

Mountain Bike Anchorage

2-7 Glenn Highway Trail

Difficulty: Easy to moderate, depending on distance.
Gravel on steep hills on either side of the Eagle River bridge can be a hazard.
Use caution at street crossings.

Surface: Paved.

Winter: Not maintained.

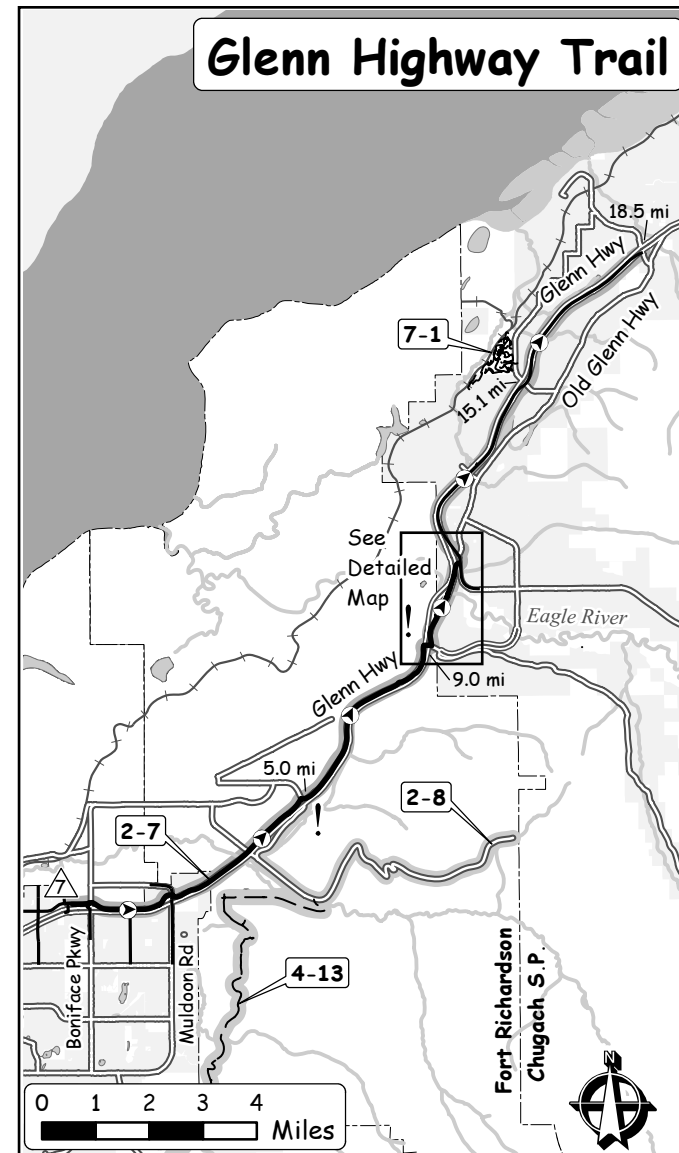
Distance: Up to 37 miles round trip.

The Glenn Highway Trail is one of the first paved trails to clear in the spring, allowing riders to enjoy some early season riding that is off the roadway. It is a good commuting route between the Anchorage Bowl and the communities to the northeast. The only downsides to the route are the noise and fumes from the busy highway. If you like to ride with tunes, this is the place. Just remember to keep to the right of the trail and be alert for other trail users. The route is usually windy in one direction, so pack a jacket.

Many cyclists start this ride near Bartlett High School and the interchange of Muldoon Road and the Glenn Highway. The beginning of the trail is actually farther west at Davis Park in the Mountain View neighborhood. Some amenities of the area include a large playground and picnic area at the Mountain View Lions Community Park, just south of Davis Park. For parents pulling kids in trailers, it's a great place for the little ones to burn off some energy or have a snack before heading home. You can also access the trail from Boniface Parkway by riding through a tunnel.

Good access points along the way include Eagle River Loop Road next to the landfill, downtown Eagle River, and Birchwood Loop Road for those headed toward Anchorage.

Chapter 2



Mountain Bike Anchorage

Most of the route is straightforward, but there are a few places where you leave the trail and cross roads, so pay close attention to the signs and map.

Mi. 0.0 Ride east from Davis Park, following signs that direct you toward Eagle River.

Mi. 0.3 Pass a tunnel on the right that leads south to Boniface Parkway and continue straight, through a tunnel under Boniface. The trail runs close to the highway, then veers away to make room for the Muldoon Road on-ramp.

Mi. 1.9 Ride into the tunnel under Muldoon. The trail emerges from the tunnel at the 2-mile marker. Veer right. (Left goes to the Alaska Native Heritage Center, Bartlett High School and Elmendorf Air Force Base.) On your right, you'll pass a pullout with a bench. Ride past a tunnel under the highway, which leads to Muldoon Road. Continue straight, following the signs for Eagle River.

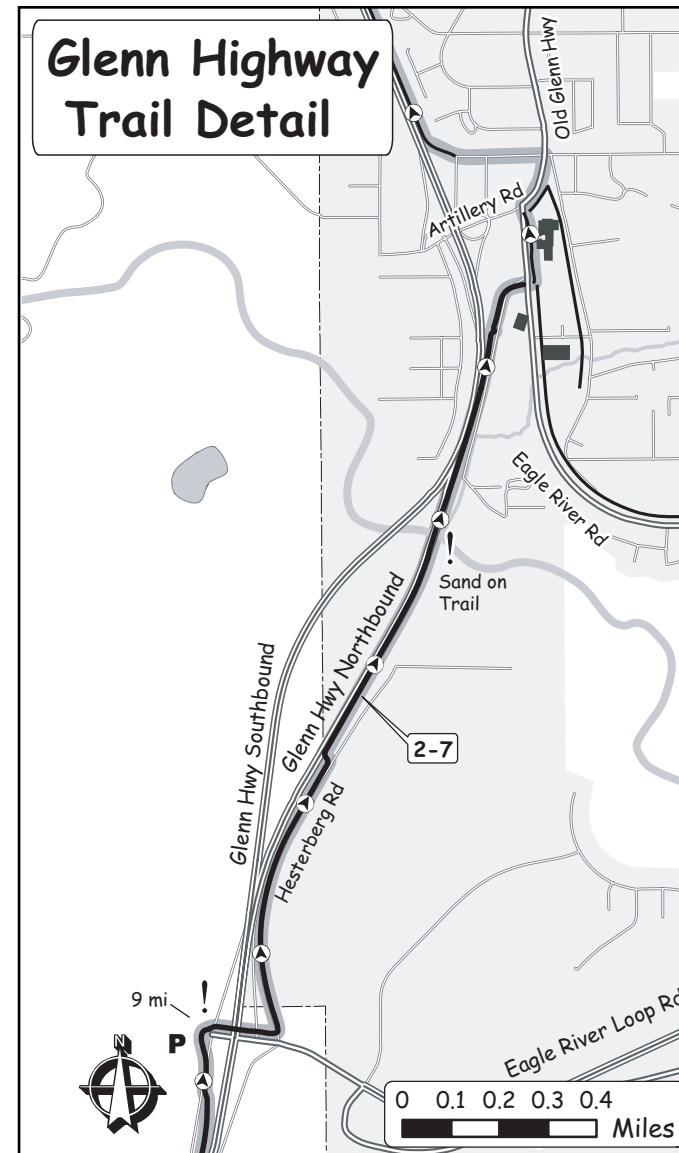
Mi. 3.4 Cross Ship Creek on a wooden bridge. Watch for sand and glass on the path. There can be a little ice in early spring.

Mi. 4.5 A large American flag is displayed at the top of a rise.

Mi. 5.0 Pass the 5-mile mark, to arrive at the road that leads to the Fort Richardson main gate. Use caution crossing this road. The continuation of the trail is directly across the road. To the left is the gate; to the right is Arctic Valley Road (Route 2-8).

Mi. 6.4 Pass a bench on the left, then note the Alaska National Guard building farther off the trail.

Chapter 2



Mountain Bike Anchorage

Mi. 8.0 Arrive at a weigh station. This area can be busy with people walking dogs, families with children, and other cyclists. Slow down here and watch for cars entering a gravel parking area. Descend into a quieter area, sheltered by trees. In springtime, this area takes longer to be free from snow and ice. Soon you'll climb and approach a road.

Mi. 9.0 Arrive at Eagle River Loop Road. A small gravel parking area is on the left. Beyond that is the gate to the landfill. Cross the road and follow the trail east, crossing the southbound off-ramp, the Glenn bridge and the northbound on-ramp. On a clear day, you may be able to see Denali and the Talkeetna Mountains to the north.

Mi. 9.2 Turn left onto Hesterberg Road. The trail signs will point left here. Be sure to ride on the right side of the road, with traffic. Signs for a campground and a correctional center also point the way. The road descends toward the trail.

Mi. 9.8 Use caution to cross the road and re-enter the trail to the left. (If you arrive at the correctional center, you went too far.) Descend to a bridge crossing Eagle River. This part of the trail often has sand on it, so use care. The trail then climbs out of the river valley.

Mi. 10.7 The trail follows VFW Road, toward the community of Eagle River.

Mi. 10.9 Cross Eagle River Road, where VFW Road intersects, then turn left onto a street-side trail. A school is on the right. The trail is somewhat rough from tree roots pushing up the pavement.

Mi. 11.0 The trail splits, and you'll go straight, crossing Artillery Road (Old Glenn Highway) at the stoplight. Turn

Chapter 2

right on the path, following the trail signs. At the next intersection, turn left to ride on Brooks Drive to the next section of the trail. (Continue straight past Brooks to reach the retail district of Eagle River.)

Mi. 11.3 A curve in the road goes left, while the trail goes straight. Use caution here on loose gravel on the edge of the road and the trail. The trail turns sharply to the right, then follows the highway north.

Mi. 12.8 To the right, you'll have a view of Mount Baldy as you approach a motor sports shop.

Mi. 13.0 Turn left to ride through a tunnel. (Going straight will take you into Eagle River.)

Mi. 13.7 Ride past Fire Lake, a float-plane lake surrounded by homes.

Mi. 14.4 Ride past the sign welcoming you to Chugiak, then descend and continue as the trail runs nearer to the off-ramp.

Mi. 15.1 At South Birchwood Loop Road cross the road and continue straight. (Turn left to go to Chugiak High School and ride the ski trails there.) For the next three miles, you'll ride past an area that is more heavily wooded, part of the Elmendorf Moraine, followed by Loretta French Park.

Mi. 18.5 The trail curves away from the highway as you arrive at North Birchwood Loop Road. You can return to Anchorage from here or turn right to arrive at the Old Glenn Highway.

From the intersection of North Birchwood Loop and the Old Glenn, it's about 5.1 miles to Thunderbird Falls