

# Hope Separated Path Project

## A safe, non-motorized bicycle pathway from the Seward Highway to Hope

The Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm (KMTA) National Heritage Area would like to assist KMTA communities and partners in developing a non-motorized, bicycle pathway through the National Heritage Area. We are seeking community input for a possible route along the Hope Highway. This would offer safe passage for cyclists and other non-motorized users who currently use the narrow, winding Hope Highway as a recreational route.



### Kenai Mountains - Turnagain Arm National Heritage Area

The designation of Alaska's Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm as a National Heritage Area recognizes the compelling history and culture of an area that cradles some of the most influential crossroads of Alaska's history. National Heritage Areas are designated by an Act of Congress and administered by a local non-profit. Designation has no effect on property rights. Funding for grassroots projects that enhance and preserve the area's historic, cultural, scenic, and outdoor recreational resources is provided by the National Heritage Area program through the National Park Service. For more information visit [www.kmtacorridor.org](http://www.kmtacorridor.org)



# Discover the Story

Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm  
National Heritage Area

Hope Inc.  
Hope Village Council  
P.O. Box 101  
Hope, AK 99605

Date: November 10, 2016

To: Kenai Mountains Turnagain Arm National Heritage Area  
c/o Kaylene Johnson-Sullivan  
P.O. Box 771054  
Eagle River, AK 99577

The Community of Hope has made the building of a bicycle / pedestrian path along the Hope Highway, particularly through the community, a priority for several years now. Hope is becoming increasingly popular with more visitors which results in considerable more traffic on the Hope Highway and through the Village of Hope.

The Hope Highway is a two lane paved road with minimal shoulders past the white fog line. Drivers often travel over the speed limit and wary cyclists and pedestrians have few options to escape them. We have kids on bikes, parents with baby strollers and small children that have no where to travel but on the limited shoulder which puts them right next to traffic. There is a demonstrated need for a dedicated non-motorized pedestrian / bikeway path along the Hope Highway.

A safe bicycle route into Hope from the Seward Highway would also connect with existing trails along Turnagain Arm trails to trails in the eastern Kenai Mountains. Linking these routes to Hope would create premier trail connections that would draw visitors and foster economic development. Improving travel opportunities along the Hope Highway would also boost the recreational and cultural resources in Hope. Hope is a launch sport for some of the most beloved trails in Chugach National Forest: Resurrection Pass Trail, Gull Rock, and Hope Point.

This region is part of the Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm National Heritage Area (KMTA), an area celebrated for its' historic travel corridors. KMTA is leading the effort to improve safety and trail development along the Hope Highway. As early as 2013, the Kenai Peninsula Borough Transportation Plan identified the Hope Highway through the community of Hope as one of the highest priority roadside trail improvement projects.

The Village of Hope strongly supports the development of a non-motorized paved trail along the Hope Highway. At a recent community meeting held on September 24, 2016 the community once again affirmed support for a bike trail along the Hope Highway.

Sincerely,



Jim Skogstad  
President-Hope Inc.

To Whom it May Concern:

My name is Holly Brooks and I am a part-time resident of Hope, Alaska and a two-time Olympian in the sport of Cross Country skiing. This is a letter of support for the proposed human-powered pedestrian path and safety improvements along the Hope Highway.

As a former professional athlete the 16-mile stretch of the Hope road was an integral yet dangerous part of my training for the 2010 Vancouver and 2014 Sochi Winter Olympic Games. "Roller skiing" is a form of cross training for "winter snow skiing" and necessitates a paved road to conduct the activity. Without a bike path as an option, I would brave the Hope highway regularly as I used to train twice a day, six days per week.

The Hope Highway is a windy, two-lane paved road with limited visibility around corners. The shoulders are narrow to non-existent. Drivers often travel over the speed limit and in the summer, the road is full of wide RVs that aren't very maneuverable. On top of that, drivers are distracted by the beautiful sites the highway and surrounding area have to offer. Consequently, over the span of my career (training on the road) I had a number of close calls forcing me to bail into the brush alongside the road. By separating human-powered and engine-powered traffic *everyone* would benefit.

A safe human-powered route into Hope from the Seward Highway would be a huge asset to the community and those visiting it. As a spokesperson for Healthy Futures I advocate for easy, accessible opportunities for exercise and activity for people of all ages and abilities. Not everyone is comfortable recreating in the woods and I believe this bike path would attract locals and tourist alike. Additionally, the trail/path would connect with existing trails along Turnagain Arm to trails in the eastern Kenai Mountains. Linking these routes to Hope would create premier trail connections that would draw visitors and foster economic development. Hope is a launch spot for some of the most beloved trails in Chugach National Forest: Resurrection Pass Trail, Gull Rock, and Hope Point.

Despite being a dead-end community Hope is exploding in popularity and this safety corridor is an obvious next step. In the name of health and safety, let's build the pedestrian path! This project has my full support and if there is ever anyway I can help make it happen please contact me!

Sincerely,

Holly Brooks  
2x Alaskan Olympian  
Hope Resident  
Healthy Futures Spokesperson

August 11, 2016

To whom it May Concern:

I am writing in support of the bike/pedestrian safety improvements along the Hope Highway.

I am the head coach and director of the APU Nordic Ski Center (APUNSC). The APUNSC is ski club based out of the Alaska Pacific University in Anchorage Alaska. We specialize in helping cross-country skier prepare for International competition and helping promote skiing in Alaska. Our program has community-based programs as well as elite level programs focused on Olympic level skiing. Currently we have 250 members from ten to eighty five years old.

Every summer, we have athletes that use the roads for roller ski training. Hope's road is an incredible resource for training and recreation. Often we have groups that will stay in Hope, train for a few days, using a combination of the road for roller skiing and running in the mountains. Traffic and shoulders are always a consideration. With the proposed plan of a separated path and improvements, it would provide a safer and better experience, most likely resulting in more people enjoying Hope's incredible recreation.

I support the development of a non-motorized paved trail along the Hope Highway.

Sincerely,



Erik Flora

Director and Head Coach, APU Nordic Ski Center  
Olympic Coach, 2010 and 2014