

ALASKA
TRAILS

NEWSLETTER

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www.alaska-trails.org

ALASKA TRAILS NEWS AND NOTICES



ALASKA TRAILS FALL FUNDRAISER SET FOR OCTOBER 20

The Alaska Trails Fall Fundraiser party will be held Thursday, October 20, at the Taproot in Anchorage. The celebration, which starts at 6:30 pm, will include a silent auction and live music by Big Fat Buddha. Attendees can bid on two Alaska Airlines Anywhere / Anytime Tickets, cabin stays, rafting trips, outdoor gear and much more!

We hope to see you there. Come enjoy the celebration and socialize with other trail lovers. Tickets are on sale now at our website: <http://www.alaska-trails.org/fall-fundraiser.html>



VOLUNTEER TO TAKE ANOTHER PIE FOR ALASKA TRAILS ON OCT 5

James Sowerwine, of the Division of Mining, Land and Water, took a pie in the face to raise money for Alaska Trails last year and he has signed up to do it again. He and other managers for the State of Alaska will be raising money for a variety of nonprofits through the Alaska State



Share Campaign. Last year State Parks Director Ben Ellis also participated and raised almost \$400 for Alaska Trails. Ben's silliness was captured on video: <http://tinyurl.com/o4ys73m>

The auction will be Wednesday, October 5, from 9am to 1pm in the space formerly occupied by Diane's on the first floor of the Atwood Building in Anchorage. The department managers choose where the money goes, and anyone can bid. The pie throwing will take place outside the Atwood Building rain, snow or shine at 3pm.

(Photos from last year's event: Before, James Sowerwine prepares to get "pied." After, James laughs with a face full of pie.)

ALASKA TRAILS APPLIES FOR REC TRAILS PROGRAM GRANTS

Alaska Trails is applying for two grants from the Recreational Trails Program. One is to fund Phase 2 of the Mirror Lake Singletrack project. The other grant will help fund a collaborative effort with Chugach State Park and the Student Conservation Association for further improvements on the Middle Fork Trail in the park. To see descriptions of the projects and the official public notice postings, go to the Alaska Trails website (www.alaska-trails.org/rtp-projects.html).

THANKS AND UPDATE ON INJURED ALASKA TRAILS FOUNDER

In the June newsletter we reported that one of Alaska Trails' founders and long-serving board members, Jack Mosby, was in a car accident in Hazelton, British Columbia, in late April. He suffered fractures in his sternum and T12 vertebrae. He spent much of May recovering in British Columbia and has since been rehabilitating at his home in Anchorage. Below is a progress report from Jack. If you would like to send a message to Jack, please e-mail office@alaska-trails.org and put Jack's name in the subject line.

Thanks to all of you for your cards, phone calls, and kind words of encouragement. It's been a long haul, but I hope the healing process will be done by year's end.

I saw the DR (doctor) again in late August. I'm about 60% healed for the vertebrae compression-burst fracture, and my sternum and ribs have healed, but I get to keep wearing the back and chest brace until the end of the year. I'm walking 4-5 miles/day on the bike trails and sidewalks near home with my four-wheel walker, depending on the weather and how I feel. Yesterday, I started to wean myself from the walker to walking poles and got in just over a mile without back pain. I'm still limited to lifting 15 pounds that I can definitely feel in my lower back. I did get clearance to drive, but I limit it to only the necessary trips.

If my lower back continues to improve and a couple of nearby lake test paddle trips work out this week, I may try to schedule the annual three-day Freezeree Paddle trip on the lower Little Susitna River in mid October. Our PT daughter has offered to go along to act as my Sherpa and to see that I don't overdo it. Come join us and enjoy the colors of Fall.

Another DR visit scheduled for late October. Thanks again for your support.

(Photo courtesy of Jack Mosby)



FEDERAL EMPLOYEES CAN DONATE THROUGH THE CFC

If you are a federal employee, you can donate to Alaska Trails through the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC). Just use the "Search Charities" button to find us. The campaign, which includes many other worthy charitable organizations, runs from September 1 to December 15. The campaign can be accessed here: <http://www.alaskacfc.org>

STATEWIDE NEWS AND NOTICES

FINAL SNOWTRAC GRANTS APPROVED FOR GROOMING, SAFETY

Even though the Snowmobile Trail Grant Program is ending, money left in the program's coffers—nearly \$240,000—will be spent this season on trail grooming and “safety, signing, and education” projects, according to a press release from the Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation.



Just over \$216,000 will be equally divided among 17 organizations for winter trail grooming in the Fairbanks, Mat-Su, Kenai Peninsula, and Juneau areas. That works out to just over \$12,700 per group.

Just over \$20,000 will go to two organizations for trail marking and educational trailhead signs. The City of White Mountain will be awarded \$10,070 to repair and replace 300 tripod trail markers on the 77-mile trail between White Mountain and Nome. The Alaska Avalanche Information Center, Inc. (AAIC) has been tentatively awarded \$10,000 to create and install educational signs to inform riders about safety at multiple locations around the state that are prone to avalanches. AAIC still needs to complete a few requirements.

Funding for the Snowmobile Trail Grant Program was vetoed earlier this year by Gov. Bill Walker due to a severe state fiscal crisis. The governor decided to allow money left in the program to be spent on the program rather than be spent on general state operations. The Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation decided how to divide the remaining money after getting input from the Snowmobile Trails Advisory Council (SnowTRAC), the citizen advisory board that reviews Snowmobile Trail Grant Program applications.

For more information contact Darcy Harris (907/269-8699, darcy.harris@alaska.gov).

(From Alaska State Parks news release)

COMMENTS DUE FOR STATE LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN



The deadline for comment on the draft Alaska Statewide Long Range Transportation Policy Plan “Let’s Keep Moving 2036” is 5 pm Monday October 24.

This draft plan updates the previous 2008 plan, proposes a performance-based approach to transportation planning, addresses updated federal requirements, and presents transportation policy recommendations based on the state’s reduced budget. To download a copy of the draft plan and the trends & condition analysis, go to <http://dot.alaska.gov/stwdplng/areaplans/lrtpp2014/documents.shtml>. You can also take the link to the Alaska 2036 Statewide Long Range

Transportation Policy Plan Update web page from the department’s homepage.

To facilitate public input, the department has launched an online open house that can be accessed any time during the comment period. Visit <http://ak2036lrtpoloh.com/index.html> to see a plan summary, access plan documents, and provide your comments to DOT&PF on how the State of Alaska can meet anticipated transportation challenges and demands over the upcoming 20-year period.

Comments can be submitted directly from the online open house, or sent by email (eric.taylor@alaska.gov), via fax ([907-465-6984](tel:907-465-6984)) or mail to this address: PO Box 112500 Juneau, AK 99811-2500.

LCWF GRANT APPLICATION CYCLE OPEN IN ALASKA



The Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation is accepting applications for grants it administers through the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). The federally funded LWCF program provides up to 50% matching grants for acquisition or development of parks and other public outdoor recreation facilities. State, regional and local entities with the legal authority to provide park and recreation services on public lands are eligible to apply.

The application deadline is 5pm on Monday, October 31. The application package, including blank forms, examples and rating criteria is available online at <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/grants/lwcf.htm> or by contacting the LWCF grants administrator, Jean Ayers (jean.ayers@alaska.gov; 907-269-8694).

(From DPOR press release)

RECREATIONAL TRAILS GRANT DEADLINE DATES NEARING

Deadlines for the Recreational Trails Grant Program have changed and are coming up soon.

The public posting due date is now October 1. The application due date is now November 1. Applications have been available since August 15.

The Recreational Trail Grant Program provides reimbursable, matching grant funds for trail easement acquisition, development and maintenance of trails and trail-related facilities. The program also provides funds for safety and educational programs. To learn more about the program, please visit the state's Recreational Trails Program page at: <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/grants/trails.htm>

BLM BOARD SEEKS NOMINATIONS FOR ADVISORY BOARD

October 10 is the deadline for nominations for five positions on BLM'S Alaska Resource Advisory Council (RAC), which advises the BLM on public land issues. Two positions are open that include representing the interests of off-highway vehicle use and commercial recreation.

Individuals who applied during the first call for nominations do not need to resubmit. All nominations from the first and second calls will be considered together during the review process.

The current Alaska RAC consists of 15 members with an interest or expertise in public land management and includes such individuals as conservationists, oil and gas and mining representatives, outdoor recreationists, state and local government officials, and tribal officials. The diverse membership of the RAC helps ensure that BLM land managers get the varying perspectives they need to achieve their mission to manage the public lands for multiple uses.

Individuals may nominate themselves or others to serve on an advisory council. All nominations must be accompanied by letters of reference from any represented interests or organizations, a completed RAC application, and any other information that speaks to the nominee's qualifications.

To learn more about the BLM Alaska RAC and download an application, go to <http://www.blm.gov/ak/rac> or contact June Lowery, RAC Coordinator, at (907) 271-3130 or email jlowery@blm.gov.

(From What's Up? by Peg Tileston)

GROUP, BLM SEEKS INPUT INTO COUNTRY'S BEST OHV RIDING

The National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council (NOHVCC) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) need your assistance in showcasing the best OHV riding opportunities in the country. You can help by nominating your favorite BLM riding areas. Simply fill out the survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/J722TD2>.

The riding areas you nominate will be compiled into a list to be voted on by you and other OHV enthusiasts across the country. The riding areas receiving the most votes will be recognized at the NOHVCC annual conference, the NOHVCC newsletter, and will be featured prominently on the national BLM website.

(From NOHVCC email)

AMERICAN HIKING SOCIETY HAS VOLUNTEERS FOR TRAIL PROJECTS

Land managers, volunteer coordinators, trail and park organizations across the state should consider



applying to the American Hiking Society's Volunteer Vacations program for next season. If successful, the AHS will send hardworking and dedicated volunteers to fulfill trail project needs. Volunteer Vacations is designed to send trail managers a crew of eager volunteers, ready to assist with trail needs. The deadline to submit a request is October 9. For more information:

<https://americanhiking.org/volunteer-vacations/host-information/>

NATIONAL RECREATION TRAIL PHOTO CONTEST DEADLINE COMING

American Trails sponsors an annual contest for photographs of designated National Recreation Trails (NRT) across the country. The contest provides awards in several categories and shows off entries (and previous winners) on the NRT website. The deadline for entries is December 15.

The goal is to highlight the diversity of the NRTs and to make more Americans familiar with these great trails. Contest judges look for good photos of trail users as well as special facilities, art on the trails, management issues, construction, and volunteers. They also want to see entries that cover the many types and uses of National Recreation Trails throughout America.

For more on the contest see: www.americantrails.org/nationalrecreationtrails/photocon.html

For a list of NRTs in Alaska, see: <http://tinyurl.com/h5bwnf4>

NATIONAL RECREATION TRAIL APPLICATIONS DUE SOON



Some applications for designating a trail as a National Recreation Trail are due by November 1.

For trails on private, city, county, or state land, or on federal land NOT overseen by the Department of Agriculture, the designation process goes through the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI). Those applications are due on November 1 of each year.

For trails on National Forests, National Grasslands, and National Recreation Areas and associated lands, the designation process goes through the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Those may be submitted anytime, but must be submitted by February 15 to be included in publicity with DOI designations each June.

For more about applying see: www.americantrails.org/nationalrecreationtrails/ApplyNRT.html

STATEWIDE TRAILS AND PUBLIC LANDS RELATED NEWSLETTERS

- Eagle Watch, State Parks (August): <http://tinyurl.com/goyfg3x>
 - Has several trails-related stories from the Interior and Southcentral

STATEWIDE LINKS

- Outdoor Explorer radio show:
 - Yukon River: <http://tinyurl.com/j9d73yn>
 - River Safety Techniques: <http://tinyurl.com/z337jur>
- Alaska maps released this week are most precise ever: <http://tinyurl.com/h8sn43o>
- State Recreational Trails Board recruiting new members (deadline Oct 1): <http://tinyurl.com/zb4egvd>
- Trouble on Alaska waterways? Don't keep it to yourself: <http://tinyurl.com/zsv52l2>

INTERIORWIDE LINKS

- Runner chronicles history of Alaska's Equinox Marathon: <http://tinyurl.com/hqcutpx>
- Fairbanksan nears end of Lewis and Clark trip: <http://tinyurl.com/z5y99hg>
- Fairbanks Metropolitan Area Transportation System newsletter (summer): <http://tinyurl.com/zprmywe>
- A path blazed through partnership: New public trail opens near Koponen Homestead subdivision: <http://tinyurl.com/helma4j>
- BLM repairs White Mountains outhouse, cistern on Summit Trail: <http://tinyurl.com/hnvg4d3>
- Trip report: Angel Creek Hillside Trail: <http://tinyurl.com/h4b4dzo>
- Fairbanks women go on rafting journey through Grand Canyon: <http://tinyurl.com/htn46zq>

SOUTHEAST LINKS

- Alaska mental health trust eyes rugged Deer Mountain for logging in Ketchikan: <http://tinyurl.com/jz4bbxc>

SOUTHCENTRAL NEWS AND NOTICES

UPCOMING MAT-SU ELECTION INCLUDES TRAIL-RELATED BOND

The Mat-Su Valley is one of the fastest growing regions in the State of Alaska. This election day, October 4, Mat-Su residents have the opportunity to continue to improve the quality of life they enjoy throughout the Mat-Su Borough through Proposition B4: The Community Development Recreation Bond.

Take a moment to learn more about this bond and how it will provide for more than 40 miles of trail improvements and improve Mat-Su recreation facilities from Talkeetna to Palmer. The Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation is encouraging people to vote yes on Proposition B4 this election.

For more information see: <http://matsutrails.org/vote-yes-prop-b4/>

(From Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation)

WASILLA ROAD PROJECT PLANS INCLUDE SEPARATED PATHWAY

Comments are due October 8 on the Wasilla-area proposal to improve and extend the Seward Meridian Parkway to Seldon Road.

The proposed work would include: Extending the parkway one mile north from Bogard Road to Seldon Road; Widening the parkway from a two-lane section to a four-lane section with a center two-way left-turn lane from Palmer-Wasilla Highway to Seldon Road; **Providing a paved, separated, shared-use pathway along the west side of the corridor for the length of the project;** New traffic signals at the intersections of the parkway with East Country Field Circle (this traffic signal will also serve Cottonwood Creek Elementary School), Bogard Road, and Seldon Road (to replace the temporary signal installed in 2016); Providing continuous roadway illumination along the entire corridor; Improving the Cottonwood

Creek crossing by replacing the culvert with a bridge or similar structure; Relocation and installation of signs, signals, and lighting; Relocation and installation of utilities and drainage; and Installation of an Automated Traffic Recorder.

This is the second phase of a larger project, which proposed to improve Seward Meridian Parkway from the Parks Highway to Seldon Road. Phase I, Parks Highway to Palmer-Wasilla Highway is complete. Construction for the proposed project is currently anticipated to begin in spring 2018. For more information see <http://www.brooks-alaska.com/sewardmeridian/>. People may also contact Cynthia Ferguson, Project Manager, at 269-0589 or email cynthia.ferguson@alaska.gov or Breanna Mahoney, Environmental Impact Analyst, at 269-0536 or email brenna.mahoney@alaska.gov. Submit comments to Brian Elliott, Regional Environmental Manager, at brian.elliott@alaska.gov.

(From What's Up? by Peg Tileston)

SOUTHCENTRAL LINKS

- Rare clear days on Kesugi Ridge provide spectacular views of Denali: <http://tinyurl.com/gmu69k4>
- Mirror Lake singletrack provides a new mountain-biking destination: <http://tinyurl.com/zohdp55>
- (Kodiak) Island Trails Network newsletter: <http://tinyurl.com/z97u6ra>
- Answers To Questions Submitted During Public Comment Period, Knik River Public Use Area (includes Rippy Trail comment): <http://notice.alaska.gov/182789>
- Anchorage Trail Watch program gets renewed interest after park killings: <http://tinyurl.com/zzh8leb>
- Borough opens new ATV trails at Jim Creek: <http://tinyurl.com/govl6w9>
- New ATV trail at Jim Creek opens up recreation prospects in Mat-Su: <http://tinyurl.com/gvp3ja3>
- Transit, trails and rails: 64 projects underway in Mat-Su: <http://tinyurl.com/jsl5kqk>
- Hatcher Pass alpine trails clearing fundraiser: <https://actionsprout.io/1BCDEC/initial>
- Bird to Gird National Recreation Trail is a featured NRT: <http://tinyurl.com/h2ouxzg>
- Keeping track of how many cyclists pass Westchester Lagoon: <http://tinyurl.com/j8k8nch>
- America's Best Trail Towns (by Backpacker; includes Homer): <http://tinyurl.com/j8f7kbb>

NATIONWIDE NEWS AND NOTICES

‘EVERY KID IN A PARK’ TO BE HELD FOR SECOND YEAR

The Obama Administration has just launched the second year of the Every Kid in a Park program. This program provides every fourth grader in America with a one-year pass so they and their families can visit federal lands for free for a full year - this includes National Parks, National Forests, and more! The intent of this program is to help connect children with nature and public lands, as someday these places will be theirs to protect and care for.

If you know a 4th grader or someone who has one in their family, ensure they visit the Every Kid in a Park website (www.everykidinapark.gov/) to get their pass.

(From American Hiking Society's Paperless Trail newsletter)

OUTDOOR RECREATION PARTICIPATION REPORT RELEASED

The Outdoor Foundation has produced the Outdoor Recreation Participation Topline Report to provide a snapshot of American participation in outdoor activities with a focus on youth and young adults. The report is based on an online survey of 32,658 Americans ages 6 and older. Participation numbers for day hiking and backpacking have both increased over a 3-year period. Day hiking is up 2.6% with 37.2

million participants while backpacking is up 4.9% with 10.1 million participants. Learn more and download the report here: <http://tinyurl.com/hznd55q>

(From American Hiking Society's Paperless Trail newsletter)

AMERICAN TRAILS CALLS FOR 2017 SYMPOSIUM PRESENTATIONS

To help develop an exciting and motivating program for the 2017 International Trails Symposium, American Trails invites people to submit ideas for presentations in support of the symposium's theme, "Trails Take Flight: Connecting People, Places, and Possibilities." Proposals can be for national or international presentations. Deadline for submissions is December 9. To find out more see:

<http://americantrails.org/ee/index.php/symposium/2017-call>

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

GRANTS

- Go the Extra Mile Fund (Michelob,American Hiking Society): <http://tinyurl.com/zt6maqs>

RECENT TRAILS-RELATED NEWSLETTERS/MAGAZINES

- American Trails (Sept): <http://tinyurl.com/hbytjux>
 - *Atlanta's Beltline trail spurs housing boom*
 - *Minneapolis greenway proposal stirs debate*
 - *The worst hike in New Hampshire*
 - *and more...*

STUDIES

- Outdoor families are happier families: <http://tinyurl.com/jx25t8c>

TRAIL GUIDES

- 7 of the Best Mountain Bike Trails in Los Angeles: <http://tinyurl.com/zh8dcu9>
- 6 East/West Coast National Park Trails for Running: <http://tinyurl.com/jp7e3jk>
- 10 Best Jackson Hole Hikes: <http://tinyurl.com/j84es6s>
- 6 Wisconsin Atv Trails For Fall In The Northwoods: <http://tinyurl.com/hc5lgbp>

OTHER NATIONAL LINKS:

- Keep Bikes Off Our Wilderness Trails (opinion): <http://tinyurl.com/jjm7aka>
- No, Mountain Bikes Won't Destroy Our Wilderness Trails (opinion): <http://tinyurl.com/zqb9owj>
- 6 Outdoor Life Lessons That Every Teen Should Learn: <http://tinyurl.com/h27cjk>
- Opinion: Ease the Impact of Mountain Biking on the Environment: <http://tinyurl.com/qd5ordl>
- Forest Service proposes a "cultural shift" for more access to public lands: <http://tinyurl.com/jovpj5w>
- How User Fees are Saving Wilderness: <http://tinyurl.com/jct4xgb>

INTERNATIONAL LINKS

- Canada's new 24,000 km cross-country bike trail draws criticism from users: <http://tinyurl.com/z48eocr>
- The World's Longest Recreational Trail Is Nearly Complete: <http://tinyurl.com/hn3z5ho>

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 eric.troyer@alaska-trails.org