

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
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The cosigner of your letter will receive a separate, identical response. Should you need additional assistance, please have a member of your staff contact James Collins, CBP Assistant Commissioner for International Affairs, at (202) 255-8699.

Sincerely,



Kristi Noem
Secretary of Homeland Security



**Homeland
Security**

September 11, 2025

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Murkowski:

Thank you for your June 26, 2025 letter to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) regarding the Chilkoot Trail.

DHS continues to take appropriate action to secure the borders of the United States, enforce our nation's immigration laws, and prioritize the safety and economic well-being of all Americans. U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is tasked with protecting our nation's borders as well as enforcing immigration, customs, border security, and agriculture laws at our nation's ports of entry. On January 20, 2025, President Trump signed Executive Order 14161, *Protecting the United States From Foreign Terrorists and Other National Security and Public Safety Threats*, which directs Federal agencies to enhance immigration screening and vetting procedures. To this end, DHS remains vigilant in its screening, vetting, and monitoring duties to focus on rooting out exploitation of our immigrant and nonimmigrant visa processes.

The remote and rugged nature of the Chilkoot Trail which lacks any U.S. or Canada Border Services Agency customs infrastructure, poses significant challenges for verifying legal entry at the border. In the past, the U.S. Park Service aided in the practice of collecting biographic information from hikers intending to take the Chilkoot Trail. This data would then be provided to both the Canada Border Services Agency and CBP for vetting. Both the Canada Border Services Agency and CBP would work together and identify any admissibility or enforcement issues pertaining to the travelers ahead of time. During 2023 and 2024, no hikers were allowed onto the trail due to flood damage.

As of 2025, all 33 miles of the trail are open. Currently, hikers can still enjoy the trail on either side but must turn around at the border. Both agencies maintain signage, outreach, and traveler information to prevent inadvertent violations. The U.S. Park Service and the Canada Border Services Agency website also advise travelers that crossing the international border on the Chilkoot Trail is illegal. Both Canada Border Services Agency and CBP now require hikers from either side to cross the border at a designated port of entry. The nearest U.S. port of entry to the Chilkoot Trail Head is the Skagway, Alaska Port of Entry, which is 22 miles away, or approximately 45 minutes by vehicle.