

ALASKA  
TRAILS



[www.alaska-trails.org](http://www.alaska-trails.org)

# ACTION UPDATE

January 2012

---

Action Updates are produced about once a month between issues of the quarterly Alaska Trails newsletter. Action Updates include new action items, action items previously reported with a deadline not yet passed, and other breaking news of interest to trail users. A copy of this Action Update will be posted to our web site.

---

## STATEWIDE NEWS

### ALASKA TRAILS NOT A PART OF 'PICK. CLICK. GIVE.' THIS YEAR

Alaska Trails will not be part of the "Pick. Click. Give." program list this year, so don't look for us on the list.

The program requires an expensive, complicated audit for organizations that exceed \$250,000 in revenue, which includes restricted "pass-through" projects and activities. More than 80 percent of our revenue goes toward services and "pass-through" activities. We won't exceed that threshold this year, so we should again be eligible in 2013. People can still make easy online donations. Just click on the "Donate" link on our home page: [www.alaska-trails.org/](http://www.alaska-trails.org/)

We received nearly \$5,000 from the 2011 "Pick. Click. Give." Thank you to everyone who donated through that program or in other ways. You are helping us with our goal of making sure Alaska has the best trails in the world.

-----

### STATEWIDE LINKS:

- An account of a packraft trip in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge: <http://tinyurl.com/7nfnykn>
- Alaska's fat-bike mania spreads its tire track across world: <http://tinyurl.com/cwxwuuw>
- Thank mining companies for Juneau's Perseverance Trail: <http://tinyurl.com/8247cmp>

## SOUTHCENTRAL REGION NEWS AND NOTICES

### STATE PARKS SPONSORS TWO NEW YEAR'S DAY HIKES

The Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation is sponsoring two "First Day" family hikes in Chugach State Park on New Year's Day 2012.

The hikes are a way to connect families with their local state park in the winter, and start the year with a fun and healthy activity. This event is inspired by a nationwide initiative through America's State Parks ([www.americasstateparks.org/](http://www.americasstateparks.org/)) to connect people to their State Parks on New Year's Day in all 50 states.

Two staff–led hikes will leave the Eagle River Nature Center at 12:30 p.m. January 1, 2012. Hike organizers ask that people come 30 minutes early to register and warm up with coffee, cocoa, and cookies before heading out on the trails. Organizers also ask that participants leave their dogs at home for this event.

There will be a \$5 parking fee for those not members of the Eagle River Nature Center. To get directions or become a center member visit <http://www.ernc.org/become-member.html>.

For more information check the state parks website as the date gets closer <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/>.

*(From Darcy Harris, Alaska State Trails Coordinator)*

## **GET OUTSIDE AND HAVE FUN ON WINTER TRAILS DAY**

So far one Alaska event is listed to take place in January on the Winter Trails Day website. More should be coming. Keep checking on the website at: [www.snowlink.com/wintertrailshomepage/findasite.aspx](http://www.snowlink.com/wintertrailshomepage/findasite.aspx)

**Hatcher Pass:** January 7 – 10 AM to 3 PM, Mile 10.6 Hatcher Pass Road. (Look for the Winter Trails Day signs.) Activities include sledding; beginner instruction in cross-country skiing, downhill skiing, snowboarding, and snowshoeing; demonstrations in avalanche rescue beacon use, winter biking, and skijoring; and a tour of a rescue cache. Free parking is available all day at state park parking lots in the Hatcher Pass area. Provided are x-c skis, snowshoes, treats, hot drinks, warming fires, and restrooms. For more information contact Warren Templin (907/745-9690 or [wtemplin@matsugov.us](mailto:wtemplin@matsugov.us)) or check the Winter Trails website. This event made possible by Alaska Trails, Mat-Su Borough Parks, the Mat-Su Trails Council, Mat Su Ski Club, Pioneer Ski Patrol, REI, Inc, Alaska State Parks

-----

### **SOUTHCENTRAL LINKS:**

- Photos from the Crevasse-Moraine Trail System in the Mat-Su Valley: <http://tinyurl.com/6rqf6s4>

## **INTERIOR REGION NEWS AND NOTICES**

### **DRAFT HOT SPRINGS PLANNING PROPOSAL TO BE RELEASED**

Final draft recommendations for the Fairbanks borough's Chena Hot Springs Block Master Planning Project will be available to the public in a meeting in January.

The meeting will be from 6 to 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, January 11, at the Morris Thompson Cultural and Visitors Center, 101 Dunkel Street, Fairbanks. Several alternative development concepts will be presented.

The borough owns about 4,000 acres of land adjacent to the Chena Hot Springs Resort. The tract contains many informal trails that are used by the public and by clients of the resort. Additionally, the eastern end of the Angel Rocks to Chena Hot Springs Trail runs within the tract. Many, and possibly all, of these trails are important public recreational assets.

The owners of the resort have used portions of the tract for aurora viewing and other winter recreational activities under license for several years. Because these activities are of major ongoing importance to the resort, the owners have submitted a proposal to purchase about 1,500 acres of the tract from the borough.

The borough's planning department has been collecting public input to determine what is in the public's interest in regard to the purchase proposal. Several meetings have been held. One in November included a mapping exercise that included a lot of opinions about trails in the area. To see the results of that meeting, as well as other important information, click on the "Documents" link at: <http://tinyurl.com/c6taxup>

For more information contact Tara Bellion (907/374-0303 x15; [tara.bellion@urs.com](mailto:tara.bellion@urs.com)).

## **TANANA FOREST CITIZEN'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO MEET**

The Tanana Valley State Forest Citizens' Advisory Committee will meet on Thursday, January 12, 2012. The meeting will take place from 6 to 9 p.m. in the Large Conference Room at the Department of Natural Resources building at 3700 Airport Way, Fairbanks, Alaska.

This committee advises the Division on plans and proposals for managing the 1.8 million acre Tanana Valley State Forest, along with other forested state lands in the Tanana Valley. This management includes trails and other forms of recreation. For more information, contact Mark Eliot at the Division of Forestry in Fairbanks at 907/451-2670 or [mark.eliot@alaska.gov](mailto:mark.eliot@alaska.gov).

## **BORO, STATE WORK TO MITIGATE DAMAGED ESTER TRAIL**

The Fairbanks borough and state are working together to mitigate damages done in August to a multi-use motorized trail that connects the top of Ester Dome to Ester Valley.

The Fairbanks Land Management Department and the state Department of Natural Resources have awarded a contract to rehabilitate the trail, sometimes called the Ester West Ridge Trail. The first part of the contract calls putting in features to reduce erosion and limit vehicle access. Rolling grade dips will be used to shunt water off the trail to reduce erosion. Ditches and other features will be used to limit access to light off-highway vehicles of no larger than 1500 pounds gross vehicle weight. Without such work the trail would be subject to erosion because the vegetative mat was removed. The second part of the contract calls for stabilizing the soils and rolling back the vegetative mat where it can reasonably be expected to hold up under year-round use. The Gillmore Construction Company won the contract. The work is to begin in spring or early summer, as soon as ground conditions allow.

The trail connects the Ester Valley Trail (also known as the Fireplug Trail) to the Nugget Creek Loop Trail on top of Ester Dome. It had been a four-wheeler trail reportedly put in by a trapper. However, a miner in Ester Valley, who is having an access dispute with other miners in the valley, took a bulldozer to the trail in August turning it into a mining access road without permission from borough and state landowners.

Commercial trespass charges are being pursued against the miner who damaged the trail.

---

## **INTERIOR LINKS:**

- Former Marine is new director of the Fairbanks Parks and Recreation Department: <http://tinyurl.com/6rgprxb>

- Neighbors of a proposed Interior veterans cemetery near Fox have concerns about trail access to the 100-acre site at the western-most end of Gold Mine Trail off the Steese Highway: <http://tinyurl.com/7h8s9hq>
- The popular Lower Angel Creek Public Use Cabin along Angel Creek Trail in the Chena River State Recreation Area has been rebuilt with help from Fort Greely firefighters: <http://tinyurl.com/8646lhz>

## WESTERN REGION NEWS AND NOTICES

### REPAIRS IMPROVE USER ACCESS TO LAKE ALEKNAGIK

Repairs to the Lake Aleknagik State Recreation Site boat ramp are now complete. The doublewide boat ramp, located at the outlet of Lake Aleknagik on the Wood River, was experiencing severe erosion along and under the concrete planks due to the current of the Wood River.

In September, gravel fill was placed to fill the voids under the concrete planks. Four concrete articulating mats were installed to protect the shoreline and provide a transition from the lakebed to the ramp. The 32,000-pound concrete mats were constructed in Soldotna and transported by truck and barge to Aleknagik. This work complements the ramp extension accomplished during spring of 2008.

*(From Eagle Watch, the Alaska State Parks newsletter)*

## NATIONWIDE AND GENERAL INTEREST NEWS AND NOTICES

### DELAYS BRING QUESTIONS ON TRANSPORTATION BILLS

The long-awaited House version of the transportation funding bill was delayed until after Congress returns January 17. The Senate bill, released in November, eliminates dedicated funding for trails and bike/pedestrian projects. Many questions remain on how the House bill would treat the Transportation Enhancements and Recreational Trails programs. Meanwhile Rep. John Carney (D-DE) and Rep. Aaron Schock (R-IL) wrote on behalf of 111 House members, both Democrats and Republicans, asking the President to support a "fully paid-for" six-year transportation funding bill. Learn more at: [www.americantrails.org/reauth.html](http://www.americantrails.org/reauth.html)

*(From American Trails e-newsletter)*

### CONTINUING THREAT TO LWCF PARKS, TRAILS, FUNDING

A bipartisan effort is underway to ensure that Land and Water Conservation Fund funding is preserved in any legislative proposal. The goal is to provide full, permanent, and dedicated funding for LWCF, which has helped thousands of park, trail, and open space projects. A bipartisan "Dear Colleague" letter supporting funding has been signed by 120 House members. Read more at: <http://tinyurl.com/748hb9g>

*(From American Trails e-newsletter)*

### COMMENT ON PUBLIC ROW ACCESSIBILITY DUE BY FEB. 2

The Access Board has reopened the comment period on its proposed guidelines for accessible public rights-of-way until February 2, 2012. This action is being taken in response to re-

quests from interested parties, including government and trade associations, for additional time to submit comments on the rule. The proposed guidelines address access to public streets and sidewalks, street crossings, on-street parking, and other components of public rights-of-way. Learn more at: <http://tinyurl.com/7yrtfur>

*(From American Trails e-newsletter)*

## **MOTORIZED TRAIL GROUP SEEKS INPUT FOR FUTURE**

The National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council (NOHVCC) is planning for future tools as part of its goal to “Create a Positive Future for OHV Recreation.”

As part of that process the group would like help from OHV users to make the right planning choices. Is there a study that has not yet been done that should be done? Is there a program or an issue that should be developed? Is there a case study of which you are aware that should be publicized? A newsletter article that would be helpful?

Examples include:

- Additional studies regarding the physical demands (health and fitness improvements) of OHV riding
- Updated studies regarding OHV’s impact on wildlife
- Winter OHV safety and ethics
- Additional trail maintenance techniques
- Listing or guide of trail maintenance products that work well in the field

Contact the NOHVCC at [trailhead@nohvcc.org](mailto:trailhead@nohvcc.org)

## **AMERICAN TRAILS DECEMBER NEWSLETTER AVAILABLE**

The December edition of Trail Tracks, the American Trails e-newsletter, is available on the Internet. The newsletter is full of good trail stories. Here’s a sampling of headlines:

- *Outside Magazine* named American Trails in their top 30 organizations
- Big Four Bridge linking IN and KY has businesses thinking big
- Wisconsin's Fox Cities Trestle Trail sees 80% spike in use
- GIS enhances printing for new generations of trail maps
- Harrowing experiences on the trail: Part 1, by Roger Bell
- South Korean trail named as provisional winner of New 7 Wonders of Nature
- Living Bridge in Meghalaya, India, constructed by living roots of fig trees

See the newsletter at: <http://tinyurl.com/cpe9dt2>

## **VOLUNTEER OR INTERN WITH AMERICAN TRAILS**

American Trails is looking for volunteers or interns to assist the group in a variety of ways. You do not have to be local to volunteer -- you can work from the convenience of your own home, on your schedule. American Trails is looking for assistance with web-based research, data entry, project assistance, and more. Find out more at: <http://tinyurl.com/7ukrpx>

## NATIONWIDE / WORLDWIDE LINKS

### MEETINGS, CONFERENCES, TRAINING, ETC.

- For a listing of upcoming trail workshops, conferences, and other meetings, see the American Trails calendar at: [www.americantrails.org/Calendar.html](http://www.americantrails.org/Calendar.html)

### OTHER LINKS:

- The American Hiking Society offers Volunteer Vacations as a way to get out and give back to trails: <http://tinyurl.com/87bw8fv>
- The Jesus Trail is a 65-kilometer hiking trail in the Galilee region of Israel which connects important sites from the life of Jesus as well as other historical and religious sites: [www.gospeltrail.com/](http://www.gospeltrail.com/)
- How the Dutch got their cycle paths: <http://tinyurl.com/7t6e7c5>
- The New Hampshire state government is seeking a private-public partnership for the development and management of a proposed campground at Jericho Mountain State Park, a hub of a trails system: <http://tinyurl.com/7ga4263>
- New Rails-To-Trails Conservancy director reflects expanding role of trails in public health: <http://tinyurl.com/83b4pg3>
- A Long Walk along a trail in England: <http://tinyurl.com/7hy8wep>
- Getting user groups involved early led to the Colorado's Rampart Motorized Recreation Area receiving CRT and NARRP Awards: <http://tinyurl.com/7nq73fn>

---

The Alaska Trails board meets via teleconference on the second Tuesday of each month from noon to 1:00PM. If you want to hear more about Alaska trail topics, share trail information, or propose a trail project, join us for an hour. Members and the public are welcome. More info: [office@alaska-trails.org](mailto:office@alaska-trails.org)

A copy of this newsletter will also be posted to our web site. Full newsletters come out at the beginning of March, June, September, and December. Action Updates come out most months in between. Deadline for articles is five days before the first of the month. Send stories to Editor Eric Troyer at [eric.troyer@alaska-trails.org](mailto:eric.troyer@alaska-trails.org)

**Enjoy your trail activities safely and be an Alaskan trail steward!**