



NEWSLETTER

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2025

PO Box 100627; Anchorage, AK 99510-0264

907/334-8049

www.alaska-trails.org

ALASKA TRAILS NEWS AND NOTICES

STATEWIDE TRAILS CONFERENCE HAPPENING THIS MONTH

ATTEND Our Trails Conference is right around the corner, on April 24-25 at the BP Energy Center in Anchorage.

Registration is already open. We will have both in-person and virtual options for attendance. We hope you can join us, and we welcome your ideas and feedback on how to make the most of this gathering.

More information on the conference, including how to register and how to access it virtually, can be found on our Trails Conference page: www.alaska-trails.org/trails-conference

To view recorded sessions and presentation slides from past conferences see our archives at: www.alaska-trails.org/conference-archive-links.



TRAIL TALES BRINGS YOU ENTERTAINING STORIES FROM THE TRAIL

ATTEND Our next Trail Tales will be held on Tuesday, April 15.



This edition of Trail Tales will benefit both Alaska Trails and Great Land Trust. Our storytelling series is sure to bring you lots of laughs, moments of contemplation, and a great time with good company. Trail Tales starts at 7 p.m. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. **For more information and to purchase tickets visit:** www.alaska-trails.org/trail-tales

Alaska Trails runs the Trail Tales storytelling series as a fundraiser for itself while also partnering with a different community organization for each event. In the spirit of Arctic Entries, storytellers share seven-minute stories about their trail experiences, adventures, and life in general. Our Trail Tales events are held at the Anchorage Museum and tickets cost \$20.

You can listen to past shows here: <https://www.alaska-trails.org/trail-tales>

JOHNSTON TAKES OVER FROM CLEARY AT ALASKA TRAILS

After more than 12 years, Alaska Trails bids farewell to Steve Cleary. Steve has been at the helm since 2012 and has helped to steward Alaska Trails from a one-person organization to the multi-faceted operation that it is today. We're deeply grateful for his vision and leadership over the years and wish him well with his new job at the Renewable Energy Alaska Project. Haley Johnston, formerly our Deputy Director, will be stepping into the Executive Director role - stay tuned for an introduction from Haley in next month's newsletter.



PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AK LONG TRAIL STUDY DUE ON APRIL 14

COMMENT The BLM has released the draft of the National Scenic Trail feasibility study for the Alaska Long Trail, open for public comment through April 14. Our key comment on the study draft is to add several routes to the “suitable” category:



- Talkeetna Backcountry route from Hatcher Pass to Talkeetna (general state land)
- Eagle River Backcountry route through alpine terrain to Eklutna and over Pioneer Peak (Chugach State Park)
- Anchorage area trails: Arctic-to-Indian Traverse, Powerline Pass, Tour of Anchorage and Moose Loop (Chugach State Park and Muni of Anchorage)

The key draft study finding is that two end-to-end routes are identified as suitable for designation:

- From Seward to Ahtna lands near Summit Lake for a length of 435.3 miles.
- From Ahtna lands near Denali Park to Fairbanks, for a length of 204.8 miles

Visit our page for links to the BLM's study and our thoughts on the draft: <https://tinyurl.com/2cw4u2dx>
To submit comments on the study, go here: <https://tinyurl.com/n2w2k853>

SPRING TRAILS ARE VULNERABLE, PLEASE USE WITH CARE

TREAD LIGHTLY 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 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.

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.



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.

Photo: Erosion on a popular trail in the Chugach State Park as seen on September 9, 2020 (Lex Treinen/Alaska Public Media)

SEEN RECENTLY ON OUR FACEBOOK PAGE

March 27

American Trails is seeking trail-related organizations willing to sign on to a letter "in support of robust federal funding for our nation's trails." **Find out more in the post (link below), which also has information on how to request funding from federal Senate and House members.**

<https://www.americantrails.org/resources/sign-on-to-support-federal-funding-for-trails>

March 26

Mark your calendars! This Earth Day, April 22nd, be a trail steward! Join Alaska Trails and Alaska State Parks for a trail and trailhead cleanup at Glen Alps in Chugach State Park.

RSVP on our website: <https://www.alaska-trails.org/current-volunteer-opportunities>



March 19



We had a grand time at Trail Tales last night with Alaska Huts Association! The stories were stellar, and we can't thank our brave storytellers enough!

Join us next month on April 15th for Trail Tales with Great Land Trust! It will be our last Trail Tales before we take a summer break, and you won't want to miss it. **You can get your tickets here:** <https://www.alaska-trails.org/trail-tales>

Photo credit: Kerry Tasker

March 14

Let's connect Glenn Highway to Far North Bicentennial Park! Anchorage Park Foundation is seeking funds to plan this much-needed trail connection. Please write to Senator Wielechowski and Representatives Eischeid and Mears in support of this project.

Learn more and find talking points here: <https://www.alaska-trails.org/long-trail-support>

March 14

Want to get more involved in trail work this summer? We have two paid trail crew member positions right now! **To learn more and apply, visit:** <https://www.alaska-trails.org/jobs>

March 10



Despite a challenging budget this year, Alaska Trails and partners submitted 13 trail projects to the legislature for inclusion into the FY'26 state capital budget. All of these projects have merit on their own for local communities, and they also fill in key gaps and connections for the Alaska Long Trail. While we don't anticipate receiving funding for all of these projects, we do hope for some \$\$ for trails this year. **Please support these projects by writing to your legislators! Find project descriptions and talking points on our website:**

<https://www.alaska-trails.org/state-budget-funding-for-aklt>

March 4

Wow, \$19,718! That's how much the BRR-Ber Challenge and the Race Across Alaska Winter Challenge raised for Alaska Trails! We are excited to put it to good use on our Alaska Long Trail Project.

Thanks so much to Race Director Heather Helzer of Turnagain Training and the participants in both challenges for their energy and generosity!



March 13

Do you love Crow Pass trail? We do too! Please reach out to Senator Merrick, Senator Giessel, and Representative Ky Holland to support the much-needed funding for trail section reroutes due erosion.

For talking points and more information, visit: <https://www.alaska-trails.org/long-trail-support>

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 have a bunch 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).

STATEWIDE NEWS AND NOTICES

TRANSPORTATION BILL CAUSES CONTROVERSY BETWEEN GROUPS

A bill in the U.S. Senate regarding funding for the Recreational Trails Program (RTP), the largest funder of trails in Alaska, has been stirring controversy.

The League of American Bicyclists recently had a call to action asking people to oppose the bill.



The League claims that the bill would pull money from the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), which funds bike lanes and sidewalks. The group says it supports the RTP but that funding for it should not draw away from the TAP. You can read about the group's position here: <https://tinyurl.com/y5777umt>

However, American Trails believes opposition to the bill is caused by misperceptions. The group argues that while RTP funding will flow through TAP, as "has always been the case," it

also states that the funding will pass through TAP "without affecting other Federal highway programs." You can read the group's position here: <https://tinyurl.com/3y9hwaey>

Kevin Dekkinga, director of membership and development for the League, counters that "the misperception is very much on the part of American Trails and our friends at RTC." (Rails to Trails Conservancy.) He said the League stands by its post from March 3 (link above).

Dekkinga says the League is working together with other groups to find a solution amendable to all.

"Together, we're working on a solution to move forward that doesn't come at the expense of life-saving roadway safety infrastructure and programming."

Mike Passo, executive director of American Trails, agrees and says the group is working with "bill sponsors to clarify language and intent that TA (Transportation Alternatives) would not diminish in funding if RTP is increased."

But he also warns that the writing of the bill is "not always in our control."

"We can't have a fractured coalition going into this coming fight to preserve our collective funding. It is not going to be easy."

Despite the challenges, Passo is optimistic.

"I absolutely see a path forward where we can all come to agreement on this," Passo said.



TRAPPING GROUP HAS NEW VIDEO ON DOGS AND TRAPS

The Alaska Trappers Association has a new "Sharing Alaska's Trails" video out on YouTube. The video is for non-trapping dog owners and has useful information on avoiding traps and getting dogs out of traps that have been accidentally caught. The video includes:

- (a) how to recognize if you are on a trapline trail,
- (b) how to recognize the various types of traps and snares, and
- (c) how to operate the traps and snares.

Most trapping seasons are closed now, but some still could be open, and if you are a dog owner or travel on trails with someone who has dogs, this is good information to review every year. See the video here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H_LcQ_Ug1lw



The ATA and Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) have also produced a pocket-sized pamphlet titled "Trap Safety for Pet Owners," which describes the types of traps and snares that may be encountered and provides illustrated instructions on how to free pets swiftly and safely. Copies are available free of charge at department offices or may be viewed on the website at: <http://tinyurl.com/m6oulhk>. More information, including video footage featuring trap removal instructions, is found on the department's website at www.adfg.alaska.gov (see "Sharing the Trails" under the "Hunting > Trapping" dropdown menu).

Photo from screenshot of ATA video

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 more information and recommended time periods for avoiding vegetation clearing see: www.fws.gov/alaska-bird-nesting-season

Photo from Denali 101: www.denali101.com/denalinationalpark/birds_of_denali.html

ALASKA STATE PARKS POSITIONS CAN INCLUDE TRAIL WORK

Alaska State Parks has a variety of seasonal positions through its the Alaska Conservation Corps (ACC), which are paid jobs, and its volunteer program. Tasks will vary and may include trail work, maintenance, fee station, or office work. Most positions begin in late May or early June. Some offices will start recruitment as early as March. You may wish to call the office in the area you wish to work in, to find out what positions they are offering this year and when applications are being accepted. For more information see:



- ACC: <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/misc/accinstr.htm>
- Volunteer Program: <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/vip/index.htm>

HELP SLOW CLIMATE CHANGE: JOIN OUTDOOR ALLIANCE, COMPOST

Climate changes affect everyone, including trail lovers.

For winter trail lovers, a warming climate can mean shorter snow seasons, and more extreme events like snow droughts and rain-on-snow events. For summer trail lovers, climate change can bring more droughts, wildfires, flooding, and permafrost thawing, all of which can hurt trails and the lands through which they run. These impacts will just get worse unless we slow climate change, which means we need to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions.

Here are two things you can do right now to help make a difference.

Join Outdoor Alliance

Outdoor Alliance is a nonprofit coalition that mobilizes outdoor enthusiasts to protect public lands and waters. This includes, but is not limited to, climate change.

The coalition is made up of several national advocacy organizations, including Winter Wildlands Alliance, the Mountaineers, the American Alpine Club, American Canoe Association, and the International Mountain Bicycling Association. The group also relies on individuals.

According to Outdoor Alliance, “Public land and conservation policy is complex, and we know how to effect meaningful change. We do the hard work, ensuring that we’re not just talking but making a measurable impact on all public lands and waters. That means building relationships with decision makers, enthusiasts, and activists to preserve trails, create new legislation, share maps, and empower others to protect the places in their backyards and beyond.”

As an individual, you can donate or sign up for action alerts. Find out more here:

www.outdooralliance.org/get-involved



Take a personal action



Find ways to not waste food. If thrown into the trash and to the landfill, rotting food creates methane, a potent greenhouse gas. Be more cognizant of your how you make and use your meals. Consider composting, even if you don’t garden. The U.S Food and Drug Administration has several tips on how to reduce food waste. Read them here: <https://tinyurl.com/333z9sfj>

Climate change may seem like an overwhelming problem, but we humans created it one step at a time, and we can solve it that way, too. Let’s do what we can to ensure that future winters still have usable snow for us and for our children, grandchildren, and beyond.

SEEN RECENTLY ON STATEWIDE FACEBOOK PAGES


BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT - ALASKA


March 28


Is health a motivating factor for time spent outside? According to a poll in Alaska’s Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2023-2027, 49.5% of surveyed Alaskans listed health and exercise as a reason they spend time outdoors. This reason for spending time outside was closely followed by the ability to enjoy scenery.

BLM-managed public lands offer the chance to achieve both goals of working out and taking in the view. Find some room to move your body in the special spaces suggested below:



 Paddle on a Wild and Scenic River, such as the Gulkana, to work your muscles and increase strength and endurance.

 Increase your cardio with a bike ride at Campbell Tract.

 Improve hand-eye coordination and response time by throwing a few casts while fly fishing at Tangle Lakes.

Link to Alaska's Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan: <https://ow.ly/8XIH50VqQB6>

BLM-WHITE MOUNTAINS NATIONAL RECREATION AREA

March 13

The BLM opened a 30-day comment period on a draft study evaluating the feasibility of designating the proposed Alaska Long Trail as a national scenic trail today.

The public has until April 14, 2025, to provide comments on the draft through the Alaska Long National Scenic Trail Feasibility Study page on the BLM National NEPA Register, here: <https://eplanning.blm.gov/eplanning-ui/project/2030342/510>.



STATEWIDE LINKS

- State park trail conditions reports: <https://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/asp/curevnts.htm>
- Finding comfort and adventure on Alaska's trails | Outdoor Explorer: <https://tinyurl.com/4xjpevxf>

SLIGHTLY OFF-TRAIL

- Early Wildland Fire Season Expected in Alaska: <https://tinyurl.com/59fscznt>
- Alaska Outdoor Alliance Action Alerts & Other News: <https://tinyurl.com/23jujn93>

SOUTHCENTRAL NEWS AND NOTICES

MAT-SU TRAILS & PARKS FOUNDATION SEEKS GRANT APPLICANTS

APPLY Deadlines for the upcoming Mat-Su Trails & Parks Foundation (MSTPF) grant cycles are coming up July 30. Got a trail or park improvement project idea? Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation wants to help make it happen! Eligible applicants can apply for grants through Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation to help fund projects that expand or enhance the valley's trail network and parks! **Please review our Grant Guidelines before applying:** <https://matsutrails.org/ourgrants/>

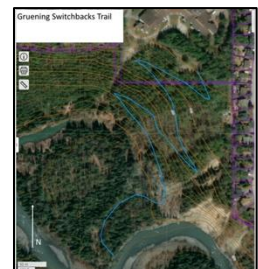
From What's Up? by Peg Tileston

SEEN RECENTLY ON SOUTHCENTRAL FACEBOOK PAGES

ALASKA TRAILS

March 12

If you live in Chugiak - Eagle River, consider supporting this great project from Chugach Mountain Bike Riders to connect Gruening Middle School to the Lower Eagle River Trail. This project will construct approximately one mile of new switchbacks and connecting trail from Gruening Middle School, located on the ridge above the river, to the existing Lower Eagle River Trail at the valley bottom. Gruening Middle School borders Chugach State Park overlooking the Eagle River Valley. Currently there is no public access to this swath of public land. Access to the



park is blocked by a chain link fence due to a steep ravine leading down to the river. Design work has been completed to construct a series of switchbacks that would connect the middle school and surrounding neighborhoods to a network of trails along the river itself. This trail would be nonmotorized multiuse, as called for in the Chugach State Park Trails Plan, open to hikers, bikers, skiers, etc. It has the support of the Chugach State Park Citizen's Advisory Board, as well as Eagle River and Eagle River Valley Community Councils.

Please write to Senator Merrick and Rep. Saddler to express your support for this project. Visit our website to learn more and find talking points: <https://www.alaska-trails.org/long-trail-support>

ANCHORAGE PARK FOUNDATION

March 12

Great news! The Youth Employment in Parks (YEP) team had a productive meeting with Senator Dan Sullivan about our frozen funds, and his office has stepped up with a process to help. This is huge! And a much-appreciated opportunity to unfreeze funding for YEP and possibly other Anchorage Park Foundation projects.

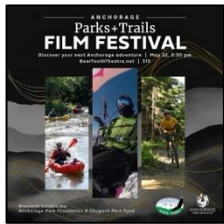


March 11

The Anchorage Youth Employment in Parks (YEP) Team is being recognized for their brilliant work this week at The Corps Network National Conference, celebrating 40 years of supporting America's greatest resource: our young people. <https://corpsnetwork.org/conference-events/national-conference>

March 4

Save the Date! May 22! Anchorage Parks+Trails Film Festival at Beartooth! Presented by the Anchorage Park Foundation and Alaska State Parks.



For more than 1000 years, residents of Dena'ina EInena (Anchorage), have been walking, hiking, fishing, skiing, and paddling. Ancient pathways along creeks have become trails that take you from the mountains to the sea and everywhere in between.

Join us to watch locally-made videos to help you navigate your next big adventure right here in Anchorage. **Tickets on sale Now! Part of the proceeds will benefit Anchorage Park Foundation and Chugach Park Fund, 501 (c)(3) non-profit organizations.** Tickets: <https://beartooththeatre.filmbot.com/movies/anchorage-parks-trails-film-festival/>

SINGLETRACK ADVOCATES

March 23

Join Singletrack Advocates and your friends to celebrate another great year and raise money for upcoming trail projects! <https://aftontickets.com/event/buyticket/el95ndqp92>

Dress up in your snazziest neon and sparkles! Buy tickets on our website.

Friday, April 25th from 7-11:30pm at 49th State Brewing

- Try your luck with our amazing raffle prizes
- Get your fresh STA merchandise
- Enjoy food and drinks for purchase
- Rock out to DJ Spencer Lee!



ALASKA HUTS ASSOCIATION

March 25

A week ago, we had the honor to co-host Trail Tales alongside our friends at Alaska Trails. We are so thankful for the turnout and funds raised for our small nonprofit.



We're even more delighted to share a story from a speaker and member of the Housewives of Turnagain Arm Book Club, Camille, who shared her story about being comfortable on Alaska's trails even as an "inexperienced bookworm from the South" because of her yearly experience at her book club's meeting - hosted at the Manitoba Cabin and Yurts.

Camille's story was a small moment out of our busy days where we could feel the crowd lean in, delight in her success of something as simple as learning how to build her own fire and feel the awe that makes these public lands so accessible to everyone.

That's something we get to provide at Alaska Huts. And we're so thankful for that.

March 12

We are thrilled to announce the launch of the Alaska Huts new membership program, designed to further foster our community of Alaska hut enthusiasts.

Over the past few months, we've taken a step back to thoughtfully reimagine our membership program, narrowing down the structure and its benefits into a more cohesive and inclusive program. **Check it out here:** <https://www.alaskahuts.org/memberships/>

By joining the Alaska Huts membership, you'll not only support our mission, but also enjoy exclusive benefits such as early booking access, event invitations, discounts on retail, and more. Your membership directly contributes to supporting our work, and we thank you for your consideration to take part. Together, we're making the outdoors more accessible and meaningful for everyone.



MAT-SU BOROUGH RECREATION AND LIBRARY SERVICES

March 14

Spring 🌱 has come early to the Mat-Su and we are seeing more people 🏃 and dogs 🐕 out on the trails already this season! This is a friendly reminder that Borough has Code 24.05.070 (A) that states "All animals shall be continuously under restraint" which is defined as "...physical control such as a leash...".

This helps protect all users of the trails and minimizes conflicts. If you do encounter a problem out on the trail, let Animal Care know: <https://animalcare.matsugov.us/pages/enforcement>

See you on the trails 🐾!

ISLAND TRAILS NETWORK (KODIAK)

March 9

Looking for a unique way to support ITN? We're looking for donated (treated) lumber of any kind, but 2x6, 4x6 would be best! Old pier wood? Let us know! Cash for lumber & gravel? Give us a call! We're hoping to fix a very muddy area on a beloved trail in Kodiak. Thanks fellow trail users, we appreciate the support!

SOUTHCENTRAL LINKS

- Anchorage Trail and Ice status: www.muni.org/Departments/parks/Pages/IceTrailStatus.aspx
- Anchorage Park Foundation, Spring newsletter: <https://tinyurl.com/bdf7j8jm>
- Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation newsletter: <https://tinyurl.com/ja9wwhb6>
- Winter Speaker Series: Historic Trails of the Mat-Su (April 8, 6:30pm): <https://tinyurl.com/3fdytxta>

SLIGHTLY OFF-TRAIL

- Alaska Huts Newsletter: <https://tinyurl.com/4but2d76>
- Plans for mining road adds to concerns in remote West Susitna region: <https://tinyurl.com/397ver3s>
- Kodiak Outdoor Film Festival (April 12): <https://www.islandtrails.org/film>
- Avoid Driving on Mat-Su Forestry Roads During Breakup: <https://tinyurl.com/fad4zt33>

INTERIORWIDE NEWS AND NOTICES

COMMENT PERIOD OPEN ON STATE FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN

COMMENT The public has until 5 pm Friday, April 18, to comment on the draft Tanana Valley State Forest Management Plan.

The forest includes 1.8 million acres of land, including a lot of land around Fairbanks, such as in the Rosie Creek, Bonanza Creek, Standard Creek, and Cache Creek areas. The forest has many trails and forestry roads used by trail users year-round.

Trails and trail use are mentioned many times throughout the plan as a valuable asset for locals and for tourism.

An informational meeting will be held virtually from 6:30pm to 8:00 pm on Thursday April 3. A link for the virtual meeting will be posted to: <https://forestry.alaska.gov/TVSFrevision>

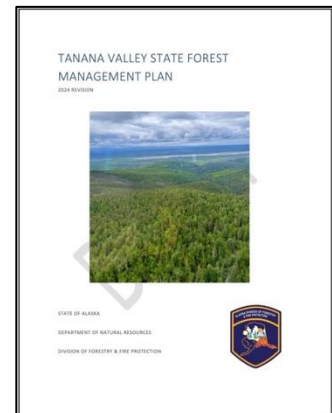
If you use trails, forestry roads, or other resources in the Tanana Valley State Forest, make sure to look through the plan and comment. If nothing else, emphasize that trails and trail use are important for local quality of life and/or tourism opportunities.

You can submit comments in writing to:
dnr.for.tvsfrevision@alaska.gov

Or you can send them to: Alaska Division of Forestry & Fire Protection; ATTN: TVSF Revision; 550 W. 7th Ave. Suite 1450; Anchorage, AK 99501

Get a copy of the plan to review here: <https://forestry.alaska.gov/TVSFrevision>

The plan is long. You can simplify your review by doing a search for specific words, such as “trail” or activities that are most important to you.



BLM GRANTS ALLOWS EXPANDED TOURS IN WHITE MOUNTAINS

BLM has issued a permit for helicopter tours and expanded snowmachine tours in the White Mountains National Recreation Area. See the following press release:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Eastern Interior Field Office issued a decision approving a special recreation permit for Borealis Basecamp, LLC, to provide trail and helicopter tours in the White Mountains

National Recreation Area. The final permit addresses concerns identified by the public during scoping and includes features to reduce potential impacts to recreation, wildlife and other resources.

“Public input was valuable to understanding impacts and making a decision that provides for a wide range of user experiences in the area,” said BLM Eastern Interior Field Office Manager Tim Hammond.

Borealis Basecamp is a local resort company currently permitted to offer snowmachine and side-by-side tours in the White Mountains. The new permit authorizes continued use of the Wickersham Dome



Trailhead and five miles of the Wickersham Creek Trail, where Borealis Basecamp has a warming tent. The permit has expanded to allow for one additional snowmachine tour per day from October 15 to April 10, with no more than 14 machines per trip and no more than 20 machines daily, except from March 1 to April 10, when only one trip with no more than 14 machines is authorized on weekends, holidays and during spring break.

Under this permit, Borealis Basecamp will perform regular winter trail grooming of their route to reduce trail degradation. The permit does not authorize summer side-by-side use because it was not included in the applicant's

new proposal. Fall side-by-side use from August 21 to October 14 was kept at the same use level as the existing authorization to address concerns about trail degradation.

The permit also authorizes Borealis Basecamp to provide up to three daily helicopter tours from September 16 to April 9, except for March 1 to April 9, when only one helicopter tour is authorized during the weekends, holidays, and spring break to reduce impacts during increased public recreation times. The proposed flight path and landing location were chosen to provide a scenic flight while minimizing wildlife and public disturbance.

See the rest of the press release here: <https://tinyurl.com/mrdec9m6>

See details of the permit process here: <https://eplanning.blm.gov/eplanning-ui/project/2033814/510>

See a Fairbanks Daily News-Miner story about the issue here: <https://tinyurl.com/56f5xk35>

Photo of snowmachines in the White Mountains NRA by Eric Troyer. Unknown if these are part of a Borealis Basecamp tour.

PROPOSED SIGNAL WOULD AFFECT PARKS HIGHWAY BIKE PATH

COMMENT An open house will be held April 2 on the proposed Parks Highway / Sheep Creek Road Extension traffic signal from 5:30 to 7pm at the University Park Elementary School. The open house will discuss a proposed project to install a new traffic signal at the intersection of the Parks Highway and Sheep Creek Extension and to improve the existing separated bicycle/pedestrian path crossing Sheep Creek Extension Road as part of this project. DOT&PF plans to construct this project during the summer of 2026.



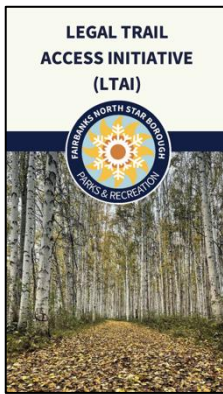
To provide comments or for more information, contact Ivet Hall, P.E., Engineering Manager. at (907) 451-5386 or email ivet.hall@alaska.gov or go to <https://dot.alaska.gov/nreg/parksandsheepcreek>. Submit comments by April 16.

From What's Up? by Peg Tileston

FAIRBANKS BORO LOOKING TO BUY EASEMENTS FROM LANDOWNERS

SELL AN EASEMENT The Fairbanks Borough is looking for landowners who have a trail on their property that is in the borough trails plan but does not already have a public access easement. The borough would like to purchase trail easements from willing landowners. If you know have such a trail, please read the announcement below and/or see this brochure: <https://tinyurl.com/mt4st9wj>. **If you have a trail that runs across your property and are uncertain of the status, call Trails Coordinator Andrea Jacobs** (contact information below).

The Fairbanks North Star Borough's Parks and Recreation Department has been developing a new program, Legal Trail Access Initiative, which uses Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) funds to purchase trail easements from willing landowners to secure legal public recreational access as suggested in the Comprehensive Recreational Trails Plan. The primary goal is to reduce liability for landowners and instances of trespassing while also making it possible for the Borough to build and maintain trails which could not have funds invested in them previously due to their lack of a public easement. The Borough is currently in the process of testing the process with interested landowners who have a CRTP trail crossing their property which does not have a public access easement associated with it. If you are interested, please contact the Trails Coordinator, Andrea Jacobs, at andrea.jacobs@fnsb.gov.



FAIRBANKS PARKS AND REC WINTER TRAILS ENDS IN APRIL

The Fairbanks North Star Borough Parks and Recreation Department is again hosting the Winter Trails Challenge.

The sign list was revealed in late December for this popular ongoing event, which is free and open to anyone. Registration is required to be eligible for prizes and awards.



The Fairbanks Trails Challenge is an all-ages, all-abilities, outdoor scavenger hunt designed to get you out with your friends and family to explore our wonderful local trails, both new and familiar. Each summer and winter season, Parks Department staff temporarily installs special signs in secret locations along a dozen or so local trails. While the signs are up, the public is invited to visit the trails and try and find the signs. Along the way hopefully you have

a chance to learn new skills, see new places, and make positive memories.

Participants who find at least ten signs during the event can win prizes from local sponsors and the coveted Trailblazer Award. Participants under the age of 10 can find at least five signs to win the Junior Trailblazer Award.

- Registration: <https://secure.rec1.com/AK/fairbanks-north-star-ak/catalog>
- Facebook Event: <https://www.facebook.com/events/1071705541370332/1071705551370331/>

SEEN RECENTLY ON INTERIOR FACEBOOK PAGES

FAIRBANKS TRAILS INC

March 18

Fairbanks Trails Inc is hiring interns to do trail work this summer! Spread the word. Here is the job description with "apply" button. <https://myjobs.adp.com/scacareers/cx/job-listing?keyword=00801219>

A great job for someone wanting to stay physically fit. Kind of like a wildland fire fighter but no smoke and in town.

March 2

Fairbanks Trails is happy to announce that we are now able to accept donations through Facebook. **Please use the Donate button here to contribute toward our work of trail maintenance, construction, education, safety, and advocacy.** Thank you!! <https://tinyurl.com/5x28ndu5>

FAIRBANKS TRAIL AND WATERWAY USERS

March 25

Below is copied from the Goldstream Community Page, which is private. I don't know exactly where in Goldstream this is, but the message is clear and reasonable. Many trails in Goldstream and the greater Fairbanks area lead to private homes. Please respect signs that indicate you are on private property and turn around unless they say you can proceed. If you doubt the veracity of the signs (people rarely put up private property signs to try to keep people off public property but it occasionally happens), then do your research first and first try to work with the authorities.



Post from the Goldstream page:

Goldstream trail system users, if you come up a trail that says private trail at the start and then has two more private property signs up the trail, please do not ignore the signs. We put in a private trail this winter so we could access the lower Goldstream trails. It leads right to the back of my house and is clearly marked well before you get anywhere near my house. There is even a sign at the beginning of the trail where it ties into the trail system that it's a private trail with no outlet or turnaround.

We have had two unwelcome visitors since putting in this trail. It is extremely frustrating to have people blatantly disregard posted signs. PLEASE RESPECT PRIVATE PROPERTY. End of rant, I hope everyone is enjoying the winter trails while they last!

March 22

The Fairbanks Daily News-Miner and KUAC have a story on the draft of the Alaska Long National Scenic Trail Feasibility Study. According to the story the draft "doesn't entail any final decisions, and the BLM doesn't have control over whether the proposed route ultimately earns the National Scenic Trail designation. That power lies with Congress."

--The draft feasibility study says the proposed route meets or partially meets eight of the nine objectives, falling short when it comes to approval of all relevant landowners.



“There were segments along the way that people were really excited about, and there were segments along the way where people weren’t necessarily interested in having a long trail cross,” Ebbers said.--

Read the story here: <https://tinyurl.com/2huekdym>

You can listen to the story on KUAC here (starting at about 2:30 minutes.): <https://tinyurl.com/53a9xtsf>

March 4

Last week the Fairbanks Borough Assembly voted 8-1 to add a seat to the Borough Parks and Recreation Commission for an assemblymember. The member will be ex-officio and will not be able to vote or be counted for quorum purposes. See the ordinance here:

www.fnsb.gov/DocumentCenter/View/20573/Ordinance-No-2025-02

For more about this issue, see this Interior Alaska Trails blog post: <https://tinyurl.com/y2cjt3s3>

March 3

At last week's Fairbanks Borough Assembly meeting, the assembly voted on an update of the borough's Capital Improvement Program project list. An attempt was made to push back several projects on the list, including \$350,000 for community trail improvements, in favor of funding that prioritized school buildings and maintenance. The attempt failed.

Read the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner story here: <https://tinyurl.com/yve6mprn>

INTERIORWIDE LINKS

- Exceeding Expectations on the Denali Highway: <https://tinyurl.com/2xy99j3r>
- A Mostly Solo Trip in the Whites: <https://tinyurl.com/28w7a36u>
- Another Year Older (a birthday bike trip in the White Mountains NRA): <https://tinyurl.com/336k3syn>

SOUTHEAST NEWS AND NOTICES

SEEN RECENTLY ON SOUTHEAST FACEBOOK PAGES

TRAIL MIX, INC

March 25

Love spending your days outside, getting your hands dirty, building trails, and working with an awesome team? 🪛 🌲 We're hiring – Apply here:

<https://trailmixinc.org/employment/>

- Crew Lead – Lead a trail crew, complete meaningful trail projects, and gain outdoor leadership and stewardship experience.
- Youth & Community Team Leader – Help lead the YEP crew with SAIL, teach trail skills, and inspire the next generation of trail stewards!

Help us steward Juneau's trails!



March 14

Love being outside with your buds? Already dreaming of summer trail days? 🌲 ☀️ Come out and volunteer with us this summer and bring all your friends and family too! 👤 👤 👤

Sign up for our Gorp Report to stay in the loop on upcoming volunteer days, and if you're signing up as a group, consider volunteering to steward a trail! You can sign up in our bio or on our website. We need volunteer hours more than ever this summer! By volunteering, you're ensuring Juneau's trails remain accessible this summer and progressing trail stewardship projects that benefit the entire community.

Volunteer days are typically Saturdays from 9am-3pm, May-September. We hope to see you on the trail! 🛠️ 🌿



March 11

Every dollar donated to Trail Mix goes directly toward supporting trail work—always! Yesterday, we kicked off scouting at Horse Tram and Tee Harbor, marking areas in need of repair and bushwhacking to explore new spur trail options. 🛠️ 🌲

Trail planning isn't just about fixing what's broken—it's about dreaming of new ways to recreate and steward this incredible place we call home. From reinforcing trails to improving drainage, every dry, well-built trail takes countless hours of planning, labor, and engineering. 🏞️ 🛠️



March 14
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Despite the challenges of this season's federal funding landscape, our commitment to

Juneau's trails remains strong. Thank you for your overwhelming support in helping us continue to care for our trails. Trail Mix was founded to bridge the gap between the mosaic of public land managers in Juneau, working efficiently across landowners to improve our trail system. We are always working towards this mission to make our trail system more accessible.

Volunteer hours and donations are more critical than ever this season. With over 90% of Juneau's community using trails, let's all pitch in to care for these vital resources that connect us to each other, to place, to nature, and to other animals.

Links to donate to our Adopt a Juneau Trail Crew fundraiser, steward a trail, or sign up to volunteer are below. This is a particularly important summer to give back to our public lands!

Support a Juneau Trail Crew: <https://tinyurl.com/fundacrew>

Volunteer: <https://wkf.ms/3QKainA>

Steward a Trail: <https://wkf.ms/4ijLuyV>

March 10

Thank you KTOO and Yvonne Krumrey for this piece on why we need to protect our trails this summer.

Read more: <https://tinyurl.com/3eret5d6>

Donate: <https://tinyurl.com/yckxmkwr>

Due to uncertainty around federal funding, we will not be able to maintain Forest Service trails this season—unless we raise \$170,000 to hire a dedicated trail crew. These trails represent 40% of our local trail system, including access to Peterson Lake, Windfall, Dan Moller, John Muir, and Eagle Glacier cabins—all of which are at risk of being left unmaintained.

March 14

Love being outside with your buds? Already dreaming of summer trail days?

🌲 🌞 Come out and volunteer with us this summer and bring all your friends and family too! 👤 👤 👤 👤

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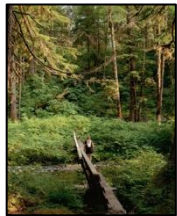
We are actively fundraising to continue maintenance on Forest Service trails this summer and to rehire some of the skilled trail workers who were recently let go. Every dollar raised will go directly towards supporting Forest Service trails and providing jobs for these valuable workers.

Trails connect us—to this place and to one another. Please consider donating, volunteering, or spreading the word to help keep Juneau's trails safe and accessible this summer. 🌲



SITKA TRAIL WORKS, INC.

March 26



With the uncertainty around federal agencies right now, we wanted to provide an update on our campaign to #SaveACrew. We are maintaining our goal of serving our community by preserving access to public lands as best we can. Check out our latest blog post for more details, available here: <https://sitkatrailworks.org/federal-uncertainty/>

Thank you so much for your support of this campaign and please let us know if you have more questions, happy hiking!

March 17

What a blast we had on Saturday! Over 30 volunteers came out in the sun to help us gravel the Indian River Cross Trail Connector for a few hours. The tread of this trail has significantly improved, and it is due to the time donated from so many incredible community members, of all ages. We hope to see everyone at our next event, April 19th. Stay tuned for more information. Happy hiking!



March 10

Thank you KCAW for highlighting our efforts to rehire a Tongass Trail Crew! [Learn more about our campaign in the article below](#) or at tinyurl.com/saveacrew
<https://tinyurl.com/4s9h7wz6>

SOUTHEAST LINKS

- Sitka Trailworks is raising money to bring back fired FS trail crew: <https://tinyurl.com/4s9h7wz6>
- Sitka Trailworks March Trailblazer Bulletin: <https://tinyurl.com/y2vs6u57>
- Southeast trail groups want fired USFS workers, if they can raise money: <https://tinyurl.com/3dk9md7d>
- Juneau's Forest Service trails may be without maintenance this year: <https://tinyurl.com/bddv7vuw>

NATIONWIDE NEWS AND NOTICES

HIKING GROUP HAS CALL TO ACTION RE PUBLIC LANDS EMPLOYEES

SIGN LETTER In recent weeks, more than 5,000 government staff members from the National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, and the Fish and Wildlife Service have been dismissed.



The American Hiking Society says this means trail organizations across the country will be unable to provide critical trail maintenance and management.

According to the AHS: "There has been no rhyme or reasons to these layoffs and all of us visiting these places over the coming weeks and months for spring break and summer vacation will experience unsafe conditions, closed restrooms and visitor centers, and trails that are impassible or don't live up to the standards that the public has come to expect as the crown jewel of the country. Without on the ground staff, organizations like American Hiking Society, cannot partner and volunteers cannot give back in the same way."

If you agree with the AHS, **the group has created an easy way for you to send a letter to Congress.** See how here: <https://americanhiking.org/advocacy/take-action/>

PLAN TO HOST AN EVENT FOR NATIONAL TRAILS DAY

PLAN AN EVENT Why host a National Trails Day® event? So your community can come together to hug trees, join a trail stewardship project, clean up a trail or waterway, or hit the trails for a hike (maybe even with an adoptable pup!).

National Trails Day® is all about celebrating our love for the outdoors and giving back to the trails that connect us. Whether you've hosted events before or this is something new for your group, we'd love for you to be part of the movement!

The best part? There's no wrong way to celebrate! Host a group hike, organize a clean-up, plan a trail run, lead an educational walk, or get creative with activities like a scavenger hunt, park BBQ, or sunset hike with post-hike stargazing.

Ready to make an impact? **Learn more about hosting and register your event today** <https://buff.ly/4hcZdHI> and bring your community together for National Trails Day® this year on Saturday, June 7th!

National Trails Day® is made possible by our generous partners. Thank you to GORE-TEX Brand, Fjällräven, and our federal partners National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Federal Highway Administration.



From American Hiking Society Facebook post

FOREST SERVICE RELEASES NEW TRAIL NOTEBOOK

The United States Forest Service has released a new edition of their Trail Maintenance and Construction Notebook. The 2025 edition contains updated techniques, photos, diagrams, and resources, including information on collaborative trail planning, trail maintenance tips, and the science behind designing, building, and maintaining long-lasting trails.

The new edition is extremely user-friendly and provides high quality pictures and diagrams to demonstrate appropriate trail management, maintenance, techniques. You can find the document here. This is a great tool for those managing, maintaining, or volunteering on trails.

Read more here: <https://tinyurl.com/mw3v7mc>

From the National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council

NATIONWIDE / INTERNATIONAL LINKS

WEBINARS, MEETINGS, CONFERENCES, TRAINING, ETC.

- American Trails calendar (trail webinars workshops, etc): www.americantrails.org/training/calendar

TRAILS-RELATED NEWSLETTERS

- American Trails "Trail Tracks": www.americantrails.org/newsletter

VOLUNTEER

- Am. Hiking Society's 2025 Volunteer Vacations: <https://americanhiking.org/volunteer-vacation-trips/>
- Conservation Volunteers VIP (February newsletter): <https://tinyurl.com/mpuuak58>

FUNDING

- FOX Factory Trail Trust (**applications reviewed quarterly**): <https://trailtrust.com/>
- Yamaha Outdoor Access Initiative (OHVs, **quarterly deadlines**): <https://yamahaoai.com/>

OTHER LINKS:

- Trail Management Best Practices (2019): <https://tinyurl.com/j4dx2ykh>
- Trail Towns & Gateway Communities: Survey Findings & Summary: <https://tinyurl.com/yaeskxcp>
- Best Practices for the Development of Snowmobile Trails: <https://tinyurl.com/yhrmjaaax>
- Caring for Good Trails: www.americantrails.org/resources/caring-for-good-trails
- 'EXPLORE' Act and Outdoor Accessibility: <https://tinyurl.com/4s9tjtm6>
- USDA FS Trail Maintenance and Construction Notebook: <https://tinyurl.com/2asb95wc>
- Soft Surface Trails Management Plan: <https://tinyurl.com/pejfs7ha>
- Economic Benefits of Mountain Biking: <https://tinyurl.com/3yc92396>

The Alaska Trails board meets via teleconference the first Monday of every other month. If you want to hear more about Alaska trail topics, share trail information, or propose a trail project, join us. 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 website. Newsletters come out at the beginning of each month. Deadline for articles is seven days before the first of the month. Send stories to Editor Eric Troyer at fbxtrails@gmail.com