

ALASKA
TRAILS

NEWSLETTER

April
2017

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907/334-8049

www.alaska-trails.org

ALASKA TRAILS NEWS AND NOTICES

SPEAKERS, ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION AT TRAILS CONFERENCE

Have you got the 2017 Statewide Trails Conference on your April calendar yet? If you're on the fence, we've got several things to tempt you: three great keynote speakers, a new "Active Transportation Track," and a free day for volunteers!

The conference will be held April 20-22 at the BP Energy Center in Anchorage. This annual gathering of trail builders, managers and enthusiasts focuses on how sustainable trails and the benefits they bring can continue to be viable in times of decreased state funding. Breakout sessions include technical trail building, trail funding, the economic benefits of trails, youth engagement and the exciting Trail Olympics. Bringing together trail users, builders and managers under one roof is also extremely valuable for networking and collaboration.

Three Great Keynote Speakers

Pat Pourchot, former Alaska legislator and state Department of Natural Resources commissioner, will speak on "Trails in a Changing Landscape." Rory Renfro of Alta Planning + Design will discuss "Trail Oriented Development." Blaine Smith, retired Chugach State Park trails specialist, will present "A Short History of Trails in Alaska."

Active Transportation Track

New this year is the "Active Transportation Track." This track is about connecting trails to the larger bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. Topics include: Walkability, Measuring Trail Use, Health and Economic Benefits of Trails, and Design in rural Alaska.

**TRAIL
TRAINING
for volunteers
with Alaska
Trail Stewards**

FREE!
SATURDAY, APRIL 22
9am - 3pm
Meet at BP Energy Center

Learn hands-on trail building skills
from Chugach State Park specialists

RESERVE YOUR SPOT:
katelyn.guinn@gmail.com

Free Saturday for Volunteers

Alaska Trails will be focusing on volunteers on the final day of the conference. Volunteers who commit to putting in their time and energy will be given FREE admission on Saturday. The field-based sessions will introduce new volunteers to trails, tools, safety and fun.

The conference will also include:

- Door Prizes – All those who register for the conference and Alaska Trails membership will be eligible for a variety of door prizes from businesses across the state.
- Poster Sessions – bring a display to share with attendees on Thursday afternoon and Saturday morning.
- Vendor tables – A limited number of vendor tables are available – right next to the lunch buffet.

Pre-conference session

Mike Shields will be holding a pre-conference session on *Trail Design and Layout* on April 18 and 19, from 9am to 5pm each day. This two-day class (one day classroom, one day field exercises) covers the basics of sustainable trail design, routing and layout. Cost is \$300 per person. For more information click the “Pre-Conference Session with Mike Shields” at: <http://www.alaska-trails.org/trails-conference.html>

- For full conference information and to register see: <http://www.alaska-trails.org/trails-conference.html>
- Coast online magazine also has a story about the conference: <http://tinyurl.com/lc6gc2a>

‘QUIZ FOR A CAUSE’ TRIVIA CONTEST TO SUPPORT ALASKA TRAILS

We know you like trails, but do you like trivia? If so, come test your knowledge and support Alaska Trails in a fun trivia game.

“Quiz for a Cause: Alaska Trails” will be held on Monday, April 10, 7-9pm at the 49th State Brewing Company, 717 W 3rd Ave in Anchorage.

Teams of six or less will get a chance to test their knowledge and compete for a cash prize! There will be a suggested \$5 buy-in/donation per person (\$30 for a team of six). Teams are welcome to play without the buy-in, but will not be eligible for the cash prize.

All funds raised will contribute to trail improvement projects around Alaska, like the work to be done on the Middle Fork Trail this summer. We will have a table set up with more information on our organization and future volunteer opportunities, as well as some giveaways and swag TBA. Grab your smart friends and come support Alaska Trails.

A big thanks to Geeks Who Drink-Alaska for making this event a possibility.

ALASKA TRAILS SEEKS NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Are you interested in taking the next step to support trails in Alaska? Alaska Trails is recruiting new board members. We are especially interested in board members who have experience in accounting and the law. The Alaska Trails board meets monthly and supports the great work Alaska Trails does across the state. For more information on board duties, roles and responsibilities, please contact our office: [907-334-8049](tel:907-334-8049) or office@alaska-trails.org

‘PICK. CLICK. GIVE.’ AND THANK YOU!

Thanks to all the donors who gave a part of their Permanent Fund Dividend to Alaska Trails through the “Pick. Click. Give.” program. Your support means a lot to us and we appreciate it.

For more information on “Pick. Click. Give” see: www.pickclickgive.org.

SPRING TRAILS ARE VULNERABLE, PLEASE USE WITH CARE

Alaska Trails asks that you please keep in mind how your trail activities might affect other trail users, especially in the spring.

As snow melts and the ground thaws, the trails become extremely muddy. Using really muddy trails at this time can result in ruts that stay all summer when the trails dry out. Those ruts can make the trails difficult to use all summer and into the next winter. They help create erosion by keeping water on the trails.

Early season damage of trails is a recurring problem. Many people are chomping at the bit to get outside once the snow melts. And some people love to get as muddy as they can while out on the trails. But with a little thought this problem can be greatly reduced.



- **Try to be patient.** Stay off the trails if you can. If you are unsure if a trail is ready to be used, check it out with the commitment to turn back if you are doing too much damage.
- **Choose low impact.** If you use the trails in several different ways, choose the method of travel that will cause the least amount of damage if you do run into some muddy sections.
- **Pick your trails carefully.** Use well-drained trails with lots of southern exposure. They typically dry out the quickest. If you just have to get muddy, please limit your activities to trails that are already thrashed. A little more damage probably won't make a big difference, but a trail in nice shape can be damaged for a season in a hurry.

An alternative to using trails in the spring is to get out on foot or by bike and go explore quiet subdivision roads new to you. You get to be outside, be active, and probably find out new things about your community.

(Constantine Khroulev photo of a badly rutted Trail Creek Trail in the White Mountains National Recreation Area north of Fairbanks.)

ALASKA TRAILS HAS TOOL TRAILERS READY FOR TRAIL PROJECTS



As you start planning trail building and maintenance projects, remember that Alaska Trails has mobile tool caches available to loan to organized trail groups in Southcentral and Interior Alaska. One cache is in the Fairbanks area and the other is in Anchorage/Mat-Su Valley area.

The trailers were upgraded recently and have a plethora of trail tools including mcleods, pulaskis, rakes, gloves, and much, much more. If you would like to borrow one of the caches, please contact us (info on masthead).

Alaska Trails is on Facebook: www.facebook.com/pages/Alaska-Trails/707066126002590

STATEWIDE NEWS AND NOTICES

SNOWMOBILE TRAILS PROGRAM APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE

Grant applications for the state Snowmobile Trails Program are now available. Public notice for applications must be posted by June 10. Grant applications must be submitted or postmarked by July 1. This program, administered by the state Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, provides reimbursable, matching grant funds for trail easement acquisition, development and maintenance of trails and trail-related facilities for snowmobile use. The program also provides funds for snowmobile safety and educational programs.

Matching funds are not required for safety and educational grant programs. Grant funds are generated from annual registration fees paid to the state by snowmobile owners statewide. For more information on the Snowmobile Trails Grant Program and the Grooming Pool, please visit:

<http://tinyurl.com/q33aj9m>

For general grant questions regarding the program please contact the Grants Administrator (907/269-8709). For project development questions please contact the State Trails Coordinator (907/269-8699). Or contact either one through the Department of Natural Resources email page (<http://tinyurl.com/3umsvj5>).

NATIONAL TRAILS DAY COMING UP THE FIRST SATURDAY IN JUNE

National Trails Day is happening June 3, but as of the end of March there was just one National Trails Day event registered for Alaska (at Tetlin National Wildlife Refuge near Tok). If you are interested in leading or organizing an event, visit www.nationaltrailsday.org for information on how to host an event, where to register an event, and how to subscribe for updates. National Trails Day is the country's largest celebration of trails. Events will take place in every state across the country and will include hikes, biking and horseback rides, paddling trips, birdwatching, geocaching, gear demonstrations, stewardship projects and more.

STATE PARKS POSITIONS INCLUDE TRAIL DUTIES

Alaska State Parks is looking for seasonal employees and volunteers. Positions include trail crew and backcountry ranger assistant. Applicants must be at least 18 years old.

- For more information on the volunteer program see: <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/vip/index.htm>
- For more information on Alaska State Parks seasonal jobs see: <http://tinyurl.com/7mog8q3>

RIVER FORECAST SITE KEEPS TRACK OF SNOW DEPTH



The National Weather Service's River Forecast Center has a website that tracks snow depths at many locations across the state. In the spring, summer, and fall, the site also tracks several things regarding rivers, including how breakup is going and what river conditions are like. See the website at: <http://www.weather.gov/apr/c/>

TRAIL EASEMENT MIGHT LOWER YOUR PROPERTY TAX

If you've got a recreational trail running across your property that is open to the public, you may qualify for a reduced property tax.

State law requires that land subject to a public recreational use easement (which can include trails) must be assessed at its true value. This recognizes that such easements restrict what a landowner can do

with the property subject to the easement. (See AS 29.45.062 and AS 34.17.100. Find Alaska Statutes at www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/folio.asp.)

However, the land or trail in question must have a legal easement. Granting an easement to the state is free and fairly easily. Download the two-page "Public Recreation Easement" form at <http://dnr.alaska.gov/mlw/forms/>. The link for the PDF document is about halfway down the page under "Land Forms." Granting the easement will also give the landowner tort and liability immunity (AS 34.17.055).

If you think you may qualify for a property tax reduction due to this law, contact your local government's Assessing Department.

STATEWIDE TRAILS AND PUBLIC LANDS RELATED NEWSLETTERS

- Eagle Watch, State Parks (several recent issues have had trail-related stories): <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/eaglewatch/eaglewatcharchive>
- Alaska Nordic Skier newsletter (several recent issues have had trail-related stories): <http://www.anchoragenordicski.com/newsletter/>

STATEWIDE LINKS

- Lawmakers should heed constituents on traps and trails (opinion): <http://tinyurl.com/z2amhbx>
- Rep. Josephson says he will rework trapping legislation: <http://tinyurl.com/lvya9hm>
- Bicycle And Pedestrian Planning In Alaska (blog): <http://tinyurl.com/h54zh3f>
- Alaska State Parks switches to new (cabin) booking system: <http://tinyurl.com/kuvqllq>

NORTHWEST LINK

- When Arctic winds blow: From Nome to Kivalina on fat-tire bikes: <http://tinyurl.com/lkgzfof>

SLIGHTLY OFF-TRAIL

- From fear to fervor, how this millennial is making the outdoors more inclusive: <http://tinyurl.com/zu92r3m>
- Review: Tiny skate ski was worst of both worlds (for trail skiing): <http://tinyurl.com/hw6tk7w>
- Who's driving this dog sled, anyway?: <http://tinyurl.com/lto5pup>
- Gold miners hike the Klondike Trail in new reality series: <http://tinyurl.com/k48xkrw>
- Three climbers saved off Alaskan glacier after almost 7 days (an "ad" for inReach, and a good cautionary tale): <http://tinyurl.com/lu5zmon>

SOUTHCENTRAL NEWS AND NOTICES

ANCHORAGE VOTERS CAN SUPPORT TRAILS, PARKS ON APRIL 4

The Anchorage Park Foundation is encouraging Anchorage voters to vote yes on Propositions 3, 4 and 7 in the April 4 election. See the letter below. Alaska Trails also encouraging voters to vote yes on these propositions.

Vote YES on Props 3, 4, and 7 for Anchorage trails!

Don't forget to vote on April 4th in favor of trail connections and safety. The Parks Bond (Prop 3) includes improvements along the Campbell Creek Trail and Chester Creek Trail such as resurfacing,

new signage for easier navigation, and upgraded LED lighting, as well as paving and improving trail access at the Jodphur parking lot at Kincaid.

Some of the projects on the Roads Bond (Prop 4) include improving bike-ability and trail connectivity by constructing 8ft multi-use pathways along road upgrades. This includes connecting the Fish Creek Trail to Spenard Rd!



Meanwhile, Prop 7 will extend the Parks and Recreation Service Area to include all the Anchorage Bowl (currently the most southeast section of the Hillside is excluded) and into Chugach State Park so that the Municipality can work with neighbors and property owners to create new and better access to Chugach State Park. This could clear up parking frustrations associated with using the trails in this area such as the McHugh Ridge Trail at Honey Bear and Rabbit Lakes Trail. The P&RSA can be

expanded only through a dual majority vote. This means the people who are in the P&RSA must vote for the expansion and those 375 people outside the P&RSA must vote for it.

Show your support for Anchorage trails and head to the polls to vote YES!

Laura Vachula
Communications Manager
Anchorage Park Foundation

Note on Prop 7: Property owners added to the Parks and Recreation Service Area will begin paying the property tax for park and recreation services of \$55 per \$100,000 of assessed value raising about \$121,150 per year. Properties already in the service area will not pay any additional taxes. This proposal will not impact Girdwood, Turnagain Arm or the Chugiak Eagle River Parks and Recreation Service Area.

KTVA had a story about Proposition 7 earlier in March: <http://tinyurl.com/lrpy4bm>

(Photo courtesy of www.alaska.org: Chester Creek Trail is one of the trails that will benefit from Proposition 3.)

NEW SINGLETRACK TRAILS PROPOSED FOR ANCHORAGE HILLSIDE

A public meeting will be held in April on a proposal to build six miles of singletrack trails on the Anchorage Hillside. The meeting will be held on Thursday, April 13, from 7 to 10pm at Spenard Recreation Center. The trails are being proposed by the mountain biking group Singletrack Advocates. Read the group's call for support below. For more info on the meeting see: www.facebook.com/events/157542761427623/

Come show your support for 6 miles of new singletrack trails at Hillside!!! We need YOU to come to the Parks & Rec meeting to show your support. The more people that show their support, the more likely the Parks & Rec committee is likely to approve STA's proposed trail expansion.

STA has already recieved letters of support from NSAA and the Hillside Community Council. We are also working will Hilltop Ski Area on alignments. The new trails will add one-way flow trails and one-way expert technical trails in the Spencer Loop area as well as near the Llama trail. We will also have new a new climbing trail too. The final trail layout will be finalized with inpurt from NSAA, Hilltop Ski Area, MOA Parks & Red and STA. See you at the Parks & Rec meeting!!!

KODIAK FILM FESTIVAL TO BE HELD APRIL 7

The Island Trails Network's Kodiak Outdoor Film Festival will be held Friday, April 7, at the Harbor Convention Center. This is Kodiak's premier showcase of local adventure/sports film talent, and draws a live audience of more than 300 people. The films highlight outdoor activities in and around Kodiak ranging from surfing to snowboarding, from hunting to spearfishing. The festival serves as ITN's annual membership meeting and is an opportunity for members to meet and greet the ITN board and staff. For more information and a taste of typical fare you can review the trailers from the last few years at <http://www.islandtrails.org/kodiak-outdoor-film-festival.html>.

SOUTHCENTRAL LINKS

- Mat-Su approves revised trapping ban in six popular parks: <http://tinyurl.com/kld2wrs>
- Come join talks about transportation in Southcentral: <http://tinyurl.com/kdercdc>
- Snowshoe outings help winter riders enjoy their trails: <http://coast-magazine.com/get-packing>
- (Kodiak) Island Trails Network newsletter: <http://tinyurl.com/l2xnrb>
- Parks bond is a bargain for a better city (opinion): <http://tinyurl.com/nya6vnh>
- 10 Trails Named After Influential Women (Lanie Fleischer Chester Creek Trail is number 9!): <http://tinyurl.com/me34s53>
- Group proposes Girdwood mountain bike park: <https://bikegirdwood.org/girdwood-mountain-bike-park/>
- Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation Winter 2017 grant awards: <http://tinyurl.com/k7la3rn>
- A Slow Snowy Slog on a Sunday Afternoon ~ Adventures Along the Historic Iditarod Trail: <http://tinyurl.com/m8hf4a3>
- Two articles on the Klutina Lake Trail/Road:
 - Battle over access to remote road sends ripples all the way to Juneau: <http://tinyurl.com/lsfhcd5>
 - A hard road: <https://craigmedred.news/2017/03/10/a-hard-road/>

INTERIORWIDE NEWS AND NOTICES

FAIRBANKS TRANSPORTATION SPRING NEWSLETTER

The spring 2017 newsletter of the Fairbanks Metropolitan Area Transportation System had a few items of interest to trail users.

BIKEWAYS MAP BEING UPDATED

FMATS is in the process of updating the BikeWays Map! The new map will reflect the recently constructed non-motorized projects. The new maps are expected to be available mid-April. For more information, visit http://fmats.us/bikeways_map/.

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

FMATS will be conducting the 7th Annual Bike and Ped Count this May!

When? May 23rd, 24th and/or 25th from 4:30 - 6:30pm

Where? 32 intersections across Fairbanks and North Pole

Interested? Contact Alicia Stevens at alicia.stevens@fmats.us or (907)459-6805.

More information can be found on the FMATS website [Count Page](#)

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN UPDATE

FMATS is working with the Alaska State Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) and Kittelson & Associates to update the long range plan, the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). The kick-off meeting took place on Friday, March 24th to discuss the process for updating the plan. To get updates on the plan or to view the current plan, visit <http://fmats.us/programs/metropolitan-transportation-plan/>

UPCOMING EVENT

DOT&PF Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan Public Meeting will be held Tuesday, April 18th, Raven Landing Community Center @ 5 - 7pm

INTERIORWIDE LINKS

- Keep Creamer's Field trails pretty (Letter to editor): <http://tinyurl.com/j69hqzg>
- A changing climate takes its toll on trails, trapping: <http://tinyurl.com/hy9j98g>
- Firth River Presentation (Fairbanks Paddlers)– April 5: <http://tinyurl.com/ml6l8je>
- Reel Paddling Film Festival 2017, Fairbanks (May 4): <http://tinyurl.com/kpg898p>
- Two Rivers trail the late Mike Kelly championed named after him: <http://tinyurl.com/ksh2kwo>
- Runner's World: Trails We Love: Equinox Marathon Trail: <http://tinyurl.com/k7f7fpm>

SOUTHEAST NEWS AND NOTICES

SUMMER UPDATE FROM JUNEAU'S TRAIL MIX

The update below was taken from the Trail Mix Facebook page (www.facebook.com/juneautrails/):

The upcoming trail season is almost here, and Trail Mix plans look like this so far:

Trail Mix will employ about 12 crew members this season which will form either two or three separate teams in the field. They will first focus on the three large bridges which will be installed on the Treadwell Ditch Maintenance Trail at Paris, Kowee and Eagle creeks. There are also plans to work on a connector trail from Auke Lake to the KAX trail along the Mendenhall River, the Horse Tram Trail out past Amalga Harbor and the Cross Admiralty Canoe Trail. In addition to this, there is now a Volunteer Trail Maintenance Team which will focus on tread and small bridge improvements between the new major bridges on the Treadwell trail.

Please keep in mind two, important, upcoming dates. The next Trail Mix Board Meeting is Thursday, April 27th and that will also serve as our annual membership meeting so please consider coming to participate. We will elect officers for this next year and discuss plans for the season. Saturday, June 3rd, is National Trails Day and we will organize a volunteer effort that day on one of our local trails for the public. We hope you can help that day. More later after the snow clears and we know the location.

SOUTHEAST LINK

- Sitka Trail Works March newsletter: <http://tinyurl.com/kwjz9p>

NATIONWIDE NEWS AND NOTICES

NOMINATIONS DUE IN APRIL FOR RTP ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Nominations for the Coalition for Recreational Trails Annual Achievement Awards are *due April 13*. The Coalition for Recreational Trails will be presenting its Tom Petri Annual Achievement Awards in Washington, D.C. on June 14th during Great Outdoors Month. This awards program, now in its 19th year, recognizes outstanding use of Recreational Trails Program (RTP) funds, showcasing excellent projects made possible by RTP funding and enhancing awareness and appreciation of the RTP among Members of Congress and other key officials. In 2014, the awards were named in honor of Tom Petri, a former Member of Congress and longtime RTP champion.

As an additional benefit, American Trails makes a web page for each winning project. See the over 100 award pages we have created since 2003. We hope you will join us in this important effort to recognize the significant contributions to our nationwide system of trails and greenways that the Recreational Trails Program is supporting all across the country.

Read more: <http://www.americantrails.org/awards/CRTawards.html>
(From American Trails website)

NATIONWIDE / INTERNATIONAL LINKS

WEBINARS, MEETINGS, CONFERENCES, TRAINING, ETC.

- For a listing of upcoming trail webinars workshops, conferences, and other meetings, see the American Trails calendar at: www.americantrails.org/Calendar.html
- Free Webinar: "On the Outdoor Walking Path": <http://tinyurl.com/gn33l49>

TRAILS-RELATED NEWSLETTERS

- National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council: <http://tinyurl.com/hks3p7j>

ADVOCACY

- Trump Budget Targets Safe Walking, Biking: <http://tinyurl.com/lycmp8m>

FUNDING

- 2017 North Face Explore Fund applications due April 5: <http://tinyurl.com/jpkkkcp>
- Federal Pedestrian and Bicycle Funding Opportunities: <http://tinyurl.com/zqz2m8p>

TRAIL GUIDES

- 13 beautiful trails to hike (or bike) in Alabama this spring: <http://tinyurl.com/hmxflqa>

STUDIES

- Why nature is the best prescription: <http://tinyurl.com/jrrsmum>

OTHER NATIONAL LINKS:

- The Pipeline That Could Change the Appalachian Trail Forever: <http://tinyurl.com/zoaz2mp>
- The changing face of camping: record numbers of minorities hit the trails: <http://tinyurl.com/l2gykh2>
- Outdoor Recreation Industry Roundtable Applauds Confirmation of Interior Secretary Zinke: <http://www.funoutdoors.com/ZinkeConfirmation>

INTERNATIONAL LINKS:

- The world's longest recreational trail gives you 15,000 miles to find yourself: <http://tinyurl.com/j5vlxr8>
- Scotland's Newest Nature Trails Are Underwater: <http://tinyurl.com/hkllhhu>
- The Worlds Longest Elevated Cycling Path Opens in China: <http://tinyurl.com/lvpvak5>
- 9 of Ontario's best mountain biking trails: <http://tinyurl.com/lerubqe>

SLIGHTLY OFF TRAIL

- Berlin Plans a New Network of Bike Superhighways: <http://tinyurl.com/jleuo7s>
- Stray dog follows adventure race team for 430 miles: <http://tinyurl.com/h33zqqz>
- What's The Leading Cause Of Wildfires In The U.S.? Humans: <http://tinyurl.com/jv63rwp>
- 16 Camping Dos And Don'ts: <http://tinyurl.com/hos8c7f>
- Watch these extreme ice skaters tackle the trails of Duluth: <http://tinyurl.com/kwtvwjc>
- Doctors and Parks Join Forces on National ParkRx Day: <http://www.funoutdoors.com/node/view/3669>

The Alaska Trails board meets via teleconference on the first Tuesday of each month from noon to 1:00 pm. 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. Call for more information and meeting details [907-334-8049](tel:907-334-8049).

A copy of this newsletter will also be posted to our web site. Newsletters come out at the beginning of each month. Deadline for articles is five days before the first of the month. Send stories to Editor Eric Troyer at fbxtrails@gmail.com