



# Johnson Pass Trail

Seward Ranger District, Chugach National Forest  
(907) 288-3178



**Recommended Uses**  
**Difficulty**  
**Public Use**  
**Length (one way)**

Easy to Moderate  
Moderate  
23 miles

**USGS Map**  
**Trip Time (one way)**  
**Recommended Season**  
**Elevation Gain**

Seward C6, C7  
2-3 days  
June-October  
1000 feet

## Trail Access

**North Trailhead:** At Mile 64, Seward Highway, (east of Granite Creek Campground) turn south on Forest Service signed, gravel road for 1/4 miles to trailhead parking. **South Trailhead:** At Mile 32.5 Seward Highway, pull into Forest Service signed pullout for trailhead (west of Upper Trail Lake). Parking areas may not be plowed in winter. *Trail is closed to saddle/pack stock from April 1-June 30 and motorized vehicles from May 1-November 30 between miles 3.3 on the north clear to the southern trailhead. The first 3.9 miles of the trail from the north trailhead is closed year round to motorized vehicles.* The Johnson Pass Wagon Road at the western edge of the parking area for North Johnson Pass trail should be used for winter access instead of the hiking trail. Winter access from the south is via the Johnson Creek winter route, which begins 1 mile up Trail Creek from the end of frozen Upper Trail Lake and connects with the Johnson Pass Trail south at mile 7.88.

## Trail Grade/Condition

Gradual elevation gain with short, steep sections. Well maintained, though may be muddy until mid-June due to snowmelt. Snow on trail may persist into early June. Downed trees can impede travel year round especially from the south trailhead to Johnson Lake.

## Recreational Opportunities

Excellent trail for those seeking spectacular scenery with few extreme elevation changes. This trail is very busy on the weekends due to bicycle use; this is an extremely popular mountain bike trail. Excellent family outing for those who can hike longer distances. Day hiking is good from both the north and south trailheads. During the first half of the southern trail, you will pass through hemlock and beetle kill spruce forests with alder and willow. The first two miles offer vistas of Upper Trail Lake. As trail levels out, vegetation changes to the sub-alpine with lower growing shrubs and a multitude of wildflowers. From the north end the trail winds through open meadows and forest. At Mile 3.9 by Bench Creek Bridge, trail enters V-shaped Bench Creek valley that continues to Bench Lake (Mile 9.3) in sub-alpine tundra.

Wildlife includes moose, wolves, black and brown bears, Dall sheep, ptarmigan and spruce grouse. Hunting in designated seasons. Fish for grayling in Bench Lake and rainbow trout in Johnson Lake. [Review Alaska Department of Fish and Game \(ADF&G\) hunting and fishing regulations.](#)

## Special Considerations

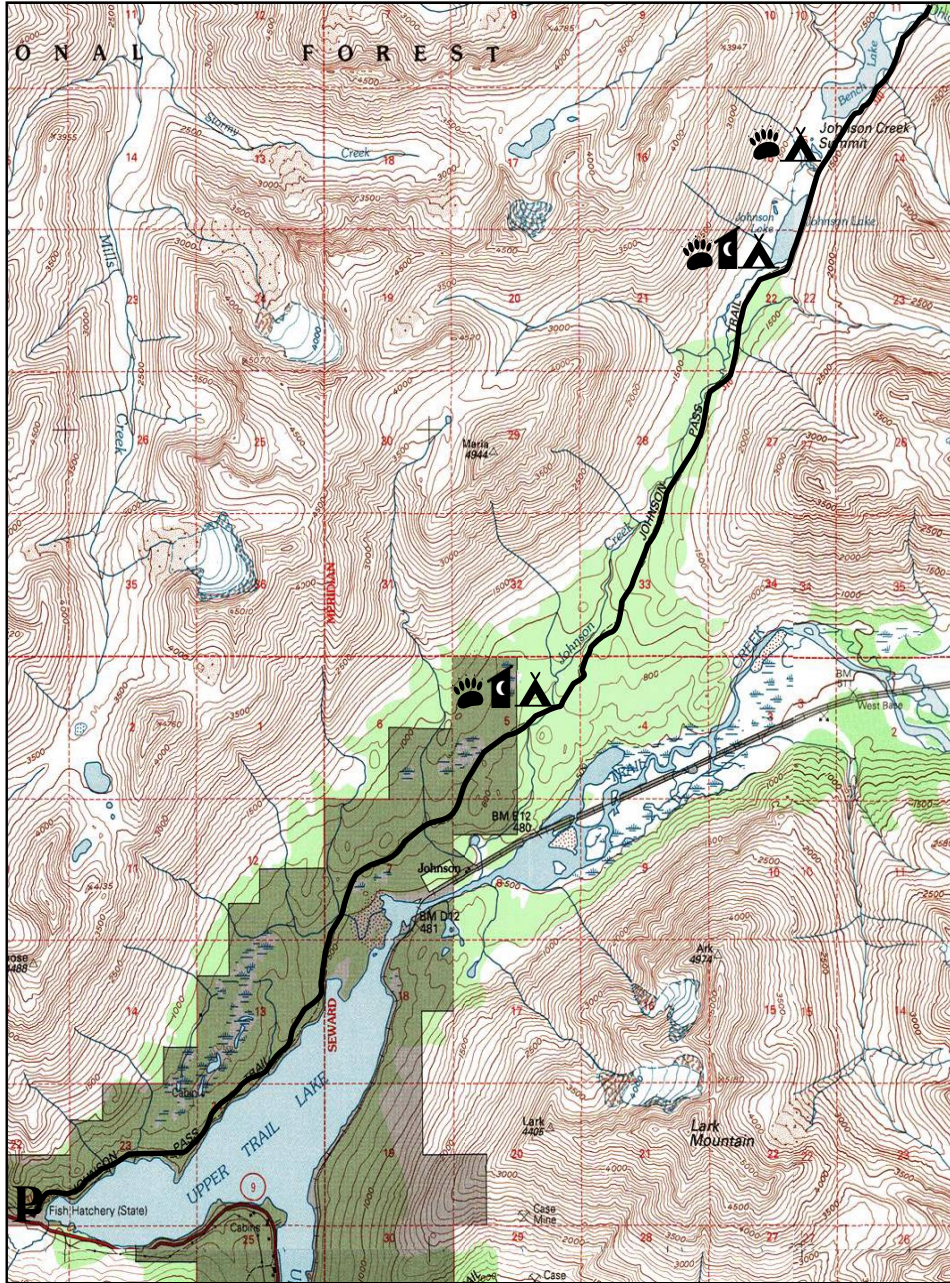
The South trail travels through a dense spruce forest of reddish-gray beetle killed trees. These trees are a major fire hazard. The trail opens up for scenic views at Johnson Lake. Use caution with bear and moose. Giardia (a microscopic parasite that can infect warm-blooded animals and humans) could be present in all open water sources, filter surface water before drinking. Winter travel may be hazardous due to avalanches, thin lake ice, and white out conditions above tree line. Winter travelers need to be able to evaluate avalanche and over-ice travel hazards. Be prepared for rapid weather changes. Remember to pack out your trash. You can contact a U.S. Forest Service office to receive more detailed information on safety precautions and Leave No Trace outdoor skills and ethics.



# Johnson Pass Trail

## SOUTH (to BENCH LAKE)

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Map not to scale

### Designated Campsites

From South to North






**Mile 7.2** N 60° 33' 21.09" W 149° 18' 22.08"

**Mile 11.7** N 60° 35' 56.3" W 149° 15' 17.1"

(There are 2 campsites, 2 bear boxes and 1 pit toilet here).

**Mile 12.5** N 60° 36' 35.2" W 149° 14' 57.3"

### LEGEND

-  Johnson Pass Trail
-  Trailhead Parking
-  Designated Campsite
-  Bear Box (food storage)
-  Backcountry Toilet

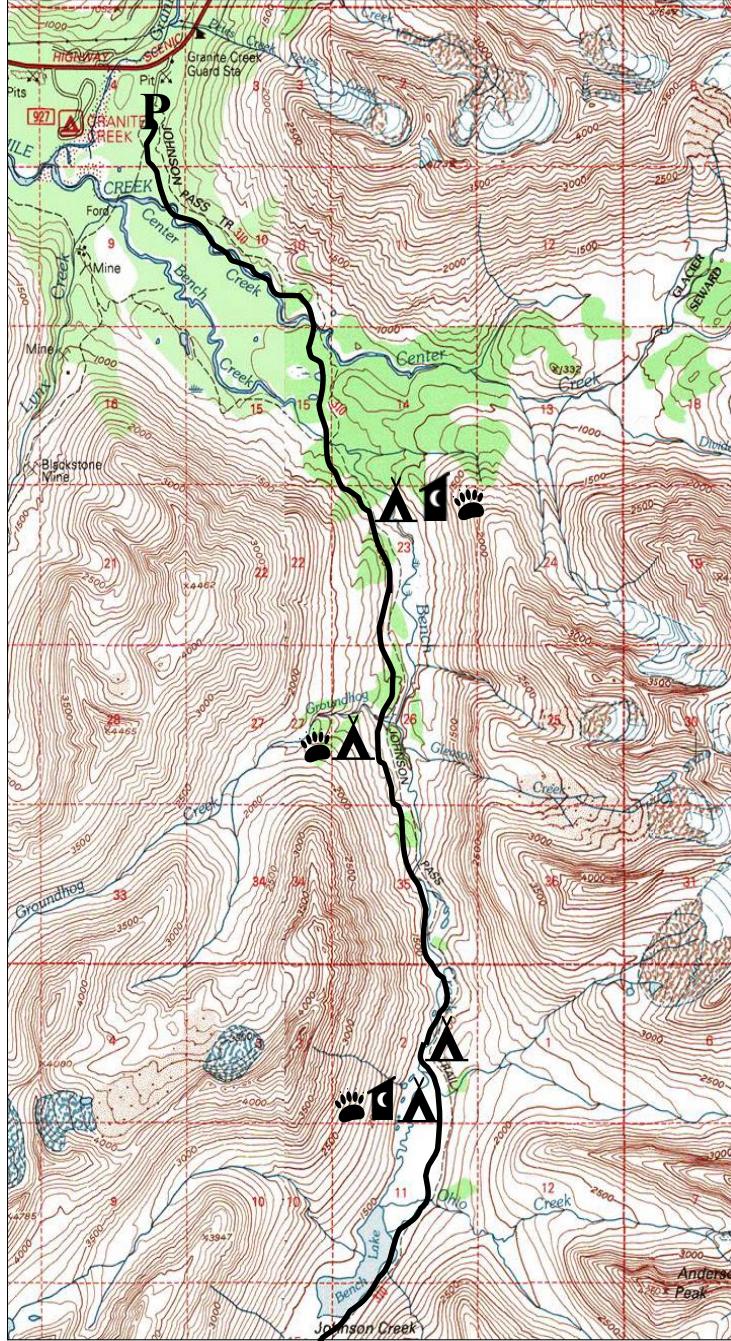




# Johnson Pass Trail

## NORTH (to BENCH LAKE)

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Map not to scale






Map created with TOPO!® ©2002 National Geographic (www.nationalgeographic.com/topo)

### Designated Campsites

From North to South

- Mile 4.0** N 60° 41' 5.4" W 149° 13' 36.4"
- Mile 5.3** N 60° 40' 07" W 149° 13' 53.5"
- Mile 7.9** N 60° 38' 18.4" W 149° 13' 17.3"
- Mile 8.24** N 60° 38' 2.3" W 149° 13' 12.1"

### LEGEND

-  Johnson Pass Trail
-  Trailhead Parking
-  Designated Campsite
-  Bear Box (food storage)
-  Backcountry Toilet