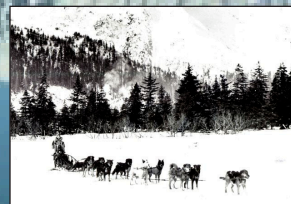
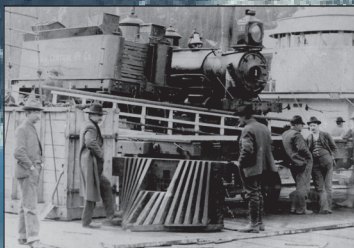
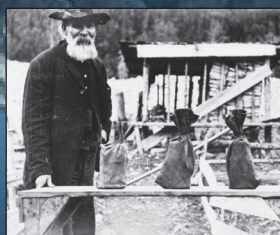




# Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm National Heritage Area

Executive Summary of Draft Management Plan

August 2011





## Executive Summary

The Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm (KMTA) National Heritage Area encompasses a magnificent landscape of mountains, lakes, rivers and fjords, traveled ways and small communities with nationally significant historic and cultural value. The area is located in the mountainous region of the Kenai Peninsula that runs north/south from the communities of Bird/Indian and Girdwood, through Moose Pass, to the City of Seward including Cooper Landing, Sunrise, and Hope to the west, and Portage, Whittier and the waters of Prince William Sound to the east.



As the coordinating entity for the KMTA National Heritage Area, the Kenai Mountains Turnagain Arm Corridor Communities Association (KMTA CCA) is tasked with developing and implementing a management plan with the input of people and organizations that have a role in the Heritage Area, including residents, communities, non-governmental organizations, Alaska Native entities, as well as national and state entities that manage trails and transportation facilities, lands and resources.

Public meetings were held during the spring and summer of 2010 to gather information regarding the vision of communities and organizations within the National Heritage Area so that the projects that are selected for funding can align with their priorities. The plan also must meet the requirements of the legislation, sponsored by Alaska's Senator Lisa Murkowski, that created the KMTA National Heritage Area in March 2009.

This management plan is meant to encourage preservation and conservation of the region's nationally important story about the many different people who traveled through, settled and developed the rugged mountain valleys of the KMTA National Heritage Area. The routes and modes of transportation developed by those who have traveled the valleys and waterways over time - starting with indigenous native peoples, continuing with early explorers, Russian miners, "Gold Rush" miners, dogsled mail carriers, to early settlers and modern visitors - give shape and texture to the fascinating story of this unique National Heritage Area. In the 1770s Captain Cook sailed into Turnagain Arm and turned around in the vicinity of the community that is now Indian. The nation has recognized the historic significance of the Iditarod Trail, the Alaska Railroad and the



Seward Highway Scenic Byway, now an All-American Road. Creating the KMTA National Heritage Area put these prior designations in the wider context of travel patterns over time and throughout the broad corridor of mountains and valleys.

Programs and projects that are developed through the National Heritage Area will be built around local and regional interests and may include (but are not limited to):

- Trail and wayside development and maintenance;
- Historic, cultural, and archeological interpretation of sites, neighborhoods, landscapes and traveled ways;
- Assistance to local museums and interpretive centers;
- Visitor and resident information about the heritage area resources and outdoor recreational and educational opportunities;
- Land and water recreational resource conservation and interpretation;
- Assistance to local education systems to enhance education regarding the history and resources of the National Heritage Area;
- Economic and community development that accomplishes purposes of the KMTA National Heritage Area.



The National Park Service is charged with technical assistance and oversight of the federal funds appropriated by Congress for the development of the KMTA National Heritage Area. The KMTA CCA will work with the National Park Service to assure that public monies are properly expended and that federal accountability and transparency requirements are fulfilled. A copy of the cooperative agreement between the NPS and KMTA CCA is attached as an appendix to this document.

In addition to the NPS, the KMTA CCA will collaborate with other partners to implement the management plan. Much of the KMTA National Heritage Area is within the Chugach National Forest, and the US Forest Service will continue to be an important partner in implementing the management plan. Strong partnerships with non-profit, private, and state governmental entities willing to invest in KMTA NHA projects are key to the success of the plan. Many of these partnerships are underway. The goal of these partnerships is to further the KMTA CCA mission to protect, enhance, interpret, fund, manage and develop the natural, historical, cultural, scenic and recreational resources of the KMTA National Heritage Area.

Another task of the KMTA CCA is to identify and develop funding sources to sustain the National Heritage Area beyond the 15-year limit of Congressional funding. Accomplishing this purpose will involve development of partnerships with communities and organizations committed to the vision of the National Heritage Area.



This management plan intentionally leaves room for flexibility so that themes and objectives can evolve at the grass-roots level. Communities within the KMTA National Heritage Area will drive the programs and projects that are brought forward for funding.

It should be emphasized that participation in KMTA CCA projects and programs is voluntary. Zoning and land-use decisions by government entities are not affected. No land enters federal control as a result of National Heritage Area designation. Private property rights are respected and not affected.

This plan is intended for the long-term benefit of the people of the KMTA National Heritage Area, the State of Alaska, and the nation.

### **HOW TO COMMENT ON THE DRAFT MANAGEMENT PLAN**

A series of public were held in the spring of 2010 to garner public feedback in creating a draft management plan. The draft management plan was written and made public on July 1, 2011. The plan is available to read in its entirety on the KMTA NHA website. Written comment is invited via the website:

**[kmtacorridor.org](http://kmtacorridor.org)**

or by sending letters to:

Jim Richardson, President  
Kenai Mountains Turnagain Arm Corridor Communities Association  
3339 Wentworth Street  
Anchorage, AK 99508-4348

In addition, the following public meetings are scheduled:

- August 16, 7 p.m., Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly meeting, 144 N. Binkley, Soldotna, AK.
- September 12, 7 p.m., Seward City Council meeting, City Hall, 410 Adam Street, Seward, AK.
- September 15, 7:00 p.m., Cook Inlet Historical Society program, Anchorage Museum Auditorium, 625 C Street, Anchorage, AK.
- Girdwood Board of Supervisors meeting, date/time to-be-announced.

