

## Appendix M—Draft Trail Guidelines

### Guidelines for trails

The trail system is a key component for education, research, and recreation taking place in the North Campus. The trail system provides convenient access for research and education, for both the UAF scientists and community, and provides recreation opportunities for UAF and the Fairbanks community. The UAF Master plan directs the North Campus Subcommittee to develop a plan that promotes the UAF trail system as a valuable campus and community asset. However, the trail system, and its uses, *must* be compatible with the other uses occurring on the North Campus and the value statements of the North Campus. Recommendations regarding the trail system follow.

### Americans with Disabilities Act compliance

The North Campus manager will pursue detailing how the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 relates to the trail system of the North Campus. This may be especially relevant to the use of the North Campus for education.

### Guidelines for lights along trails

The issue of expanded lighting has been raised. Due to the potential for negative effects on research, increased lighting is not planned at this time. If lights are to be increased in the future the most likely route would be from the current northern terminus of the lights on the T-Field road to the southeastern corner of the T-Field. The survey conducted during the public involvement meeting found that 60% of respondents felt expanding the ski trail lights is acceptable; 30% felt it is unacceptable. The most often cited area for expanding the lights was the T-Field road, followed by the Midnight Express and Big Whizzy loops.

1. If the lights are expanded, they should be located near existing power.
2. The lights should be concentrated in a small area to minimize the extent of light pollution.
3. The lights on the remainder of the T-Field road (leading to the T-Field) should be a priority as power exists in this area and this area was identified as a priority for lighting in the Skarland Trails Management Plan.
4. The T-Field itself, may receive enough light from the moon sky (plus potential T-Field road lights) to be safely skied at night.
5. The Midnight Express Loop may have potential for lighting due to its compact nature (e.g., one light pole may illuminate several sections of the trail) and proximity to areas that already have lights.
6. Expansion of Trail lighting would require North Campus Subcommittee approval.

### Guidelines for walking trails in North Campus

The Skarland Trails Plans lists several proposals for winter walking trails on the North Campus. This plan upholds those recommendations.

1. Increase amount of groomed winter walking trails. These trails should be loops of roughly one-half to one mile. Three to four new loops should be formed, either on existing trails, or by cutting new corridors. The trails should be distributed along the southern boundary of the North Campus, and have easy access from various points on campus, such as West Ridge, student housing, and lower campus. New walking trails can potentially cross groomed ski trails at right angles, but should not be adjacent to the same route, which leads to walkers ending up on groomed ski trails. Walkers are often the new to the University (e.g., new students) and least familiar with North Campus so they need adequate signage to ensure they know where to go and why walking on groomed ski trails in winter is not allowed.
2. Where possible, efforts will be made to accommodate walkers on the edge of groomed skate skiing trails. However, the feasibility of compatibility with skiing will have to be explored.
3. The feasibility of a multi-use corridor, which can be used for commuting from West Ridge to Yankovich Rd. should be explored.
  - a. The corridor would be a multiuse path for walkers and bikers
  - b. The agreement between UAF and the United States Geological Survey for the College International Geophysical Observatory site specified buffer zones in which new trails cannot be developed. This must be considered when examining a route for such a commuting corridor.
  - c. Alternate route: Dalton Trail to Pooch Loop to North Tanana.

### Other guidelines for trails

1. Groomed ski trails: Dogs and walkers are not allowed on trails designated for skiing only.
2. Trails within the Arboretum will not be widened (i.e., the average width as measured trunk to trunk will not increase over current conditions nor will extensive brushing be allowed).
3. Maintenance of groomed trails: continue mowing, brushing and flattening as needed.
4. Erosion should be mitigated using appropriate techniques.
5. Trail width: A limit to trail width should be established. Essentially, this applies to trails cut through the wooded areas.
  - a. No trail wider than 40 ft. (an exception would be an approved "practice area").

- b. No more than 40% of the trail miles can be 30 to 40 feet wide.
  - c. At least 30% of the trail miles remain 10 feet or less in width.
6. Trail surface
- a. Continue to evaluate areas of trails that are persistently wet during summer.
  - b. Explore options for trail cover, such as geo-matting, to prevent further erosion.
  - c. Approximately 5% of trail miles could end up covered with some appropriate trail surfaces.
  - d. Permanent boardwalks should be avoided on trails.
7. Restrictions on wet areas: While there was support for placing some limitations on use in areas that are continuously wet in the summer, the extent of erosion from this use is not likely too great. Therefore, no restrictions are recommended at this time, but wet areas should be monitored for erosion. Increased informational signage is expected to reduce (often accidental) use of wet areas in summer.
8. Trail construction: Trail development shall be reviewed by the North Campus manager, and the North Campus Subcommittee. Trail development should minimize disturbance to permafrost and should preserve the natural aesthetic of the area (i.e. no berms, no big brush piles, etc.). Trails should be cleared and surfaced to avoid erosion.
9. The possibility of a central parking area, trail access, and beginner's ski area on the land NE of the museum and south of the proposed Tanana Loop extension should be explored. This could be adjacent to, and coordinated with the proposed UA Museum/NSF open space. Plans for this open space should allow for North Campus trail access in case this is necessitated by construction of Tanana Loop.
10. Smith Lake Preserve: Existing trails that occur within the hundred-yard buffer will be exempted to the following specific limits.
- a. The trail connecting the south side of Smith Lake to the Potato Field can be no wider than 30 ft. measured from tree to tree.
  - b. The trail connecting the northwest side of Smith Lake to the T-Field Road can be no wider than 30 ft. measured from tree to tree.
  - c. The trail connecting the east end of Smith Lake to the T-Field Road can be no wider than 15 ft. measured from tree to tree.
  - d. The remainder of the trails will be no wider than 5 ft. measured tree to tree.