



NEWSLETTER

MAR
2023

PO Box 100627; Anchorage, AK 99510-0264

907/334-8049

www.alaska-trails.org

ALASKA TRAILS NEWS AND NOTICES

SUPPORT NEEDED FOR ALASKA LONG TRAIL IN THE STATE BUDGET

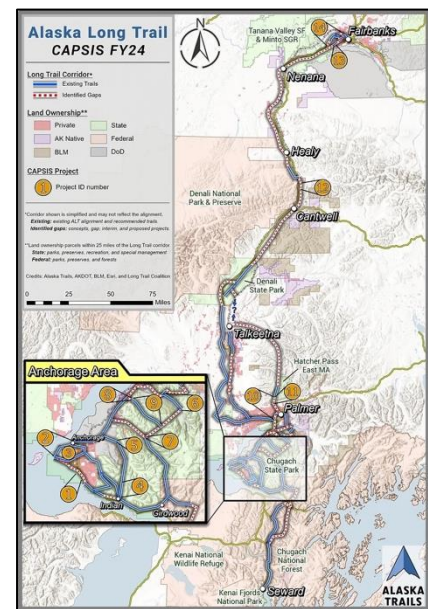
ADVOCATE Alaska Trails and our partners have recently submitted 14 Alaska Long Trail projects into the FY24 state capital budget, totaling \$9.5 million. These projects will fill key shovel-ready and planning-ready gaps in the section between Anchorage and Fairbanks. The 14 projects include:

- Building new non-motorized trails
- Existing multi-use trail improvements
- Planning studies to identify links between segments
- Improving trail access and parking
- Wayfinding and cultural heritage
- Separated highway paths for safe non-motorized travel

Please consider supporting these projects by writing letters to your state legislators by March 10. We've got some helpful resource for you.

- Legislative contact information: <https://akleg.gov/>
- Advocacy Tool Kit (from Alaska Outdoor Alliance): www.alaskaoutdooralliance.org/economicimpact

You can find more information, including the specific projects here: <https://tinyurl.com/97e6zmf>



ANCHORAGE VOTERS: VOTE YES ON PROP A AND YES ON PROP 6

VOTE In the upcoming vote-by-mail election in Anchorage, you will see two important propositions for trails and outdoor recreation.

PROPOSITION A

The Special Election Proposition A supports funding for renovating and rehabilitating trails and parks and making improvements at various parks and recreational facilities in the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Service Area. In addition to improvements to parks, playgrounds, athletic fields and recreation centers, Proposition A will also fund projects along Campbell Creek Trail, Fish Creek Trail, Ship Creek Trail, and the Tony Knowles Coastal Trail. Historically, Anchorage voters have been very supportive of Park Bonds like proposition A and we hope that the community will continue to show their enthusiasm for parks, trails and recreation by voting **YES on Prop A**.

PROPOSITION 6

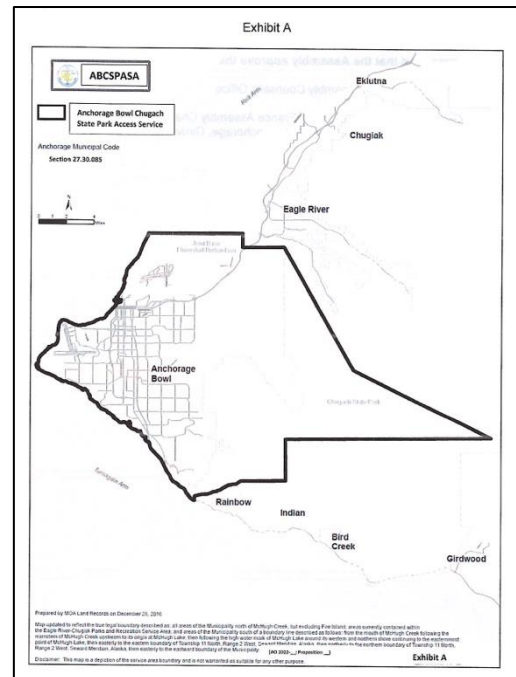
Also on the ballot is Proposition 6, which seeks to create the Chugach State Park Service Area. Creation of the service area would allow the municipality to submit bond propositions to voters for projects that support access to portions of Chugach State Park located in the service area. There is currently no good mechanism to fund capital maintenance projects for paving and resurfacing the roads leading to Chugach State Park because most roads leading to the park are in community Road Service Areas.

Prop 6 is a great example of improving the efficiency of local government as this would allow the municipality to raise funds for a match of as little as 9 percent for state and federal infrastructure funds, which the municipality has previously been unable to access. Besides improving access to the park, this would bring money into the community and create jobs and economic development.

The service area would not levy taxes upon approval of this proposition; taxes may only be levied if voters subsequently approve a proposition that authorizes levying and spending generally or for a particular project or projects.

Proposition 6 is the first step towards improving the parking and road surface issues at several popular Chugach State Park access points. Alaska Trails hopes that the Anchorage community shows their support for reasonable and pleasant access to Chugach State Park by voting **YES on Prop 6**.

To find out more about the issue, see this Anchorage Daily News story: <https://tinyurl.com/bdfafkwc>



ALASKA TRAILS WELCOMES TWO NEW BOARD MEMBERS

We've got two new members joining the board of Alaska Trails. Welcome to Katherine and Grace!

KATHERINE GINSBACH

Katherine moved to Alaska for a one-year fellowship at Alaska Native Medical Center and has been here ever since.



She grew up in the Black Hills of South Dakota and adopted an early appreciation for the outdoors. She received a degree in Environmental Studies from College of the Holy Cross (Massachusetts) and then moved to Boulder, Colorado, where she fell in love with mountain biking. After grad school, she moved to Alaska where she realized her love for skiing and learned how to bikepack (thanks Grande and Dusty!)

Since then, she's been taking advantage of all Alaska has to offer, but mostly skiing, biking, or trail running. She currently works on pandemic preparedness and response legislation, global health governance, and disease surveillance at Georgetown University Law School.

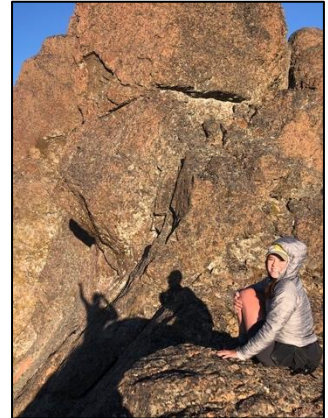
When not working you can find her on the trails behind her house, usually with a pocketful of Sour Patch Kids.

GRACE KUBITZ

Grace is a life-long Alaskan who grew up in Southcentral Alaska and has spent the past four years living between Juneau and Anchorage.

She holds a master's degree in public administration with a focus in public policy from the University of Alaska Anchorage, and a degree in political science with a minor in sustainability from the University of Michigan. After spending several years as a staff member in the Alaska State Legislature working closely with lawmakers, stakeholders, and members of the public to advance Alaska-focused policy, Grace has continued her career in government, policy, and business development by joining NANA Regional Corporation as their External Affairs Manager.

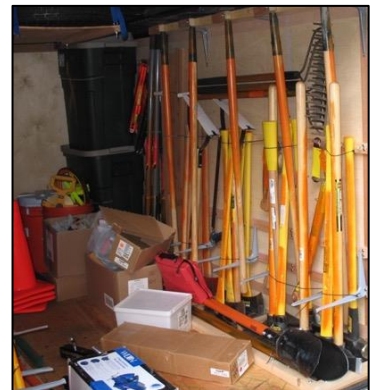
In her free time, Grace can be found fishing, skiing, and mountain running, often with her favorite doggy-nephew, Niles.



ALASKA TRAILS SEEKS BIGGER SHOP SPACE FOR TOOLS, MORE

FIND SPACE As Alaska Trails begins to prepare for three paid crews, continued collaboration with the Youth Employment in Parks (YEP) program and our volunteer efforts, we find ourselves in need of a larger space to store, maintain and dry gear, tools and equipment. We are looking for a space that includes the following in the greater Anchorage area:

- 1200 square feet of warehouse / shop space with a large enough garage door to allow vehicles
- 200 – 400 square feet for office space – two offices and/or a meeting room
- Bathroom / Internet
- Kitchen area – not necessarily needed and we can make one
- Mezzanine or other set up to dry and store gear and equipment well



We are open to sharing a space with another organization. We are considering both rental and purchase options. **If you have ideas on such a space, please contact Alaska Trails at 907-334-8049 or office@alaska-trails.org.**

SAVE THE DATE FOR STATEWIDE TRAILS CONFERENCE IN APRIL

SAVE DATE Please mark your calendar for our annual Statewide Trails Conference to be held **April 12-14**. It will be held at the BP Energy Center in Anchorage. This year we will have both in-person and virtual options for attendance.

The conference provides trail users and the wider public a statewide opportunity for training and networking with trail professionals. There are many ways to enjoy Alaska's trails and the conference brings them together all under one roof. 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.

Please see <https://www.alaska-trails.org/trails-conference> for agenda and updates. **Registration opens March 3rd**. 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. See you in April!

TRAIL TALES SUPPORTS KENAI HERITAGE AREA WITH TRAIL STORIES

ATTEND Hear outdoor enthusiasts and trail lovers as they share their stories at the Anchorage Museum. At



each Trail Tales event, seven storytellers tell seven-minute-long stories about their trail experiences, adventures, and life in general. Net proceeds from ticket sales go to two nonprofits: Alaska Trails and a partner organization for each event. **Our next event will be on Tuesday, March 21, at 7 p.m., in partnership with Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm National Heritage Area.** Doors open at 6:30 p.m. and tickets cost \$20.

All our shows last year sold out, so don't wait. For more information and to purchase tickets, visit: <http://www.alaska-trails.org/trail-tales>

USE "PICK. CLICK. GIVE." TO DONATE TO ALASKA TRAILS

DONATE Giving back to the trails you love 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. Donations. When you file for your PFD, choose Alaska Trails to ensure the trails in our backyards 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/



To go directly to the Alaska Trails "Pick. Click. Give." page click here: www.pickclickgive.org/index.cfm/pfdorgs.info/Alaska-Trails

SEEN RECENTLY ON OUR FACEBOOK PAGE

ATTEND Feb 27: Live in Anchorage and want to help support the Alaska Long Trail but not sure how? This Sunday, Anchorage legislators will be in town, and they want to hear from you. Please attend if you are able and let them know you support investing in trails. We, along with many other trail partner organizations, have submitted capital budget projects. Let them know you support the Alaska Long Trail!

Shared event: Anchorage Delegation Town Hall

Event by Representative Donna C Mears and Senator James Kaufman

Duration: 2 hr

Join us Sunday March 5 from 2-4pm at Rasmuson Hall at UAA to meet with your legislators. Live and written testimony opportunities available, as well as time for more informal conversations.

3416 Seawolf Dr.

Bus lines 10, 20, 25

STATEWIDE NEWS AND NOTICES

PART-TIME, DISTANCE COLLEGE IMPROVES WALKABLE ADVOCACY

If you want to improve your skills and effectiveness as a walkable/livable community advocate, check out the Alaska and New Mexico State Walking College.



Sponsored by AARP Alaska, AARP New Mexico, and America Walks, this part-time distance-learning fellowship program covers leadership development, coalition-building, walkable community design, local public policy, and strategic planning. In addition to studying an online curriculum, you will complete community assignments, participate in video-conferenced discussion forums, and receive one-on-one coaching from an experienced mentor to help you develop a personal

Walking Action Plan for your community.

Requiring a commitment of about 5 hours per week for 6 months, the Alaska and New Mexico State Walking College is free of charge, but Fellowships are limited and the application process is competitive.

- More information about the program: <https://tinyurl.com/3tvw2rbd>
- Fellowship application form: <https://forms.gle/ChXMekMCcbBC8f3X6>

SLOW CLIMATE CHANGE: STAY INFORMED, REDUCE SINGLE CAR TRIPS

ACT Climate changes affect everyone, especially those who enjoy winter sports.

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 keep 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.

SEEN RECENTLY ON STATEWIDE FACEBOOK PAGES

ALASKA STATE PARKS

VOLUNTEER Feb 23: Seeking volunteers! Volunteers are the lifeblood of our Alaska State Parks. We are currently recruiting volunteers for general volunteer positions for the Summer 2023 season! These positions include: Trail Crews, Park Assistants, Ranger Assistants, Backcountry Ranger Assistants, Park Caretakers

Interested in becoming a volunteer with Alaska State Parks?

Check out our open positions here:

<https://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/vip/vvilstsm.htm>

Applications can be submitted online here:

<https://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/vip/vipapplication.htm>

If you have any issues submitting an applications or any questions about volunteering, please e-mail dnr.pksweb@alaska.gov.



Feb 22: Attention all outdoor enthusiasts! We would like to PROUDLY REMIND YOU that our annual parking and boat launch passes are available online. It is super easy to order.

With this convenient option, you can now securely purchase your annual park and boat launch pass from the comfort of your own home. No lines, no waiting.

Visit <https://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/passes> at YOUR convenience. Afternoon? Sure. Morning, okay, I guess. Middle of the night? ABSOLUTELY. YOU LIVE YOUR LIFE AND ORDER WHEN YOU WANT. Take advantage of this exciting feature and start planning your next day hike or GREAT ALASKAN ADVENTURE.

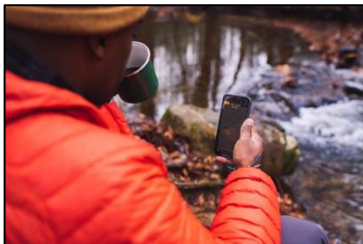
Jan 30: Got OuterSpatial?! 🥳

Alaska State Parks has all of our trails, trailheads and Public-Use Cabins and campgrounds in this handy little app. Check it out!

<https://www.outerspatial.com/>

FAIRBANKS TRAIL AND WATERWAY USERS

Feb 10: More and more people are using phones for navigation. But it can be tough to keep them warm



in winter when you're out on the trails. I have started using an ultra-running vest that I picked up at locally. It's got chest pockets that fit my phone and other electronics, and I can wear it under my outer layers. Keeps them warm nicely.

For more ideas, this article is GaiaGPS specific, but it has some good overall tips on saving your phone's battery life.

<https://blog.gaiagps.com/save-phone-battery-life/>

STATEWIDE LINKS

SLIGHTLY OFF-TRAIL

- AK's Outdoor Economy Enjoys Brisk Post-Pandemic Recovery: <https://tinyurl.com/2ecueujm>
- OPINION: Murkowski leads the way on investment in outdoor recreation: <https://tinyurl.com/489bhpdk>
- Amazon closing AmazonSmile to focus on programs with greater impact: <https://tinyurl.com/2p8sjh7d>
- National Forest Foundation's Alaska Cabins Project: <https://tinyurl.com/2nsat2vb>

- Alaska State Parks has revived its State Trails Program page: <https://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/aktrails/>
- Alaska tourism threatened as iconic glaciers melt away: <https://tinyurl.com/47juzj6v>

SOUTHCENTRAL NEWS AND NOTICES

CALL TO ACTION FOR SETTLERS BAY COASTAL PARK EXPANSION

In its most recent newsletter, the Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation has a call to action and a call for a contractor.

CALL TO ACTION: SETTLERS BAY COASTAL PARK EXPANSION

ADVOCATE You may be aware that Great Land Trust has been working with a vast array of partners to expand Settler's Bay Coastal Park by 187 acres. They are almost across the finish line, and they need your help!

The MSB Assembly is set to vote on the project at its Tuesday, March 7, regular meeting. **The best thing you can do is testify in person at the Assembly chambers on March 7 at 6pm. The next best thing is to call in and show your support. Read more about this project and learn how you can help here:** <http://greatlandtrust.org/help-us-expand-settlers-bay-coastal-park/>

This expansion will create more recreational opportunities for walkers, bikers, skiers, nature viewers, and the surrounding neighborhoods. Annually, Settler's Bay is now visited almost as much as the Butte and Government Peak Recreation Area.



CALLING COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH PROFESSIONALS!

Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation is looking to work with an independent contractor to tell the story of the impact MSTPF and our grantees are making in the community. This will be a month-to-month contract that will mainly involve writing monthly updates to our supporters and stakeholders and developing content for the communications channels we manage. If you are a contractor with an established client base and are interested in working with us, please contact Wes Hoskins at whoskins@matsutrails.org or the office at 907-746-8757.

WASILLA'S FAIRVIEW LOOP PROJECT TO INCLUDE PAVED PATHWAY

COMMENT Comments are **due by March 3** on the Notice of Intent to Begin Engineering and Environmental Studies on the Fairview Loop Rehabilitation and Pathway Project in Wasilla. The proposed work would include:

- resurface and rehabilitate sections of Fairview Loop, as needed;
- re-establish road shoulders on both sides, as needed, where the road is being resurfaced or realigned;
- widen shoulders, as needed for safety;
- construct a paved multi-use pathway along a portion of Fairview Loop;
- clear approximately beyond the slope catch or to the DOT&PF Right-of-Way (ROW), as required to allow for realignment, consequent ditch rebuilding, construction of the paved multi-use pathway, and drainage improvements;
- horizontally and vertically realign sections of Fairview Loop, as needed for safety;

- improve intersections, including adding turn lanes, improving sight distances, and improving approach geometry;
- replace and/or improve drainage, as needed, including drainage improvements at Cottonwood Creek and Cottonwood Slough.

The proposed project would encroach into the mapped and unmapped base (100-year) floodplain. Construction for the first stage of the proposed project is anticipated to begin in the spring of 2024. For more information, contact Lauren Little, Project Manager, at (907)378-5911 or lauren.little@alaska.gov. **Submit comments to Brian Elliott, Regional Environmental Manager**, at Brian.Elliott@Alaska.gov.

From What's Up? by Peg Tileston

FINAL JUDGEMENT DELIVERED FOR ANCHORAGE'S STEWART TRAIL

The Friends of Stewart Public Trail recently sent out a new update on the case:

Dear Friends and Members of the Stewart Public Trail:

Great news. Today Judge Crosby entered the final judgement.

- The barrier will be modified to allow non-motorized access within ten days (March 9).
- 15-foot wide easement
- The Judge denied the defendants' request for a stay, which means the trail will be open even if the defendants appeal.

In addition, we have filed for about \$100,000 in attorney fees from the defendants. The Judge will still need to rule on that.

Enjoy the news. This has been a long hard battle well worth it. We are grateful for all the help and support received along the way.

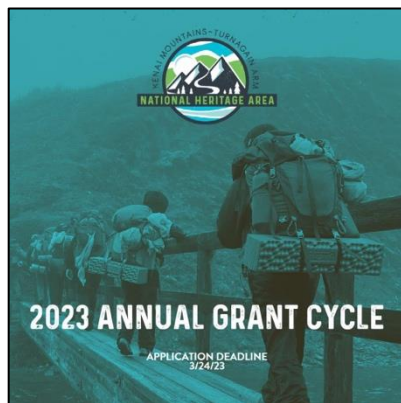
Sincerely,

Friends of the Stewart Public Trail,

friendsofthestewarttrail@gmail.com

GRANTS AVAILABLE FROM KENAI-TURNAGAIN HERITAGE AREA

APPLY The Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm (KMTA) National Heritage Area has announced that its annual grant cycle is now open. The group awards grants for projects that steward the natural, cultural, and historical resources of Alaska's only National Heritage Area. It is seeking to support projects that will help preserve, promote, and facilitate public enjoyment of these resources, including trail building and maintenance projects.



KMTA offers one-year and multi-year grants up to \$24,000 through two primary grant areas: Community Grants and Publication and Arts Grants. **Applications are due at midnight on March 24, 2023. Check out the grants program on the website – www.kmtacorridor.org/grants-overview/ to see if you're eligible to apply.**

Contact Jessa West at jessawest@kmtacorridor.org with any questions!

MAT-SU FOUNDATION OFFERS FUNDING FOR TRAILS AND MORE

APPLY The Mat-Su Trails & Parks Foundation partners with organizations and local governments on projects and efforts that expand and enhance the valley's network of trails and parks. To accommodate summer construction season planning, the group is currently accepting applications on a rolling basis. **Please contact them to discuss any timing questions for your project:** <https://matsutrails.org/ourgrants/>

SEEN RECENTLY ON SOUTHCENTRAL FACEBOOK PAGES

ANCHORAGE PARKS AND RECREATION

Feb 22: 📢 📢 WE ARE HIRING! 📢 📢

Did you know that the Youth Employment in Parks (YEP) program doesn't just have opportunities for teens but also has positions for adults? If you are looking for the perfect summer job, consider applying as a Youth Employment in Parks Crew Leader! This job is ideal for teachers or someone seeking seasonal work and includes leading a youth crew, working on trails, and helping with park improvements. So, if you want to inspire the next generation while getting paid to work outside, consider applying today!

Learn more and apply at

www.muni.org/Departments/parks/pages/yep.aspx



Feb 15: WE ARE HIRING! 📢

Are you AWESOME? We might be biased, but we are too, and Anchorage Parks and Recreation is recruiting more awesome folks to join our team! If you love working outside and want to help keep Anchorage's parks and trails in top-notch condition, the Park Caretaker position might be the perfect job for you. Caretaker responsibilities vary from season to season, and no two days are the same. From hot mopping the ice in winter to cutting the grass in the summer—there are always fun projects in the works.

Learn more about our open positions at www.muni.org/parks

February 9: Hey, Anchorage teens between the ages of 16-19! Do you know what you want to do this summer? We hope the answer is YEP! If you are searching for a first job, want to work outside and GET PAID, and give back to the Anchorage community, consider checking out the Youth Employment in Parks (YEP) program! This summer program hires local youth to work on park and trail improvement projects and allows teens to learn new skills and make lifelong friends! 🌞 🛠️ 🧑

Learn more and apply at www.muni.org/Departments/parks/pages/yep.aspx



Feb 1: WOAH THERE! Do you know who yields to who on your favorite winter trails? Skiers, bikers, dog mushers, and other users are all recreating on our trails. With that said, there are a couple of things you can do to make sure that everyone has a safe and fun time while out and about:



- ➡ Keep right, except to pass! When passing other users, use safe speeds and let your intentions known by using your voice or bell.
- ⚠ Yield to other users who cannot stop quickly.
- 🐕🛷 Dog sleds are fast, quiet, and difficult to slow down! Make sure you know where you are on the trail system, remember that mushing trails are dog sled only, and be sure to look and listen carefully before crossing mushing paths.

Have fun, stay safe, and remember to share the trails!

ANCHORAGE PARKS FOUNDATION

Feb 27: This Sunday Anchorage legislators will be in town and want to hear from you. Please attend and let them know you support investing in parks and trails. We, along with Alaska Trails and many other partners, have submitted capital budget projects. Let them know you support the Alaska Long Trail! ❤️

Shared event: Anchorage Delegation Town Hall

Event by Representative Donna C Mears and Senator James Kaufman

Join us Sunday March 5 from 2-4pm at Rasmuson Hall at UAA to meet with your legislators. Live and written testimony opportunities available, as well as time for more informal conversations.

3416 Seawolf Dr. Bus lines 10, 20, 25

February 9: Anchorage is the "basecamp" to the Alaska Long Trail. Our Moose Loop trail system is part of the "urban braid" - that we are working to connect to the Mat-Su for trails north and to Girdwood in the south. We are excited to start hiking and biking on some of the new bridges built in the Kenai Peninsula on the portion of the trail that goes from Seward to Girdwood. Many thanks to the Alaska Legislature for funding some of these critical connections and Alaska Trails for pulling together



the stakeholders to make it happen!

<https://tinyurl.com/bde3z3pe>

Feb 2: We are so excited about this new trail - which will be completed in July 2023. It started off as a dream of the Scenic Foothills Community Council - seeking a safe connection to Far North Bicentennial Park along the Tudor curve. Their \$20,000 Community Challenge Grant in 2016 has leveraged more than \$2 million for a safe multi use trail from Campbell Airstrip Road. Congrats to all involved! Many thanks to Anchorage Parks and Recreation and Rasmuson Foundation, the hard work of the Bronga family and friends, AMATS, DOT&PF and Neeser Construction.



See this YouTube video about the trail: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mYF2qSsMF0E>

CHUGIAK-EAGLE RIVER TRAILS COALITION

Event: Chugiak-Eagle River Trails Coalition meeting 6:30pm, Weds Mar 15, at Sleepy Dog Coffee in Eagle River.



We are compiling a list of all path and trail projects in Chugiak-Eagle River and asking volunteers to adopt a trail to make sure it gets funded, built and maintained. Currently, we are following nearly 30 trail and path projects in Chugiak-Eagle River! Come and let us know what your trail and path priorities are!

MAT-SU BOROUGH RECREATION AND LIBRARY SERVICES

Feb 17: The Mat Su Borough Grooming Crew has been hard at work packing and grooming trails and setting classic tracks wherever possible. Here's a shot of our 6x6 tracked groomer on the Matanuska River Trail. We groom this trail for walking, skiing, and fat tire biking from the Old Glenn Highway bridge all the way to Gulkana St. near Sherrod Elementary School with a connector to the Matanuska River Park campground. We hope you enjoy!



February 10: There's a LOT of trails out there in the Mat Su Borough (over 2000 miles worth) and it takes a ton of time and effort to maintain them. Fortunately, we have many community partner volunteers, from all over the Borough, who are willing to jump in and provide a wonderful service to their communities. One such group is the Willow Trail Committee. They have several grooming machines that they use on their local trails, but one of the coolest is a Nissan Frontier pick-up on tracks. If you see them, or any groomers, out on the trails, please thank them for their hard work and dedication.



EVENT BY ISLAND TRAILS NETWORK

13th Annual Kodiak Outdoor Film Fest

Friday, April 7, 2023 At 7 pm, Gerald C. Wilson Auditorium

Submit your film by March 31. Doors will open at 6:30. Your annual membership to Island Trails Network is your admission. Contact Travis@islandtrails.org for more information

SOUTHCENTRAL LINKS

- Anchorage Parks and Recreation Ice and Trail Report: <https://tinyurl.com/5n7jrum5>

SLIGHTLY OFF-TRAIL

- Wild Ice Skating: January 2023 Skilak Lake (1:30 video): www.youtube.com/watch?v=0IeE2ssoeiU

INTERIORWIDE NEWS AND NOTICES

FAIRBANKS PARKS AND REC AGAIN HOLDING TRAILS CHALLENGE

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



The sign list was revealed in late December for this popular ongoing event, which is free and open to anyone. Not all trail signs were installed at first, but they are all up now! And the Winter Trails Guide is online to help you find the trails. Remember you can go to the Trails Office Webpage to find several downloadable maps to help you on your trip. A link to the guide is below. Participants need to be registered to be eligible for prizes and awards.

- Facebook Event: <https://www.facebook.com/events/814319782989022/>
- Trails Office page: <https://fairbanksak.myrec.com/info/facilities/details.aspx?FacilityID=14955>
- Winter Trails Guide: https://issuu.com/fnsbparksandrec/docs/fairbanks_winter_trails_guide_22-23

Photo from the Trails Challenge Facebook Event

SEEN RECENTLY ON INTERIOR FACEBOOK PAGES

WHITE MOUNTAINS TRAIL REPORTS

Feb 20: Heads up. There are wolf traps at beaver and Ophir creek crossings coming in from McKay trailhead. They are well baited and VERY close to the trail. If your canine companion has a good nose and likes to eat, consider keeping them on a leash or harness through these sections.

NORDIC SKI CLUB OF FAIRBANKS

February 20: Early warning about trail closures at Birch Hill Recreation Area during Junior Nationals coming in March. Unfortunately, Birch Hill does not yet have a good way to access trails that won't be used for the races. However, closure of trails is extremely rare. We hope everyone understands. We will give issue more notices as the event gets nearer.

And everyone is invited to come watch the races! For more on the Junior Nationals, see the website

(<https://jn2023fairbanks.org/>) or check out the Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100083058886302>

- Monday 3/13 - All trails closed through 3PM
- Tuesday 3/14 - All trails closed through 6PM
- Thursday 3/16 - All trails closed through 3:30PM
- On Saturday, Sunday and Wednesday the trails will be open to the public, as those are training days and public skiing should not interfere with the JN skiers.

Photo of 2023 Besh Cup race by Max Kaufman



INTERIORWIDE LINKS

- Ester Valley Trail Trial Ends; Boro Trails Plan Amended, Sent to Platting Board: <https://tinyurl.com/2ay5tjey>
- Assembly sends trail plan back to platting board (New-Miner): <https://tinyurl.com/26hfme4d>

- Our Unique American Birkebeiner Experience (xc skiing): <https://tinyurl.com/3b9kdy3s>
- Recently Defeated Trail Ordinance Not an Instance of Mob Rule: <https://tinyurl.com/5n6kjin2>

SOUTHEAST NEWS AND NOTICES

SEEN RECENTLY ON SOUTHEAST FACEBOOK PAGES

TRAIL MIX, INC.

Feb 21: How can we reduce erosion rates to keep the edge of our trails safe? Gabion baskets! 🪨 🧺

Gabion baskets are wire, rectangular baskets that are used to help prevent erosion near moving water. Gabion baskets are assembled in the field, secured into position, and then filled with rocks. By creating a sturdy barrier, with rocks that cannot be swept away, gabion baskets help uphold sections of trail that are located near moving water.

With large storms and water damage becoming more frequent, gabion baskets are key to keeping our trails safe and accessible. 🥾



Feb 17: Just like our tools, our trails need regular maintenance. 🧰 When you Pick.Click.Give., you're helping equip Trail Mix with the resources needed to take care of our trail system.



From chainsawing downed trees to brushing back the undergrowth, your donation means we can give Juneau's trails the attention they deserve. File for your PFD by March 31 at pfd.alaska.gov, and please consider contributing a portion to Trail Mix through @pickclickgive.

Feb 7: Mary Lou King is trail royalty. 👑

Best known for authoring "90+ Short Walks Around Juneau," King has done more than just write the best resource on the Juneau Trail System.

Said Ryan O'Shaughnessy, Trail Mix Executive Director, "[She] really kindled the idea of trails as something you have to advocate for. Or else they'll go away."

Read more about this tireless trail supporter in the Juneau Empire:

<https://tinyurl.com/28xwnp48>



SITKA TRAIL WORKS, INC.



Feb 27: Last week everyone got in on trail maintenance! Sitka Conservation Society employees took a break on a sunny day last week to do volunteer trail clearing on Sitka's single track mountain bike trails. Thank you SCS!

If you want to donate or become a member of SCS go to www.sitkawild.org or call (907)-747-7509. For more information on SCS, check out their page @sitkawild!

Feb 22: Teamwork makes the dream work! This week, staff from the US Forest Service, the City, and Sitka Trail Works, teamed up to cut out trees that had blown down on the Herring Cove to Beaver Lake Trail earlier this month.



This trail was conceived through the 2003 Sitka Trail Plan and funded by grants acquired by Sitka Trail Works. Since the trail starts on City land and ascends to the National Forest, it was necessary for a community nonprofit like Sitka Trail Works to facilitate work across multiple jurisdictions.

Feb 14: Sitka Trail Works is recruiting a new member for our Board of Directors to guide the organization in an exciting time of growth!

Our small nonprofit is creating a plan for the future of our trail system and developing a new summer youth program aimed at cultivating Indigenous stewardship. As such, we're seeking a leader with a background in Tlingit culture and/or environmental education. Individuals with experience in nonprofit development or the tourism industry would also bring a valuable perspective. Volunteer board members meet monthly as a whole and dig into the details in smaller teams, working closely with the new executive director, Ben Hughey.

If you or someone you know seems like a good fit, email hikes@sitkatrailworks.org to get an application.



SOUTHEAST LINKS

- Tribe says Sitka Seawalk a possible threat to ancient mariculture site: <https://tinyurl.com/mpvvc8v7>
- Sitkans direct future investments in the outdoors: <https://tinyurl.com/2uda6ncf>

SLIGHTLY OFF TRAIL

- Juneau tour company hopes to offer e-bike tours on Douglas Road: <https://tinyurl.com/y6d8rxac>

NATIONWIDE NEWS AND NOTICES

INTERNATIONAL TRAILS SUMMIT TO BE HELD IN APRIL IN RENO, NV

American Trails and the Professional TrailBuilders Association (PTBA) have joined forces to co-host the International Trails Summit (ITS) in Reno, Nevada during the week of April 17, 2023. ITS is a collaborative effort of the 25th International Trails Symposium and Training Institute and the Sustainable Trails Conference. This combined, high-impact event will convene a diverse trail and outdoor community to learn, build relationships, and find solutions to the challenges of developing and elevating outdoor recreation opportunities for all. The joint conference will also feature the World Trails Network - Hub for the Americas. Learn more here: <https://tinyurl.com/ye2xmc2p>

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

- Conservation Volunteers International Program newsletter (Feb): <https://tinyurl.com/2pbfc6d>
- Am. Hiking Society's 2023 Volunteer Vacations: <https://americanhiking.org/volunteer-vacation-trips/>

FUNDING

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

OTHER LINKS:

- 2023 Legacy Trail Program Awardees Announced: <https://tinyurl.com/re596d7f>
- 2022 NRT Photo Contest Winners Announced: <https://tinyurl.com/5aj5f2wj>
- Spending time in nature may protect against the risk of dementia: <https://tinyurl.com/3mmmzsvf>
- Affinity and Identity-Based Crews and Programs: <https://tinyurl.com/59ahzda9>
- How to Save Phone Battery Life in the Backcountry: <https://blog.gaiagps.com/save-phone-battery-life/>
- 2023 Hike the Hill® Advocacy Event Success: <https://tinyurl.com/578a2fxt>
- The Trans-Bhutan Trail reopens after 60 years: <https://tinyurl.com/2s3773ew>
- Market Research: Equity of Access to Trails: <https://tinyurl.com/2p6t3ks5>

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