



David Bronson, Mayor

Animal Facilities 2023 Report

APDES Permit No. AKS-052558

MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Prepared for:

Municipality of Anchorage
Watershed Management Services

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November 1, 2023



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Introduction

The Anchorage Waterways Council (AWC) is in contract with the Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) Watershed Management Services (WMS) to evaluate animal facilities within the Municipality during Years 1 through 3 (2020 to 2023) of the current APDES Permit AKS-052558 held jointly between the MOA and the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (AKDOT&PF). This is found under Part 3.3.3 of the permit. During the previous permit period, 2015 to 2020, AWC also reviewed and evaluated animal facilities within the MOA and provided a year-end report¹ in 2018.

Goal: Review and update the previous permit list (2018) for animal facilities and locations of high domestic animal usage in the Municipality, such as kennels/boarding and pet day care facilities; pens, corrals, and stables; recreational facilities and trails; show and event areas; pet stores; groomers; dog parks; the Alaska Zoo; and other commercial animal facilities.

During Year 3 (2023), the focus was on the following:

1. Revisiting the MOA's Animal Care and Control Center (AACCC) staff to review information on their multiple-pet licensing program requirements and any suggested code changes.
2. Contacting the Anchorage Water and Wastewater Utility (AWWU) regarding their Industrial Pretreatment program standards regarding animal facilities.
3. Updating the list of facilities and event locations and developing maps of them for proximity to waterbodies and other pertinent features that would impact stormwater runoff.
4. Continuing site visits to facilities.
5. Developing new draft recommendations for additions or changes to licensing programs and ordinances/regulations that could have positive effects on water quality.

Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) Municipal Code and Animals

Anchorage Municipal Code (AMC) Title 8 "Penal Code" and Title 17 "Animals" define an animal as all members of the Phylum Chordata, Subphylum Vertebrates, excluding nondomestic animals (wildlife) and humans. Even though Title 17 specifically addresses dogs, cats, rabbits, ferrets, fowl, and horses, the MOA animal control officers do respond to complaints of cruelty, abuse, animal fighting, neglect, and other issues for all species of animals as listed under Title 8. They have dealt with llamas, alpacas, domestic sheep and goats, domestic pigs including pot-bellied pigs, guinea pigs, hamsters, gerbils, mice, donkeys or asses, mules, chickens, as well as various species of birds, reptiles, and amphibians.

AMC Title 21, "Planning and Zoning", also has provisions about animals in regard to land use. These include Title 21.05.050--Commercial Uses: Definitions and Use-specific standard animal commercial uses on land; Title 21.45.115--Outdoor Keeping of Animals; and Titles 21.45.350, 21.45.360, and 21.50.305—Large Domestic Animal Facilities.

Licensing

The MOA issues eight categories of facility licenses (Table 1). The number of licenses issued may be higher than listed at the end of the year when many licenses expire. These licensees will not be tallied into the license database until they are renewed, which requires an inspection of the facility by an animal control officer. Unlicensed facilities do exist (per Animal Care and Control), however with a limited number of officers they have to focus more on priority issues, such as dog bites and facility inspections.

¹ The 2018 Animal Facilities report can be found starting at p. 111 at the following link:
<http://anchoragestormwater.com/Documents/2018AnnualReport/AppG12018EducationSummaryReport.pdf>

Facility Type	# of licenses
Ranch/stable	10
Pet Stores	6
Grooming	24
Boarding	21
Total Multi-Animal (4-10 animals)	151
Total Multi-Animal (11+ animals)	27
Total Mushing Facility (4-10 animals)	11
Total Mushing Facility (11+ animals)	15
Total licenses	265

Table 1. MOA licensed facilities, July 2023

Facility Type	Number	Number Visited	Percent
Animal Services	2	2	100%
Boarding	25	20	80%
Dog Parks (includes 2 indoor)	11	11	100%
Grooming	26	17	69%
Pet Store	8	8	100%
Ranches/Stables	13	8	62%
The Alaska Zoo	1	1	100%
Venues	10	10	100%
Total licenses	96	77	

Table 2. MOA licensed facilities visited, 2022-2023²

Animal Services:

There are two organizations in the Municipality that provide aid and information to pet owners:

1. MOA Animal Care and Control Center (AACCC), 4711 Elmore Rd., Anchorage
2. Alaska SPCA, 8301 Petersburg St., Anchorage

Both agencies were visited several times, and their facilities were neat, clean, and professionally run. The Alaska SPCA is located along the north bank of the South Fork of Little Campbell Creek (Figure 1). The banks of the creek were never found to contain trash or waste related to the facility. The open area of the facility is fenced and has the proper setback from the creek. The facility, in my opinion, does not impact the creek, and considering the other industrial sites adjacent—it is probably the neatest.



Figure 1. Aerial view of the SPCA with South Fork Little Campbell Creek (Google Earth)

² Figures on some tables will vary due to updated information or date ranges.

In addition to these two organizations, there are several private rescue organizations (Table 3) that are generally staffed with volunteers and focused on dogs and cats. These volunteer organizations provide an important service to help rescue pets. Several of them exist in private homes and place their animals with foster caretakers unless they have their own kennel and funds usually from private donations. Recently, a few of the organizations, such as AARF, rescue stray or surrendered dogs in Alaska’s rural villages.

Organization
Alaska Animal Rescue Friends (AARF)
Alaska Dog and Puppy Rescue
August Fund
Friends of Pets
Clear Creek Cat Rescue
Kitty and Canine Connection
Mojo’s Hope: A Rescue Group for Animals with Special Needs

Table 3. Rescue organizations in the MOA

Off-Leash Dog Parks and Areas

Nine off-Leash dog parks and areas are found in the Anchorage bowl (Table 4 and Map 1), and all were visited for this survey. The newest is *Chanshtnu*-Muldoon Dog Park which opened in 2022. All off-leash dog parks have pet waste stations in the park or at the trail heads. Unfortunately, many people feel that all parks are off-Leash areas which is clearly observed and frequently discussed in social media.

Three of the off-leash parks are located on a waterway: University Lake Dog Park on University Lake, *Chanshtnu* at the South Fork of Chester Creek, and Valley of the Moon Park at Chester Creek. All others have some distance between them and a waterway, yet the potential for stormwater runoff with *E. coli* to a creek is still high.

MOA Dog Parks	Watershed	Stormwater “flows to”
Arctic/Benson Park (F/A)	Fish Creek	Fish Creek
Chanshtnu-Muldoon Park (F/A)	Chester Creek	South Fork Chester Creek
Connor’s Bog Park	Campbell Creek & Fish Creek	Lower Campbell Creek & Connor’s Lake
Far North Bicentennial Park - Gasline Trail	Campbell Creek	South Fork Campbell Creek
Russian Jack Park	Chester Creek	Middle Fork Chester Creek
South Anchorage Sports Park (F/A)	Campbell Creek	Campbell Creek
University Lake Park	Chester Creek	South Fork Chester Creek
Valley of the Moon Park (F/A)	Chester Creek	Chester Creek
Whisper Faith Kovach Park (F/A)	Little Campbell Creek	South Fork Little Campbell Creek
Fenced areas (F/A) indicate separate enclosed areas for small dogs (under 25 lbs.), and they also have a poop bag dispenser and a trash can. All dog parks were visited.		

Table 4. Off-leash areas in Anchorage

Additionally, dog park users are doing a poor job of cleaning up after their dogs. Watching people’s behavior at the parks yielded some interesting observations. One of the more common behaviors observed is for owners arriving at the dog park who park their car and let their dogs out loose while getting their gear or kids. The free-ranging dog runs all around the parking lot and often defecates in the parking lot or surrounding vegetation with the owner completely oblivious.

A similar situation involves folks not keeping a good eye on their pets who defecate off in the woods. About half of the people pick up after their dogs, and these are usually people who are actively interacting with their dog. The other half do not clean up after their pets because they turn their dog(s) loose in the park and pay no attention to it or what it is doing. Some dog owners stand around in big groups talking and are oblivious to the dogs unless there is a fight. Many folks are on cell phones and are focused on their conversation and not their pets. Additionally, along trails, while many bike riders have their loose dogs accompanying them, they are riding fast and concentrating on what is ahead of them not paying attention to the dog and its activities.

Arctic-Benson dog park received upgrades recently which include gate latch improvements, a paved walkway, crushed gravel, landscaping, and benches. In June 2023, volunteers came together for a Neighborhood Park Fix-It to plant irises, weed the existing beds, and spread mulch. Figure 2 shows some of the improvements. The only concern noted during this survey is a continuing presence of people who are there without dogs or children, which tends to make some park users nervous.



Figure 2. Aerial photo of Arctic-Benson Dog Park showing the improvements (Photo by the MOA)

There are two new indoor dog “parks” in Anchorage—The Paw Room which is located at 1200 E 68th Ave #102, and Unleashed Alaska at 1 68 E. Potter Drive. Both facilities charge for their use. The Paw Room can be rented day or night and will work best for dog training or as a site for off-leashed socialization and play. Unleashed Alaska requires a temperament test, proof of all shots, and regular monthly flea preventative care. Unleashed Alaska provides doggy daycare, boarding, and training as well. Dog waste is immediately cleaned up, and both facilities throw the waste into the trash.

Grooming Facilities

Dog grooming facilities (Table 5) are ephemeral businesses. Many come and go in short periods of time, while others survive longer. A few are “off the radar” businesses located in residences with no license. There were 26 licensed grooming facilities in the Municipality in July 2023 of which 17 (65%) were visited. Those in residences were not visited. The only wastes noted were dog hair and occasional dog poop which were disposed of in the trash. It makes sense that grooming businesses will not have much waste, if any, that would harm our waterways, because their waste water empties into the sanitary sewer. Wastewater from mobile grooming business is supposed to be dumped onto private property or in a sanitary sewer, and I was unable to confirm this with the one business.

Name	Address	Type	Visited
Aaron’s Pretty Pups	7720 Rovenna St. Anchorage	R	No
Adorable Pets Grooming	12812 Old Glenn Hwy. Anchorage	S	Yes
Alaska K9 Aquatics	549 W. International Airport Rd. Anchorage	S	Yes
Arctic Tails	1601 E. 84 th Ave Anchorage	S	Yes
Autumn Paris Pet Services	8225 Old Seward Hwy. Anchorage	S	Yes
Bella’s Pawish Parlour	9747 Newhaven Lp. Anchorage	R	No
Bev’s Dog Grooming	409 W. Northern Lights Blvd. Anchorage	S	Yes
Brigitte’s Dog Grooming	6580 Askeland Dr. Anchorage	R	No
Diamond Dog Salon, LLC	1407 Wolverine St. Anchorage	R	No
Doggie Dog World	6130 Burlwood St. Anchorage	S	Yes
Dogs Day Boutique Grooming Salon	7801 Schoon St. Anchorage	S	Yes
Doodle Doo Boutique	240 Center Ct. Anchorage	S	Yes
Hair of the Dog, LLC	1000 W. 66 th Ct. Anchorage	R	No
Holly’s House, Inc.	3550 Orbit Cir. Anchorage	R	No
Honest to Dog	5011 Arctic Blvd. Anchorage	S	Yes
Howling Peaks	6614 Lake Otis Pkwy, Anchorage	S	Yes
Pet Smart	601 E. Dimond Blvd. Anchorage	S	Yes
Pet Zoo	901 E. Dimond Blvd. Anchorage	S	Yes
PetCo	3090 Mountain View Dr. Anchorage	S	Yes
PetCo	8621 Old Seward Hwy. Anchorage	S	Yes
Primpin Pooches & Cats, LLC.	12870 Old Seward Hwy. Anchorage	S	Yes
That Dog Lady	4841 Fairbanks St., Unit K, Anchorage	M	No
The Natural Pet	500 Muldoon Rd. Anchorage	S	Yes
The Pet Stop	1921 W. Dimond Blvd. Anchorage	S	Yes
VCA Animal Hospital	2639 Boniface Pkwy. Anchorage	S	No
*R=Residential, S=Storefront, M=Mobile, Facilities visited: 17 of 25 (68%)			

Table 5. Grooming facilities in Anchorage

Stables and Ranches

As of November 1, 2023, the MOA had eight licenses for commercial stables/ranches and another five were found through searches. Their locations and watersheds are listed in Table 6. Horse owners contend that stable space is in short supply in Anchorage, and closure of the Diamond H Ranch in 2022, next to the Alaska Zoo, has added to this problem³. Examination of Anchorage on Google Earth suggests there are private “backyard stables” in the Anchorage Bowl and Eagle River/Chugiak where one or more horses appear to be kept. They rarely attract attention unless an issue arises.

Ranches/Stables/Zoo	Address	Watershed
Alaska Zoo*	4731 O'Malley Rd, Anchorage	Little Campbell Creek
Amazing Grace Ranch*	7340 Holman Ave, Anchorage	Little Campbell Creek
AR Barn	11120 Birch Rd, Anchorage	Little Campbell Creek
Chamberlain Equestrian Center*	3900 Abbott Rd, Anchorage	Little Campbell Creek
Eaton's Moose Meadow Equestrian Center*	5801 Moose Meadow Ln Cir, Anchorage	Little Campbell Creek
F-Bar-J Ranch*	4140 Lore Rd, Anchorage	Little Campbell Creek
Outten's Ridin' Ranch	5700 Huffman Rd, Anchorage	Furrow Creek
Raven Tree Stables	10501 Hillside Dr, Anchorage	Little Campbell Creek
Rockin' B Ranch*	3741 Ptarmigan Terrace, Anchorage	Little Rabbit Creek
Rocking H Stable*	5625 E. 112 th Ave, Anchorage	Little Campbell Creek
Six Bar E Stables	11401 Totem Rd, Anchorage	Little Campbell Creek
Behind the Bit	19816 Adrian Ave, Chugiak	Fire Creek
Carriage Wheel Ranch*	22012 Blair Ave, Chugiak	Peters Creek
Oldonyo Equestrian	22218 Yarnot Ave, Chugiak	Peters Creek
* visited, Percent visited is 64% (n=9/14) includes the Zoo		

Table 6. Stables including the Alaska Zoo in the Municipality

The stables visited were generally clean and neat with no major problems noted, even for those literally right on a creek. The primary concern about stables involves manure disposal. Most stable owners in the Anchorage Bowl claim that their manure is taken to the Anchorage Regional Landfill, or it is made available to friends and other Anchorage residents for their gardens and yards. This is, however, difficult to confirm.

The thirteen stables and the Alaska Zoo (Maps 2 and 3) along with their watersheds show that most are in the Little Campbell Creek Watershed. The Alaska Zoo and F-Bar-J stable have South Fork Little Campbell and North Fork Little Campbell Creek respectively running right through their facilities, and the closeness of the Chamberlain Equestrian Center to South Fork Little Campbell Creek is also of concern (Figure 3). These findings suggest that attention needs to especially be directed towards the impact of these facilities on *E. coli* concentrations in the Little Campbell Creek watershed.

³ <https://www.alaskanewssource.com/2022/03/30/alaska-zoo-purchase-nearby-ranch-has-some-horse-owners-worried-about-where-theyll-go/>

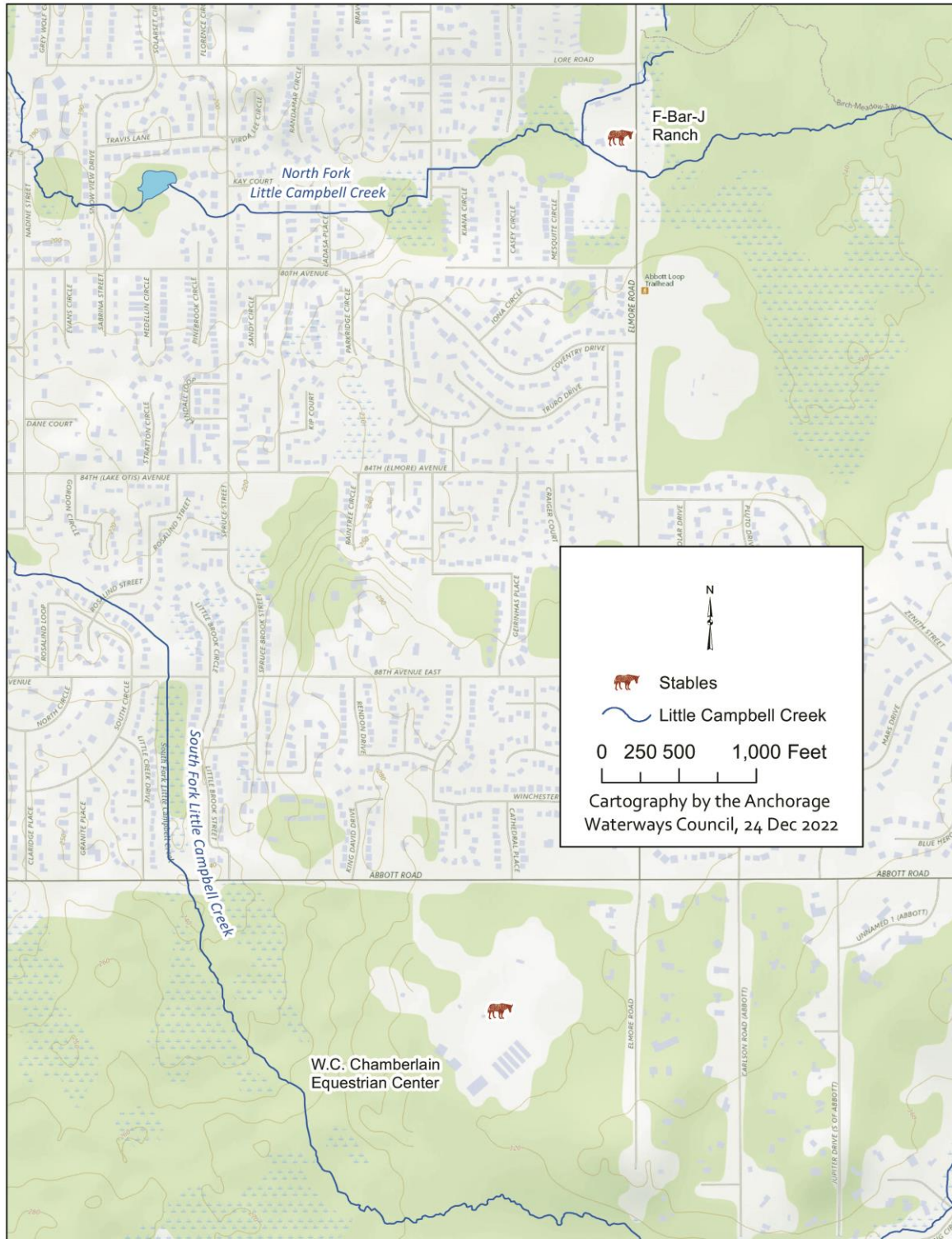


Figure 3. Proximity of 2 stables to North Fork Little Campbell Creek and South Fork Little Campbell Creek

Chugiak has three commercial stables (Map 3), situated in prime “Chugiak horse country”, a term coined by area realtors. They are located in the Peters Creek and Fire Creek Watersheds. The major issue with these stables is the short distance from the stables to creeks—Behind the Bit is ~1,500 feet from Fire Creek, and the Carriage Wheel Ranch and Oldonyo Equestrian are each about 850 feet from Peters Creek. The Carriage Wheel Ranch which was visited appeared neat and clean.

In April 2021, then-Assemblyman John Weddleton called AWC to report possible water pollution next to a park on Birch Rd. AWC Director Cherie Northon and staff biologist Thom Eley responded and met Assemblyman Weddleton at Forsythe Park which is just downhill from Eaton’s Moose Meadow Equestrian Center on Moose Meadow Lane. This was during breakup, so snowmelt mixed with manure (Figure 4) from the adjacent horse stable was flowing downhill towards Forsythe Park and then into the Municipality’s stormwater system. This stormwater empties into South Fork Little Campbell Creek. Watershed Management Services was notified and dealt with the situation⁴ (personal communication, Kyle Cunningham).



Figure 4. Manure and runoff leaving the horse property and flowing to S. Fork Little Campbell Creek

According to Alaska Equine & Small Animal Veterinary Clinic in Chugiak, it is estimated that over 1,000 horses are in the Anchorage to Chugiak area. Given that horses produce between 35 and 50 pounds of feces per day⁵, the result could be as high as 50,000 pounds/25 tons of manure daily and 9,125 tons annually--all of which needs to be cleaned up properly. If not, this is potentially a huge source of *E. coli* in local waterways. Comparatively speaking, Anchorage Animal Control’s website states, “Anchorage has an estimated 65,000 dogs. Dogs relieve themselves every day, producing an average of 3/4 pound of waste per dog. That’s over 48,000 pounds or about 24 tons of dog waste each and every day.”⁶ While the pathogens in dog and horse waste may not be comparable in regard to human health impacts, they still raise problems for water quality.

Horse dung possesses *E. coli* like other Homeotherms, and also contributes an unknown amount of bacteria to our creeks. Because of high levels of *E. coli* in our streams, the Alaska Dept. of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has labeled most of the waterways within the Anchorage bowl as “impaired,”

⁴ Personal communication 4/21/21-Kyle Cunningham, Water Management Services.

⁵ https://esc.rutgers.edu/fact_sheet/horses-and-manure/#:~:text=A%201000-pound%20horse%20will%20defecate%20from%204%20to,urine%29%20daily%2C%20or%20approximately%209.1%20tons%20per%20year

⁶ https://www.muni.org/Departments/health/Admin/animal_control/Pages/scoop.aspx

because they don't meet the State of Alaska Water Quality Standards (AWQS). The Municipality, along with Anchorage Waterways Council and other partners, work constantly to reduce the *E. coli* levels and thus the impaired rating.

Aside from the issue of *E. coli* and other pathogens, manure runoff contributes phosphorus, nitrogen, and potassium to our creeks potentially resulting in eutrophication.

The Alaska Zoo

On October 2, 2023, a follow-up visit that was timed when precipitation had recently occurred was made to the Alaska Zoo to update previous report comments. Anchorage received rainfall of .41" from midnight on the 2nd which was causing the South Fork Little Campbell Creek to run fast and high. Because the South Fork Little Campbell Creek flows east to west straight through the zoo grounds, runoff from the exhibits goes directly downhill into the creek. The concerning uphill animal exhibits include black bear (Figures 5 and 6), caribou, and brown bear. In fact, the creek actually runs right through the brown bear exhibit's southeast corner and across its front fence (Figure 7). The grounds are bare soil for the most part, and, upon inspection, there does not appear to be any barrier holding back runoff. The grounds were quite muddy from the recent precipitation, and animal waste was most likely present. As recommended previously, these exhibits need to be assessed to determine the impact of them introducing *E. coli* bacteria and soil into the creek.



Figure 5. Black bear exhibit on slope above S. Fork Little Campbell Creek—arrow towards creek



Figure 6. Lower fencing of black bear exhibit just above S. Fork Little Campbell Creek



Figure 7. Brown bear exhibit with S. Fork Little Campbell Creek flowing along the bottom of the slope.

Pet Stores

Eight pet stores are found in the Municipality, and all have been visited (Table 7). The pet stores were found to be neat and reasonably clean. They deal with birds, cats, fish, and reptiles—chiefly red-eared Slide turtles (*Trachemys scripta elegans*) which have been observed in local creeks numerous times. Other retail stores sell dog food and dog supplies (Costco, Cabela’s, Walmart, Fred Meyer, etc.), but they are not pet stores *per se*. The pet stores do not deal in dogs except for the occasional dog adoption event. Dogs are allowed in many of these stores with their owners, and waste cleanup stations are conveniently located in most and waste goes into the trash.

Pet Stores in Anchorage/Eagle River	Address
Percent of Pet Stores Visited	100% (n=8 of 8)
AK Bark Fireweed	557 E. Fireweed Ln. Anchorage
Alaska Mill and Feed	1501 E. 1 st Ave. Anchorage
Pet Smart	1200 N. Muldoon Rd. Anchorage
Pet Smart & Pet Hotel	601 E. Dimond Blvd. Anchorage
Pet Zoo	12046 Business Blvd. Eagle River
Pet Zoo	901 E. Dimond Blvd. Anchorage
Petco	8621 Old Seward Hwy. Anchorage
Petco	3090 Mountain View Dr. Anchorage

Table 7. Pet Stores in Anchorage

Venues/Events

The venues for major animal activities in the Municipality are shown in Table 8 and Maps 4 and 5. All thirteen animal event venues were visited twice between 2020 and 2023, and most appeared to be relatively clean of animal wastes from their activities. There are a few one-time animal events which may be conducted at other locations, such as parks and school grounds. An example is Friends of Pets’ Annual “Dog Jog” which has been held at East High School and more recently at Service High.

Most of the Agility Trial, AKC Dog Shows, and Alaska Herding Groups do a good job of cleaning up before and after their activities because they don’t want the dogs to be distracted (and this includes goose poop) by animal waste. Waste pickup is also mandated in their use permits. MOA Parks and Recreation occasionally allows some animal events in MOA parks, and animal waste at these permitted events (parades, dog competitions, etc.) must be cleaned up. Even so, cleaning up of animal wastes is not specifically listed on their online application. There is a question about the cleanup plans, and the form warns that “all debris and trash” must be cleaned up or Solid Waste Services (SWS) will be called.

AWC’s annual Scoop-the-Poop Day does not require a permit from Parks and Rec, nor does its Annual Creek Cleanup. Parks and Rec staff do come around one or more times a day during these events and haul away bagged pet waste and trash, and we are grateful for that.

Sled dogs for the ceremonial start of the Iditarod and Ronly World Championship Sled Dog races are problematic. The mushing trails cross parks, creeks, streets, and greenbelts, the dog waste is not cleaned up from these event. The same is true, although on a smaller scale, for Chugiak Dog Musher’s Association’s mushing trails and Tozier Track whose trails cross Campbell Creek numerous times. Mr. C.B. Stewart of Parks and Recreation assured Dr. Eley that “the dogs are trained athletes and do not poop while they run.” This is both incorrect and absurd as anyone who has mushed dogs or watched a mushing event close up knows. I have never seen a dog musher clean up dog feces other than in their

the dog yards (most compost the wastes or take them to the landfill), starting points (Downtown Anchorage), or at rest stops during races.

The Horse Drawn Carriage Company which operates in downtown Anchorage puts “catch bags” on their horses to collect manure.

In an attempt to monitor the impact of pet waste from mushing, AWC staff examined a 1,700 ft. section of the trail in the Chester Creek greenbelt at Eastchester Park a day after the 5 March 2016 Ceremonial Start of the Iditarod in Anchorage. Twenty-three intact piles of dog feces were found or about one pile every 75 feet. Much of the area, which had been traversed by approximately 1,000 dogs in 4 hours, had been ground up so the snow was more of a brown and white mixture. A second sample of snow off the trail was collected for comparison. The *E. coli* sampling was by the Coliscan® Method⁷, and the findings of this sampling are shown in Table 9.

Activity	Venues
Agility Trials	Waldron Lake/Bancroft Park as well as other MOA parks
AKC Dog Shows	Chugiak Benefit Association Grounds, Chugiak
Alaska Dog Sports	Facility at 511 West 54th Avenue, Anchorage, and ball fields
Alaska Herding Group Club	Chugiak Benefit Association Grounds, Chugiak
Alaskan Sled Dog & Racing Association	Tozier Track, Campbell Creek and Chester Creek Trails, Greenbelts, and Far North Bicentennial Park, Anchorage
Anchorage Horse Council Events	William Clark Chamberlin Equestrian Center, Anchorage
Chugiak Dog Mushers	Beach Lake Park, Chugiak
Friends of Pets “Dog Jog”	Service High School, Anchorage
Horse Drawn Carriage Company	Downtown Anchorage and Chugiak
Hundesport Alaska & AK Schutzhund Clubs	Hundeplatz Field, Kincaid Park, Anchorage
Iditarod Ceremonial Start	Downtown, Chester Creek Trail, Campbell Greenbelt and Far North Bicentennial Park
Lions Club Rodeo	Lions Club Park, Eagle River
World Championship Sled Dog Races	Downtown, Chester Creek Trail, Campbell Greenbelt and Far North Bicentennial Park

Table 8. Known Venues of Animal Activities in the Municipality of Anchorage

Location	<i>E. coli</i> Colony Count Per 100 ml Sample
Iditarod Trail	1,120 FCU/100 ml
30 feet off the Iditarod Trail	40 FCU/100 ml

Table 9. *E. coli* counts from samples collected from the Iditarod Ceremonial, 6 March 2016.

High levels of *E. coli* are undoubtedly entering the ecosystem due to dog mushing events over the course of one to four days. It seems that mushers/dog handlers, mushing organizations, or volunteers should be required to clean up dog wastes on trails after events (besides Downtown where their vehicles are parked), although this may not be popular nor very practical.

⁷ https://www.micrologylabs.com/page.php?page_id=93&page_name=Coliscan-Easygel

Boarding

Boarding licenses include both overnight boarding kennels and doggy daycares (Table 10). Some of the boarding and dog daycare facilities are in storefront buildings, such as Peters Creek Animal Boarding and Howling Peaks), and the rest are in private homes or property. The ones in commercial properties are easy to survey as you are able to walk in and ask your questions. It is common for employees and owners to appear uneasy and suspicious when asked questions concerning their business practices. Once they understand you are not from code enforcement nor are you are trying to shut them down, they are more open to sharing information.

Private kennels were found on Google Earth, and, surprisingly, there is little evidence of a kennel's footprint at the locations. Large sheds were often observed on the properties, but nothing looking like a "kennel" was seen. It was noted that one kennel, Rabbit Creek Kennels, composts its waste but it is unclear what they did with the compost.

Boarding Facilities	Address
Percent Boarding Facilities Visited	55% (n=12 of 22)
Howling Peaks	6614 Lake Otis Pkwy, Anchorage AK 99507
Rabbit Creek Kennels	3255 E. 150th Ave. Anchorage AK 99516
The Hound Lounge	2513 Fairbanks St. Anchorage AK 99503
Southpaw Kennels	11801 Old Seward Hwy. Anchorage, AK 99515
Home Away From Home Inc (Daycare & Boarding)	16444 Brooks Lp. Eagle River, AK. 99577
Happy Hearts Daycare	3101 Rose St. Anchorage, AK 99508
A Happy Dog Day Camp	1525 E Tudor Rd. Anchorage, AK. 99507
A Happy Dog Day Camp and Boarding Southside	8210 Hartzell Rd. Anchorage, AK 99507
Animal Daycare & Boarding	5716 Kennyhill Dr. Anchorage, AK 99504
Moen Holmestead Kennels and Stables	17501 Golden View Dr. Anchorage, AK 99516
Arctic Tails Doggy Daycare, LLC	1601 E. 84 th Ave. Anchorage, AK 99507
Arfie's Doggy Daycare	535 E. 6 th Ave. Anchorage, AK 99501
Barking Lot Doggie Daycare	150 W. Dowling Rd, Anchorage, AK 99507
The Farmstead Pet Activity Center	16428 Brooks Lp. Eagle River, AK 99577
Grey Wolf Canine, LLC	12230 Vista Ridge Lp. Eagle River, AK 9957Pet7
Golden Paws Kennel	3820 Hiland Rd. Eagle River, AK 99507
Huntsman Stables, LLC	11688 Jerome St. Anchorage, AK 99516
Liebich Rentals, LLC	4421 E. 104 th Ave. Anchorage, AK 99507
AR Barn Warm Memories	11120 Birch Rd. Anchorage, AK 99516
Mac Mountain Mutts	4120 Johnny Dr. Eagle River, AK 99577
Peters Creek Pet Boarding	20843 Old Glenn Hwy. Chugiak, AK 99567
Purrfect Purr Cat Hotel	549 W. International Airport Rd. Anchorage, AK 99518

Table 10. Boarding kennels in the Municipality

Summary

The 2023 animal survey was completed on October 30, 2023, and the following issues are the highest priority:

- addressing the concern at the Alaska Zoo where the South Fork of Little Campbell Creek runs through the brown bear exhibit and receives runoff from other exhibits,
- carefully reviewing the management plans for stables that are located on or near creeks, especially F-Bar-J Stable and Chamberlain Equestrian Center,
- continue campaigning to have more pet owners clean up after their pets in both off-leash parks and in common areas, such as trails, greenbelts, parks and school playgrounds, and
- enforcing leash laws.

Interestingly, on October 5, 2023, there was a post on the app “Nextdoor”⁸ by a user of the Campbell Airstrip area. They wrote, “*Watch OUT! Police officer on Campbell Airstrip issuing TICKETS for owners walking dogs off leash, Friday at 3:45-4pm-ish.*” (Figure 8) There were nearly 200 responses that ranged from the police-bashing (which was soon clarified that this was not an Anchorage Police officer) to several “it’s about time!” kudos. Following are a few of the positive comments:

- *Yay! Now let’s see them visit the rest of the neighborhood parks that have become unofficial off-leash dog parks in spite of the leash law*
- *I completely agree. Coming from a dog owner I’m all about dog parks but animals should always be on leash if not there.*
- *Well, if the dogs are on the leash like they should be, then there is nothing to worry about*
- *At long last-- Kincaid Park could also use some oversight-*
- *Glad to hear it. Way too many off leash dogs that owners have no intention of picking up after. (Especially the bike riders with a dog)*
- *Yay!! So glad to hear they are finally enforcing the law. The irresponsible owners who let their dogs run all over, off their leash, and poop everywhere, and not pick it up. I’m tired of hiking and seeing dog poop all over the trails and full poop bags hanging in the trees and having to dodge the mess. Be a responsible pet owner.*
- *I am seeing way too many owners bringing their dogs to public parks that are not designated off-leash. These dogs are leaving their poo and generally allowed by the owners to be a nuisance. For some reason pet owners feel they can just let their dogs out. My two bunnies were killed in my backyard by dogs allowed off-leash, it's just ridiculous. Applaud the tickets, leash your animal.*

The majority of the responses were about the above issues and the impact of loose dogs on other dogs and dog poop! While it’s often difficult to gauge what people truly feel about dog poop not being picked up, these responses are a good indicator that it is definitely an issue. Perhaps even more relevant was the last message by the original poster who started a firestorm but clearly learned a lot from it.

“My OP was intended for my friends and neighbors who may be out that way, just a heads up. I personally think it’s a bit over the top to issue tickets, but if there’s been an increasing presence of irresponsible dog owners letting their unpredictable or aggressive or disobedient dogs run amok, scaring people, and other dogs, then it’s understandable. A family member was running with our dog off leash. They might have been mistaken about the person being a police officer, just observed the officer was on bike, had a uniform, badge, and gun. Thankfully this time received a warning. But a mom with stroller and dog received a ticket. In over 20 years I’ve never heard of such a thing at Campbell airstrip. I imagine

⁸ www.nextdoor.com

a serious incident might have taken place there recently. I'm grateful for the police, the troopers, the rangers. It's got to be one of the toughest jobs out there today."

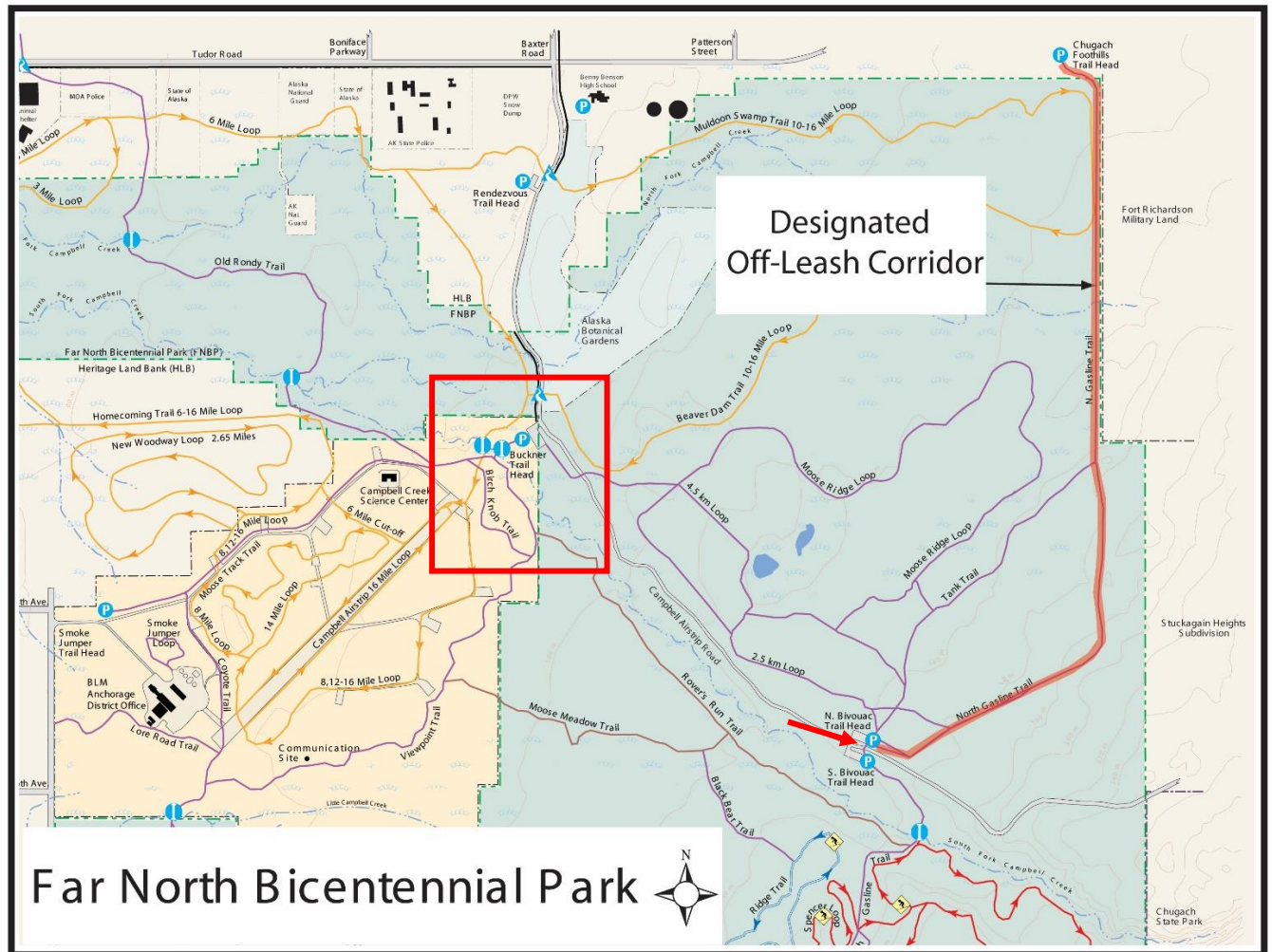


Figure 8. Campbell Airstrip area (red square) and off-leash corridor Gasline Trail access (red arrow)

Contract Deliverables

Regarding the tasks and goals of this report,

1. MOA's Animal Care and Control Center (AACCC) staff has been contacted and information on their multiple-pet licensing program requirements has been reviewed including suggested code changes.
2. Anchorage Water and Wastewater Utility (AWWU) has been contacted regarding their Industrial Pretreatment program standards regarding animal facilities.
3. The list of facilities and event locations and developing maps of them for proximity to waterbodies and other pertinent features that would impact stormwater runoff have been updated.
4. Site visits to facilities have occurred.

Anchorage Municipal Code has been reviewed for any changes related to animals. Licensing requirements haven't changed, although AACCC did change some of the categories they have used for

licensing—this is for their internal record-keeping only. There have been no major changes in their licensing program.

There have also been no changes in regard to the Anchorage Water & Wastewater program standards in regard to animal facilities.

The previous permit lists for animal facilities and locations of high domestic animal usage in the Municipality, such as kennels/boarding and pet day care facilities; pens, corrals, and stables; recreational facilities and trails; show and event areas; pet stores; groomers; dog parks; the Alaska Zoo; and other commercial animal facilities, have been updated and reviewed.

The list of facility and event locations as well as maps have been updated. Like most things, animal facilities, with the exception of pet stores and stables, tend to be transient and change often. Ninety-six facilities were listed for 2022-2023 (Table 2) and 77 or 80% were visited. These facilities place their waste in the trash, while others have been found to offer it (manure) to citizens for their gardens, haul it to the landfill, or compost it. One kennel composts its dog waste. Three locations remain a concern due to their proximity to Little Campbell Creek—F-Bar-J Stable, Chamberlain Equestrian Center, and the Alaska Zoo which were discussed earlier.

Regarding new draft recommendations for additions or changes to licensing programs and ordinances/regulations that could have positive effects on water quality, Titles 17 and 21 have been reviewed in detail. Title 17 is in line with ordinances from most other cities with a few differences in numbers and kinds of animals that can be possessed, fines and fees schedules and administrative processes.

Recommendations for Ordinance Changes (Title 17 and Title 21) Changes:

1. Dumping of aquariums and aquatic organisms into creeks:

An ordinance that prohibits the releasing of any pet on the land or dumping aquarium fish, animals, and plants into the creeks, rivers, and lakes of the Municipality is needed. These dumped species have the potential to become invasive species thus causing problems in our aquatic ecosystems. Recently, goldfish (*Cyprinidae*) became a major problem in Cuddy Pond⁹, and individual and groups of Red-eared Slider Turtles (*Trachemys scripta elegans*) have been seen in University and other lakes as well as Chester and Campbell Creeks.

2. Backyard keeping of chickens:

Chicken raising is becoming quite common in Anchorage but not without controversy. It is interesting to note that all of the pet stores carry chicken, rabbit, and other domestic animal foods. This may or may not need be a new ordinance, but there needs to be standards and guidance for urban chicken owners: how to locate an ecologically sound site for the coop; how to build a sound coop; how to reduce noise and smell from chicken raising operations; how to reduce predation on chickens, chicken coops and setbacks, and other issues pertinent to chicken raising. Across the Western United State, many towns and homeowner associations have extremely strict policies regarding chickens, while others are incredibly lenient – Moab, Utah even allows the keeping of roosters in town and housing areas.

Recommendation concerning stables and zoo

The sources of the *E. coli* in our creeks have long been a source of speculation—dogs, wild mammals, waterfowl, horses, and humans (directly or leaky septic systems)—but without a true idea about the actual contribution of each component. It would be prudent to fund a project with DEC to ascertain what are the actual sources of *E. coli* that are found in local waterways. Are dogs the primary

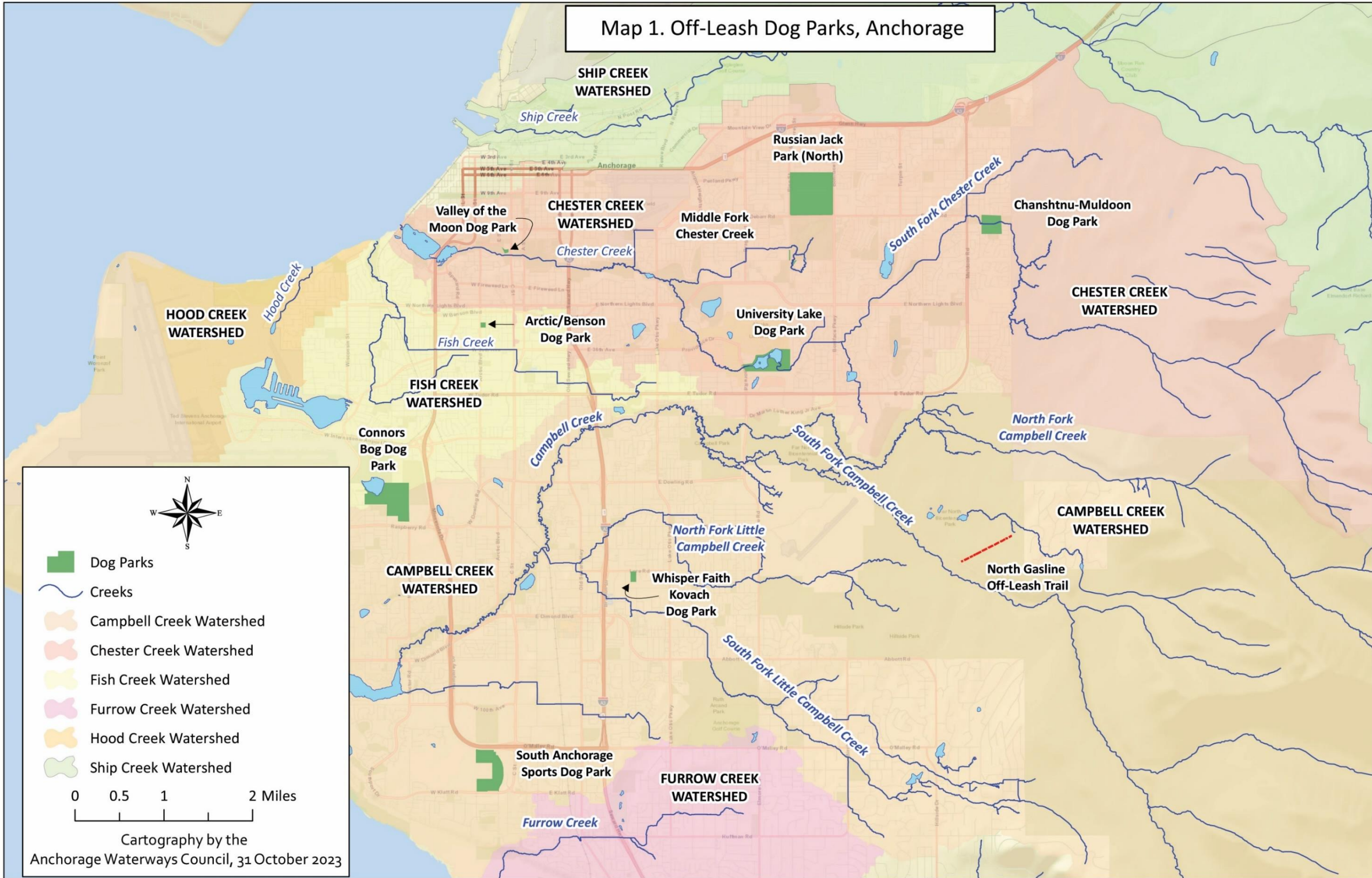
⁹ <https://www.adn.com/alaska-news/anchorage/2019/07/24/wildlife-officials-will-use-fish-killing-chemical-to-get-rid-of-cuddy-park-goldfish/#:~:text=An%20estimated%20150%20illegally%20introduced,wildlife%20biologists%20want%20them%20gone.%5D>

culprit or are other critters equally or more significant? The procedure, microbial source tracking (MST), could be used to ascertain the origins of the fecal contamination. The variety of tests available is increasing every year, and now include: beaver, bird, goose, gull, ruminant, chicken, horse, sewage, and human¹⁰. This has proven useful to other communities when combined with fieldwork on upstream sources.

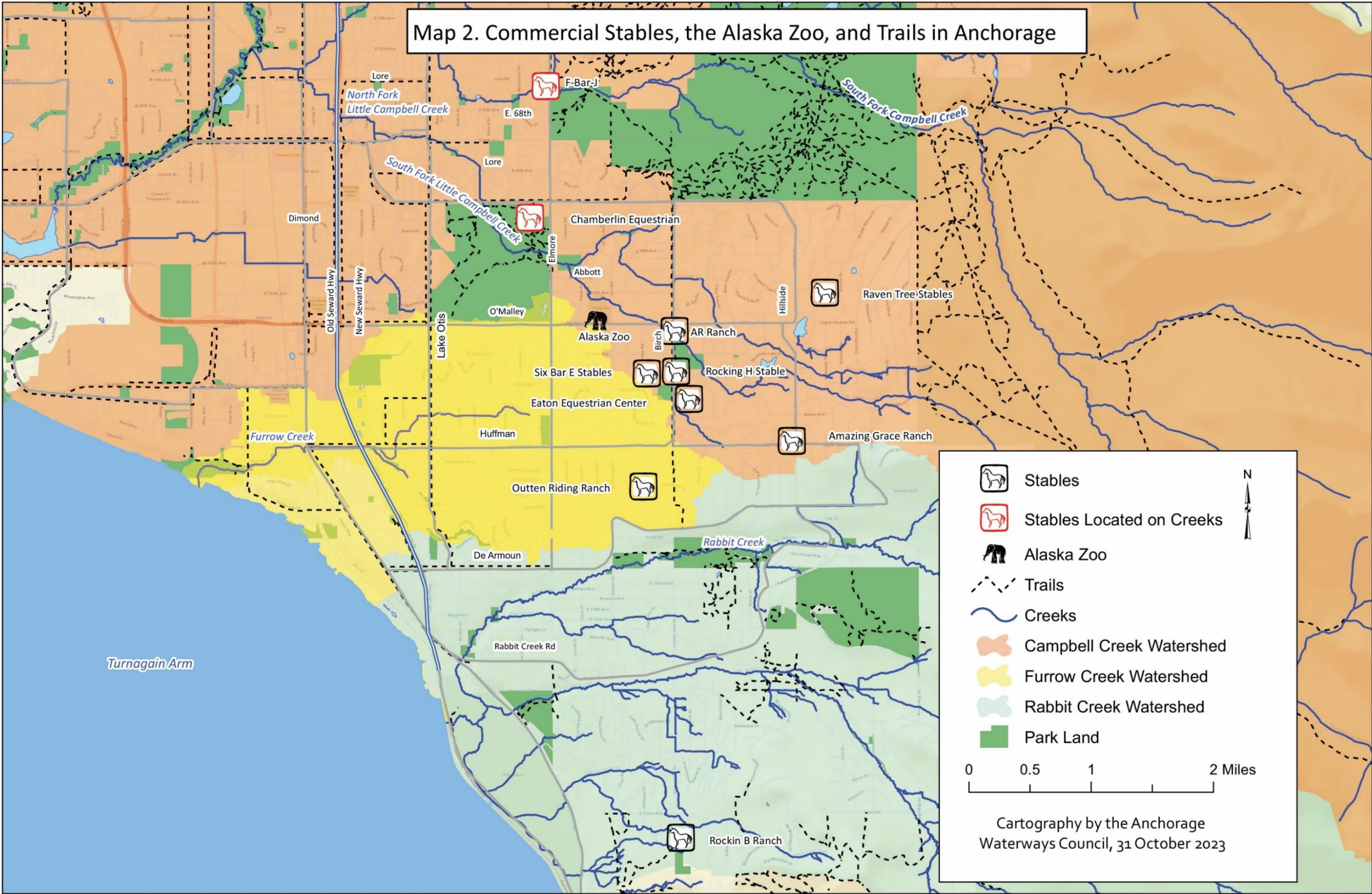
¹⁰ <https://www.luminultra.com/blog/what-is-microbial-source-tracking/>

APPENDIX – Maps

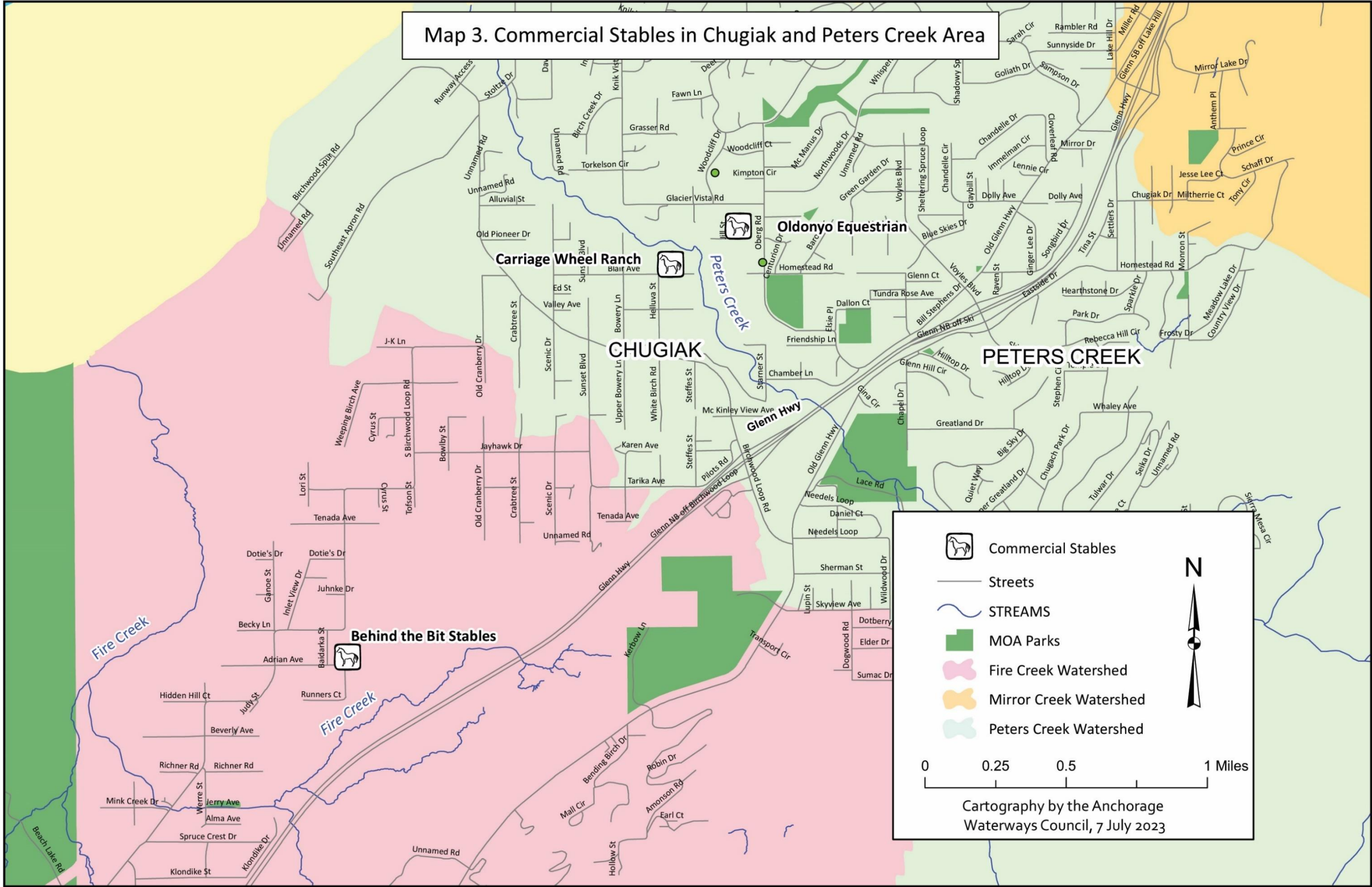
Map 1. Off-Leash Dog Parks, Anchorage



Map 2. Commercial Stables, the Alaska Zoo, and Trails in Anchorage



Map 3. Commercial Stables in Chugiak and Peters Creek Area



Legend





- Commercial Stables
- Streets
- STREAMS
- MOA Parks
- Fire Creek Watershed
- Mirror Creek Watershed
- Peters Creek Watershed

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

Cartography by the Anchorage Waterways Council, 7 July 2023

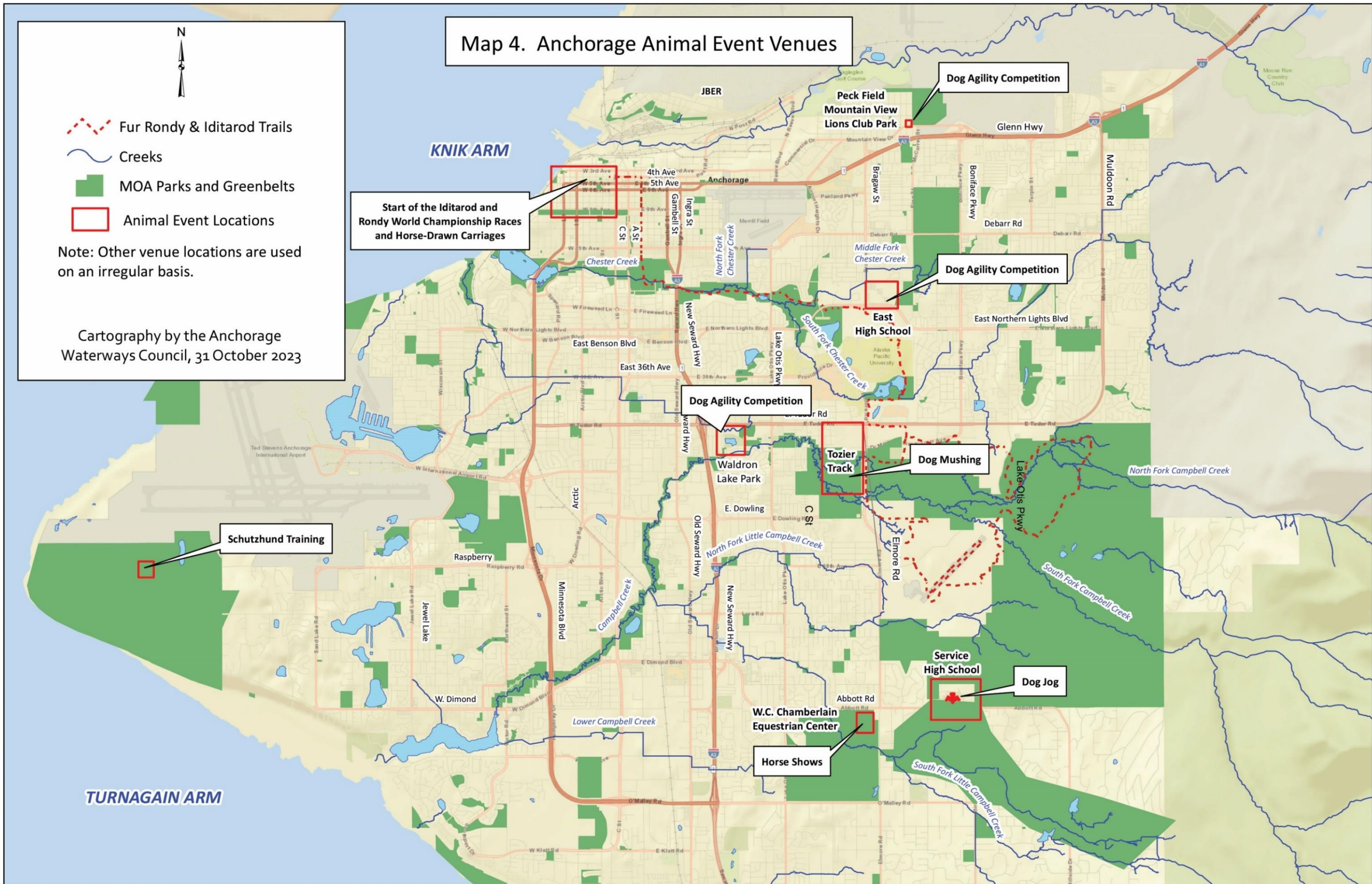
Map 4. Anchorage Animal Event Venues

N

-  Fur Rondy & Iditarod Trails
-  Creeks
-  MOA Parks and Greenbelts
-  Animal Event Locations

Note: Other venue locations are used on an irregular basis.

Cartography by the Anchorage Waterways Council, 31 October 2023



Map 5. Chugiak and Eagle River Animal Venues

