

## Crooked Lake and Iron Dog Winter Trails

Multi-use winter trails

- Tread:** Snow – 3’- 8’ wide  
**Length:** Crooked Lake Trail :10 ± miles  
Iron Dog Trail : 27 ± miles  
**Difficulty:** Easy to moderate  
**Activity:** Snowmachining, dog mushing, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing and skijoring  
**Trailhead(s):** Crooked Lake: Parking is limited to the side of the road.  
Iron Dog: Parking is available on Big Lake and also Big Lake North and South State Waysides; plus private lodges and marinas  
**Nearest town:** Big Lake  
**Manager:** MSB Land Management Division (745-9869)  
**Trail Care:** vacant

### How to get there

**Crooked Lake Trail:** From the intersection with Parks Highway MP 52.3, follow Big Lake Road 3.6 miles, stay to the left at the Y, which is S. Big Lake Road ( it turns into West Susitna Parkway), follow for another 10 miles until you reach the intersection with LacViex Drive (right), and W. Papoose Twin Lake Road (straight ahead). Continue straight ahead on W. Papoose Twin Lake Road (which is a narrow gravel road) for 1 ¼ mile. Crooked Lake Trail takes off from the road. There is very limited parking here, so be careful not to block the road. Note - The Matanuska-Susitna Borough has plans to build a trailhead when funding allows, but until then parking is along the road or on little side roads where there is room to turn around.

**Iron Dog Trail:** From the intersection with Parks Highway MP 52.3, follow Big Lake Road 3.6 miles, go left at the Y to the Big Lake South Wayside, or go right at the Y to the Big Lake North Wayside. There are several private lodges and marinas that also plow areas on the lake for parking. It

varies from year to year, so check with the lakeside businesses for information.

### General description

**Crooked Lake Trail** connects the Big Lake area with trails to the west and north. The trail heads west from Papoose Twins Lake Road and connects with the Iron Dog Trail, which then continues on to the Susitna River. The trail is approximately 10 miles long from Papoose Twins Lake Road to the Iron Dog Trail. The trails traverse large swamps and ridges of mixed forest.

**The Iron Dog Trail** is a winter trail and is reached by crossing Big Lake, Mud Lake and Flat Lake when the lakes are sufficiently frozen for over-ice travel. At the west end of Flat Lake a short trail - known as the Flat Lake Connector - heads northwest and connects the beginning of the Iron Dog to Flat Lake.

At this intersection the Iron Dog Trail formally begins, heading northwest for about 5 miles then turning southwest for 7 ½ miles where it intersects with the

Crooked Lake Trail. The Iron Dog continues west-northwest for another 5 miles where it ends at the banks of the Susitna River – an area known as ‘Susitna Station’. From the Susitna River trail travelers can follow the frozen rivers to points south, north or west up the Yentna River, or connect to the Iditarod National Historic Trail, which also crosses the Susitna River at the Susitna Station.

### Trail uses

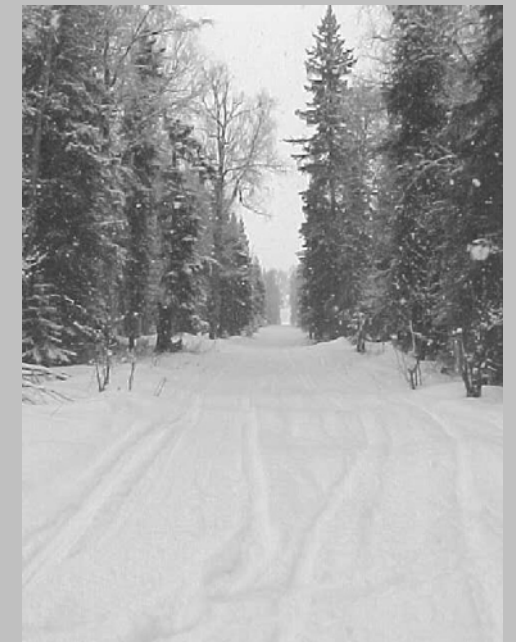
The Crooked Lake Trail and Iron Dog Trail are winter trails, used primarily by snowmachiners, dog mushers, and skiers; but snowshoers, skijorers and winter bikers also use them.

### \*Take note

Near Hock Lake and the Susitna Station there are several side trails that lead to private property. Stay on the main trail and avoid trespassing on Private Property.

Many local recreational and professional dog mushers use these trails. If traveling by snowmachine be cautious and yield to dog teams. Pull over, shut off machine and wait while dog teams pass.

# Crooked Lake and Iron Dog Winter Trail



**Matanuska Susitna Borough  
Community Development Department  
350 E. Dahlia Avenue  
Palmer, Alaska 99645**

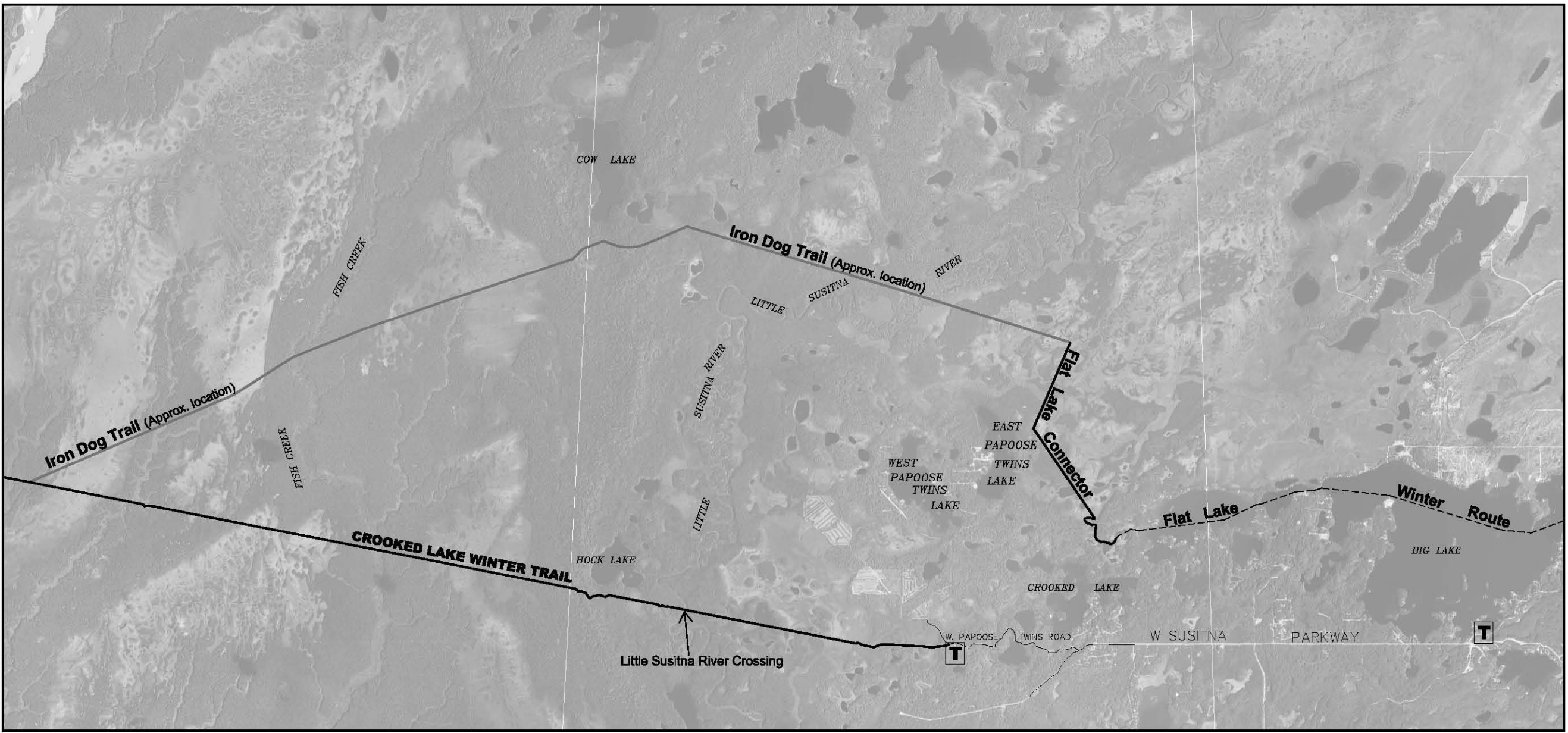
**(907) 745-9578  
www.matsugov.us**

**LEGEND**

**T** Small Parking Area

\* Parking available on Big Lake at several private businesses.

\* Trails open only when sufficient snow cover exists.



**IRON DOG AND CROOKED LAKE WINTER TRAILS**