sentences clear: The National Center for Education Statistics notes that more than half of US adults read below the equivalent of a sixth-grade level. If you need to use a scientific term, explain it immediately.

Write in the spirit of highly respected newspaper editor John Carroll, known for empowering his readers. He would remind his journalists, “We don’t talk down to our readers, we lift them up.”

- **Consistency:** The next batch of panels may be made by people with different tastes, different writing styles, and different senses of humor. Choosing a somewhat middle-of-the-road tone (not extremely formal or informal) will allow future designers to create new panels that may have a slightly different approach. As long as they, too, stay near that middle-of-the-road, they won’t be markedly different than a panel created a few years earlier. If they notably stand-out, the new panel could feel out of place, discordant, disconcerting and clashing with everything already at the site (which are not feelings we want to provoke on ERNC trails).





**CH 7: INTERPRETING THE
CULTURAL HISTORY OF
EAGLE RIVER VALLEY**

i. Historical Presence

ERNC is situated in Eagle River Valley, within the homeland of the Dena'ina people, in a region with a deep human history extending back thousands of years. Dena'ina groups have lived, traveled, and traded throughout southcentral Alaska for many generations and continue to live in the area today. The nearby village of Eklutna remains an important Dena'ina cultural center. Because ERNC sits on traditional Dena'ina homelands, this history, living presence, and language offer an important opportunity for interpretation, learning, and respect.

This chapter shows the intention of this interpretive plan to make space for future theme creation and subjects to be added and addressed as historical and cultural surveys of the area are completed.

ii. Surveys

To our knowledge, no in-depth cultural or archeological surveys have been carried out in the areas around and beyond the nature center. Without this step, there may be holes or gaps in the creation of interpretive media.

ERNC may want to consider seeking grants to survey the area, perhaps in partnership with the Eklutna Tribe and through the State Historical Preservation Office grants.



iii. Inclusion of Dena'ina Language, Culture, and Knowledge

Information the center might like to include on interpretive signage includes:

- Place names;
- Dena'ina language;
- Traditional usage of the area (flora, hunting, fishing, travel); and
- The relationship of Dena'ina people to the area or the local flora and fauna.

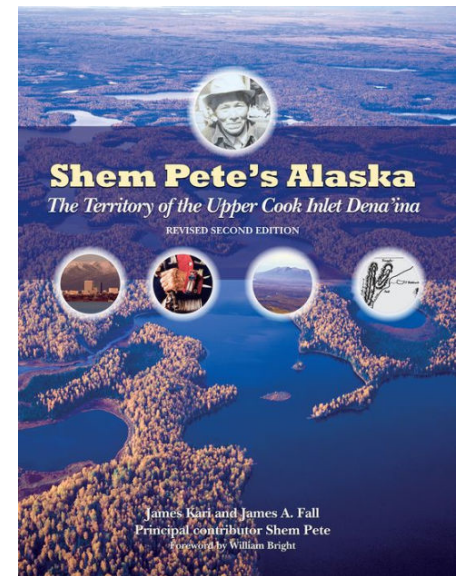
Following the principle of “not about us without us,” development will need the participation of a Dena'ina culture bearer, organization, and/or language experts. Materials could be developed based on resources such as *Shem Pete's Alaska: The Territory of the Upper Cook Inlet Dena'ina* and reviewed by an expert, or they could be developed cooperatively. Interpretive materials should also be reviewed by the Office of History and Archeology for factual accuracy and historical insight.

Some panels could focus on Dena'ina-related topics, while other panels with subjects related to natural history, safety, etc. could include Dena'ina terms, weaving the thread of Dena'ina presence and knowledge of the area as a cohesive theme through the entire suite of interpretive materials.

iv. “Shem Pete's Alaska”

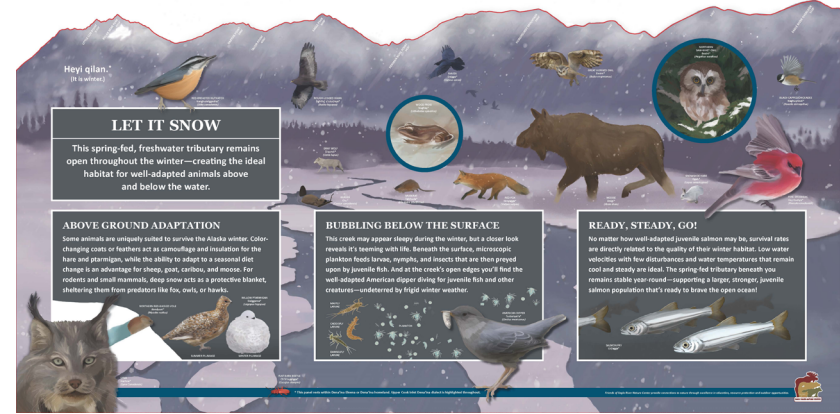
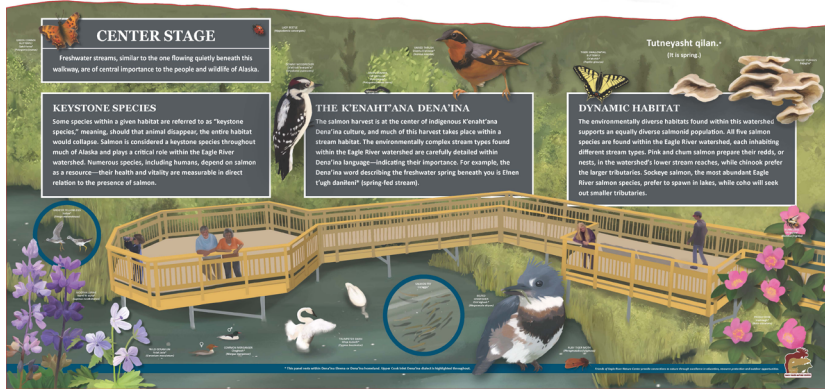
In his book, Shem Pete shares these Dena'ina placenames local to the area:

- Nuk'elehitnu 'Fish Run Again Creek'—Eagle River
- Nuk'elehitnu Kaq 'Mouth of Fish Run Again Creek'—Eagle Bay, mouth of Eagle River
- Nuk'elehitnu Łi'a 'Glacier of Fish Run Again River—Eagle Glacier
- T'usq'a 'Cutting Place'—small creek into Eagle River, possibly Clunie Creek



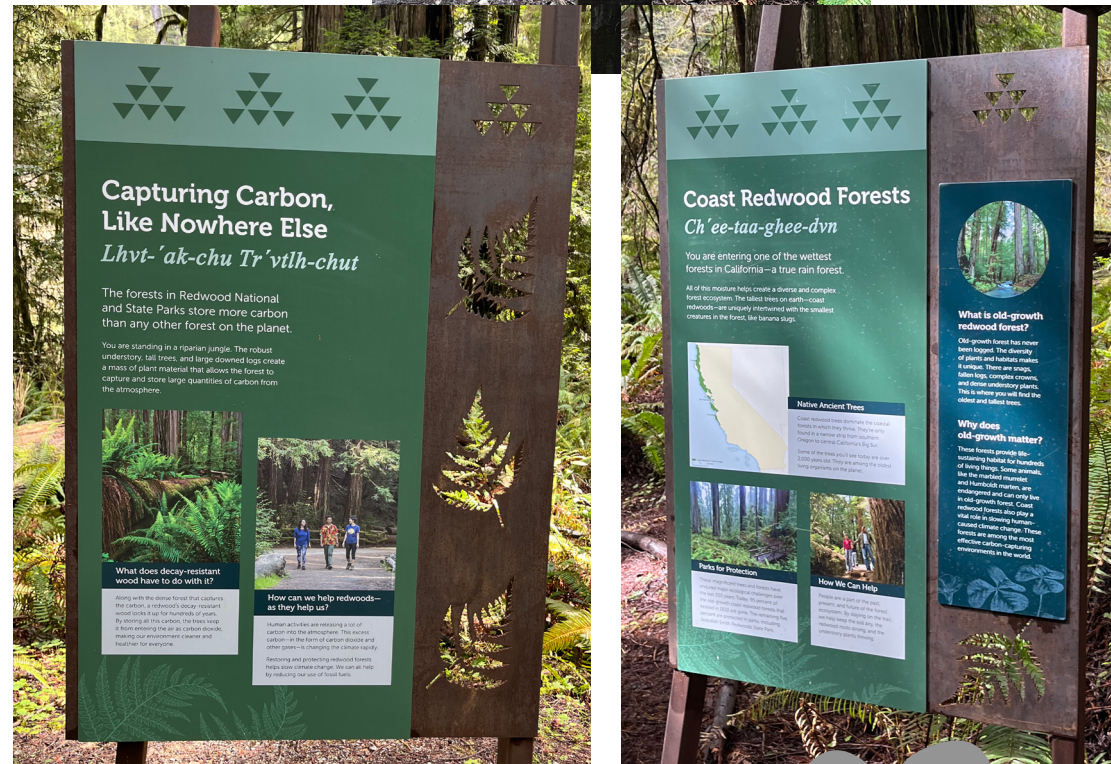
⁴Definitions, including question marks, are taken from *Shem Pete's Alaska* pages 328-329.

I&E created four panels for ERNC's salmon viewing deck that feature Dena'ina Athabascan language. They were made in collaboration with James Fall and Aaron Leggett, Dena'ina language experts (see the summer, winter, spring and fall panels below).



California State Parks work closely with Tolowa and other tribes to incorporate placenames and local Indigenous language into interpretive panels (see photo upper right.)

Signs often include visual design elements unique to the tribe, like borders or other design elements (see photos lower left and lower right).





CH 8: CONCLUSION

i. Meeting the FERNC Mission Through MIP Implementation

This MIP is supported by CSP's Regional Office, ERNC staff, partners, and board members. Thus, it can be used to plan funding, or to find and support grant opportunities to help bring this project to fruition. However, it is a living and working document. It may not represent the final version of the FERNC's project to update, enrich and guide signage and interpretation at the ERNC and on its trail system. This plan is meant to guide the process of implementing this worthy project while incorporating input from the contributing individuals and organizations.

This plan informs current and future staff and board members about how static interpretation and a full signage plan can meet visitor expectations and help support the mission and vision of the organization.

ii. Our Thanks

Our thanks to Laura Kruger and Marlowe Scully from ERNC and the efforts and support from:

- Heather Bottrell of the MIP Review Team and FERNC board member,
- Samantha Blumenkonig of the MIP Review Team and former ERNC staff,
- Colin Tyler Photography, and
- Shawna Popovici, Sarana Schell, and Roxanne Belovarac of DPOR's I&E Unit.





APPENDICES

APPENDIX A. Approval Letter from ERNC Board

Ms. Laura Kruger
ERNC Executive Director
31750 Eagle River Rd.
Eagle River, AK 99577

26 March, 2026

Dear Ms. Kruger,

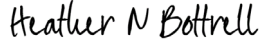
On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Eagle River Nature Center, I am pleased to approve the Master Interpretive Plan for the Eagle River Nature Center.

The Board recognizes the Master Interpretive Plan as an important guiding document that will drive future visitors' engagement with the Center and Chugach State Park. As written, the plan will strengthen the Center's ability to deliver high-quality, mission-driven interpretation and educational experiences. The plan provides a clear framework for storytelling, visitor engagement, and education in service to honoring the natural, cultural, and ecological values of the Eagle River watershed.

We commend staff, partners, and contributors for their thoughtful work developing a plan that reflects the Center's commitment to education, conservation, and community connection. The Board supports the implementation of this plan as a living document that will guide interpretive efforts over time and evolve as the Center grows.

Thank you for your dedication to the Eagle River Nature Center and for advancing its mission through this important work.

Sincerely,

Signed by:

6338EC4F55C6438...

Heather Bottrell

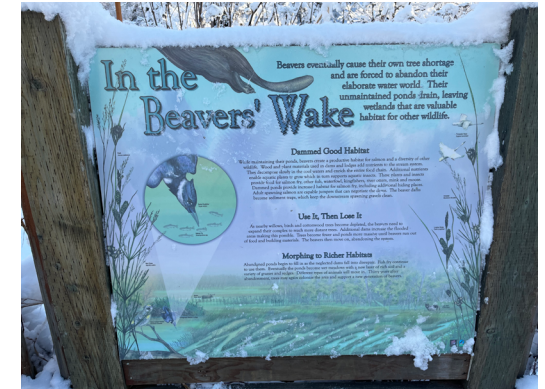
On behalf of the Board of Directors, Friends of Eagle River Nature Center



APPENDIX B. Current Sign Inventory

Currently there are several methods of communicating information and interpretation at the ERNC, both inside the nature center building and out on the trails.

- **Park Entrance Sign** at main entrance by the road
- **Maps, fee machine, trail conditions sign, and information kiosk** at the front door
- **Main trailhead kiosk** located around the back of the nature center with existing DPOR printed information poster and starting trail head signs
- **IHNT interpretive sign** in the front garden bed
- **River display** on back deck with additional flora and fauna ID signs
- **Trail signs** at intersections that include directional trail signs and trail maps
- **Rodak Nature Trail:**
 - About eight **interpretive signs** (original to the 1980s) along the trail with different topics related to the area
 - **Beaver Viewing Deck** with one sign before the deck and two interpretive signs on the deck (original to 1980s)
 - **Salmon Viewing Deck** with four interpretive signs (new in 2023) and an “Eagle River Nature Center” metal sign
 - **Memorial Totem** (no sign)



- **Albert Loop Geology Tour** (the old booklet is not in use)
- **Pollinator Garden** receives seasonal plant ID signs each year
- **Native Plant Garden** receives seasonal plant ID signs each year
- **Naturalists on Deck** available to interact with visitors when out on deck or on the trails
- **Rodak Rangers** booklet for self-guided visits became available to guests in 2025



Photo courtesy of Kevan Dee

APPENDIX C. Resources for Developing Interpretive Themes

The National Association for Interpretation defines interpretation as a purposeful approach to communication that facilitates meaningful, relevant, and inclusive experiences that deepen understanding, broaden perspectives, and inspire engagement with the world around us.

Interpretive themes are meaningful and powerful when they make a connection for people between a tangible resource and universal intangible concepts or emotions.

Intangibles and Universal Concepts:

Abundance,	Difficulty,	Knowledge,	Respect,
Acceptance,	Disappointment,	Labor,	Responsibility,
Adaptation,	Discipline,	Leadership,	Rigors,
Adventure,	Discovery,	Life,	Risk,
Aggression,	Discouragement,	Limits,	Rules,
Anger,	Dismay,	Loss,	Safety,
Anticipation,	Dread,	Luck,	Satisfaction,
Anxiety,	Durability,	Madness,	Secrets,
Apprehension,	Education,	Maturity,	Security,
Awe,	Enchantment,	Meanings,	Shelter,
Beauty,	Encouragement,	Merriment,	Sickness,
Beginnings,	Endurance,	Mirth,	Significance,
Betrayal,	Enemy,	Misery,	Size,
Brotherhood,	Entertainment,	Mission,	Skill,
Care,	Evil,	Mistakes,	Starvation,
Celebration,	Excess,	Mortification,	Stress,
Change,	Expectation,	Motherhood,	Struggle,
Choice,	Experience,	Mystery,	Success,
Common sense	Exploration,	Ordeal,	Surprise,
Communication,	Failure,	Pain,	Suspicion,
Community,	Family,	Paradise,	Teamwork,
Compassion,	Fatigue,	Patience,	Temptation,
Competition,	Fear,	Patriotism,	Time,
Complexity,	Fortitude,	Peace,	Tolerance,
Complications,	Friendship,	Perseverance,	Torment,
Confidence,	Frustration,	Play,	Transportation,
Confusion,	Game playing,	Possibilities,	Travel,
Construction,	Goals,	Poverty,	Triumph,
Consumption,	Good/Goodness,	Pride,	Trust,
Control,	Greed,	Problems,	Uniqueness,
Cooperation,	Hardship,	Progress,	Unknown,
Courage,	Hate,	Promises,	Values,
Culture,	Health,	Protection,	Variety,
Curiosity,	Home,	Prudence,	Violence,
Dance,	Honesty,	Punishment,	War,
Danger,	Honor,	Reality,	Wastefulness,
Death,	Hope,	Reflection,	Wealth,
Decisions,	Hospitality,	Regret,	Weather,
Defense,	Hunger,	Reliability,	Wilderness,
Deficiency,	Imagination,	Religion,	Wonder,
Delight,	Integrity,	Resentment,	Worry,
Depression,	Interdependence,	Resolution,	Youth
Deprivation,	Joy,	Resolve,	
Desperation,	Kindness,	Resourcefulness,	



APPENDIX D. Accessibility Resources⁵

The Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 (ABA) was the first federal law to address accessibility, and through an update in 2015, continues to inform federal standards for trail accessibility.

While these applied only to federal land in 2024, the United States Access Board is looking to expand them to state and local governments as well as organizations covered by the [Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\)](#).

Trail Access Information

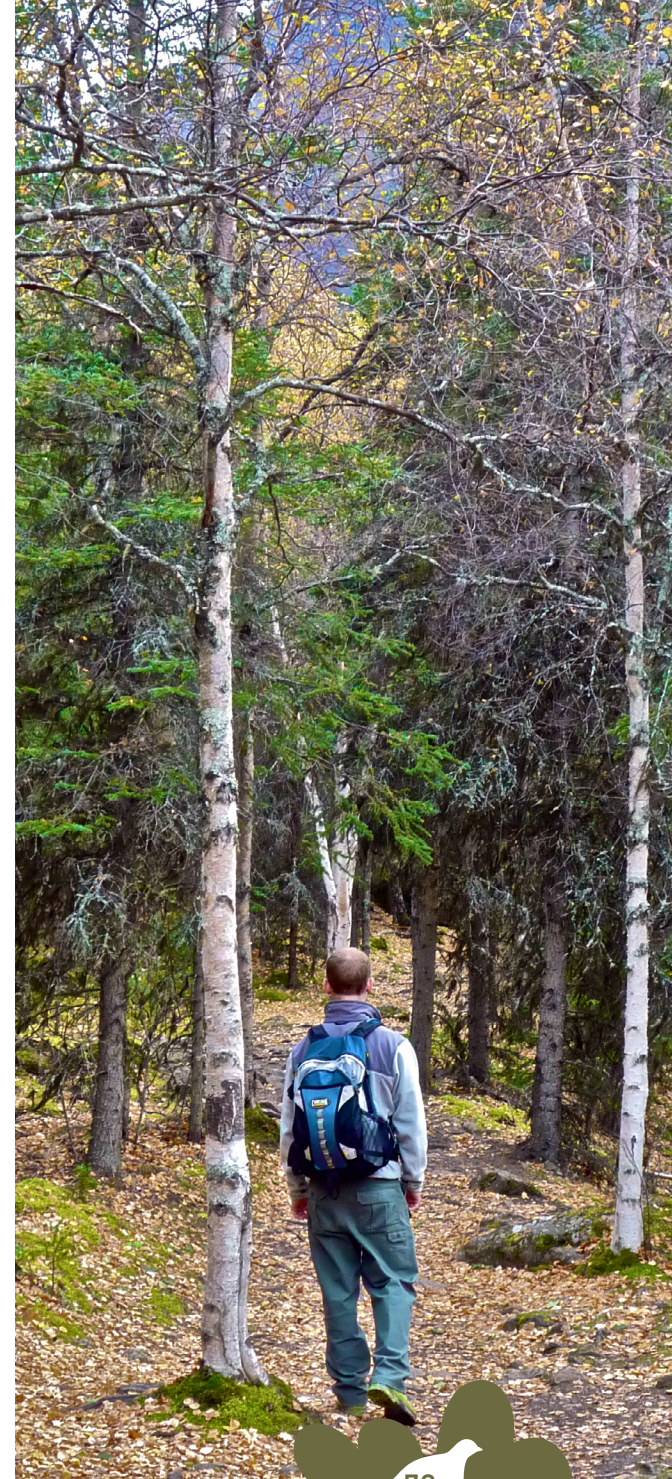
Trail Access Information (TAI) is summary information that allows each user type to determine if a trail meets their personal needs based on the type of trail usage (hiker, equestrian, OHV etc.) and the abilities of the individual:

- Length of the trail or trail segment
- Surface type and quality*
- Typical and minimum tread width
- Typical and maximum running slope (grade)
- Typical and maximum cross slope
- When the trail was made or assessed, and a note that the posted information reflects the condition of the trail at that time.

*Surface type and quality = surface firmness and stability. A lack of firmness and stability is the greatest barrier to access for hikers who must use wheelchairs for mobility.

These categories are specified by the [Architectural Barriers Act \(ABA\) Standards \(2015\)](#) and the [Forest Service Trail Accessibility Guidelines \(FSTAG\) \(2013\)](#) as the minimum information that should be included on trailhead signage to avoid discrimination based on disability and give all potential trail users insight on trail conditions.

⁵Much information in this section is cited or summarized from the Beneficial Designs Inc. website, <https://www.beneficialdesigns.com>

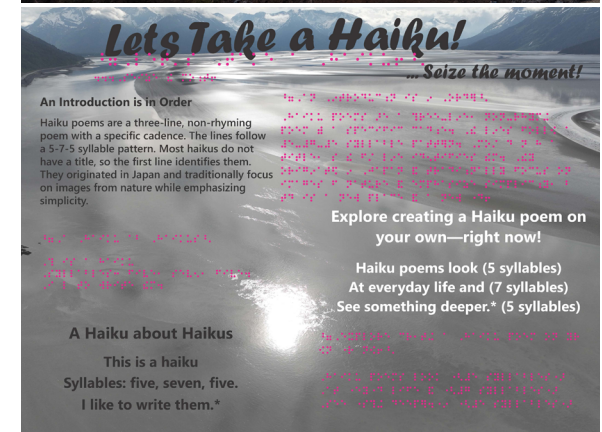


Surface information is part of ABA Standards and USFS requirements for trailhead signage. Given the difficulty of gathering the information, some states share only general information about surface type.

Accessibility Resources

In this [accessibility resource information](#) from the USFS, “Accessible” refers to a facility that was in compliance with accessibility guidelines or standards when it was built or altered. There are three different sets of these guidelines and standards that apply to facilities built on national forests and grasslands:

1. [Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Standards \(ABAAS\)](#) apply to facilities designed, built, altered, or leased with federal funds, including visitor information centers, USFS offices, sidewalks, parking lots, restrooms and others.
2. [The Forest Service Outdoor Recreation Accessibility Guidelines \(FSORAG\)](#) is the accessibility standard for campgrounds, picnic areas, viewing overlooks, swimming beaches and the pathways that connect the facilities within those recreation areas. The purpose is to integrate accessibility seamlessly without changing the outdoor recreation settings with the goal of all recreation areas for all people to enjoy together. [FSORAG is available as a pocket guide](#) as well.
3. [The Forest Service Trail Accessibility Guidelines \(FSTAG\)](#) apply to new or altered trails that are designed for pedestrian hiking and which connect directly to a trailhead or to another trail that currently complies with these guidelines. The goal is to maximize accessibility while not changing the character or experience of the trail setting. [FSTAG is also available as a pocket guide](#).



Examples of USFS resources on best practices for various aspects of outdoor recreation

[Accessibility Guidebook for Outdoor Recreation and Trails](#) help designers and managers apply accessibility standards to their outdoor recreation sites and trails.

[Forest Service Plans for Accessible Picnic Tables](#) provide diagrams and measurements to help make picnic tables more accessible.

[Accessible Gates for Trails and Roads](#) a cache of ready-to-built gate designs that serve the purpose of the gate and allow pedestrians including wheelchair users to pass through the gate.

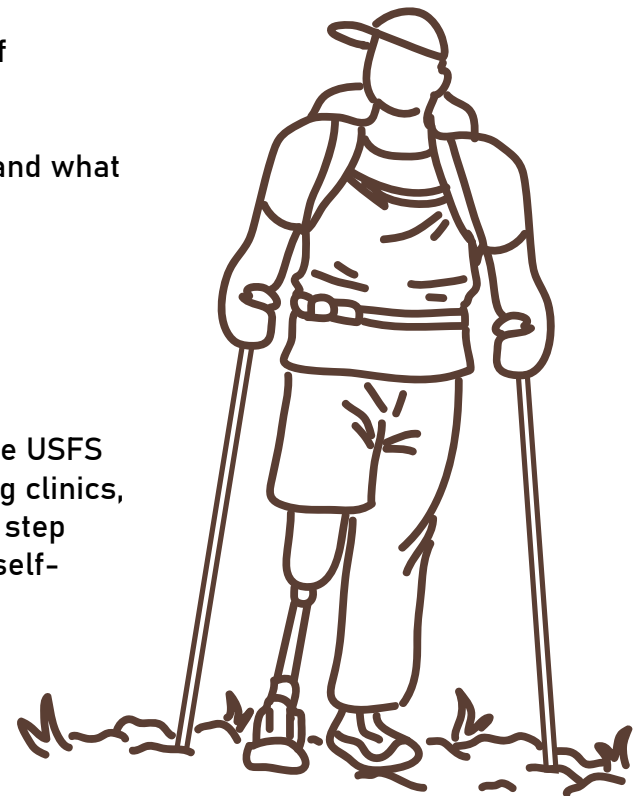
[Forest Service Exhibit Accessibility Checklist](#) is a handy guide to help keep track of requirements standards for exhibits.

[Service Animals and Outdoor Recreation](#) details the definition of a service animal and what is required of visitors, employees and volunteers.

Nonprofit support for visually impaired hikers

Team FarSight Foundation, Inc. <https://www.farsightfoundation.org/what-we-do>

Team FarSight Foundation is a small nonprofit that works with partners such as the USFS on accessible signage, developing guide dog gear, and offers hiking clinics, climbing clinics, and adventure camps. Their mission is to inspire the blind and visually impaired to step outside their comfort zones through backcountry experiences to promote greater self-reliance and independence in everyday life.



APPENDIX E. SPECIES LISTS: (not comprehensive)

NATIVE PLANTS, SHRUBS, AND TREES

Boreal (Northern) Yarrow	<i>Achillea millefolium</i> var. <i>borealis</i>
Larkspurleaf Monkshood	<i>Aconitum delphinifolium</i>
Red Baneberry	<i>Actaea rubra</i>
Moschatel	<i>Adoxa moschatellina</i>
Alder	<i>Alnus</i>
Yellow Thimbleweed	<i>Anemone richardsonii</i>
Western (Red) Columbine	<i>Aquilegia formosa</i>
Kamchatka Rockcress	<i>Arabidopsis lyrata</i> subsp. <i>kamchatica</i>
Tilesius Wormwood	<i>Artemisia tilesii</i>
Goat's Beard	<i>Aruncus sylvester</i>
Arctic (Siberian) Aster	<i>Aster sibiricus</i>
Lady Fern	<i>Athyrium filix-femina</i>
Alaska Paper Birch	<i>Betula neoalaskana</i>
Paper Birch	<i>Betula papyrifera</i>
Shepherd's Purse	<i>Capsella bursa pastoris</i>
Bluejoint Reedgrass	<i>Calamagrostis canadensis</i>
Marsh Marigold	<i>Caltha palustris</i>
Calypso (Fairy Slipper) Orchid	<i>Calypso bulbosa</i>
Bluebells of Scotland	<i>Campanula rotundifolia</i>
Indian Paintbrush	<i>Castilleja</i>
Field Chickweed	<i>Cerastium arvense</i>
Common Fireweed	<i>Chamaenerion angustifolium</i>



Calypso orchid (*Calypso bulbosa*)

Dwarf Fireweed, River Beauty
 Dwarf Dogwood, Bunchberry
 Spotted Lady Slipper Orchid
 Mountain Larkspur
 Yellow Dryas (Mountain Avens)
 Wood Fern
 Crowberry
 Common (Field) Horsetail
 Wood Horsetail
 Alaska Cotton (Cottongrass)
 Chocolate Lily
 Hemp Nettle
 Northern Bedstraw
 Sweet Scented Bedstraw
 Woolly Geranium
 Large-Leaved (Yellow) Avens
 Northern Oak Fern
 Cow Parsnip (Pushki)
 Yellow Toadflax
 Twinflower
 Bog Labrador Tea
 Arctic lupine
 Nootka Lupine
 Arctic Starflower
 Pineappleweed

Chamerion latifolium
Cornus canadensis
Cypripedium guttatum
Delphinium glaucum
Dryas drummondii
Dryopteris
Empetrum nigrum
Equisetum arvense
Equisetum silvaticum
Eriophorum scheuchzeri
Fritillaria biflora
Galeopsis tetrahit
Galium boreale
Galium triflorum
Geranium erianthum
Geum macrophyllum
Gymnocarpium dryopteris
Heracleum lanatum
Linaria vulgaris
Linnaea borealis
Ledum palustre groenlandicum
Lupinus arcticus
Lupinus nootkatensis
Lysimachia europaea
Matricaria matricarioides



Northern lungwort (*Mertensia paniculata*)



Cranesbill (*Geranium erianthum*)

Ostrich (Fiddlehead) Fern
Northern Bluebells
Grove Sandwort
Single Delight (Shy Maiden)
Alpine Forget-Me-Not
Common (Yellow) Ball Mustard
Devil's Club

Sweet Cicely
Marsh Grass of Parnassus
Balsam Groundsel
Black Spruce
White Spruce
Common Plantain
Tall Jacob's Ladder
Cottonwood
Marsh Fivefinger (Marsh Cinquefoil)
Tundra Rose (Shrubby Cinquefoil)
Rough Cinquefoil
Pink Wintergreen
High Northern Buttercup
White Water (Threadleaf) Crowfoot
Yellow Rattle
Western Roseroot
Black Currant
Red Currant

Matteuccia struthiopteris
Mertensia paniculata
Moehringia lateriflora
Moneses uniflora
Myosotis alpestris
Neslia paniculata
Oplopanax horridus (Echinopanax horridum)
Osmorhiza purpurea
Parnassia palustris
Packera paupercula
Picea mariana
Picea glauca
Plantago major
Polemonium acutiflorum
Populus
Potentilla palustris
Dasiphora fruticosa
Potentilla norvegica
Pyrola asarifolia
Ranunculus hyperboreus
Ranunculus trichophyllus
Rhinanthus minor
Rhodiola integrifolia
Ribes laxiflorum
Ribes triste



Alpine sweetvetch (*Hedysarum alpinum*)

Prickly Rose	<i>Rosa acicularis</i>
Sitka Rose	<i>Rosa rugosa</i>
Nagoonberry	<i>Rubus arcticus</i>
Cloudberry	<i>Rubus chamaemorus</i>
Red Raspberry	<i>Rubus idaeus</i>
Willow sp.	<i>Salix species</i>
Red Elderberry	<i>Sambucus racemosa</i>
Spirea stevenii	<i>Spirea beauverdiana (stevenii)</i>
Twisted Stalk, Watermelonberry, Wild Cucumber	<i>Streptopus amplexifolius</i>
Elegant (Western Canada) Goldenrod	<i>Solidago lepida</i>
Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>
Fewflower Meadow-rue	<i>Thalictrum sparsiflorum</i>
Alsike (Swedish) Clover	<i>Trifolium hybridum</i>
Stinging Nettle	<i>Urtica lyallii</i>
Lowbush Blueberry	<i>Vaccinium angustifolium</i>
Lingonberry, Lowbush Cranberry	<i>Vaccinium vitis idaea</i>
False Hellebore	<i>Veratrum viride</i>
Highbush Cranberry	<i>Viburnum edule</i>
Alaska Violet	<i>Viola langsdorffi</i>
White Violet	<i>Viola renifolia</i>
Selkirk's Violet	<i>Viola selkirkii</i>



Highbush Cranberry (*Viburnum edule*)



Lowbush Blueberry
(*Vaccinium angustifolium*)

FUNGI—Family Agaricaceae: Mushrooms

Fly Agaric	<i>Amanita muscaria</i>
King Bolete (Penny Bun)	<i>Boletus edulis</i>
Red-fruited Pixie Cup	<i>Cladonia pleurota</i>
Star-tipped Reindeer Lichen	<i>Cladonia stellaris</i>
Shaggy Mane	<i>Coprinus comatus</i>
Birch Polypore	<i>Fomitopsis betulina</i>
Hoof Fungus	<i>Fomes fomentarius</i>
Alder Root Gall	<i>Frankia alni</i>
False Morel	<i>Gyromitra esculenta</i>
Chaga	<i>Inonotus obliquus</i>
Conifer Chicken of the Woods	<i>Laetiporus conifericola</i>
White Rim Lichen	<i>Lecanora rupicola</i>
Common Puffball	<i>Lycoperdon perlatum</i>
Pear-shaped Puffball	<i>Lycoperdon pyriforme</i>
Tree Lungwort	<i>Lobaria pulmonaria</i>
Dyer's Polypore	<i>Phaeolus schweinitzii</i>
Elegant Sunburst Lichen	<i>Rusavskia elegans</i>
Sugared Sunburst Lichen	<i>Rusavskia soorediata</i>
Wrinkled Thimble Morel	<i>Verpa bohemica</i>



Conifer Chicken of the Woods (*Laetiporus conifericola*)
Photo courtesy of RTehan

FISH

Threespine Stickleback
Staghorn Sculpin
Chum (Dog) Salmon
Coho (Sliver) Salmon
Pink (Humpy) Salmon
Rainbow Trout
Sockeye (Red) Salmon
Chinook (King) Salmon
Ninespine Stickleback
Dolly Varden Char
Arctic Grayling

Gasterosteus aculeatus
Leptocottus armatus
Oncorhynchus keta
Oncorhynchus kisutch
Oncorhynchus gorbuscha
Oncorhynchus mykiss
Oncorhynchus nerka
Oncorhynchus tshawytscha
Pungitius pungitius
Salvelinus malma
Thymallus arcticus

BIRDS

Sharp-shinned Hawk
Spotted Sandpiper
Common Redpoll
Hoary Redpoll
Northern Goshawk
Northern Saw-whet Owl
Red-winged Blackbird
Northern Pintail
Green-winged Teal
Mallard

Accipiter striatus
Actitis macularius
Acanthis flammea
Acanthis hornemanni
Accipiter gentilis
Aegolius acadicus
Agelaius phoeniceus
Anas acuta
Anas carolinensis
Anas platyrhynchos



Rainbow trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*)

Golden Eagle
Bohemian Waxwing
Great Horned Owl
Barrow's Goldeneye
Red-tailed Hawk
Spruce Grouse
Wilson's Warbler
Gray-cheeked Thrush
Hermit Thrush
Swainson's Thrush
Northern Harrier
American Dipper
Northern Flicker
Olive-sided Flycatcher
Western Wood-pewee
Common Raven
Stellar's Jay
Trumpeter Swan
Alder Flycatcher
Rusty Blackbird
Merlin
American Kestrel
Common Snipe

Aquila chrysaetos
Bombycilla garrulus
Bubo virginianus
Bucephala islandica
Buteo jamaicensis
Canachites canadensis
Cardellina pusilla
Catharus minimus
Catharus guttatus
Catharus ustulatus
Circus hudsonius
Cinclus mexicanus
Colaptes auratus
Contopus cooperi
Contopus sordidulus
Corvus corax
Cyanocitta stelleri
Cygnus buccinator
Empidonax alnorum
Euphagus carolinus
Falco columbarius
Falco sparverius
Gallinago gallinago



Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*)
Photo courtesy of Giles Laurent

Sandhill Crane
 Bald Eagle
 Varied Thrush
 Dark-eyed Junco
 Northern Shrike
 Hairy Woodpecker
 White-winged Crossbill
 American Wigeon
 Belted Kingfisher
 Lincoln's Sparrow
 Common Merganser
 Northern Waterthrush
 Fox Sparrow
 Savannah Sparrow
 Canada (Gray) Jay
 Black-backed Woodpecker
 Downy Woodpecker
 Three-toed Woodpecker
 Pine Grosbeak
 Black-capped Chickadee
 Ruby-crowned Kinglet
 Golden-crowned Kinglet
 Rufous Hummingbird
 Yellow-rumped Warbler
 Arctic Tern

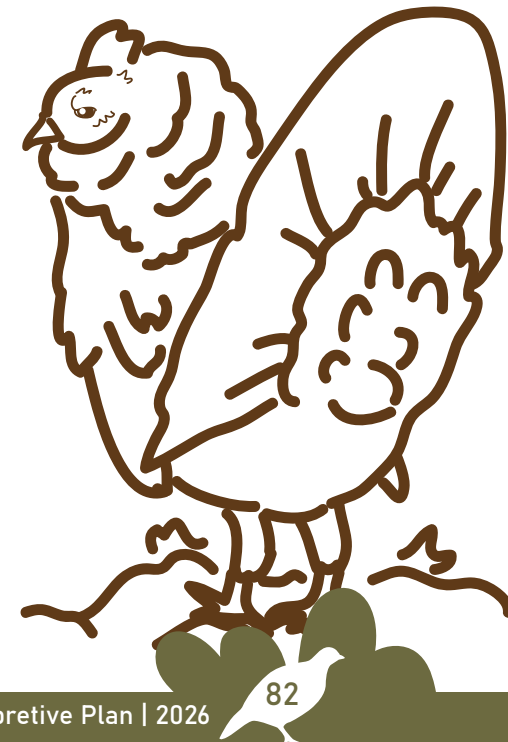
Grus canadensis
Haliaeetus leucocephalus
Ixoreus naevius
Junco hyemalis
Lanius borealis
Leuconotopicus villosus
Loxia leucoptera
Mareca americana
Megasceryle alcyon
Melospiza lincolnii
Mergus merganser
Parkesia noveboracensis
Passerella iliaca
Passerculus sandwichensis
Perisoreus canadensis
Picoides arcticus
Picoides pubescens
Picoides dorsalis
Pinicola enucleator
Poecile atricapillus
Regulus calendula
Regulus satrapa
Selasphorus rufus
Setophaga coronata
Sterna paradisaea



Three-toed Woodpecker (*Picoides dorsalis*)



Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*)



Yellow Warbler
Blackpoll Warbler
Townsend's Warbler
Red-breasted Nuthatch
Pine Siskin
Northern Hawk Owl
Tree Swallow
Violet-green Swallow
Greater Yellowlegs
Lesser Yellowlegs
American Robin
Orange-crowned Warbler
Golden-crowned Sparrow
White-crowned Sparrow

Setophaga petechia
Setophaga striata
Setophaga townsendi
Sitta canadensis
Spinus pinus
Surnia ulula
Tachycineta bicolor
Tachycineta thalassina
Tringa melanoleuca
Tringa flavipes
Turdus migratorius
Vermivora celata
Zonotrichia atricapilla
Zonotrichia leucophrys

MAMMALS

INSECTIVORA—Family Soricidae: Shrews

Masked Shrew *Sorex cinereus*
Vagrant Shrew *Sorex vagrans*

CARNIVORA—Family Ursidae: Bears

Black Bear *Ursus americanus*
Brown Bear *Ursus arctos*



Brown bear (*Ursus arctos*)

CARNIVORA—Family Mustelidae: Weasels, Skunks, etc

Wolverine	<i>Gulo gulo</i>
River Otter	<i>Lontra canadensis</i>
American Marten	<i>Martes americana</i>
Ermine (Short-tailed Weasel, Eurasian Stoat)	<i>Mustela erminea</i>
Least Weasel	<i>Mustela rixosa</i>
American Mink	<i>Mustela vison</i>

CARNIVORA—Family Canidae: Dogs, Wolves, and Foxes

Coyote	<i>Canis latrans</i>
Gray Wolf	<i>Canis Lupus</i>
Red Fox	<i>Vulpes vulpes</i>

CARNIVORA—Family Felidae: Cats

Canada Lynx	<i>Lynx canadensis</i>
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RODENTIA—Family Sciuridae: Squirrels

Northern Flying Squirrel	<i>Glaucomys sabrinus yukonensis</i>
Northern Gray Squirrel	<i>Sciurus carolinensis</i>
Red Squirrel	<i>Tamiasciurus hudsonicus</i>
Arctic Ground Squirrel	<i>Uroditellus parryii</i>

RODENTIA—Family Cricetidae: Mice, Rats, Lemmings, and Voles

Northern Red-backed Vole	<i>Myodes rutilus</i>
Western Meadow Vole	<i>Microtus drummondii</i>
Muskrat	<i>Ondatra zibethicus</i>
Meadow Jumping Mouse	<i>Zapus hudsonius</i>

RODENTIA—Family Erethizontidae: Porcupine

Porcupine	<i>Erethizon dorsatum</i>
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Coyote (*Canis latrans*)



Muskrat (*Ondatra zibethicus*)

RODENTIA—Family Castoridae: Beaver

Beaver *Castor canadensis*

LAGOMORPHA—Family Leporidae & Ochotonidae: Hares, Rabbits, and Pika

Snowshoe Hare *Lepus americanus*

Collared Pika *Ochotona collaris*

CHIROPTERA—Family Vespertilionidae: Micro Bats

Little Brown Bat *Myotis lucifugus*

ARTIODACTYLA—Family Cervidae: Deer

Moose *Alces alces*

Mountain Goat *Oreamnos americanus*

Dall Sheep *Ovis dalli*



Beaver (*Castor canadensis*)
Photo courtesy Teri Pieper

AMPHIBIANS

Wood Frog *Rana sylvatica*



Moose (*Alces alces*)
Photo courtesy Eberhard Brunner

ARACHNIDS/SPIDERS

Six-spotted Orbweaver	<i>Araniella displicata</i>
Marbled Orbweaver	<i>Araneus marmoreus</i>
Shamrock Orbweaver	<i>Araneus trifolium</i>
Spinyrib Wolf Spider	<i>Alopecosa aculeata</i>
Goldenrod Crab Spider	<i>Misumena vatia</i>
Saddleback Harvestman	<i>Mitopus morio</i>
Boreal Combfoot	<i>Steatoda borealis</i>

INSECTS

HYMENOPTERA—Family Formicidae: Ants

Boreal Carpenter (Hercules) Ant	<i>Camponotus herculeanus</i>
New World Red Bearded Ant	<i>Formica neorufibarbis</i>

HYMENOPTERA—Family Apidae: Bees—Bumblebees

Frigid Bumblebee	<i>Bombus frigidus</i>
Fuzzy-horned (Tricolored, Orange-belted, Mixed) Bumblebee	<i>Bombus mixtus</i>
Arctic (Polar) Bumblebee	<i>Bombus polaris</i>

HYMENOPTERA—Family Apidae: Bees—Honeybees

Western Honey Bee	<i>Apis mellifera</i>
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COLEOPTERA—Family Carabidae: Beetles

Red Flat Bark Beetle	<i>Cucujus clavipes</i>
Birch Shield Bug	<i>Elasmotethus interstinctus</i>
Margined Snail-eating Beetle	<i>Scaphinotus marginatus</i>



Western Honey Bee (*Apis mellifera*)

Photo courtesy Ivar Leidus

(See <https://www.inaturalist.org/places/chugach-state-park-boundary#taxon=47158>)

COLEOPTERA—Family Coccinellidae: Lady Beetles/Bugs

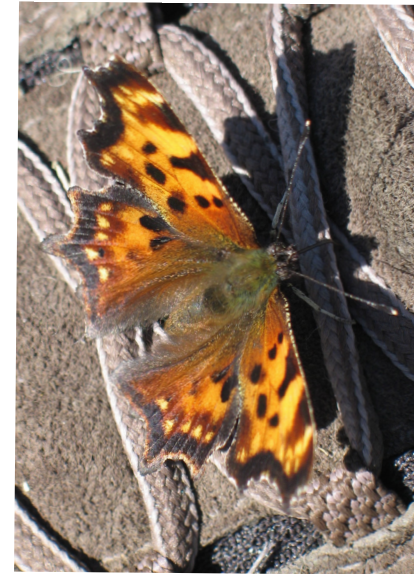
Gleaming	<i>Coccinella fulgida</i>
Streaked	<i>Myzia pullata</i>
Convergent	<i>Hippodamia convergens</i>
American Five-spotted	<i>Hippodamia quinquesignata</i>

LEPIDOPTERA—Family Papilionidae & Pieridae: Butterflies

Milbert's Tortoiseshell Butterfly	<i>Aglais milberti</i>
Cranberry Blue	<i>Agriades optilete</i>
Frigga Fritillary	<i>Boloria frigga</i>
Canadian Tiger Swallowtail	<i>Papilio canadensis</i>
Eastern Tiger Swallowtail	<i>Papilio glaucus</i>
Arctic White Butterfly	<i>Pieris angelika</i>
Margined White Butterfly	<i>Pieris marginalis</i>
Northern Blue Butterfly	<i>Plebejus idas</i>
Green Comma Butterfly	<i>Polygonia faunus</i>
Mourning Cloak Butterfly	<i>Nymphalis antiopa</i>
Polixenes Arctic Butterfly	<i>Oeneis polixenes</i>

**ODONATA—Family Suborder & Aeshnidae & Corduliidae:
Darners, Damselflies, and Dragonflies**

Variable Darner	<i>Aeshna interrupta</i>
Zigzag Darner	<i>Aeshna sitchensis</i>
American Emerald Dragonfly	<i>Cordulia shurtleffii</i>
Boreal Bluert Damselfly	<i>Enallagma boreale</i>
Northern Spreadwing Damselfly	<i>Lestes disjunctus</i>
Four-spotted Skimmer Dragonfly	<i>Libellula quadrimaculata</i>
Ringed Emerald Dragonfly	<i>Somatochlora albicincta</i>



Green Comma Butterfly
(*Polygonia faunus*)



Variable Darner (*Aeshna interrupta*)

HEMIPTERA—Family Aphidida: Aphids

Bog-dwelling Drone	<i>Eristalis cryptarum</i>
Black-bristled Logsitter	<i>Hammerschmidtia rufa</i>

TRICHOPTERA—Family Limnephilidae: Caddisflies

Dusky Drone Fly	<i>Eristalis obscura</i>
Green Alder Sawfly	<i>Monsoma pulveratum</i>

DIPTERA—Family Syrphidae: Hoverflies, Flower Flies

Mosquitos	<i>Culicidae</i>
Milky Slug	<i>Deroceras reticulatum</i>
Mayflies	<i>Ephemeroptera</i>
High Mountain Grasshopper	<i>Melanoplus frigidus</i>
White-bowed Smoothwing	<i>Scaeva affinis</i>

LEPIDOPTERA—Family Sphingidae & Arctiidae: Moths

Labrador Tiger	<i>Apantesis quenseli</i>
Ross' Tussock Moth	<i>Gynaephora rossii</i>
Hummingbird Clearwing	<i>Hemaris thysbe</i>
Bedstraw Hawkmoth	<i>Hyles gallii</i>
Scarce Infant	<i>Leucobrephephos brephoides</i>
Ruby Tiger	<i>Phragmatobia fuliginosa</i>

COLEOPTERA—Family Cerambycidae: Sawyers

White-spotted Sawyer	<i>Monochamus scutellatus</i>
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HYMENOPTERA—Family Vespidae: Wasps and Yellowjackets

Arctic Yellowjacket	<i>Dolichovespula albida</i>
Aerial Yellowjacket	<i>Dolichovespula arenaria</i>
Bald-faced Hornet	<i>Dolichovespula maculata</i>
Yellow-horned horntail	<i>Urocerus flavicornis</i>



Hummingbird Clearwing (*Hemaris thysbe*)
Photo courtesy Michael Nerrie

APPENDIX F. Panel Design Guidelines

NAI recommendations for good interpretive design should be followed by any company or organization that partners with ERNC to create interpretive signage.

Signage content should be written and reviewed by an interpretive writer in partnership with ERNC naturalists. If ERNC staff have certified interpretive guide training and interpretive writing skills, then they can develop signage content based on industry best practices.

DPOR also has a Policy and Procedure (#30100) for the development of permanent interpretive and orientation panels. It requires all interpretive and orientation signage to involve I&E in the development of this signage to ensure accuracy of message content and consistency of quality and look. It can be designed either by I&E, or in partnership with them, requiring reviews by the unit and other subject matter experts, and fabrication by the division's panel fabricator.

Cohesive Color Palette and Design Elements

This plan recommends developing a unified color palette that can be used in each implementation phase as old signage at ERNC is removed and new signage is created. Maintaining a consistent color palette over time indicates careful, thoughtful planning and builds a coherent visual identity.

Developing design elements to carry forward will also be key to building a strong visual identity.

The FERNC logo is a good starting place for creating the color palette.



Hex: 750909
R:117 G:9 B:9
C:31 M:100 Y:100 K:43



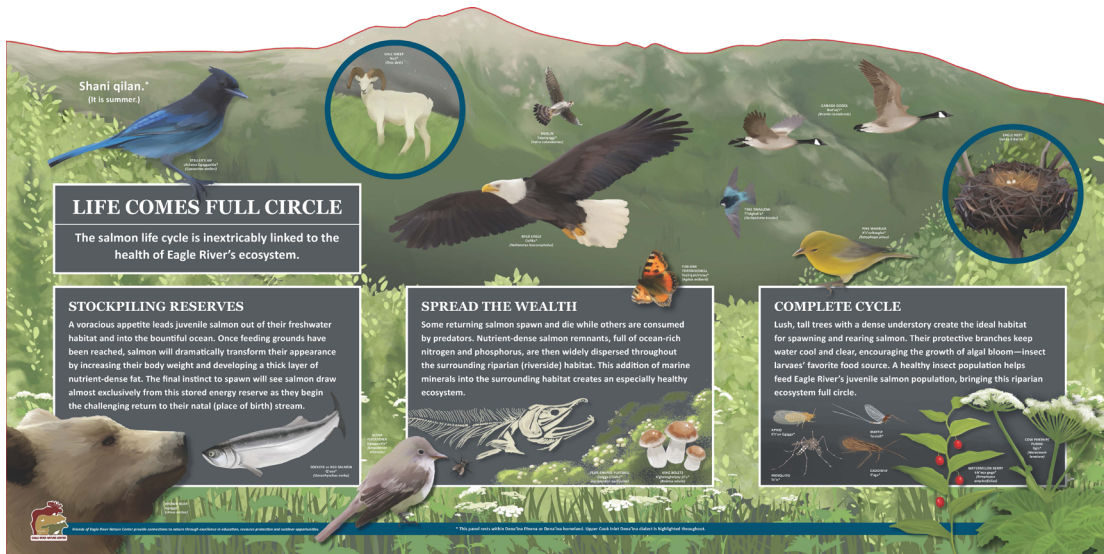
Hex: af8c4d
R:175 G:140 B:77
C:30 M:40 Y:81 K:6



Hex: 6c6a40
R:108 G:106 B:64
C:54 M:44 Y:82 K:25



Photo courtesy of Colin Tyler Photography



The newest signage created for the center uses grey text boxes with a white border. This style element can easily fit into any future design.

The design also features a 4th level line at the base of the sign in a captivating blue color.

This element includes the ERNC logo and vision statement, and notes the panel is within Dena'ina homeland.

Text box and base line colors:



Hex: 4a5257
R:74 G:82 B:87
C:70 M:57 Y:52 K:31



Hex: 00496e
R:0 G:73 B:110
C:100 M:72 Y:35 K:19

At a minimum, all signage created for this site should include these elements to create minimal cohesion across the interpretive signage.



Additional design elements can be used to bring cohesion to signage across a site. Some examples:

- **Icon:** A symbol, like a logo, to be featured on every panel in a series. Like an envelope icon conveys the idea of sending something (an email, etc.), in this case, an icon would be a small symbol created to convey a unifying theme for a set of panels—e.g. wildlife, geology, or stewardship.
- **Quotes:** Quotes, phrases, and text can unite panels. In the panels made for the Shem Pete Trails in Willow's Newman Park, a Shem Pete quote and translation are included across every panel, regardless of subject matter.
- **Shape:** A unique shape, as seen in the Shem Pete Trails and ERNC seasonal panel examples above, gives a distinct visual identity recognizable even at a distance.
- **Borders:** Having similar borders makes a striking impression and gives signage a consistent overall look. For example, DPOR orientation panels have a “swooping” border, an eagle at the top, and mountain (at the bottom). Every orientation panel greets every state park user in this same manner although location, colors, and content may differ. Borders are helpful in creating a funding line or other required caption.
- **Backgrounds:** Although this element may “disappear into the background” as intended, using a standard base can create a cohesive look across a site.

All panels in the Shem Pete Trails series had 1) the same border, 2) the same icon of the moon with the trail name around it, and 3) the same background element along the bottom of a forest and lake silhouette.



Logos

We recommend that only the FERNC logo is placed on most interpretive signage. Restricting logos to just one or two gives them importance.

To avoid visual clutter and maintain the featured logo's visual power, DPOR standard practice is to add contributor information in the fourth-level band across the base of the panel rather than use of additional logos.

I&E may drop the state parks logo to make space for contributor logos and provide “sign designed by Alaska State Park” information as text in a funding line.

Another solution to recognizing partners while keeping sign designs uncluttered is to place a small, non-invasive plaque on the post. This can highlight partners' contributions more effectively than one tiny visual element among many larger elements.



Fonts

Font wars often crop up in organizations. For an MIP, there must be typographical peace codified in a binding pact.

- The main body font must be easy to read. In interpretive signage, legibility is paramount.
- The primary font can be paired with a sparingly used “interest font” for titles, quotes or other brief text elements.
- Specialty fonts used to liven up plain body text must not sacrifice readability for visual interest.
- A single interpretive panel should have no more than three fonts.

Designers may bend these rules if they have a good reason.

To build continuity among all panels, it is recommended that all future interpretive panel designs use the fonts in the newest signage at the salmon viewing deck:

- **GEORGIA** for headlines offers interest as a serif font while remaining serious enough to introduce any topic.
- **Calibri** provides easy-to-read body text.

SAFE HAVEN

Salmon life begins below the gravel...

These fonts are common across design software programs so will be easily available for use in future projects.



Panel Sizes and Shapes

The design plan proposed for future interpretive panels should include standard shapes and a range of standard sizes.

Just like finding the right tool for the job, finding the right size for a panel to “do the job” of conveying messages will be important. The nature of the job—the amount of text on a sign and its location—will determine panel size and shape.

Each panel will be a standard size so they fit within a cohesive design plan. Standards also dictate the shape of signage. The new standards do allow for custom-cut signs similar to the newer signs placed at the salmon viewing deck.

Rail-mounted interpretive signs were implemented at the salmon viewing deck. They were based from an DPOR standard of 18 inches tall. However, their width was custom as the support of the railing allowed for wider panels that display more information. These are 36 inches wide with a custom-cut top. 18 inches remains low profile so not to block views, while the larger width allowed for additional information. It is recommended that future, smaller interpretive panels use the 18-inch height as the standard. This means that future DPOR Interpretive Sign Type E signs (described in next section) or rail mounted signs can come in three recommended sizes:

1. Smallest interpretive signs: 18 inches tall by 15 inches wide (for the Type E post)
2. Standard interpretive signs: 18 inches tall by 24 inches wide (for the Type E post)
3. Rail-mounted interpretive signs: 18 inches tall by 36 inches wide

Further recommendations about sign sizes and shapes are covered in the next section, DPOR Standard Mounts.



DPOR Standard Mounts

DPOR's Design and Construction Section employs a variety of standards that can be used and adapted for the ERNC MIP implementation. DPOR Standards are recommended for use as the ERNC facility and its trails lie within CSP. Users of Alaska's State Parks are accustomed to being greeted with these standards and finding the information they need for their visit and about the geological, cultural and biological features they encounter.

These standards are also recommended because their designs have been refined over the course of decades to withstand the stressors of Alaska's outdoor spaces, reducing maintenance costs over time. However, the MIP also recommends considerations for other welcoming and specialty signage for the nature center.



[Alaska State Parks Standard Drawings](#)

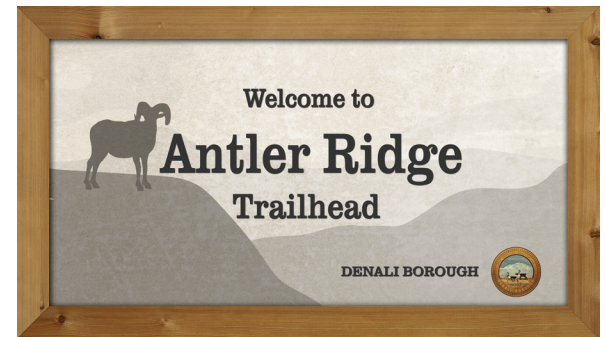
Standard Park Entrance Sign

This plan recommends developing a custom park entrance sign for the ERNC, replacing the current standard park entrance sign, while keeping the standard base. This high-value upgrade will convey a unique park identity for minimal cost.

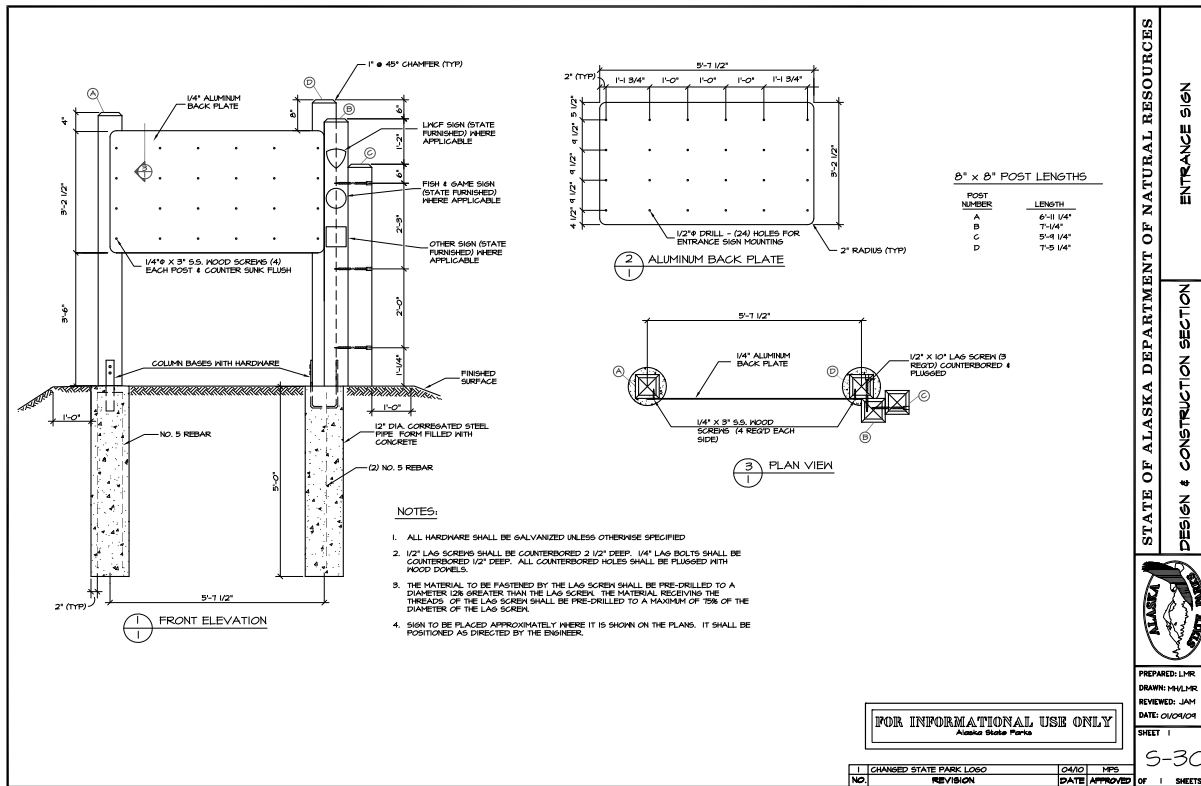
Giving the ERNC a custom look and feel is consistent with examples created at K'esugi Ken Campground and Potter Marsh.

The updated entrance sign text can read "Welcome to Eagle River Nature Center in Chugach State Park." The INHT and Crow Pass Trail can be introduced nearer the trailhead with specific signage.

The standard base can easily be upgraded in the future with rock bases or other features if desired.



Alaska State Parks Standard Drawings



Wayfinding Post

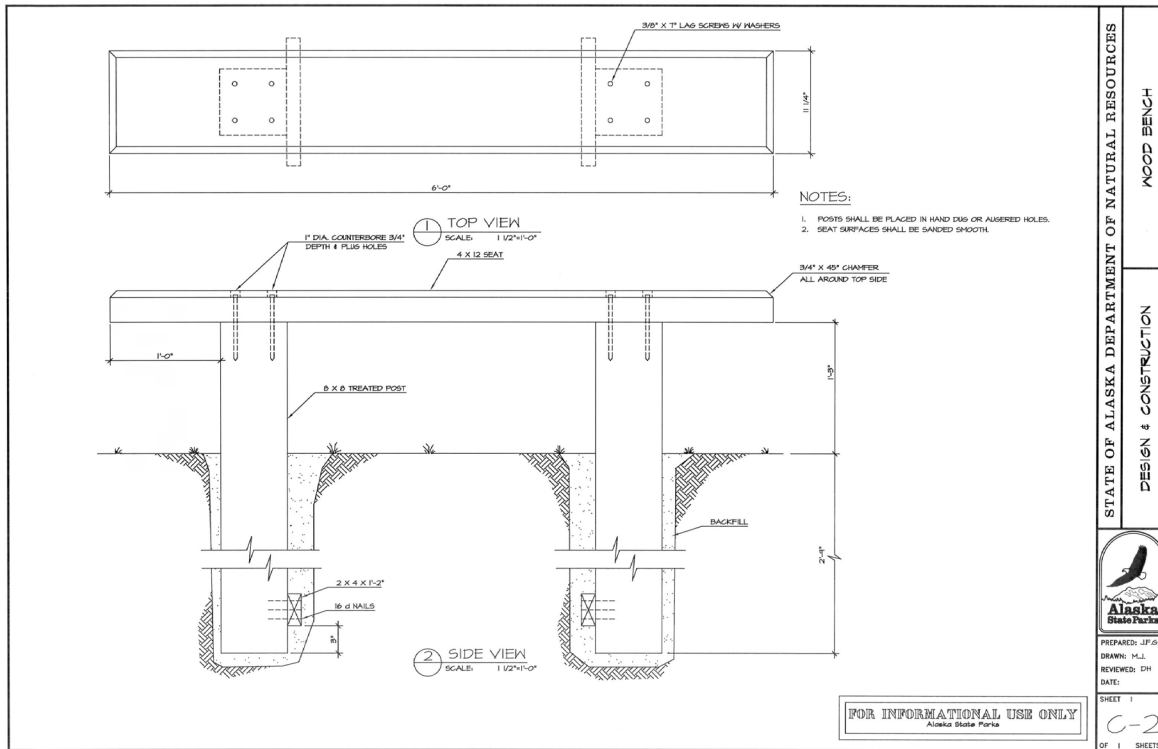
ERNC has a wayfinding post at most, if not all, of major trail intersections.

This plan recommends having this wayfinding post at every trail junction, if one does not already exist there, or if a Type A sign with orientation panel is not present. There are enough new visitors to the facility every year to warrant the clear wayfinding signage.

Additional icons and signs are recommended for each post (e.g. yurt/cabin names, trail names and directions, junction name if applicable, emergency locator information, etc.)

Wooden Bench

There are currently several wooden benches at this facility. A few additional benches are recommended in this plan.

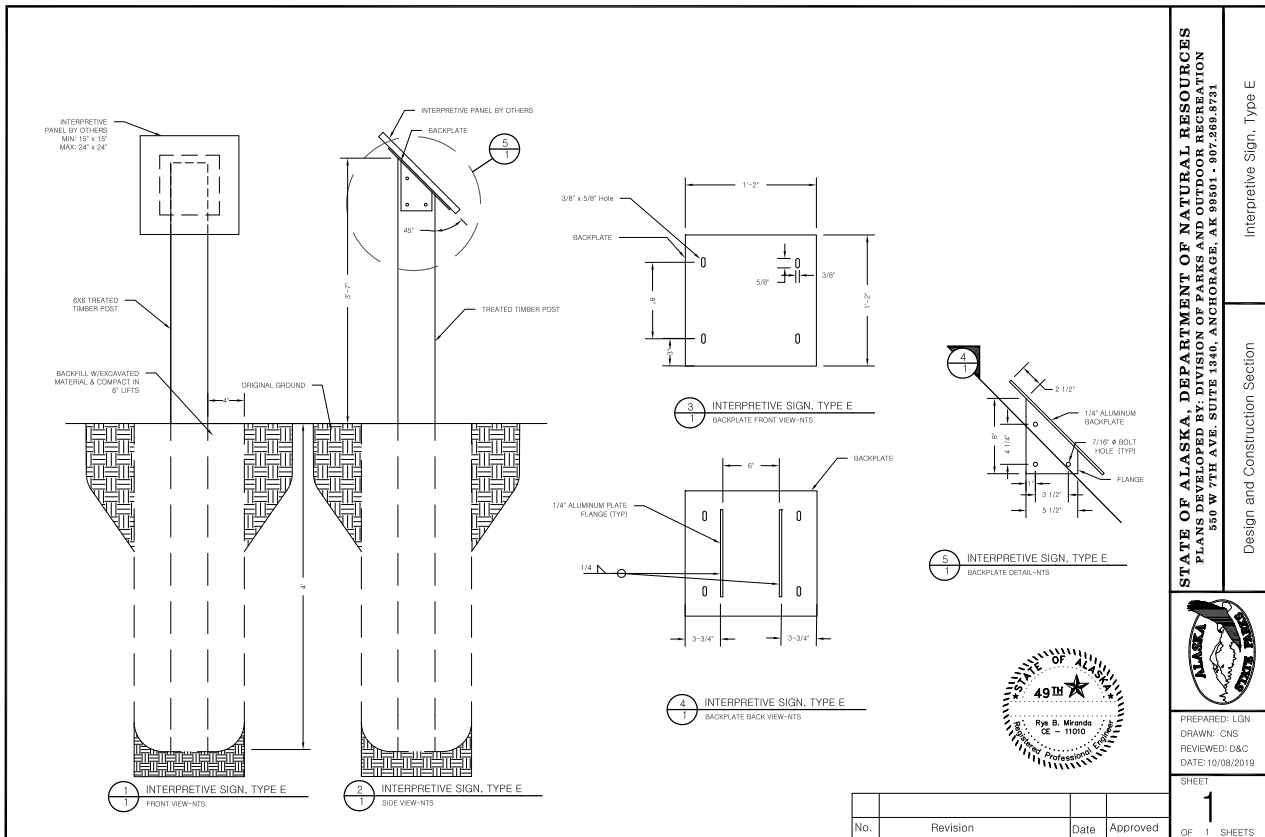


Alaska State Parks Standard Drawings

Type E Sign

Type E signs are generally used for interpretive signs set along trails on a single post or mounted on railings.

The standard size of the panels used with this post are 18 by 15 inches (small) or 18 by 24 inches (standard) and oriented either horizontally or vertically although this plan recommends sticking to 18 inches tall for consistency at the site. They can have custom cut borders or 3D elements, depending on their subject and location.



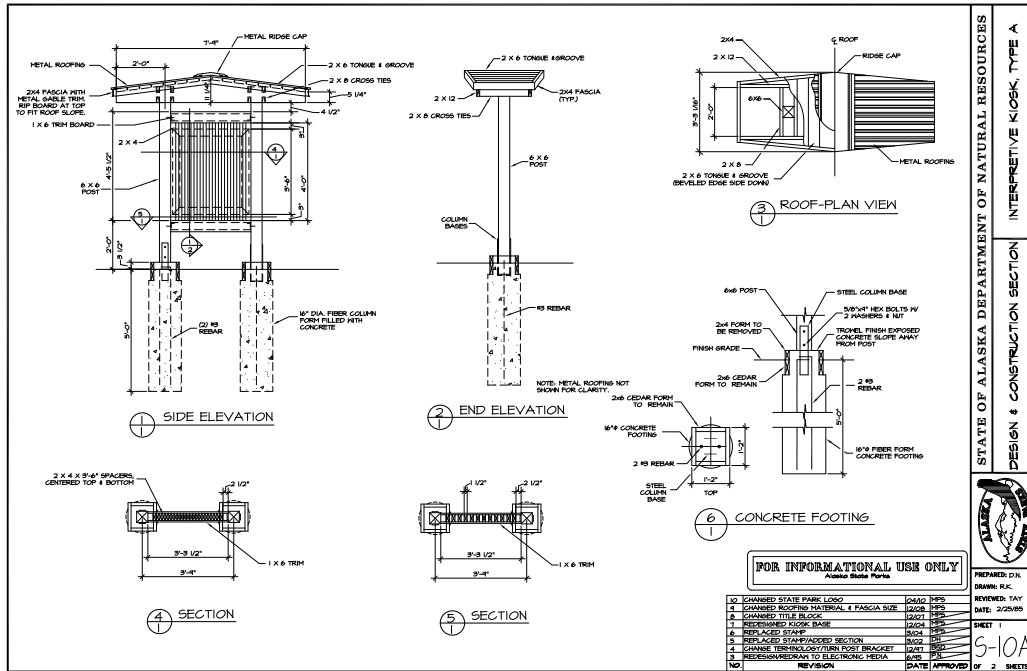
Alaska State Parks Standard Drawings



Type A Interpretive Kiosk

Type A interpretive kiosks can be double- or single-sided and are most used at smaller trailheads or important intersections. They are not low-profile signs as they stand taller than most people and have a roof to help with maintenance of the signage mounted to it. They are meant to command attention and are especially important for wayfinding, orientation, or safety messaging. This kiosk can be double- or single-sided depending on the orientation of installation. At DPOR trailheads, generally there is an orientation panel on one side while the other side can have either an interpretive panel or bulletin board. A few additional Type A kiosks are recommended in this plan. Attention to placement is important to plan for snow in the winter to be sure it is placed higher to accommodate deep snow years.

The standard size of the panel or panels is 30.5 by 36.5 inches. They are mounted inside the frame.



Alaska State Parks Standard Drawings



APPENDIX G. Implementation Plan

This plan schedules the implementation of all MIP recommended actions and interpretation to meet interpretive goals and themes.

Chart

In the chart on the following page, every recommendation from Chapter 5 is listed and scheduled into a five-year implementation plan. The suggested subjects for interpretation came together after site visits with the ERNC naturalists and staff, a collection of many viewpoints when out on the trail and noting ‘what is there’ that needs to be interpreted.

Phases

Phase 1: Should be “low-hanging fruit”—projects that can be obtained with the least amount of effort or funding, but have high impact.

Phases 2 through 4: These phases should be able to group similar recommendations in order to complete them as a whole. Additionally, the projects should cost less in phase two than in phase three and four to allow time for fundraising or grant writing.

Phase 5: Completes projects that are lower priority or conversely will take the most amount of planning, effort, or funding.

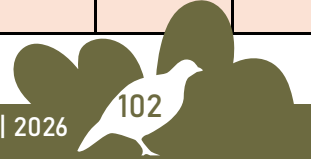
Themes Met

Additionally, this chart worked to identify themes met by each recommendation. Understandably, orientation and safety look as if they are met by most of the recommendations. This is partially due to grouping “replacing interpretation along X, Y, or Z trail” into one recommendation, so all themes are met. It will take continued discernment by the interpretive writers and ERNC naturalists to ensure that all interpretive goals and themes will be met by the final signage determined for implementation.



Recommendation Table

Rec. Number(s)	Recommendation	Location	Building phases					Funding statuses	Themes met by Recommendation:						
			Phase 1 2026	Phase 2 2027	Phase 3 2028	Phase 4 2029	Phase 5 2030		Welcome Orient	Steward. Safety	Recr. Wellness	Flora Fauna	Nat. Wonders	Hist. Signif.	
	**Recommendations that are described in the pages following this chart.														
Zone 1; 1	Park Entrance Sign	Zone 1: Current sign installed at park entrance	*						*						
Zone 1; 2	Raised Sign in Concrete Island	Zone 1: Inserted in and above concrete island	*					Funds being raised currently	*						
Zone 1; 3	ERNC Name Sign	Zone 1: Panel on building face			*				*						
Zone 2; 1	Upper Parking Lot Visitor Flow Elements: includes signage, flagstones, tiles, concrete insets, archway, arrows, etc.	Zone 2: From the upper parking lot to the right, south side of the building				*			*	*					
Zone 2; 2	Dena'ina Placename Project	Zone 2: South side of the building just as you enter the deck area		*	*			Work with APF to place and fund sign (will determine phase implementation)							*
Zone 2; 3	Landscape Design and Pathways	Zone 2: From the upper parking lot to the right, south side of the building				*			*	*					
Zone 2; 4	Reset/Move Larger Orientation Kiosk	Zone 2: Back of upper deck	*					Have kiosk	*	*					
Zone 2; 5	Type A Interpretive Kiosk**	Zone 2: Beginning of Crow Pass/Iditarod trail or prior to or at first trail junction	*						*	*					*
Zone 2; 6	Reset Type A Interpretive Kiosk and "Iron Ranger" Fee Station	Zone 2: Lower Parking Lot at Rodak Trailhead				*		Have kiosk, fee station	*	*		*			
Zone 2; 7	Boot Brush Stations**	Zone 2: Next to prior two Type A kiosks		*				Explore partnership with a Soil and Water Conservation District for funding		*		*			
Zone 2; 8	Consolidate Upper Parking Lot Informational Signs	Zone 2: Upper Parking Lot				*			*	*					
Zone 2; 9	Consolidate Lower Parking Lot Informational Signs	Zone 2: Lower Parking Lot				*			*	*					
Zone 2; 10	Signage: to discourage incorrect flow	Zone 2: North side of ERNC building		*						*					
Zone 2; 11	Interpretive Signage**	Zone 2: ERNC area			*				*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Zone 3; 1	Beaver Overlook: interpretation refresh**	Zone 3: Beaver Overlook on Rodak Trail			*							*	*		
Zone 3; 2	Remove Old Interpretive Signs and Refresh Interpretive Signage on the Rodak Loop**	Zone 3: Rodak Loop		*	*					*	*	*	*	*	*
Zone 3; 3	Create additional bench seating	Zone 3: Rodak Loop	*					Could fund benches through sale of memorial plaques							
Zone 3; 4	Wayfinding Posts: at all junctions missing one	Zone 3: Rodak Loop	*						*	*					



Recommendation Table

Rec. Number(s)	Recommendation	Location	Building phases					Funding statuses	Themes met by Recommendation:						
							*								
Zone 3; 5	Emergency Locator Numbers: added to wayfinding posts	Zone 3: Rodak Loop					*		*	*					
Zone 3; 6	Bear Safety Interp Display (See 4; 1)														
Zone 4; 1	Bear Safety Interpretive Display**	Zone 4: Rodak Loop at intersection with Albert Loop		*				High priority		*	*	*			
Zone 4; 2	Albert Loop signage: at River Trial Yurt and snowmachine access about flooding and closures**	Zone 4: Albert Loop at RT Yurt/Snowmachine Access					*			*		*	*		
Zone 4; 3	Wayfinding Posts: at all junctions missing one	Zone 4: Albert Loop	*						*	*					
Zone 4; 4	Emergency Locator Numbers: added to wayfinding posts	Zone 4: Albert Loop		*					*	*					
Zone 4; 5	Interpretation Refresh: along early segment from trailhead to intersection with the Rodak and Dew Mound Trails **	Zone 4: Crow Pass/INHT to Rodak/Dew Jct.			*	*				*	*	*	*	*	*
Zone 4; 6	Interactive/Play Feature or Ball Run**	Zone 4: Crow Pass/INHT and/or Play Area					*				*				
Zone 4; 7	Wayfinding Posts: at all junctions missing one	Zone 4: Crow Pass/Iditarod Trail esp. every remaining intersection to/from Echo Bend CG	*						*	*					
Zone 4; 8	Emergency Locator Numbers: added to wayfinding posts	Zone 4: Crow Pass/Iditarod Trail		*					*	*					
Zone 4; 9	Wayfinding Posts: at all junctions missing one	Zone 4: Dew Mound Trail	*						*	*					
Zone 4; 10	Replace/Improve Tree Blazes for Winter Travelers	Zone 4: Dew Mound Trail		*					*	*					
Zone 4; 11	Add Minimal Back-country Safety and Camping Signage: include Albert Loop closures for people floating rapids in fall, LNT information, bear/fire awareness, etc.**	Zone 4: Echo Bend CG Area					*			*					
Zone 4; 12	Emergency Locator Numbers: added to wayfinding posts	Zone 4: Dew Mound Trail		*					*						
TOTALS:			9	9	6	6	5		21	23	5	8	5	5	



Proposed Interpretive Signage and Subjects

This section further describes the proposed recommendations that are double-starred (**) in the Recommendations Table.

Zone 2; 5: Type A Interpretive Kiosk

It is recommended to add an introduction of the Crow Pass/INHT panel on the reverse side of the kiosk.

Zone 2; 7: Boot Brush Stations

Boot brushes are often combined with stewardship messages about invasive species in the area. Oftentimes Soil and Water Conservation Districts partner with organizations to place these stations.

Zone 2; 11: Interpretive Signage Improvements Next to the Nature Center

It is recommended to:

- replace handmade plant ID signage with professional plant ID markers (possibly including scientific and Native names, and cultural, traditional, and modern uses).
- replace the peak ID panel that was removed as it benefits people who do not wander beyond the nature center.
- repair and reorient the sculptural map of Eagle River.
- remove the Flora and Fauna panels, potentially replacing them with fewer, panels (with possibly tactile or accessible features) for visitor and program interaction.

Zone 3; 1: Beaver Overlook

Years of beaver activity have transformed the area, undermining the relevance of the viewing deck interpretation. It is recommended to remove the 20-year-old signs and replace them with smaller, rail-mounted signs that mimic the new panels at the salmon viewing deck.



A boot brush station next to a trail orientation panel. Photo courtesy National Park Service



This Bird Point orientation panel has a raised locator map that is printed with clear braille dots and a raised clear line along the ADA accessible path.



Zone 3; 2: Rodak Loop Interpretive Signage

It is recommended to:

- update the signage about glaciation. Although it might be placed in the same location as the current glaciation sign, it needs updated to discuss specifically glaciation in the Eagle River valley.
- interpret erratics and how they arrived in the valley at the site of an erratic.
- discuss squirrels, middens, and their role in the ecosystem in 'Squirrel Alley.'
- create new signage near the wetlands about bird migration, nesting, watching (raptors, dippers, swallows, etc.), and the importance of dogs on leash.
- interpret the bear back-scratching post.
- create new bat houses and add interpretation about bats.
- replace two older signs with one or two new panels, closer to the Dew Mound Trail junction, on subjects relevant to the location.

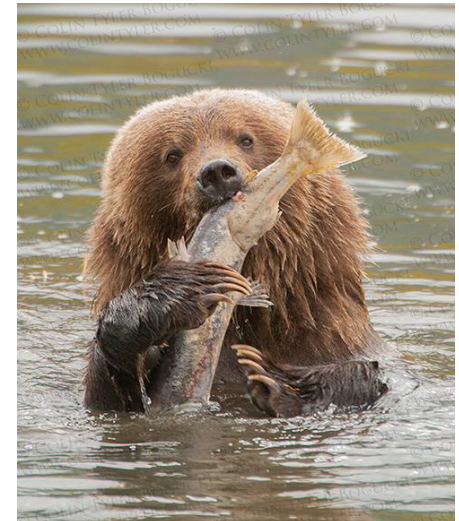


Photo courtesy of Colin Tyler Photography

Zone 4; 1: Bear Safety Interpretive Display

A bear safety interpretive sign at this location is a high priority. This junction is where the Albert Loop is closed seasonally during the fish runs. Having interpretive messages will better communicate bear awareness and safety information.



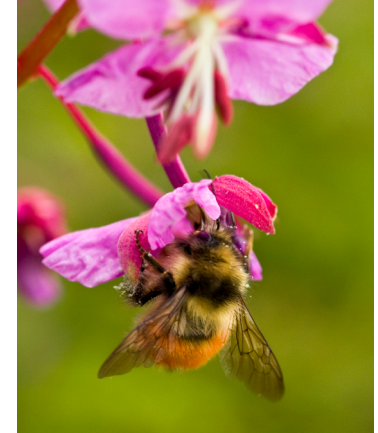
A USFS panel on bear safety at Russian River Campground.

Zone 4; 2: Albert Loop Flooding and Snowmachine Signage

During certain times of the year (including winter), Eagle River experiences seasonal flooding and breaches its banks. There is an opportunity to add interpretive information to the trail closure notices. This recommendation is lower priority for ERNC staff.

Zone 4; 5: Trailside Interpretation (from trailhead to Rodak/Dew Mound junction)

- an introductory Crow Pass/Iditarod panel is recommended at the Type A kiosk in Zone 2 (recommendation 5); panels on this Zone 4 segment of trail could go deeper into cultural use or history of the Eagle River Valley and Crow Pass.
- this trail has thriving meadows full of flowers, pollinators, and mushrooms that can be interpreted in numerous ways.
- there are potential culturally modified trees along this trail that need studied.
- older birch and cottonwood line the trail and draw interest. Both trees have significant roles in the habitat and have cultural and historical uses that can be interpreted.



Zone 4; 6: Interactive Play Features or Ball Run

ERNC staff understand that the uphill trip back to the nature center can be wearying for young visitors legs. Creating purposeful, interactive interpretive or play elements can allow for breaks along the Crow Pass/INHT here in the play or shelter building area located at the junction with the Rodak Trail. A ball run could be considered for progressing young visitors downhill or to the next subject area. Subjects remain to be discussed; additional panels would likely support ERNC staff programs for young visitors.



Zone 4; 11: Echo Bend Campground

It is recommended to add orientation, stewardship, closure, and boating safety information in a Type A Interpretive Kiosk at the campground, giving the site a central location for information and key messages or important notices. If a Type A is too large for this location, a smaller ASP standard could be adjusted to fit this purpose, though this might limit the amount of messaging possible.



