



NEWSLETTER

MAR
2024

PO Box 100627; Anchorage, AK 99510-0264

907/334-8049

www.alaska-trails.org

ALASKA TRAILS NEWS AND NOTICES

AK LONG TRAIL PROJECTS SUBMITTED TO STATE CAPITAL BUDGET

ADVOCATE For the fourth consecutive year now, Alaska Trails and partners are submitting Alaska Long Trail projects for inclusion in the state capital budget. This year, the packet comprises 21 trail projects that span the distance from Girdwood to Denali Borough. Partners include the Municipality of Anchorage, Chugach Mountain Bike Riders, Anchorage Park Foundation, the Anchorage Ski Club, Alaska State Parks, Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation, and the Denali Borough.

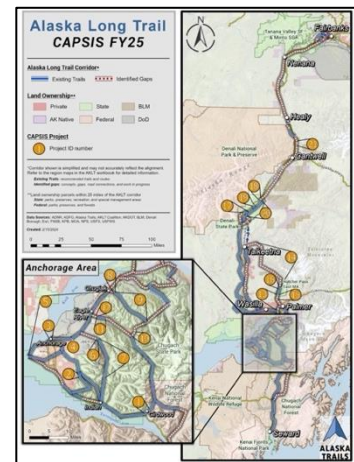
These trail projects will build new and improve existing trails, conduct planning studies to develop trail connections, improve trail access and parking, expand wayfinding, and highlight cultural heritage.

We need your help advocating for these projects by March 15!

Guidance on how to write letters of support is available on our website:

www.alaska-trails.org/state-budget-funding-for-aklt

- See this Alaska Beacon story about the submitted projects: <http://tinyurl.com/4e5w2dun>



TRAIL TALES BRINGS YOU MORE STORIES FROM THE TRAIL

ATTEND The next edition of Trail Tales will be on March 19 and will benefit both Alaska Trails and the Nordic Skiing Association of Anchorage.



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 2024 Trail Tales events will be held at the Anchorage Museum and tickets cost \$20.

Trail Tales will start at 7 p.m. Doors will open at 6:30 p.m. Tickets are on sale now. Put the next Trail Tales event on your calendar: April 16. We will be partnering with Girls Riding Into Tomorrow. For more information and to

purchase tickets, visit: www.alaska-trails.org/trail-tales

TRAILS CONFERENCE TO BE HELD IN APRIL IN HYBRID FORMAT

ATTEND Please mark your calendar for our annual Statewide Trails Conference coming up soon!

The conference will be held April 10-12. We will have both in-person and virtual options this year, allowing us to bring in presenters from the east coast, Canada and across the state. The in-person version will be held at the BP Energy



Center in Anchorage. More information on the conference, including the agenda and the link to register, is available on our website: www.alaska-trails.org/trails-conference

Trails and outdoor recreation are a public health asset and an economic engine for the state and the trails conference seeks to raise the profile of trails and their importance to Alaska. We hope you can join us, and we welcome your ideas and feedback on how to make the most of this gathering. **Send your ideas and comments to:** office@alaska-trails.org

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

USE “PICK. CLICK. GIVE.” TO DONATE TO ALASKA TRAILS DONATE

DONATE March 31 is the last day to file for your Permanent Fund Dividend. Giving back to the trails you love while filing is easy! Help maintain, improve, and build new trails for you and your fellow Alaskans by choosing Alaska Trails for your annual Pick. Click. Give. When you file for your PFD, choose Alaska Trails to ensure the trails in our back yards are safe, sustainable, and fun for all and that we can complete the Alaska Long Trail, a world-class trail system connecting Seward to Fairbanks!



Giving through your PFD is a secure and easy way to make a donation.

When you file for your PFD online, you will be given the opportunity to select a non-profit to receive a portion of your PFD. If you do, please remember Alaska Trails. If

you use “Pick. Click. Give.” you will be able to check a box that authorizes the state to send your name, contact information, and the amount you give when it sends contributions to an organization. We want to acknowledge and recognize your generous support, and this is the only way we will know it’s you making the gift. For more information on “Pick. Click. Give.” visit: www.pickclickgive.org/

Link to the Alaska Trails “PCG” page: www.pickclickgive.org/index.cfm/pfdorgs.info/Alaska-Trails

SEEN RECENTLY ON OUR FACEBOOK PAGE

February 27

We are in Juneau this week, talking about the Alaska Long Trail to the state legislators!

>Shared from Senator Bill Wielechowski

February 27

Today Senator Kelly Merrick and I co-sponsored a lunch and learn about the Alaska Long Trail. We were joined by Representative Zack Fields and several other representatives along with staff in the building to hear about the 500-mile-long trail system from Seward to Fairbanks. Some stretches of the trail already exist, like the Kesugi Ridge trail. Other portions of the trail are existing but in need of repairs and other areas still need to be built. Sections of the Long Trail will incorporate a variety of year-round uses including hiking, skiing, and snow machining.



February 21



We had a great time at Trail Tales with Bike Anchorage last night at the Anchorage Museum! Big thanks to all our brave storytellers and to everyone who attended! We have two more awesome events coming your way: with Nordic Skiing Association of Anchorage in March and Girls Riding Into Tomorrow in April! Get your tickets here: <https://www.alaska-trails.org/trail-tales>

February 15

We are excited to work on the Hidden Lake Trail this summer! Thanks to Chugach Park Fund, we will be able to fix this muddy section of the trail so we can have a much more enjoyable hike!



February 2

Check out this episode of the Su Valley Voice to learn more about trail use in the Mat-Su and hear from our own, Sam Dinges, and Zach Million of the BLM about the Alaska Long Trail effort!



"Hiking, biking, mushing, skiing, kick sledding and just plain getting on the trails to wander the woods and natural areas outside our back doors.... how we find trails, care for them and use them, these are the topics on this episode of Su Valley Voice."

SEVERAL EASY WAYS TO HELP FUND ALASKA TRAILS

With the help of other organizations, you can help Alaska Trails continue advocating for trails.

FASHIONPACT: FashionPACT, an Anchorage resale boutique, seeks to strengthen the Anchorage community by raising funds for local non-profits. You can help by donating gently used clothing, shoes, jewelry, etc. at FashionPACT and choose Alaska Trails. FashionPACT sells the items in their boutique and gives us payment for the things that sell. Learn more at www.FashionPact.com.



FRED MEYER REWARDS: Sign up for the Community Rewards program by linking your Fred Meyer Rewards Card to Alaska Trails at www.fredmeyer.com/communityrewards. You can search for Alaska Trails or by our nonprofit number – KU871. Then, every time you shop and use your rewards card, you are helping Alaska Trails earn a donation! You still earn your rewards points, fuel points, and rebates, just as you do today.



GOODSEARCH: GoodSearch.com is a search engine that donates half its revenue, about a penny per search, to charities designated by the user. You use it just as you would any search engine, and, it's powered by Yahoo!. Just go to www.goodsearch.org and be sure to enter Alaska Trails as the charity you want to support.



BAGOY'S: Anchorage-based Bagoy's Florist and Home helps through its Helping Hands web fundraising program (<https://www.bagoys.com/programs/charitable-giving/>). When you order online from Bagoy's (www.bagoys.com) there is a check box at the bottom of the payment page that says "This is a Helping Hands order." When you check that box, the list of enrolled organizations are shown and you can choose Alaska Trails from the list.





Spring is Just Around the Corner Time to Plan, Prepare, and Advocate

Gearing up for the 2024 Season

Spring is getting closer, and we are excited to report that we have hired all our seasonal staff for 2024. Thanks to two grants from the Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation, our paid trail crews will work on the amazing trails in the Mat-Su as well as trails in Chugach State Park and Chugach National Forest. We are excited to once again be partnering with the Anchorage Park Foundation and the Youth Employment in Parks (YEP) program as well.

Capital Projects Update – Alaska Long Trail (AKLT)

Even as Alaska Trails ventures to Juneau again to support trail projects in the capital budget, several of the projects funded in previous years are prepping for significant steps forward in 2024. The plan for Crow Pass and the plan for work needed on that trail has begun and will continue this summer. Major work will also take place on the Indian Valley trail, implementing the upgraded design and layout that began last year. Alaska Trails will also be working with a contractor to fix portions of the Eklutna Lakeside trail. This session, Alaska Trails is working with a coalition to support funding for 21 AKLT projects submitted in the FY 25 capital budget, including: the Flattop Trail, the Iditarod National Historic Trail and the Government Peak Traverse.

These and other projects will continue to connect the dots for the [Alaska Long Trail](#) and work to complete the route from Seward to Fairbanks.

RAAWC nears \$150K in total donations

The Race Across Alaska Winter Challenge (RAAWC) is once again inspiring people around the country to get out and enjoy trails this winter, including me. I just checked my tally, and I am at 548.6 miles and enjoying every one of them. Alaska Trails is once again honored to be one of the non-profits associated with this fun virtual race. Over 2,000 participants are recreating on trails and tracking it on their RAAWC page. A portion of each entry is donated to Alaska Trails for our Alaska Long Trail project. In addition, each racer is offered the opportunity to donate to the project. It's an amazing boost for Alaska Trails and a wonderful way to get people active over the winter. Find out more here: www.raawc.com/Race/AK/Anchorage/AlaskaChallenge



Don't forget to file your PFD – and give - through Pick Click Give! The deadline to file is March 31.

We appreciate your support.
Happy Trails,

Steve Cleary

STATEWIDE NEWS AND NOTICES

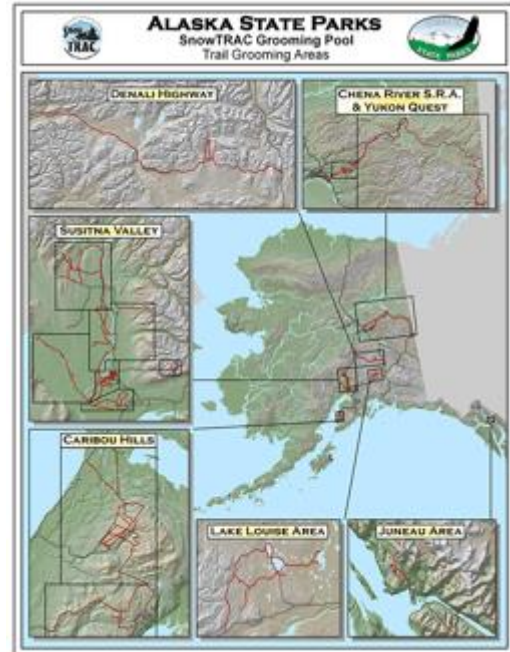
WINTER TRAIL GROOMING PROGRAMS NEED YOUR HELP

DONATE/SERVE Many winter trails activities require (or at least are much improved by) grooming, such as snowmachining, skiing, mushing, and fatbiking. If you engage in an activity that is improved by grooming, please remember to support those efforts. There are several ways you can help.

If you use an area that is clearly groomed and has a grooming fund, make sure to donate. Not all trails that are groomed have a specific grooming fund, but you can also join or donate to the group that is doing the grooming. Look for signs or Facebook posts that tell you how you can help.

You can also support the Alaska Snowtrail Grant Program, which provides funds for grooming in several areas of the state. The grooming this program provides benefits more than snowmachiners. Anyone who uses the groomed trails benefits, including fatbikers, skiers, mushers, and hikers. You can't donate to the Snowmachine Trails Program, but you can help it by making sure to register your snowmachine, which is what funds the program. You can also serve on the SnowTRAC board, which advises the state administration on how the funds are spent. Finally, you can advocate for the program. In years past, administrations have tried to cut the program as part of budget cutting measures. However, strong advocacy has kept the program alive.

To find out more about the program see: <https://dot.alaska.gov/snowtrails/program.shtml>
Most importantly, get out there and enjoy all the great winter trails we have in Alaska!



SLOW CLIMATE CHANGE: STAY INFORMED, REDUCE SINGLE CAR TRIPS

ACT Climate changes affect everyone, especially winter sports enthusiasts.

A warming climate can mean shorter snow seasons, and more extreme events like snow droughts and rain-on-snow events. These will just get worse unless we slow climate change, which means we need to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions.

One way you can help is to stay informed. Save Our Snow, established in 2004, is an impartial compiler and publisher of data on what the ski industry and ski resorts are doing to combat climate change.

The site and the "Green Resort Database" were first conceived by snow sports writer and researcher Patrick Thorne, who has spent the past three decades collecting information on ski resorts around the world. Increasingly aware of climate change's effects on ski areas, and what ski resorts were doing to combat it, Thorne felt uniquely placed to bridge the information gap that was apparent in the general media and ski industry reporting.

Check out Save Our Snow here: <https://saveoursnow.com/>



Take a personal action



Carpool, bike, or take public transportation for your commute or to do errands. Each of these actions help reduce the number of trips taken by a single person in a car. While taking a car might be convenient, transportation adds almost 30 percent to greenhouse gases.

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>

SEEN RECENTLY ON STATEWIDE FACEBOOK PAGES

ALASKA STATE PARKS

February 13

COMMENT DPOR has posted the public notice for scoping for Commercial Use Permits until 4/12/2024.



The Alaska Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation (DPOR), is considering whether it should revise regulating the use of state park land and water. Specifically, DNR is considering revising regulations in order to provide outdoor recreation opportunities, enhance public safety, provide public clarity, and update existing regulations for Commercial Use Permits (CUPs) to determine what criteria shall be met for an applicant to be eligible for a CUP, and when a CUP shall be suspended, denied, or revoked for a period of time

or indefinitely.

The link to the Public Notice is located here: <http://tinyurl.com/2kw87wvj>

 Bill Sherwonit, Denali State Park, Byers Lake Sunset

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT - ALASKA

January 31

COMMENT Attention! BLM seeks input for new Castner Glacier Recreation Area Management Plan Scoping period February 13 – March 14, virtual public meeting February 14.

The public can attend the 5:30pm February 14 virtual scoping meeting by pre-registering at the BLM National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Register project webpage here: <https://eplanning.blm.gov/eplanning-ui/project/2030733/510>

The public may also review all meeting materials and submit comment on the same project webpage by clicking on the green “participate now” link.

Photo of Castner Glacier: Cory Larson, BLM



FAIRBANKS CYCLE CLUB

February 16

Federal funding for transportation projects across Alaska is in danger because of mistakes made by the state Department of Transportation. We do not yet know how or if it will affect cycle-specific projects, such as bike/pedestrian paths. In any case, this is very concerning because cyclists, no matter their choice of transportation, are affected problems with road construction projects.

You can read a story in the Alaska Beacon about the issue here:

<http://tinyurl.com/yk7ybh23>

There are also stories in the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner (<http://tinyurl.com/yckxajvk>) and the Anchorage Daily News (<http://tinyurl.com/mtvpvd29>). Blogger Dermot Cole also has a post on the subject: <http://tinyurl.com/5f6aw2et>.



FAIRBANKS TRAIL AND WATERWAY USERS

February 27

This article is aimed at cross-country ski racers, but it is valid for anyone who travels for winter recreation. It's a paradox since airline travel is a big driver of climate change.

Shared from
FasterSkier
February 26

Man-made ribbons of snow have become an all-too-common occurrence at ski races this season, as North America experiences the warmest winter on record.



For ski racers, a biting paradox is at play, asking whether it's possible to balance the travel demands and interests long-vested in the sport with advocacy for climate change policies that might be essential for nordic skiing to have any sort of long-term future.

World Cup champions Gus Schumacher and Jessie Diggins, actively involved with the climate group Protect Our

Winters, are leaning into, as leading climate author and avid nordic skier Bill McKibben calls, "imperfect advocacy," our Nat Herz reports! <http://tinyurl.com/48tdt52d>

(Photo: American Birkebeiner Ski Foundation)

STATEWIDE LINKS

SLIGHTLY OFF-TRAIL

- New crowdsourced map for dog owners shares trapline locations in Alaska: <http://tinyurl.com/2efjya6v>
- After fatal collisions, Alaska dog groups push for safety gear: <http://tinyurl.com/5frz8mfu>
- 350 Miles in the Arctic Refuge and a Tour of the Sadlerochits: <http://tinyurl.com/4bhecpjc>
- Military spouse transforms Alaska tundra into welcoming community: <http://tinyurl.com/2spj24hn>
- OpenSkiMap (ski trails mapping software): <https://openskimap.org/>

SOUTHCENTRAL NEWS AND NOTICES

BALLOT MEASURE 9 WOULD IMPROVE ACCESS TO CHUGACH PARK

VOTE In April, Anchorage voters will get an opportunity to vote for a bond that would help improve access issues for Chugach State Park. See the following appeal from a newsletter created by advocates for the bond.

In April 2023, Anchorage citizens voted to create the Chugach Access Service Area (CASA). Until then, there had been no viable financing mechanism to improve the roads, parking, and trails that provide access into the Park. In the absence of that funding, Park access infrastructure is frequently in poor condition, undersized or simply not there.

In April, Anchorage voters will have their first ever chance to use a CASA bond measure to improve access to the Park. A group of people including representatives of Local Road Service Areas, businesses, and hiking, skiing, biking, park, and trail groups are working together to inform the public and build support to pass this Municipal bond.

Please vote to support this bond measure.

The Ballot Measure, #9, would authorize \$4 million to upgrade Canyon Road and associated parking. Canyon Road leads to heavily used but underdeveloped year-round trailheads on the south side of Flattop, including the upgraded "Sunnyside" Flattop trail and trails to Peak 3, Ptarmigan Tarn, and Rabbit Lake. The bond measure is a critical first step in improving access to the spectacular alpine terrain of Chugach State Park, benefiting all Anchorage residents, and helping to address our city's continuing population decline and economic doldrums.



YOUTH EMPLOYMENT IN PARKS SEEKS APPLICANTS

APPLY Anchorage's Youth Employment in Parks is hiring.



YEP engages Anchorage youth in improving city parks & trails. It is a program of the Anchorage Park Foundation and the Municipality of Anchorage Parks & Recreation Department.

The YEP program isn't just an excellent first job experience for teens. YEP Crew Leader positions are a fantastic summer opportunity for professionals who want to inspire teens and make a positive impact on their community and environment!

Click on the links below to learn more about each position and apply today!

• YEP Crew Member Position (Closes 3/17/2024)) -

<http://tinyurl.com/xf68dbur>

- YEP Senior Crew Member Position (Closes 3/17/2024) - <http://tinyurl.com/37wknsww>
- Crew Leader Position - <http://tinyurl.com/mtf642sc>

To learn more about the YEP program visit: <https://www.muni.org/Departments/parks/Pages/YEP.aspx>

ANCHORAGE ELECTION VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR PARK BONDS

VOLUNTEER The following was run in an Anchorage Park Foundation newsletter:

Volunteers Needed: The municipal election is April 2. Ballots will be mailed March 12, and we need your help to show community support for investing in Anchorage. The Parks Bond and better access to Chugach State Park Bond are two of the many important ballot items. Would you be willing to have a yard sign in your yard? Volunteers are also needed to help assemble and deliver signs. **To volunteer please contact Diana** (Diana@anchorageparkfoundation.org). Thank you!

APPLICATION PERIOD OPEN FOR TWO ANCHORAGE PARK GRANTS

APPLY The Anchorage Park Foundation is seeking proposals for two programs: The Community Challenge Grant and the Neighborhood Forest Grant.

The deadline for both is 5 pm on March 20, but there is a grant writing assistance workshop before that on March 6.

- The Community Challenge Grant provides funding on a competitive basis for projects that improve Anchorage parks, trails, greenbelts, and recreation centers. Projects must benefit municipal park land and have meaningful community involvement.
- The Neighborhood Forest Grant provides funding on a competitive basis for projects that restore, reforest, and sustain urban forests on public or private land. Projects must benefit underserved areas in north Anchorage and have meaningful community involvement.



For more information visit this web page: <https://anchorageparkfoundation.org/grants/>

SEEN RECENTLY ON SOUTHCENTRAL FACEBOOK PAGES

ALASKA STATE PARKS

February 15



DONATE The Chugach Park Fund is working to raise funds for an upgrade on the beginning of the Hidden Lake Trail in the Chugach. 🌟 🙌

Find out more about the Chugach Park Fund here:

<https://alaskacf.org/funds/chugach-park-fund/>

We love our partners and appreciate all the trail projects the Chugach Park Fund has made happen over the years! 🙌

🇺🇸 Chugach Park Fund, Trail to Hidden Lake

HOMER TRAILS ALLIANCE

February 14

We are excited to thank the Homer Foundation, specifically the Youth Advisory Committee for choosing Homer Trails Alliance as a recipient of \$916 for a new Stihl Brusher for clearing brush and grasses on our local trails. 'The YAC has a strong youth voice philosophy and determines its own program goals for each grant cycle.' This grant was made at the recommendation of the Community Grants Committee, the YAC Fund, a Restricted fund, managed by the Homer Foundation.



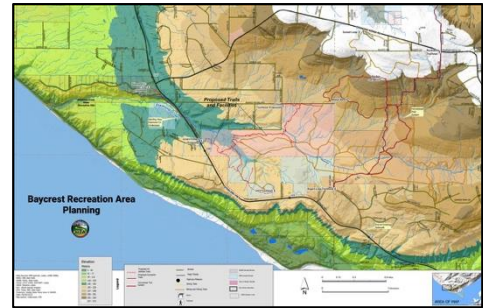
The students recognize the importance of trail maintenance for the safety of all hikers and the in particular the challenges facing kids hiking in overgrown areas that reduce the visibility of the trail and the wildlife that also use the trails.

Thank you to all the donors that make the YAC grants possible!

January 29

Thank you to the Homer City Council and Parks and Recreation. Advisory Commission for the unanimous support of the ordinance passed 1/22/24 in support of AK-DOT including a pedestrian underpass at MP 168 Sterling Hwy to connect 1000 acres of recreation land on both sides of the Sterling Highway. The time is now to make this happen!

Ordinance 24-06, An Ordinance of the City Council of Homer, Alaska Amending the FY24 Capital Budget by Appropriating \$25,000 from the Homer Accelerated Roads and Trails (HART) Trails Fund to Contract Engineering Services for Preliminary Design of Non-motorized Trails and Trailhead Connecting City of Homer Diamond Creek Property to the Proposed Highway Underpass. Davis. Introduction January 8, 2024 Public Hearing and Second Reading January 22, 2024



Check out the City of Homer Multi-Resource Management Plan: <http://tinyurl.com/j47dbmuz> and HTA's Vision for this area on our website: <http://tinyurl.com/3fb63bwk>

SOUTHCENTRAL LINKS

- Anchorage Winter Ice & Trail Status: www.muni.org/Departments/parks/Pages/IceTrailStatus.aspx

SLIGHTLY OFF TRAIL

- Judge rules Campbell Lake residents cannot sue State over public access: <http://tinyurl.com/5n8p8d9t>
- State Parks Recruiting for Kenai Peninsula Advisory Boards (ddlln March 4): <http://tinyurl.com/57xrku2n>
- (Kodiak) Island Trails Network winter newsletter: <http://tinyurl.com/sxffk59t>
- 14th Kodiak Outdoor Film Fest (March 29): <https://www.facebook.com/events/1420609938541204/>
- Valdez Fat Bike Bash is March 8-10: <https://valdezadventurealliance.com/fat>

INTERIORWIDE NEWS AND NOTICES

LAND PURCHASE WOULD PROTECT GOLDSTREAM VALLEY TRAIL

DONATE Your help is needed to restore access to a vital piece of an important Goldstream Valley trail that has been blocked since 2020.

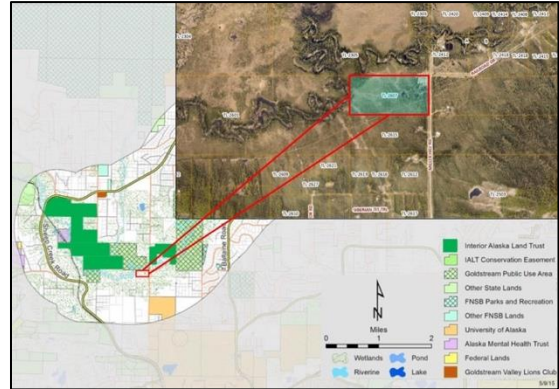
In early February, the Interior Alaska Land Trust (IALT) announced that is has worked out a deal to purchase the property over which that trail section runs. However, the land trust needs donations to raise the money to make the purchase. See the IALT Facebook post below.

Exciting News! The Interior Alaska Land Trust (IALT) has agreed to purchase another important parcel in Goldstream Valley. This parcel contains a crucial section of the historic east-west Railroad Trail, enhancing access to the Goldstream Public Use Area to the north and protecting

existing and future trail access.

A generous community member has offered to match donations up to \$25,000. However, we still need to raise an additional \$25,000 to ensure this parcel is protected in perpetuity for the community. Your support is essential. Please consider making a donation today to help us secure this important piece of our local greenspace. Every contribution brings us closer to our goal, thanks to our matching donor.

Thank you for your continued support. Our work is not possible without you. Visit <https://interioraklandtrust.org/donate/> to make a difference now.



The IALT donation page does not have a specific place to donate to this effort, but you can add a note that explains your donation intentions. Here's an example: " For Goldstream Valley land to protect part of Tanana Valley Railroad Trail."

This story is an excerpt from an Interior Alaska Trails blog post. To read the rest of the post and learn more about this issue go here: <http://tinyurl.com/mtc4vnse>

SEEN RECENTLY ON INTERIOR FACEBOOK PAGES

FAIRBANKS TRAIL AND WATERWAY USERS

February 29

This nature reserve has several trails on it!

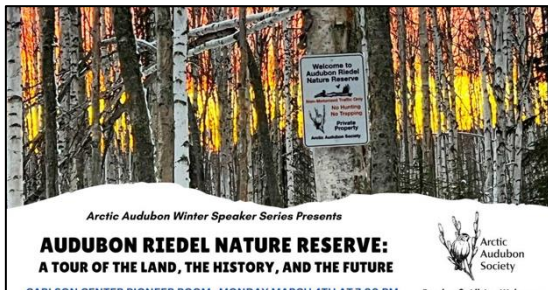
Event by Arctic Audubon Society

Audubon Riedel Nature Reserve: A Tour of the Land, the History, and the Future

Monday, March 4

Join the Arctic Audubon Society for the next winter program, Audubon Riedel Nature Reserve: a Tour of the Land, the History, and the Future. The program will be on Monday, March 4 at 7:00 pm at the Carlson Center Pioneer Room! This program is free, and everyone is welcome!

The Audubon Riedel Nature Reserve began 40 years ago due to Elonore Riedel's desire to ensure that her 160-acre homestead would remain intact and undeveloped. In December 1984, Elonore and husband Charles deeded the 160-acre homestead to Arctic Audubon Society. Since then, the Reserve has expanded to 320 acres through a purchase of 40 acres by Arctic Audubon as well as gifts of 40 acres from the Mayo family and 80 acres from the Herning family. Join us for a virtual tour of this beautiful



Reserve near 5-Mile Chena Hot Springs Road. Together we will explore the land, wildlife, trails, history, and future of the Audubon Riedel Nature Reserve. The Reserve has a rich history with many twists and turns along the way. We invite the community to enjoy this land and help us shape its future.

Listen to Board Members Gail Mayo, Darla Theisen, and Mary Zalar present about the local nature reserve owned by the Arctic Audubon Society and how it has influenced their lives. Learn more at this talk! For more information, contact us at 907-479-2954 or visit <https://www.arcticaudubon.org/>

February 22

Here's a great story on Rove Co., which has been offering free meetups, skiing and other activities, around the Fairbanks area.

Rove Co officially started in 2022 with an apparel line and a schedule of community meet-ups. The goal was to get cooped-up Alaskans outdoors in a safe, connective, kid-friendly way. Attendees might snowshoe, cross-country ski or hike while hanging out together.



The groups quickly grew in popularity, so much so that Blum began offering meetups in multiple locations, alongside adults-only overnight trips in the Alaskan wilderness.

"I found my community and started to feel confident and in a good place myself as a mother taking my child into the outdoors," she said. "I felt like I could be in a position where I could keep creating this community for others, too."--

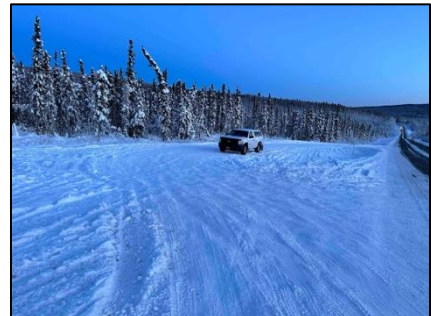
<https://militaryfamilies.com/fitness/rove-co-transforms-alaska-tundra-into-welcoming-community/>

Find out more about the group here: <https://rovecooutdoors.com>

February 19

THANK The Alaska Department of Transportation has cleared the El Dorado Creek Trailhead on Goldstream Road across from Buck's Drive. This photo is from how it looked earlier this winter. The department has also been keeping the Goldstream Creek pullout cleared off Ballaine Road. **If you care about having winter access to these trailheads, please thank Mr Sakalaskas.** These trailheads would have eventually become almost unusable, especially once the snow starts getting soft.

Jason Sakalaskas, Maintenance and Operations Chief
(907) 451-2214; jason.sakalaskas@alaska.gov



INTERIORWIDE LINKS

- FNSB Winter Trails Challenge: <http://tinyurl.com/4en7rcx5>
- Three Skiing Strikes and a Biking Home Run!: <http://tinyurl.com/2kpmxuth>

SLIGHTLY OFF TRAIL

- New director takes helm of borough parks and rec department (Fairbanks): <http://tinyurl.com/3k2w7b7v>
- Borough welcomes new Parks and Rec Director: <http://tinyurl.com/2hc2rj57>
- Standard Creek Road Goldstream Creek Bridge Closure Planned April 1: <http://tinyurl.com/y3mzktca>

SOUTHEAST NEWS AND NOTICES

SEEN RECENTLY ON SOUTHEAST FACEBOOK PAGES

SITKA TRAIL WORKS, INC.

February 20

This winter, Sitka Trail Works and the 4H Alaska Way of Life Club are excited to offer a Youth Hiking Club! Once a month, we hike a different trail in Sitka. With the expanding daylight this month, we got to try for a larger hike, up Gavan Hill. We lucked out and had a beautiful warm sunny day! We are very proud to have made it all the way to the viewpoint. We took many breaks, including a reading break where we got to look at the beautiful illustrations done by local artist @michaelagoade as we learned about the Water Protectors and connected it to our home here in Sitka. If you have a child aged 8-12 who may be interested, reach out to allie@sitkawild.org to sign up!



February 16

Yesterday was an amazing day for trail maintenance! Thanks to our incredible volunteers, we had 8 pairs of hands helping revive the small but essential bridge on the Kaasda Heen/Indian River trail that was taken down in the storms earlier this month. Without jacks borrowed from community members and all the extra hands, this work wouldn't have been possible, so thank you to the Sitka community for your generosity and to our volunteers who took an entire afternoon to help make this trail accessible again! Go check it out on this sunny day!



#sitkatrails

*This is just a temporary fix before the Forest Service can permanently replace the bridge in the coming months.

February 15

Last weekend, our Board of Directors got to spend Saturday learning about board strategy and focusing on strategic planning for our organization in a training hosted by the Foraker Group. We got to do so with amazing ocean views from the Fisherman's Quay loft, thank you to the Calvin family for donating their space! Our board members are involved in numerous non-profits and businesses across Sitka, making the impact of this training far and wide. This training was made possible by a grant from the Strengthening Organizations program of The Alaska Community Foundation, with support from the Rasmuson Foundation. Thank you to our board for taking time out of their weekends to focus on making Sitka Trail Works as great as it can be and to the Foraker staff for travelling down from Anchorage to be with us. Happy hiking!



February 14

Thanks for all the reports of issues on trails these last few weeks, and please keep letting us know! We've been out with volunteers and agency partners doing our best to clear what we can. Yesterday, a volunteer response crew went out with our ED to tackle some blowdown removal on the Kaasda Heen trail, you can see the before and after photos here. Thank you to our incredible group of volunteers for getting out there. Unfortunately, there are a number of problem spots, like the blowdown shown in the third photo, that we won't be able to address until later in the spring. We will be sure to remove it as soon as we can. Thank you for your support Sitka!



February 13

REPORT Have you ever been on the trails and seen a blown down tree or broken bridge? After the recent storms we have heard about many of these instances on our trails. We are excited to share a free and easy to use app that can help you, help us!



Trail Forks is available for download in the Apple App Store and Google Play Store. All you have to do is make a free account, and in Trail Forks, you can submit a trail report. We check for new reports and make it a priority to respond to the trail maintenance needs in the community. To make your report most effective, ensure location services are enabled for the app, so we can track exactly where your report is on the trail. With your help, we can keep the trails clear and safe for all to use as quickly as possible! Thank you Sitka!

[Learn more on How to Submit a Trail Report in the article here:](#)

<http://tinyurl.com/bddcrm2w>

TRAIL MIX, INC.

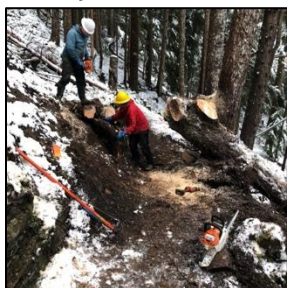
February 6

Last season, our crew had a blast learning about building mountain bike trails from Gary Paasch at Send Scapes! 🪚 Over the course of a few weeks, Gary, Juneau Mountain Bike Alliance, Trail Mix, and many amazing volunteers constructed and improved trails in the Under Thunder Mountain Bike Park. 🌲

We can't wait to get back out there this season and improve mountain biking access in Juneau!



January 30



Earlier this winter, the steadfast guardians of the Treadwell Ditch responded to damage on the Emerson Spur Trail. 🌲 A few members of the Volunteer Trail Maintenance Team (VTMT) headed up the trail to address a root wad that had slid onto the trail, blocking the path.

Together, they trimmed back branches and roots and cleared a way through. In the spring, they'll head up again to clear the remaining chunk of root wad to restore the trail to its full width. Thank you VTMT for keeping the Treadwell Ditch accessible!

HAINES HUTS AND TRAILS

February 8

❄️ 📷 **Call for Pictures!** 📷 ❄️ Have you been out enjoying the winter trails this season? Haines Huts and Trails is setting up a new page to provide updates on winter trail grooming to be launched soon. **If you have any pictures showcasing our lovely home that you are willing to share, please message us or email to admin@haineshuts.org.** This site will help folks easily find the latest trail conditions regardless of whether they are on this platform, and pictures can be great motivation to get outdoors! Think Snow! ❄️



SOUTHEAST LINK

- Goodbye letter from ED of Trail Mix: <https://mailchi.mp/8d48a6100a49/a-very-fond-farewell>

NATIONWIDE NEWS AND NOTICES

2024 NORTH AMERICAN TRAIL SECTOR SURVEY NOW OPEN!

TAKE SURVEY If you manage, build, maintain, or plan trails, please take this important survey. The results of this survey will inform the trail community across North America about the current health of trails, trail systems, and trail organizations, identify pressure points and obstacles for growth, and arm advocates with the data they need to make the case for trails in their region.

Census Details:

- This survey is for professionals working or volunteering in the trail sector, it is not for trail users.
- Results of this survey will be tabulated and distributed to all respondents and made available on the American Trails and Trans Canada Trail websites.
- The survey will likely take about a half hour to complete.
- You can view a past report from the 2022 Canada Trail Sector Survey to get an idea of the types of information that we will be gathering for the first time in America as well.

Deadline: Please respond to this survey by 4:59 PM (ET) on March 31.

Thank you for participating in this important research. We look forward to sharing the results with the North American trails community.

Learn more here: <https://tctrail.ca/2024-north-american-trail-sector-survey/>

From American Trails

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/training/calendar

TRAILS-RELATED NEWSLETTERS

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

VOLUNTEER

- Am. Hiking Society's 2024 Volunteer Vacations: <https://americanhiking.org/volunteer-vacation-trips/>
 - Alternative (to Spring) Break: <https://americanhiking.org/volunteer-vacations/alternative-break/>
- Conservation International VIP newsletter (Feb 2024): <http://tinyurl.com/2s3fp7ja>

FUNDING

- FOX Factory Trail Trust (**applications reviewed quarterly**): <https://trailtrust.com/>
- Yamaha Outdoor Access Initiative (OHVs, **quarterly deadlines**): <https://yamahaoai.com/>
- Community Change Grants, **deadline to apply is November 21**: <http://tinyurl.com/54mztbsv>

OTHER LINKS:

- 2024 Legacy Trail Program Awardees Announced: <http://tinyurl.com/2c8xaw5x>
- Why Trails Matter: Trails and Greenways Promote Health: <http://tinyurl.com/ydbawvch>
- Adaptive Recreation: Hiking and Biking for Mobility Device Users: <http://tinyurl.com/7ay2v6wf>
- Accessibility Toolkit for Land Managers: <http://tinyurl.com/mr3h5j6n>

The Alaska Trails board meets via teleconference the first Tuesday of every other month from 5-7pm. 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 web site. 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