

ALASKA TRAILS NEWS AND NOTICES

TRAILS CONFERENCE SPEAKERS, OLYMPICS INSPIRE ATTENDEES

While Alaska trail advocates face challenges, the fight is worth it because trails help bring us the beauty of Alaska, are key ingredients to an active transportation network, and are public health assets and economic engines.

Those are the message delivered by keynote speakers to the more than 100 attendees, presenters and volunteers gathered for the Alaska Trails 2017 Statewide Trails Conference. The conference was held April 20-22 at the BP Energy Center in Anchorage.

Anchorage Mayor Ethan Berkowitz kicked off the conference again this year. A trail user who competed in this year's Tour of Anchorage ski race, Mayor Berkowitz spoke about the importance of trails and thanked the conference participants for their hard work. Senator Lisa Murkowski addressed the



attendees as well – via a video she recorded – highlighting new online maps being produced by the US Forest Service and calling trails “public health assets and economic engines,” a sentiment echoed by many conference presenters.

Keynote speaker Pat Pourchot used his decades of experience as a state legislator, state Department of Natural Resources Commissioner and federal Department of Interior employee to weave trails, outdoor recreation, public lands, new political and economic realities with the history of Alaska. His speech highlighted both the challenges trail advocates face while celebrating the beauty of Alaska and its trails.

Friday finished with a keynote from Rory Renfro of Alta Planning and Design titled: Trail Oriented Development. He discussed the key ingredients needed to transform an active transportation-oriented vision into reality. From higher-level regional planning and multi-jurisdictional consensus building, to detailed bicycle/pedestrian network design and land use connections, Rory showed examples of how this type of development has worked in other areas and could work in Alaska.

Saturday's attendees were fired-up by retired trails specialist Blaine Smith, whose thoughtful, historical and inspirational look at trails in Alaska set the stage for a great day for Alaska Trail Stewards, the Alaska Trails program that seeks to decrease the backlog of needed maintenance on trails across Alaska. Half of the participants stayed at the BP Energy Center to learn how to integrate volunteers into their agency or group, while the other half headed to Chugach State Park for a field trip training session. Volunteers finished the day by signing up for the many volunteer opportunities this summer.



The Trail Olympics once again delighted competitors and viewers alike, as they completed several trail-related tasks and obstacles. Blaine Smith and Joe Hall of Chugach State Park engineered the event, which saw teams working together to complete a mock NEPA process, build a boardwalk, start a chainsaw, make a causeway and calculate helicopter loads for the gravel to fill it – all while being pursued by a moose (in costume and with real poop) and tenacious judges.

There was ample time for trail builders, managers and users to make new connections that will benefit all trail users across the state. This important networking happens in the halls and lobbies before and after the sessions and is integral to the success of the conference. We

hope you will join us in keeping those great conversations and ideas going.

Conference presentations are being posted at the Alaska Trails website here: <http://www.alaska-trails.org/conference-presentations.html>.

Thanks again to our 2017 Conference Sponsors:

- Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
- Mat-Su Health Foundation
- Alaska Recreation and Park Association
- Alyeska Pipeline Service Company
- Bosco's

For news stories on the trails conference see:

- Statewide Trails Conference focuses on sustainable trails: <http://tinyurl.com/le7psma>
- Trail enthusiasts talk funding, building and design: <http://tinyurl.com/l93bjs4>

(Story and Trail Olympics photos by Steve Cleary)

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).

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.



One 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. However, do be careful to follow the rules of the road. Another alternative is to sign up for one of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game outdoor skills classes: <http://tinyurl.com/lm4aorj>

(Eric Troyer photo of Stiles Creek Trail in the Chena River State Recreation Area, before the trail was rerouted and hardened)

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

ALASKA TRAILS LINKS

- Active all winter, bike enthusiast wins top spot in photo contest: <http://tinyurl.com/lzk68mg>
- Alaska Trail Stewards video promo: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Cj75XqSgr8>
- From our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/pages/Alaska-Trails/707066126002590
 - Thanks to Senator Murkowski who recorded a brief welcome for our Trails Conference. She cited trails as: "public health assets and economic engines," which we did our best to highlight at the conference last week.

STATEWIDE NEWS AND NOTICES

APPLICATIONS DUE FOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE ASSISTANCE

Could the National Park Service help in your community to create close-to-home recreation opportunities and protect nearby nature?

Apply by June 30 to be considered for technical assistance with your locally-led conservation and outdoor recreation project. The community assistance specialists in our Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance program can help you to:

- Increase access to outdoor recreation and the natural world;
- Improve community health with new opportunities for more active living;
- Promote conservation and encourage stewardship of local resources;
- Benefit the local economy by improving quality of life;
- Connect youth to the outdoors and engage the next generation of conservation stewards; and
- Build partnerships that support your project's success!



To find out if we can help your community, review the application process. Then call or email our staff member nearest you to discuss your idea. We want to talk with you informally before you apply, to explore and develop your project idea and help you make the best of your application. Please let us know by the end of May if you intend to submit an application.

Still need help deciding to do something great in your community with our help? Watch this short video: <https://www.nps.gov/orgs/rtca/multimedia.htm>

Applications are due by June 30. For more information: <https://www.nps.gov/orgs/rtca/apply.htm>
(From NPS Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance program email; photo of RTCA program manager Paul Clark talking with Joe Hall about the newly rerouted portion of the Middle Fork Trail near Anchorage from RTCA webpage: <https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1005/index.htm>)

PRESIDENTIAL EXECUTIVE ORDER SPARKS OUTDOORS CONCERN

President Donald Trump wants to review many national monuments. This has caused concern among many in the outdoors industry. Below is a recent letter from Mike Morganson, Outdoor Programs and Outreach Market Coordinator in REI Anchorage.

*Dear Co-op Partner,
Leaders of the Outdoor Industry are in Washington D.C. this week speaking to congress and the administration around the importance of protecting our public lands. On April 26, President Trump signed an executive order calling for a review of approximately 30 national monuments over 100,000 acres, dating back to 1996. This is a concern for everyone that believes in the power of the outdoors. The co-op issued a response, both in social and on our blog (<http://tinyurl.com/m34x9m3>).*

This week the Outdoor Industry Association also released an updated Outdoor Recreation Economy report (<http://tinyurl.com/key7kbn>) that we encourage you to review and share with your community. The results are staggering. It reports that the outdoor recreation economy generates:

- \$887B in consumer spending annually
- \$7.6M American jobs
- \$65.3B in federal tax revenue
- \$59.2B in state and local tax revenue

While the conversation about our public lands may be complex, the way millions of Americans feel about those lands is much simpler. We share a deep love for these special places and the memories we create there.

At its heart, the idea of public lands isn't about politics or policy, it's about a shared passion for a life outdoors. One that crosses party lines and touches every corner of our nation. As one of our partners in creating a life outdoors, we encourage you to communicate out to your network the importance of our public lands. To that end, we have produced a Facebook post (<http://tinyurl.com/kodh759>) that we would appreciate you sharing out to your members, network and friends.

Together, we can elevate the conversation around the importance of our public lands and encourage our nation's leaders to see them as a critical part of the fabric of America. Thanks for your support, partnership and sharing. Together we can be #UnitedOutside,

Sincerely,
Mike

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. As of the end of April there were five National Trails Day events registered for Alaska from Kenai to Tok to Fairbanks. More are welcome! 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.

WATCH FOR BIRD NESTS WHEN WORKING ON TRAILS

Trail work sometimes requires downing trees or clearing shrubs. When doing so make sure not to violate the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, which makes it illegal for anyone to "take" migratory birds, their eggs, feathers, or nests. "Take" includes destroying or damaging active bird nests or eggs. Different areas of the state have different sensitive periods generally occurring between April 15 and July 25. However, if you encounter an active nest *at any time* leave it in place and protected until young hatch and depart. "Active" is indicated by intact eggs, live chicks, or the presence of an adult on the nest.

For a PDF document with more information and recommended time periods for avoiding vegetation clearing see: <http://tinyurl.com/kwubruc>

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

- Hiking maps go mobile: Feds unveil digital backcountry guides: <http://tinyurl.com/nybj6mt>
- National Geographic Just Named These Two Alaska Trails The Best In The World: <http://tinyurl.com/lj3nyko>
- New day use and entrance fees to be implemented at state parks: <http://tinyurl.com/ma8kkno>
- 2016 National Recreation Trails Photo Contest Winners (two from Alaska): <http://tinyurl.com/kkxalm2>
- Rozell to revisit a hiking dream across Alaska, 20 years later: <http://tinyurl.com/lj2psn9>

SLIGHTLY OFF-TRAIL

- Inspired by the Quest: Polish ultrarunner completes journey from Whitehorse to Fairbanks: <http://tinyurl.com/m8hrb9h>
- Why 'Parker's Trail' is the best 3 hours of Alaska reality TV you're missing: <http://tinyurl.com/kcs6jrv>
- Ambler Road access project scoping period extended: <http://tinyurl.com/meuksdg>
- Outdoor Explorer radio show: Noise and light pollution: <http://tinyurl.com/n45jq5t>
- Alaska Department of Fish and Game Outdoor Camps and Skills Clinics: <http://tinyurl.com/lm4aorj>
- When bikers collide with bears: <http://tinyurl.com/kscqfg>
- Reducing the impact of invasive elodea on fisheries: <http://tinyurl.com/ltyr746>
- Inspire Alaska outdoor discovery with kids early on: <http://tinyurl.com/m8rgq5n>

COLLAPSED BRIDGE NEAR BYERS LAKE GETS TEMPORARY FIX



(From Alaska State Parks Facebook post: <https://www.facebook.com/AlaskaStateParks>)

Great news: A temporary bridge has been installed by Big Dipper Construction to replace the collapsed footbridge over the inlet near Byers Lake on the Byers Lake Trail in Denali State Park! A long-term fix for the bridge is underway, but the materials for construction could not be procured before spring weather cut off the construction window. A permanent fix to the bridge will be completed over the winter. Please respect all posted signs and warnings.

SOUTH DENALI FACILITIES TO INCLUDE TRAILS NETWORK

A south Denali visitor complex that will include a network of trails is moving forward.

Part of the complex is the new K'esugi Ken Campground, which will officially open on Friday, May 26. Three public-use cabins have been available for rent since December and trails were groomed for cross-country skiing this winter.

Plans for the complex call for "a new hiking trail to alpine areas plus a network of trails for a range of abilities."

For more information see: <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/sdenali/index.htm#&panel1-3>

MAT-SU GROUPS WORK TOGETHER TO RE-ESTABLISH HISTORIC TRAIL

The Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation has partnered with the Knik Chapter of the Iditarod Trail Blazers, Big Lake Trails, Inc., the City of Houston, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, Alaska DNR, the National Park Service and Valley Mountain Bikers and Hikers to re-establish the historic Herning Trail to celebrate our Borough's history and enhance outdoor recreation and economic opportunities.

In the 1990s, the Alaska Department of Natural Resources mapped an RS2477 easement for the Herning Trail, running from the historic townsite of Knik to Houston (see map in plan, download link below). The Herning Trail project team has prepared a draft Historic Herning Trail Concept Plan for review and posted it on the borough webpage (www.matsugov.us under public notices). Please review the draft plan to learn more about the history and future of the historic Herning Trail. For more information about the project, visit www.facebook.com/The-Historic-Herning-Trail-1678652662405960.



Thank you for your help in creating a world-class trails system in the Mat-Su Borough!

Supporting material is available for public review during normal business hours on the 2nd floor of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough building in the Land Management Division. Public comment is invited on this request. If you have any comments please mail or deliver them to the borough offices at the address

indicated above, no later than May 30, 2017. If you have questions about this request: call 861-7869 between 8:00-5:00 or you can send an e-mail to: lmb@matsugov.us (PLEASE REFER TO MSB007128 WHEN SUBMITTING COMMENTS).

Download the plan here: <https://www.matsugov.us/publicnotice/draft-herning-trail-concept-plan#draft-herning-trail-concept-plan>

(From Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/MatSuTrailsandParksFoundation/>; photo of fatbikers on Herning Trail from <http://alaskab4udie.blogspot.com>)

ANCHORAGE PARKS AND REC ASKS TRAIL USERS TO BE PATIENT

Let the waiting games begin... Grooming maintenance has ended for Hillside and Kincaid except the snowmaking loop for a few more days. We're in the thick of breakup and the trails are soft and impressionable. Think of them like a sweet cake for a party. Honestly, who doesn't love a great party?



The problem is that if you dig into the cake before its done all you get is a sticky mush and a big mess before you have to start all over again. Footprints, paw prints, and bike tires can really be a problem this time of year where they ruin the drainage grade of the trails and transport material away with each use. The damage takes its toll on the trails but it also stretches the resources and volunteers trying to keep our world class trail system at top shape.

We're clearing the paved trails as we speak so you can stretch the legs and get out in the great weather. Consider them a nice little snack before the party. So in the end we just ask that you help us to save the trails this spring by staying off and once they dry out, it's cake time!



(From the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/AnchorageParksandRec>)

MAT-SU GROUP CALLS FOR TRAIL PROJECT GRANT APPLICATIONS

As winter ebbs to spring and we patiently wait through break-up to get back out on the trails, now is the time to prepare those trail project grant applications. Our next grant cycle deadline is June 1st 2017. We encourage people to work with our staff early in the process to discuss your project and get all the materials submitted for review. Please go to our website to download grant guidelines and application materials. www.matsutrails.org

(From Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation webpage)

SOUTHCENTRAL LINKS

- As Alaska melts, here's how to enjoy the soggy outdoors: <http://tinyurl.com/n8vrgzk>
- (Anchorage) Parks Bond—Proposition 3—passed: <http://tinyurl.com/jw2cn6h>
- Outdoor Explorer radio show: Mountain biking in Eagle River and the Mat-Su: <http://tinyurl.com/kgv5d3n>
- As spring blossoms, Boating season beckons: <http://coast-magazine.com/back-in-the-paddle>
- APU student seeks public input about popular Anchorage park: <http://tinyurl.com/n8zhr5d>
- New Hillside singletrack trails OK'd by (Anchorage) Parks and Rec board: <http://tinyurl.com/m5g2hxx>
- (Kodiak) Termination Point Community Celebration, June 2, includes hike: <http://tinyurl.com/lrxz79t>

- State, Eklutna agree to keep trails to Knik Glacier and river open to the public: <http://tinyurl.com/lqtmeb4>
- Another 6 to 8 miles of Hillside singletrack bike trails to be built this summer: <http://tinyurl.com/ky6eyto>
- Another Anchorage footbridge collapses, this one on the Campbell Creek trail: <http://tinyurl.com/mmwfb8h>
 - Campbell Creek Trail Bridge Rehabilitation webpage: <http://tinyurl.com/nxogldu>
- Residents asked to stay off muddy Anchorage trails during spring breakup: <http://tinyurl.com/lu8333r>

INTERIORWIDE NEWS AND NOTICES

STATE CUTS CAUSE CLOSURE OF DELTA AREA PARK FACILITIES

Most Delta Junction area state park facilities will be closed starting July 1 if proposed state budget cuts take place.

Land- and water-based trails associated with those facilities will remain open, but the trails will be affected by the cuts, according to Brooks Ludwig, superintendent of northern region parks. The main impact on trails will be the limited places for camping.



Camping facilities to be closed include Big Delta State Historical Park, Clearwater State Recreation Site, Delta State Recreation Site, Donnelly Creek State Recreation Site, Fielding Lake State Recreation Area, and Quartz Lake State Recreation Area.

“We will try to contract out Clearwater, Quartz Lake, Delta, and Big Delta State Historical Parks but if no one bids on the contract those sites will go to passive management, like Olnes Pond where the facilities are boarded up, furniture removed, people will still be able to access the site, but there will be no management,”

Ludwig wrote in an email. Ludwig does expect a contractor to take over Quartz Lake, charging for boat launch, day use, and camping fees.

The boat ramp for the Clearwater River, a popular “blue” trail, will remain open, according to Ludwig. However, the campground at the Clearwater State Recreation Site, which is adjacent to the ramp, would remain closed—as would other state campgrounds in the area—if no contractor takes the job. This would make multi-day trips more difficult or expensive (if people choose to stay at a hotel). The Clearwater River is popular for fishing and for float trips to Clearwater Lake or to the Tanana River to its confluence with the Delta River. Also, a new day-use fee will be charged at the site, along with other sites in the interior (see “day-use fees” link in Interiorwide Links).

The boat ramps at Fielding and Quartz lakes will remain open, though the bathroom next to the Fielding Lake ramp will be locked.

The land-based trails at Quartz Lake State Recreation Area will remain open and receive some maintenance, according to Ludwig.

“We try to run our trail crew down to Quartz Lake every spring to log out the trails,” Ludwig wrote in an email. “As long as we keep getting the RTGP funding (Recreational Trails Program grants) we will continue to do that. That will be the extent of trail maintenance. We will not pursue funding for trail projects in the Delta Area as we do not have the staff to oversee those projects.”

The Citizens Advisory Board of the Northern Parks Region has written to Senator Pete Kelly, president of the Alaska Senate, asking that funding for the Delta Junction area park facilities be put back in the budget. In trying to deal with the current state budget crisis, the Senate is proposing large state budget cuts. The House is proposing fewer cuts, instead instituting an income tax and raising oil taxes. Both sides agree, at least in principal, that the Permanent Fund needs to be restructured to help pay for the large budget deficit.

People wanting to comment on the cuts should contact their state legislators at: <http://w3.akleg.gov/index.php> (If you don't know who your legislators are, use the "Who Represents Me?" box in the lower right corner of the page.)

For more information on the cuts see this News-Miner story: <http://tinyurl.com/l9jfmvg>

(Photo by Eric Troyer of the lookout at the end of Bluff Point Trail, one of several land-based trails in the Quartz Lake State Recreation Site.)

CLOSED TRAILS IN CHENA RIVER SRA TO OPEN BY LATE MAY

Several trails in the Chena River State Recreation Area were closed on April 26 to all uses except walking. The seasonal closures allow the trails to thaw and water to disperse without disturbance.

The Angel Creek Hillside, Compeau and Stiles trails will reopen May 26 or sooner depending on conditions. The South Fork, Colorado Creek, East Fork, Yukon Quest Winter and Angel Creek Valley Trails are winter trails and will remain closed to motorized use during the summer. Other trails in the recreation area were not included in the closure.

Violations of the trail closures can be reported to Alaska State Parks during business hours at 451-2695. On evenings and weekends, contact Alaska State Troopers and they will contact Alaska State Park rangers.

For more information see: <http://tinyurl.com/m4xdysb>

LAKE AND TRAIL FESTIVAL TO CELEBRATE TANANA LAKES REC AREA

The Fairbanks Parks and Recreation Department will be hosting a Lake and Trail Festival, Saturday, June 10, at Tanana Lakes Recreation Area Non-Motorized Boat Launch. Our partners will provide paddling instruction in canoes, kayaks, and stand-up paddleboards throughout the day (pre-registration required). There will be many family oriented outdoor games, activities and classes. The Summer Trails Challenge will be unveiled too! For more information keep an eye on the Fairbanks North Star Borough Parks and Recreation Department website (<http://www.co.fairbanks.ak.us/pr/pages/default.aspx>) or its Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/Fairbanks-North-Star-Borough-Parks-Rec-285026928325274/>) or call at 459-1070.

(From the FNSB Parks and Recreation Department website)

DENALI NATIONAL PARK TRAILS PROPOSAL UP FOR COMMENT

An environmental assessment proposing to construct new trails connecting the Riley Creek Day Use Area and the Murie Science and Learning Center (MSLC) to other facilities in the entrance area of Denali National Park and Preserve (Denali) is available at <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/connectiontrails> for public review and comment.

The assessment evaluates an action alternative and a no-action alternative. The action alternative would enhance connectivity among buildings and trails in the entrance area and would minimize safety concerns for pedestrians using the Denali trail system. The proposed project would include up to 6,500 feet of trail and would consist of a mixture of upgrades to existing informal trails and new trail construction.

The Entrance Area Trail Connections Environmental Assessment is available at on the Planning, Environment, and Public Comment Site (PEPC) (web address above). Comments can be submitted directly on the PEPC site, e-mailed to dena_planning@nps.gov or mailed to Superintendent, Denali National Park and Preserve, P.O. Box 9, Denali Park, AK 99755. Comments will be accepted through May 29, 2017.

(From email by Katherine Belcher, public information officer, Denali National Park and Preserve)

LAND TRUST PLANS GOLDSTREAM, CRIPPLE CREEK PROJECTS

The Interior Alaska Land Trust has two new trail projects, one in Goldstream Valley and one along Cripple Creek, near Chena Pump Road.

The group has contracted Jon Underwood, owner of Happy Trails, Inc., “to build a walking/skiing trail around the back of the Peat Ponds, off Sheep Creek/Goldstream Road,” according to Seth Adams, a trust board member.

The project will require “a couple of volunteer work parties to hand finish the trail and clean up the mess that the dozer will make,” Adams wrote in an email. Dates haven’t been set for the work parties, but they will be reported in this newsletter or interested people can contact the trust (web address below).

The group is also applying for a National Park Service grant to “help us plan trail facilities on our Cripple Creek property, to hopefully improve recreation possibilities on those trails,” Adams wrote. The property is on the right side as you drive Chena Pump Road away from town.

For more information on the group see its website at: <https://interioraklandtrust.org>

NEW WHITE MOUNTAINS NRA MAP FOR MOBILE DEVICES RELEASED

A new map of the White Mountains National Recreation Area is among a set of maps BLM Alaska recently released for use on mobile devices. These maps should work fine when you're outside cell coverage once you've installed a georeferenced map application on your mobile device. For instructions and access to the White Mountains map and others, visit <https://www.blm.gov/maps/georeferenced-PDFs>.

(From BLM-White Mountains National Recreation Area Facebook page)

FREE GUIDE HAS IDEAS FOR RECREATING OUTSIDE WITH A FAMILY

Gear up for summer with help from the Family-Friendly Outdoor Recreation Guide! The guide is full ideas and helpful hints on where and how to recreate in Interior Alaska, your family is sure to get the best out of summer.

Pick up a free guide at the Alaska Centers - Fairbanks, located inside of the Morris Thompson Cultural and Visitors Center. (<https://www.facebook.com/Morris-Thompson-Cultural-and-Visitors-Center-225017977526267/>)

(From the Fairbanks Alaska Public Lands Information Center Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/AlaskaCentersFairbanks>)

INTERIORWIDE LINKS

- Reel Paddling Film Festival 2017, Fairbanks (May 4): <http://tinyurl.com/kpg898p>
- State institutes day-use fees for Chena Rec Area, other Interior sites: <http://tinyurl.com/lgt386c>
- User fees to be added to over a dozen Interior State Park facilities: <http://tinyurl.com/lk5y5vc>
- An ATV trails brochure for the Lower Chatanika State Recreation Site is now available for download on the website: <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/aspunits/northern/lrchatrivsra.htm>
- Fairbanks Paddlers’ Annual Chena River Clean Up – May 10: <http://tinyurl.com/mrwxh2r>

SOUTHEAST NEWS AND NOTICES

BATTERY POINT TRAIL OPEN TO PUBLIC IN CHILKAT STATE PARK

The Haines Area of Alaska State Parks is pleased to announce the completion of the Battery Point Trail realignment that connects the existing trail down to a lower beach side route and mitigates erosion and run-off issues. The trail work, completed in 2015 and 2016, extends the hardened portion of the trail down to beach access, descending a ridge at the lowest point to avoid a previously muddy, ankle-twisting, root-infested section. The section of trail built to sustainable trail standards was over 1,400 linear feet. Haines Area Natural Resource Technicians, Dallas Anderson and Andrew Althausser, and Alaska Conservation Corps member Liz Segars, worked hard to provide solid trail access for the use, enjoyment, and welfare of the public.

The trail realignment process began long before boots were on the ground in Spring 2015 with hefty public input and a great deal of effort from staff previously assigned to the Haines Area. Tom Kain, the previous park ranger for the Haines Area, applied for a Recreation Trails Program grant during fall 2014. The grant was awarded the following spring for \$47,540. This, compounded with the \$15,000 previously awarded by the City and Borough of Haines, got the project moving.

(This is a partial story is from the March edition of Eagle Watch, the state parks newsletter. To read the rest of the article see:

<http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/eaglewatch/eaglewatcharchive>; map from SeaTrails website: http://www.seatrails.org/com_haines/trl-battery.htm)



SOUTHEAST LINKS

- Sitka Trail Works Spring 2017 newsletter: <http://sitkatrailworks.org/news/>
- Juneau's mix of history, scenery and hiking trails makes it a great family destination: <http://tinyurl.com/n6znerx>

NATIONWIDE NEWS AND NOTICES

PRESIDENT TRUMP WANTS TO TRIM TRAIL-RELATED PROGRAM FUNDS

The Land and Water Conservation Fund is coming under more heat given the fact that the Trump Administration has recommended cutting the program's budget in FY 2018 from \$247 million to \$127 million. In response, more than 200 members of Congress have sent a letter to the House Appropriations Committee urging more robust funding than what the President is seeking.

(From Americans for Responsible Recreational Access: <http://www.ara-access.com>; for more on recent fights regarding the Land and Water Conservation Fund see the Land and Water Conservation Fund Coalition news: <http://www.lwccoalition.org/in-the-news.html>)

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

TRAILS-RELATED NEWSLETTERS

- Rails to Trails Conservancy enews (April): <http://tinyurl.com/m77ppts>
- American Trails (May): <http://tinyurl.com/kmfv5gz>
- National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council (April): <http://tinyurl.com/krfjdyw>

FUNDING

- National Forest Foundation Matching Awards Program (deadline June 26): <http://tinyurl.com/px7y6ke>

TRAIL GUIDES

- 4 best little-known trails to hike in Kansas this spring: <http://tinyurl.com/l5r3wtg>
- 13 Bike Trails To Cycle Through (New Jersey) This Spring: <http://tinyurl.com/mvgk4d5>
- Best easy walking trails along San Francisco's bayshore: <http://tinyurl.com/m8ep5bq>
- Discover Davis County's (Utah) Top 10 Hiking Trails: <http://tinyurl.com/l9eno5v>
- Check This Map of 10 Metro-Accessible Running Trails in Washington (D.C.): <http://tinyurl.com/klh9jjm>
- 13 Southern Hiking Trails That Go the Distance: <http://www.southernliving.com/travel/hiking-trails>

OTHER NATIONAL LINKS:

- "Story Maps" Use Technology To Create New Tool Promoting OHV (and other) Recreation: <http://tinyurl.com/l83bzig2>
- The 11 Best American Hiking Trails Near Breweries: <http://tinyurl.com/lwadah8>
- Why Spring Is the Perfect Time to Take Your Workout Outdoors: <http://tinyurl.com/l67mwmj>
- Five Steps To Enjoy National Forests On Off-Highway Vehicles: <http://tinyurl.com/lvl8lc>
- TomTom Will Now Help You Find Uncrowded National Park Trails: <http://tinyurl.com/mp6qbj2>
- 5 Traverse City Trails For Great Northern Michigan Hiking: <http://tinyurl.com/n2htogw>
- National Get Outdoors Day (June 10): <http://www.nationalgetoutdoorsday.org>
- Spiked trails in Sylva, N.C., lead to domestic terrorism bill: <http://tinyurl.com/kxvqg7r>

INTERNATIONAL LINKS:

- London's best-kept secret for walkers – and five more trails to explore this spring: <http://tinyurl.com/l3gn8go>
- South to Patagonia (volunteer opportunity): <http://tinyurl.com/mau7244>
- These 10 Hiking Trails Will Blow Your Mind: <http://tinyurl.com/mob7u4t>
- 5 Common Misconceptions About (Canada's) Great Trail: <http://tinyurl.com/mmpbvtj>
- Your guide to hiking around Hong Kong's Lion Rock: <http://tinyurl.com/n4pa8xp>

SLIGHTLY OFF TRAIL

- Discovering Bigfoots on North Bonneville trails: <http://tinyurl.com/lrwas4>
- National Park Service Receives Gift from President Trump: www.funoutdoors.com/node/view/3671

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