



NEWSLETTER

APR
2023

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www.alaska-trails.org

ALASKA TRAILS NEWS AND NOTICES

2023 STATEWIDE TRAILS CONFERENCE TO BE HELD IN APRIL

ATTEND Our annual Statewide Trails Conference will be held April 12-14th 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.

Here's a taste of what the conference will offer:

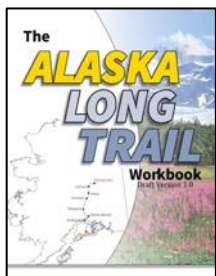
- Training Crew Leaders for Alaska's Trails: Three seasoned Alaska trail professionals - Christine Byl, Gabe Travis, and Blaine Smith - will share their perspectives on years of training, and being trained, and what they've learned about how to build strong leadership in the trails world.
- Map Technology for Evidence-based Trails: Improved map data opens new frontiers for evidence-based trail design. Hear from a group of GIS and trail experts that are exploring the potential of using analysis of high-resolution LIDAR topography, multispectral imagery, point clouds, and hiker tracklines.



The first day of the conference, April 12th, will be free, and there will be a full-day workshop on trail contracting (this workshop is now full). View the complete conference agenda and register here:

<https://www.alaska-trails.org/trails-conference>

PHOTOS, INPUT NEEDED FOR ALASKA LONG TRAIL WORKBOOK



SEND PHOTOS Interested in the Alaska Long Trail route details? A draft of the Alaska Long Trail Workbook has been put together and is now available for you to peruse! This living document is a compilation of proposed routes that identifies existing trails, potential issues and areas of trail that need work, gaps in the route, and analyzes routes to determine their "time of completion" and difficulty:

<https://www.alaska-trails.org/workbook-draft>

The workbook is still a working draft, and we would appreciate your help in making it more complete! Do you have high resolution photographs you'd be willing to share from portions of the Alaska Long Trail route? Please contact xlopez1818@gmail.com.

ALASKA TRAIL STEWARDS NEED YOU FOR A NEW SEASON

VOLUNTEER Are you getting excited for summer hiking and trail work? We sure are! A National Forest Foundation grant helped us build new tread on the Iditarod National Historic Trail in Chugach National Forest last year, in partnership with Alaska Geographic. During one volunteer event alone, Alaska Trail Stewards volunteers and Alaska Geographic youth constructed 300 feet of tread, making the trail safer, more sustainable, and more enjoyable for all! We are planning two volunteer events in the Chugach National Forest for this coming summer, and we hope you'll consider joining us!



We'll have other volunteer events as well.

Learn more about our Alaska Trail Stewards Program: <https://www.alaska-trails.org/alaska-trail-stewards>

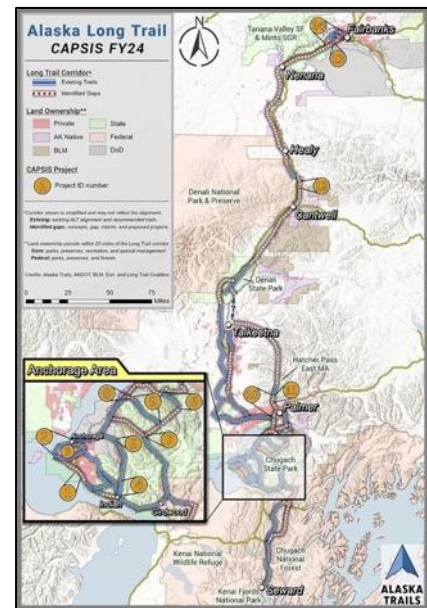
SUPPORT NEEDED FOR ALASKA LONG TRAIL IN THE STATE BUDGET

ADVOCATE Alaska Trails and our partners have recently submitted 14 Alaska Long Trail projects into 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

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

Please consider supporting some or all these projects by writing letters to your state legislators: <https://www.alaska-trails.org/long-trail-support>



ALASKA TRAILS HAS TOOL TRAILERS READY FOR TRAIL PROJECTS



BORROW 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).

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 really muddy trails at this time can result in ruts that stay all summer when the trails dry out. Those ruts can make the trails difficult to use all summer and into the next winter. They help create erosion by keeping water on the trails.

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)

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 is shown and you can choose Alaska Trails from the list.



ALASKA TRAILS NEEDS YOUR HELP TO PRESERVE, PROMOTE TRAILS

This newsletter is brought to you free by Alaska Trails. Our mission is to enhance the Alaska trail experience by supporting sustainable, world-renowned trails through advocacy and education. We couldn't do this without support from you. Please donate to help us continue our work: www.alaska-trails.org/donate
All year long we strive to:

- Promote the health, social and economic benefits of trails by educating users through forums, conferences, information materials, training and other activities.
- Preserve and improve public trail access by assisting public and private organizations in forming coordinated programs, policies, and standards.
- Promote sustainable trail systems for all users by developing and providing technical assistance for trail projects.

SEEN RECENTLY ON OUR FACEBOOK PAGE

March 23: On this #ThankfulThursday, we are grateful to Senator Lisa Murkowski for her continued support and commitment to the Alaska Long Trail Project!

Shared from
Lisa Murkowski

March 23: Improving recreational opportunities in Alaska has long been a priority of mine, and I'm proud to support the Alaska Long Trail. Today, I was glad to hear the U.S. Forest Service Chief is committed to maintaining this trail as well.

March 13: Have you heard?! Proposition 6 and Proposition A are good for Anchorage's economy! The Anchorage Economic Development Council Board of Directors voted this week to support passage of Proposition 6, the proposal for the Creation of the Chugach State Park Access Service Area. They also support Proposition A, which will allow for improvements to Anchorage's parks and trails. The Anchorage Economic Development Council encourages voters to vote "Yes" on these important propositions on the April 4 Municipal ballot.

March 8: Check out this fun upcoming race at Eklutna Lake that will benefit Alaska Trails and the Eagle River Nature Center!

Shared from
lifetime adventures

Good Morning! We're proud to announce the return of the Eklutna Challenge!!! This is a race that was held annually in the 2000's until 2016. It's a 3-mile run and 15 mile bike duathlon that heads through Eydlu Ben's trail and Eklutna Lakeside trail. The race will take place on April 29th starting at 10:00am. Entrance fees are \$45 until April 20th, and \$55 from April 21st - April 29th. All proceeds will be donated to Alaska Trails and the Eagle River Nature Center.

Details can be found on the attached flyer, and you can sign up at bit.ly/eklutnachallenge

The event is limited to 200 participants. Show your support of the Chugach State Park trails and these wonderful organizations. Spread the word. Share, share, share!!!! We'll see you there!!!



STATEWIDE NEWS AND NOTICES

NATIONAL TRAILS DAY EVENT REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN

Join us on June 3, 2023, for National Trails Day. Connect with more people in your area who share your love of being outside.

Each year, National Trails Day reaches millions of people through advertising, social media, and word of mouth. Registering an event on the official National Trails Day event site is a great opportunity to connect to new and existing trail users in your community who are looking for outdoor events.

Register your event here: <https://americanhiking.org/national-trails-day/host-information/>

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 affects 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.

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

SITKA TRAIL WORKS, INC.

March 27: We are excited to uplift some exciting community news! The University of Alaska Center for Economic Development has released their Hut to Hut report as well as updated their map of public use cabins in Alaska. This is the only map of all public use cabins in Alaska! Explore the map here:

<https://ua-ced.org/alaska-huts-map>

ALASKA STATE PARKS

March 21: ****TUTKA BACKDOOR AND SENTINEL RIDGE UPDATE****



Alaska State Parks and Ground Truth Alaska continue to work collaboratively towards sustainable trail development in this area. The trail is not completed, and we ask the public to refrain from hiking through this construction area to protect sensitive soils in sub-alpine/alpine area of the Tutka Backdoor and Sentinel Ridge Routes/ trail.

We are committed to working collaboratively to achieve the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation’s trail standards. We hope construction will continue in

2024 and we ask the public to avoid the construction area until the trail is completed. Thank you for your patience and respect! <https://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/misc/newsrelease/2023/tutka2023.pdf>
If you have questions, please contact Ranger Jason Okuly at 907-435-7595.

FAIRBANKS TRAIL AND WATERWAY USERS

Jay Cable, a Fairbanksan and one of the Iditarod Trail Invitational finishers, has an interesting blog post with photos of entries in cabin and shelter logbooks and on from the walls. Some are from many years past. <https://tinyurl.com/btd3rvxf>

STATEWIDE LINKS

- Proponents of Alaska Long Trail pitch 14 projects as steps toward ambitious 500-mile goal: <https://tinyurl.com/2a2phmrm>

SLIGHTLY OFF-TRAIL

- Study examines why People of Color don't recreate in numbers: <https://tinyurl.com/bdrkp8d5>
- Most Kenai Peninsula trapping setback proposals fail at Board of Game: <https://tinyurl.com/4j445ba5>
- From Minnesota to Alaska by snowmobile?: <https://tinyurl.com/y3yup5z6>

SOUTHCENTRAL NEWS AND NOTICES

TWO TRAIL-RELATED PROPOSITIONS IN ANCHORAGE VOTE

If you haven't voted yet in the Anchorage municipal election, there's still time. Find out more in this message from the Anchorage Park Foundation newsletter:

This year park lovers have two opportunities to support the places we love in the 2023 municipal election. Proposition A funds improvements to our urban park and trail system and Proposition 6 creates a much needed Chugach State Park Access Service Area for the Anchorage Bowl.

Voting ends Tuesday, April 4, 2023

Vote by mail begins March 14th and ends on Election Day, April 4. Learn more about ballot measures, candidates, how to track your ballot and, other voter resources from Anchorage Municipal Election here: <https://tinyurl.com/2bs886rr>

Prop A: Parks & Recreation

The Municipality of Anchorage manages 11,000 acres of parkland, 226 parks, and more than 250 miles of trails and recreation facilities that make Anchorage a great place to live. Voter approved bonds provide the primary source of funding to maintain and improve park and recreation infrastructure. For 11 years in a row, voters have said YES to Anchorage park and recreation bonds. Prop A provides an affordable way to invest in public improvements. Learn about proposed projects here: <https://tinyurl.com/bdk64ppy>



Prop 6: Chugach Access

This proposition would create a new Chugach State Park Access Service Area within the Anchorage Bowl. It would not mandate any new taxes for residents or any specific projects. However, it would provide the mechanism to submit future project proposals to the voters for funding approval. Projects would improve park access through trailhead developments, road and parking improvements, and management to address the effects of park users on local residents. Learn more here:

<https://tinyurl.com/bdk64ppv>

Alaska Trails encourages Anchorage area voters to vote YES on Prop A and Prop 6. To learn more about these propositions visit: <https://anchorageparkfoundation.org/bond/>.

FINAL JUDGEMENT DELIVERED FOR ANCHORAGE'S STEWART TRAIL

The Friends of Stewart Public Trail sent out this update on March 7:

Dear Friends of the Stewart Public Trail:

Yesterday, for the first time in nearly eight years, the trail was opened up for non-motorized access at the trailhead. This is the culmination of incredible support from the community, and is a cause for much happiness.

We need to be considerate not to overwhelm the neighborhood. The parking options there are currently limited. We will be working with the Muni to assess the parking options, but for practical reasons this needs to wait until the snow is gone. The trail is going to be there forever, so if some of you can hold off on visiting the trail for a while, that would be respectful.

If you do drive up there, again, parking is limited. Do not block the road, and do not block driveways. The trail itself is an active driveway so please do not block the gates at the immediate trailhead, allowing the gates to swing open for the residents' vehicles to get in and out.

Also, please carpool. Moen Park, Storck Park, and Golden View Middle School (as available) are very close-by places to stage cars.

We will continue to keep you updated on the upcoming legal developments and deadlines.

This has been a long process and we are extremely grateful for everyone's support and perseverance in achieving the restoration of this public access.

Sincerely,

Friends of the Stewart Public Trail,
friendsofthestewarttrail@gmail.com

Photo: Stewart Trail blockage from the Alaska Landmine (<https://alaskalandmine.com/>)



MORE ON THE STEWART TRAIL: PARKING AND USING THE TRAIL

Here are excerpts from a Friends of the Stewart Public Trail message sent in March regarding where to park and using the trail:

The Road Service Area has and may do some more snow clearing on Steamboat Dr. to help with parking. There are numerous "No Parking" signs on the road, but they are a bit confusing. Please do not impede traffic at the curve where Steamboat turns into Mountainside Village. Parking below the curve, on the uphill side of Steamboat, pointing downhill, below the first driveway seems ok. Pull off the road surface as far as you safely can. If you park above the curve on Mountainside Village Dr., turn around in a safe area, and then park on the northwest side of the street (facing Anchorage), which will provide adequate space for street traffic.

Carpool if possible. Once you have parked or have been dropped off, you will enter the trail to the right of the red gate. There is a sign on the gate explaining some basic expectations. Please be particularly mindful about picking up after your dogs, and pack out any trash. Folks who have waited 8 years to return to this trail do not want to see dogs' leftovers or your plastic bags. This is one of the issues that led to the trail being closed 8 years ago.

The trail is the road surface or roadbed, 15 feet wide, so follow it approximately a mile until you come to a split in the trail. The upper split (to the left, facing up-valley) is the public easement we restored. This split does go past the parked 5th wheel RV, but this is the correct route. The two split routes rejoin, and shortly thereafter the easement involved in the lawsuit ends. The roadbed continues up-valley; we believe the roadbed across the next tract of property is a platted public road. Up to the present time, not many folks have ventured past the split trail after public access was restored. If you continue up-valley, once again stay on the roadbed. After a total of about 1.8 miles from the gate at Steamboat Drive, there is a switchback trail to the left that will ascend to a ridge. (It may not be very visible due to lack of use). If you miss the switchback turnoff, the roadbed ends shortly thereafter, so you'll need to go back to catch the switchback. When you reach the ridge and go right you are about 0.3 miles from the Chugach State Park boundary, where you can continue to Ruby and McHugh Peaks, if you care to.

The Stewart Homestead Trail is wonderful for people of all ages, as one can go for a short or long hike, and see beautiful landscapes. We will try to enter the information about the trail on All Trails to clear up any confusion. Basically, follow the roadbed up-valley, and use the left (or uphill) split in the trail.

COMMENTS DUE ON MAT-SU'S BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN PLAN

The Matanuska-Susitna Borough's Bike and Pedestrian Plan (BPP) is available for public review and comment. Comments are due by April 30. We encourage all our members to take a look and let the Borough know what you think. The purpose of the plan is to provide for a safer, better-connected bike and pedestrian network for Borough residents. It focuses on areas that do not have bike or pedestrian facilities, and addresses safety for bikers and pedestrians.

Use the BPP website to look through maps and planning documents and provide comments through the comment portal:

<https://www.matsubikeandped.com/plan-and-comment>



From Valley Mountain Bikers and Hikers newsletter

SEEN RECENTLY ON SOUTHCENTRAL FACEBOOK PAGES

ALASKA STATE PARKS

March 8: Shout out to these two awesome Alaska State Parks volunteers! 🙌🌟

In the Mat-Su we love our volunteers. Especially when they are out doing winter grooming of our ski trails at Nancy Lake. 🛡️ ❄️

Dan Lemmer and his daughter Ashley have been doing a great job of getting all of the ski trails groomed...this is the first time they have been all groomed in a few years. So they are Rock stars.

Ashley comes out and helps him on weekends and after school. She loves it. 😊

Dan works on the slope and each time he comes back he calls our Nancy Lake Office to let us know he will be headed back out to keep grooming. He has been doing this all winter. Thanks Ashley and Dan! ⭐



SINGLETRACK ADVOCATES

March 28: PSA: The Tour of Anchorage (TOA) Trail will be closed for two weeks in April (17th-30th) and then again from June 18th – September 1st (approximately) for the installation of three new bridges.

Closure Dates: April 17-30 (approx.) and June 18 – September 1

Location: TOA between BLM Campbell Creek Science Center and MLK Jr. Blvd.

SOUTHCENTRAL LINKS

- Judge orders Frank Pugh to restore Stewart Trail public access: <https://tinyurl.com/49myeauk>
- Most Kenai Peninsula trapping setback proposals fail at Board of Game: <https://tinyurl.com/4j445ba5>
- Anchorage Parks and Rec Winter Trail & Ice Status: <https://tinyurl.com/5n7jrum5>
- Anchorage Parks and Trails Attract and Retain a Quality Workforce: <https://tinyurl.com/yc479h3y>

SLIGHTLY OFF-TRAIL

- Notice of Decision - Public Access Easement request by the U.S. Forest Service to authorize access improvements in Twentymile: <http://notice.alaska.gov/210274>
- Proposition seeks to create Chugach State Park Access Service Area: <https://tinyurl.com/4u48y66h>
- Kodiak Outdoor Film Festival, April 7: <https://www.islandtrails.org/film.html>
- Trusting Tustumena (a skating/planning post): <https://thingstolucat.com/2023/03/20/tustumena/>
- House Committee approves access on Campbell Lake easements: <https://tinyurl.com/2p87m4wu>

INTERIORWIDE NEWS AND NOTICES

SEEN RECENTLY ON INTERIOR FACEBOOK PAGES

FAIRBANKS TRAIL AND WATERWAY USERS

Two related posts regarding trails north of Fairbanks:

March 12: Just a heads up to trail users, especially dog teams, that use the trails along the normally unplowed portion of Old Murphy Dome Road and O'Conner Dome (Upper Missile site), GVEA has

bulldozed the snow off big sections of the trails up here with no warning on the trail or public notice that I have seen. Affected areas are dozed down to dirt, big berms are left where the trail used to be, and it's a huge mess that could be a significant safety issue for larger dog teams. Be aware and travel with care.

Then after an outcry by trail users:

March 16: Thank you GVEA for responding positively to this situation.

Shared from (and edited for brevity):

Golden Valley Electric Assn.

March 16: *Update for Murphy Dome residents* GVEA is happy to report that we were able to arrange grooming of trails that were disrupted by an ongoing project to upgrade and energize 10 miles of line. We understand this is a high-use time of year for trails and will continue to make all efforts to minimize disruption to area residents. More information on this project is below.

Together with contractor Fullford Electric, GVEA is working to upgrade and energize approximately 10 miles of existing but currently unenergized line that runs parallel to Old Murphy Dome Road. This stretch of line was given to GVEA when the military no longer needed it, with the stipulation that GVEA could either remove it and lose the easements or repair the line and use it.



Work is being completed during the winter months due to safety concerns, ease of access, and contractor availability.

We appreciate your patience and apologize for any inconvenience as work progresses.

March 8: Cool project!

--For her Eagle Scout project, she spearheaded creating an interpretive display for the new Antler Ridge Trail, just south of Healy. The sign focuses on Dall sheep.—

Fairbanks Daily News-Miner story: <https://tinyurl.com/yc7hn4fk>

ALASKA DNR - DIVISION OF FORESTRY & FIRE PROTECTION - DOF

March 17: The Alaska Division of Forestry & Fire Protection and the Alaska Department of Fish & Game are finishing repairs along 10 miles of Cache Creek Road and replacing the Fortune Creek Bridge. These repairs will increase access to the Tanana Valley State Forest west of Fairbanks.



Located off Murphy Dome Road approximately 15 miles west of Fairbanks, Cache Creek Road is part of the Tanana Valley State Forest road system that covers more than 250 miles in the Tok-Delta-Fairbanks Area. It and other forestry roads are used by multiple user groups including hunters, loggers, firewood cutters, property owners, recreationists, and berry pickers. The road has seen heavy use and needs repair to ensure its long-term durability.

Work on the road this season is expected to be completed at the end of May. To learn more, visit the project website: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=hunteraccess.tananavalley>

Contact: Kevin Meany, Division of Forestry & Fire Protection, Fairbanks Area, 907-451-2602, kevin.meany@alaska.gov or Katie Sechrist, Department of Fish & Game, Hunter Access Program Coordinator, 907-267-2541, katie.sechrist@alaska.gov

INTERIORWIDE LINKS

- Grooming for Success: Tom Helmers: <https://tinyurl.com/5bkr8bkx>
- Re-routed Mist Creek Trail Ready for Winter Use: <https://tinyurl.com/yu75ybyx>
- Ester Valley Trail Trial Amicable Settlement Email: <https://tinyurl.com/3bzwub2v>
- Fairbanks Borough Trails Plan Faces More Hurdles: <https://tinyurl.com/y8rfxkbp>
- Tolovana Hot Springs - Which Mode of Transportation is Best?: <https://tinyurl.com/28k4k2v3>
- Paddling Presentation Double Feature at Silver Gulch – April 5: <https://tinyurl.com/bdddw5ra>

SLIGHTLY OFF-TRAIL

- Agencies schedule two public meetings on Army's land-withdrawal request: <https://tinyurl.com/57k7jvhb>

SOUTHEAST NEWS AND NOTICES

CHECK OUT OUR NEW JUNEAU TRAIL GUIDE FOR IDEAS ON OUTINGS

Trail Mix has a new online trail guide. Check out the description from The Dirt, Trail Mix's newsletter:

You asked for it... and we listened! Over the past year, Trail Mix has been hard at work developing a trail guide that is now accessible via our website.

The Juneau Trail Guide includes a visual display of trails and cabins throughout Juneau. Clicking on each trail will provide the user with relevant information, such as mileage and trailhead location. Additionally, the map includes cabins and links to their reservation booking pages.

We hope that this guide can be a valuable resource for our community. As a community resource, we value your feedback. If you have suggestions on ways that we can improve our map, please submit feedback using the link below the map.

Check out the guide here: <https://trailmixinc.org/trails/>



SEEN RECENTLY ON SOUTHEAST FACEBOOK PAGES

TRAIL MIX, INC.

March 28: Power in the palm of your hand! The sledgehammer: the ultimate tool for taking on the toughest jobs 🖐️🔨

A sledgehammer is a large, heavy hammer with a long handle, typically made of wood or fiberglass, and a metal head weighing between 2 and 20 pounds. The weight of the hammerhead and

the length of the handle allow the user to generate a great deal of force, making it a powerful tool for heavy-duty work.

At Trail Mix, we like to use sledgehammers to break up "ankle-breakers", which are large rocks that can be hazardous to hikers. As a bonus, the broken rock can be used as gravel to add to the trail! 🪨



March 21: It's #tooltalktuesday and today we're talking about tool maintenance! Maintaining our tools is a key part of our field operations. 🔑 Sharpening blades, removing grime, and replacing worn parts are crucial parts of keeping tools safe and effective. To do this, crew members use files and belt sanders to sharpen blades. ⚒️

March 14: Happy #tooltalktuesday! Today, we're highlighting a crew favorite: the excavator! 🙌

The excavator is a handy machine that we often use when we need to do more extensive trail clearing. This machine can be used to dig up ground, move gravel, and flatten sections of land. Most commonly, we use the excavator to fill our many, many bags of gravel that we fly out to the trail!



JUNEAU PARKS & RECREATION

March 4: The pedestrian bridge over Montana Creek on the Kaxdigoowu Héen Dei (Brotherhood Bridge Trail) is closed due to continued erosion of the banks supporting the bridge abutment.



The bridge was previously closed in the fall of 2022 after a large storm scoured the bank of Montana Creek and undermined the bridge abutment. Emergency stabilization work was completed at that time and the bridge was reopened for pedestrian use. However, bank erosion continued this winter, and the bridge is closed due to unsafe conditions.

A barrier is being installed to prohibit bridge access. Please observe the posted warning signs and do not attempt to access the bridge or climb down the river banks, as this will increase erosion. The streambanks and bridge abutment will be evaluated for stabilization and repair.

SITKA TRAIL WORKS

March 28: Last September, Sitka Trail Works coordinated the transportation of lumber and gravel to the Salmon Lake Trail. The popular trail to a lakeside cabin on the Tongass National Forest had been severely eroded by flooding in recent years. Thanks to funding from the National Forest Foundation, we were able to helicopter in the necessary materials for work to be accomplished this season. Sitkans love this hike-in cabin and this work will ensure the community has access for years to come!



March 23: While Sitka Trail Works assists with maintenance and repair of existing trails and the planning and construction of new trails, we also help connect Sitkans with the outdoors by facilitating group hikes throughout the summer. Our group hikes are led by our volunteer board members. These hikes run from May to August and we will be publishing our summer calendar of activities soon. Before we put that out, we want to know if there are any specific hikes you want to see on the calendar this year? Let us know and we will try to make it happen!



Also, we're looking into hosting a trip to Sea Lion Cove – would you be interested in that?
*All of these hikes are free of charge, except for off-island trips that require us to hire marine transportation.

March 22: Our work was highlighted in a national publication!

Last fall, [Erik de Jong](#), sailboat captain of the Bagheera, joined the Sitka Trail Works crew in renovating the Sea Lion Cove Trail. Erik recently published a story of the journey and project in a piece for sailing magazine, [Cruising Club of America](#). Titled "Something Different", Erik's piece details the challenges of trail work in Southeast Alaska from changing tides and weather to material delays. Our feature is on pages 66-73 of the issue linked here: https://issuu.com/cruisingclub/docs/voyages_2023



March 14: #TrailTuesdays time! This week we're appreciating the Cross Trail. With so many entrances and uses, the Cross Trail is an easy favorite in Sitka. Our favorite part is that you always run into a friend on the trail, making it a great way to feel the Sitka Community. How do you use the Cross Trail?

March 13: You funded the Trail Plan! With the support of the Sitka Community, we're charting the future of Sitka's Trails. Thank you to the many local businesses that donated to the Trail Plan!

March 7: Happy #TrailTuesday! This week we are featuring the beautiful trails up Harbor Mountain. All this sun is making us excited for summertime adventures at the top. With gorgeous views of the mountains and sea, vibrant wildflowers, and ample alpine blueberries, Harbor Mountain is one of our favorite spots. What is your favorite thing to do on the Harbor Mountain trails?



March 2: Huge thank you to the Sitka All-Terrain Riders for their volunteer effort clearing snow from Sitka's sidewalks this winter! It makes a huge difference for people walking, biking, or rolling around town, ensuring our community is accessible. Thank you!

And this comment: If you'd like to support their efforts you can donate here!

<https://www.sitka-atr.com/shop>

📷 James Poulslon, Sitka Sentinel

SOUTHEAST LINKS

- Recent survey shows Sitka's 'enthusiasm' for trail improvement plans: <https://tinyurl.com/4udjm39p>

NATIONWIDE NEWS AND NOTICES

APPLICATIONS OPEN FOR TRAIL STEWARDSHIP FUNDING

The National Wilderness Stewardship Alliance, in collaboration with American Trails, American Hiking Society, Back Country Horsemen of America, the International Mountain Bicycling Association, the National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council, and the American Motorcyclist Association, is pleased to announce the 5th round of the National Forest System Trail Stewardship Partner Funding (Trail Stewardship Partner Funding) through the financial assistance of the USDA Forest Service for trail maintenance on National Forest System trails for the 2023-24 Field seasons - May 2023 through December 2024. Learn more and apply by the April 15, 2023, deadline.

https://www.wildernessalliance.org/trail_funding

From American Hiking Society newsletter

TELL YOUR MEMBER OF CONGRESS TO SUPPORT TRAIL FUNDING

Right now, members of Congress are developing their funding requests for FY24 and you have the opportunity to influence what your Senators and Representatives are prioritizing. Through your support last year, trails saw a \$40+ million increase in program funding across the federal government. We need your support to ensure this funding continues! Will you take 30 seconds to send your Member of Congress a message asking them to support robust funding for trails?

<https://americanhiking.org/advocacy/take-action/>

From American Hiking Society newsletter

TELL CONGRESS TO PASS THE OUTDOORS FOR ALL ACT

A bipartisan group of Representatives and Senators recently reintroduced the Outdoors for All Act (S.448/H.R.1065) to expand outdoor recreation opportunities in urban and low-income communities across the country. The legislation would permanently authorize a federal program that ensures a portion of Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) funding goes to areas without adequate access to local parks and trails. AHS is proud to support this legislation and was included in the press release from Sen. Collins and Sen. Padilla. Show your support for Outdoors for All by asking your elected officials to support this legislation.

<https://americanhiking.org/advocacy/take-action-outdoors-for-all-act/>

From American Hiking Society newsletter

AMERICA'S OUTDOOR RECREATION ACT REINTRODUCED IN SENATE

Today, Senator Joe Manchin (D-WV) and Senator John Barrasso (R-WY) reintroduced America's Outdoor Recreation Act, the most comprehensive package of outdoor recreation bills in a generation. We urge OIA members to join us in expressing support for this historic legislation.

This bipartisan legislation will provide sizable federal support to build outdoor recreation opportunities across the country in various ways, including the following:

- Developing and supporting specific recreation infrastructure like cycling trails and outdoor entrepreneurial training programs
- Establishing programs that support public-private partnerships to modernize and improve public lands
- Utilizing real-time data more efficiently to identify visitor trends, extend the length of the season for public access to federal lands, and improve user communications

Improvements like these will have a real impact on the ability of all Americans to spend time outside and enjoy the benefits of outdoor recreation. OIA has been continually engaged in advocating for the passage of this bill. If you would like to learn more about the bill and advocate for its passage, add your name to a sign-on letter to Congress in support of AORA by following the link here: <http://bit.ly/3YW27Xh>

From Outdoor Industry Association Facebook post

LONG DISTANCE BIKING TRAILS BILL NEEDS SUPPORT

The BOLT Act is back! One of IMBA's flagship bills has been reintroduced in Congress.

The bill will identify at least 10 existing long-distance bike trails and at least 10 opportunities to develop or complete such trails, while better supporting long rides with maps, signage, and promotional materials. IMBA EPICS like the Maah Daah Hey in North Dakota and long-distance dreams like the Great Divide Route would get a bolster of support from the bill.

Last Congress, the BOLT Act passed the House floor and moved quickly through Senate committees. We look forward to generating even more momentum to pass this bipartisan bill with support of mountain bikers like you.

Help the BOLT Act go the distance this legislative session by learning more and sending a note of support to your elected officials: <https://www.imba.com/bolt-act>

From Facebook post by the International Mountain Biking Association

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 (Mar): <https://tinyurl.com/bmheyvhi>
- 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:

- Celebrating Women Who Care for Trails: <https://tinyurl.com/y49eddyt>
- American Trails Adds Additional Support for Trails Capacity Program: <https://tinyurl.com/57rmv4fn>
- Hikers can take simple steps to reduce spread of invasive plant species: <https://tinyurl.com/ysestrz6d>

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