



NEWSLETTER

NOV
2022

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www.alaska-trails.org

ALASKA TRAILS NEWS AND NOTICES

APPLICANTS SOUGHT FOR LONG TRAIL PROJECT IN MAT-SU

APPLY Alaska Trails is hiring! We're looking for someone to lead the planning and community engagement effort for the Alaska Long Trail project in the Mat-Su Borough.

The position will start ASAP once the funding is secure, aiming for a November start date, and will last through 2023. The position may be extended pending funding.

The Mat-Su Borough is at the heart of the ALT and critical to its connection and success. To harness the current momentum and to garner more substantial community support in the Mat-Su Borough, the ALT Mat-Su Coordinator will lead the ALT project in the borough through community engagement, public outreach, relationship-building with landowners and decision-makers, and identifying priorities for trail projects.

Please check out all the details at our website: www.alaska-trails.org/jobs



LAND MANAGER FORUM TO BE HELD IN NOVEMBER

ATTEND Alaska Trails will be holding its annual Land Manager Forum on **Tuesday, November 15**.



We are excited to bring land managers, trails groups, pro trail builders and trail enthusiasts together to highlight the many successes we have had and share what's worked and what hasn't. We hope you can join us to wrap up the trail season and begin planning for next year.

The forum will be held at BP Energy Center in Anchorage. You can register, see this year's agenda, and see last years' presentations here: www.alaska-trails.org/land-manager-forum. If you have any questions or ideas for the forum, send an email to Steve Cleary: steve.cleary@alaska-trails.org

LONG TRAIL SEEKS AN ALTERNATIVE NAME

Have an idea for an alternative name for the Alaska Long Trail? We are accepting suggestions! Please send us an email at office@alaska-trails.org.

Want to learn more about the Alaska Long Trail? Visit: <https://www.alaska-trails.org/the-alaska-long-trail>



TRAIL TALES COMING BACK FOR MORE OF YOUR TRAIL STORIES

ATTEND Alaska Trails is excited to be bringing back the Trail Tales storytelling series, partnered with a different community trail group each event. In the spirit of Arctic Entries, storytellers will share seven-minute stories about their trail experiences, adventures, and life in general. Our 2022 Trail Tales events will be held at the Anchorage Museum and tickets cost \$20.



Our next event will be on Tuesday, November 15, at 7 p.m., in partnership with the Anchorage Park Foundation. Doors will open at 6:30 p.m.

For more information and to purchase tickets, visit: www.alaska-trails.org/trail-tales

VIRTUAL RACE ACROSS ALASKA BENEFITS YOU AND ALASKA TRAILS

ENTER/DONATE The Race Across Alaska Winter Challenge, a multi-sport challenge, is a great way to get outside while challenging yourself to stay happy and healthy during winter. And you'll be helping our cause to help build and maintain some of the best trails in the world!

Here's how it works. You can run, walk, fatbike, indoor bike, XC ski, swim, or any activity you like. You can choose from eight different virtual distances – from 60 miles to 2,000 miles, which is a whopping 22.3 miles per day. Now that's a challenge. The goal is to log as many miles as you can over the three months of winter to get (virtually) from location A to B. You can also participate as a team (friends/family/school).

- 60 miles = Anchorage to Whittier (0.7 miles/day)
- 125 miles = Anchorage to Sheep Mountain (1.4 miles/day)
- 235 miles = Anchorage to Denali National Park (2.6 miles/day)
- 350 miles = Anchorage to Delta Junction (3.9 miles/day)
- 500 miles = Alaska Long Trail, Seward to Fairbanks (5.6 miles/day)
- 800 miles = Denali Highway Loop (8.9 miles/day)
- 1150 miles = Historic Iditarod Trail (12.8 miles/day)
- 2000 miles = Ketchikan to Deadhorse (22.3 miles/day)



You will have the ability to log your miles, track your progress, collect virtual badges, so how you rank up to others on the leader board daily. You can invite other to this challenge to help you to stay motivated all winter long.

Online registration began November 1, and the virtual race starts on Winter Solstice – December 21. See the website for more details: www.raawc.com/Race/AK/Anchorage/AlaskaChallenge

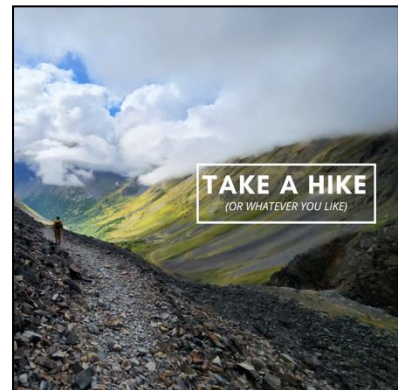
RAAWC is a fundraiser for the Alaska Trails and the Alaska Long Trail project. **For every racer that participates, \$10 will be donated to Alaska Trails PLUS racers can donate additional funds to support the development of The Alaska Long Trail. (If you choose to decline the swag you can donate even more to Alaska Trails: \$25 for the hat and shirt, and \$10 for the finishers medal.)** Last year more than \$40,000 was donated through participation and donations! Alaska Trails is very grateful for the financial support from the race, but also the boost it gives to the community by inspiring an active, healthy lifestyle.



The official race cannon will be fired at the Zoom Kickoff Party on December 21 at 6pm AKS (10pm EST). Join the Facebook group to hear about pop-up Zoom and/or Zwift FREE workouts along with facebook live videos: www.facebook.com/groups/824863588292365

‘TAKE A HIKE OR WHATEVER YOU LIKE’ GARNERS ALMOST \$5,000!

Thank you to everyone who participated in our Take a Hike or Whatever You Like fundraiser! Because of your trail time and donations, we raised nearly \$5,000 to help build and maintain trails in Alaska. We had 50 people participating this year. The fundraiser was run from October 1-10. People could Take A Hike—or bike or run or walk—and then make a donation to Alaska Trails. Donors who gave \$25 or more received a Race Across Alaska shirt and those who donated \$100 or more were eligible for a prize drawing. We’d like to thank everyone who donated and our sponsors, The North Face, Wild Scoops, and Moose’s Tooth. Below is a list of people who won prizes.



- Ray M. – \$300 North Face gift card
- Hans C. – North Face duffel bag
- Glen H. – Moose’s/Bear Tooth gift card
- John W. – Wild Scoops package

SEEN RECENTLY ON OUR FACEBOOK PAGE

Oct 28: Alaska Trails is proud to be the project manager for the 2023-2027 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) update. **We would love to have your input on the SCORP draft, starting November 1st!** To learn more, visit: www.alaska-trails.org/scorp-2023-2027

Oct 25: Alaska Trails is honored to have received the Alaska Recreation and Park Association Outstanding Organization Award this year, and pleased to note that our superstar Alaska Trails Board Member Kate Thomas is also on the list for her great work in Wrangell!! We will continue to work diligently towards improving trail and outdoor recreation opportunities for all across Alaska!

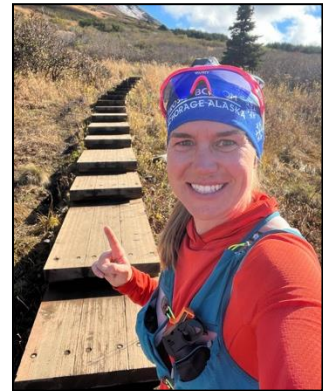


October 20: A BIG Thankful Thursday shout-out to the @Kenai Mountains Turnagain Arm National Heritage Area (KMTA) for their support, via their grant program, for both our paid crew and volunteers! Look at these photos and remember when the SUN used to shine. Here’s our crew working on the Crescent Lake Trail to reduce the “optional bushwack” that KMTA mentions on their website 😊. And some great photos of our volunteers working on the Iditarod National Historic Trail near Ptarmigan Creek. Thanks KMTA!

October 3: Hi There! I'm Heather Helzer, owner of @turnagaintraining and founder of the Virtual Race Across Alaska Winter Challenge. When I'm not coaching triathlon or race directing, I'm enjoying the trails via trail running, hiking or biking.

I got to know Alaska Trails well 5yrs ago when I was a story host at a Trail Talk where I talked about my hike along the Chilkoot Trail solo with my 10month old baby. Since then, Turnagain Training has worked alongside Alaska Trails to have them as our spotlight fundraiser in the Virtual Race Across Alaska Winter Challenge. **For every participant we donate \$10 of the race entry fee to the Alaska Trails while also allowing racers to make an additional donation.** Last year the Virtual Race Across Alaska Winter Challenge raised over \$40,000 for Alaska Trails!

We'd love for you to join us too! **Registration opens November 1st.** Learn more at www.RAAWC.com



STATEWIDE NEWS AND NOTICES

COMMENT SOUGHT ON STATEWIDE OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN

COMMENT The Alaska Department of Natural Resources invites the public to contribute to the funding and development guide for all Alaska outdoor public recreation.

The Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) for 2023 – 2027 will be available for public review Nov. 1 - 28, 2022.

The SCORP, which is rewritten every five years, also allows Alaska to qualify for millions of dollars in federal Land and Water Conservation Funds (LWCF) in addition to Recreational Trails Program funds managed by the U.S. Federal Highways Administration and the State of Alaska. It also serves as a guide for all public outdoor recreation in urban and rural neighborhoods, cities, and regions for a given state. This iteration of the plan is packed full of new research, cutting-edge data, and statewide and regional stakeholder input.

Demand for outdoor recreation in Alaska, by residents and visitors, continues to grow. Pressure on existing facilities and the need for expanded resources all affect the current capacity of outdoor recreational opportunities in Alaska. This SCORP breaks new ground to present a set of actions needed to grow and sustain the value of these unique outdoor gifts and create more benefits for Alaska and Alaska residents.

“Outdoor recreation defines the Alaskan way of life and is one of the strongest sectors of the Alaska economy,” said Brent Goodrum, Deputy Commissioner for the Department, “From fishing to skiing,

You love the outdoors...

The Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) 2023-2027 currently being drafted will make the case for increased investment for outdoor facilities.

You can help change Alaska's outdoor recreation investment landscape by commenting on the SCORP.

Public review November 1-28

STATEWIDE COMPREHENSIVE
ALASKA SCORP
2023-27
OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN

Love the outdoors.

remote snowmachining to strolling on neighborhood trails, Alaska ranks at the top of the nation's outdoor recreation participation rate. Alaskans have a right to say what they want with their trails."

Major themes covered in the 2023-2027 SCORP include the outdoor recreation economy and workforce, health and wellness, stewardship and conservation, and quality of life. Research shows that outdoor recreation makes significant contributions to health and quality of life. Outdoor recreation has also long been tied to cultural traditions in Alaska. Outdoor recreation is also a major economic force and one of the strongest growth sectors in Alaska's economy.

The plan was developed with significant research and input from statewide advisory groups (including Alaska Trails) and local, state, federal, Alaska Native, and private land managers. Data presented includes surveys on outdoor recreation priorities from the general public, land managers and tribal governments. Also included is data on trends in outdoor recreation around the state.

Public comment on the SCORP is welcome from Nov. 1-28 here: <https://www.alaskacorp.org>

From Alaska Department of Natural Resources press release

OUTDOOR REC TRAILS ADVISORY BOARD RECRUITING NEW MEMBERS

APPLY The Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation is seeking multiple candidates to fill two volunteer positions, representing Motorized and Diversified trail users, for the Outdoor Recreational Trails Advisory Board (ORTAB). Applicants should have knowledge, experience, and interest in outdoor recreational activities and grant-funded programs. This is a commissioner-appointed position with a three-year term, and the board meets a minimum of twice per year.



The primary role of the ORTAB is to assist in evaluating grant proposals for the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) and Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). Since 2000, these programs have invested over 30 million dollars in trail projects throughout the state, creating critical and sustainable infrastructure while supporting private sector jobs throughout Alaska. Because ORTAB members carry a wide array of trail and public land user experiences, they are occasionally asked for additional advice on other outdoor recreation related subjects. Additional information regarding the ORTAB can be found at <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/misc/ortaboard.htm>.

Anyone interested in serving on the ORTAB should submit the following:

- a letter of interest
- brief resume
- completed ORTAB Applicant Questionnaire

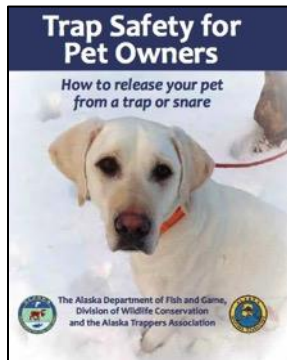
The documents should be submitted to the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation at Parks.RTPGrantApp@alaska.gov. **The last day to submit applications is November 11.**

If you know anyone who supports trails, works well in a collaborative environment, and has knowledge or experience with trails, please encourage them to apply.

From Alaska Department of Natural Resources press release

RESOURCES HELP REDUCE PET/TRAPPING CONFLICTS

Trapping season opens November 1, so trail users who let their dogs run loose should make sure they know some basic information about traps and trap lines. A pamphlet and videos are available.



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

VIDEO: The ATA also sells a 30-minute video, "Sharing Alaska's Trails," that includes information such as how to know if you are on a trap line, trap line safety, the physics of handling and opening traps and snares, and tips for first-aid for pets accidentally caught in traps. The video doesn't promote trapping but deals with the practicalities of sharing the trails. A three-minute excerpt of the DVD can be found on YouTube (www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jk242jZwEAQ). To order a copy of the DVD check the ATA store (www.alaskatrappers.org).



Most trapping seasons run from November 1 to the end of February, but the season for a few species lasts longer. Wolf traps could be active well into April.

WINTER TRAIL GROOMING PROGRAMS NEED YOUR HELP

DONATE/SERVE Winter is upon us and if there is no snow on the ground in your area, there soon will be.

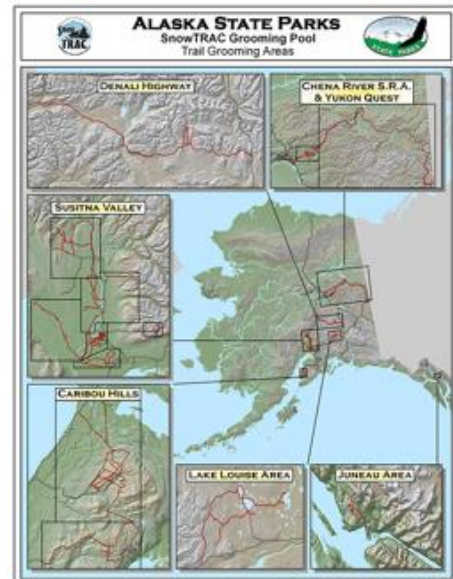
Many winter trails activities require (or at least are much improved by) grooming, such as snowmachining, skiing, mushing, and fatbiking. If you engage in an activity that is improved by grooming, please remember to support those efforts. There are several ways you can help.

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 that tell you how you can help.

You can also support the Alaska Snowmachine Trails 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: <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/grants/snowmotr.htm>
Most importantly, get out there and enjoy all the great winter trails we have in Alaska!



WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP SLOW CLIMATE CHANGE

JOIN, ACT Climate change affects everyone, especially winter sports enthusiasts like snowmachiners, mushers, cross-country skiers, and fatbikers.

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.

But can the actions of one or two people make a difference? Yep. Especially if more people are doing the same. Here are two things you can do right now to help make a difference.



Join "Stop the Money Pipeline"

<https://stopthemoneypipeline.com/>

Stop the Money Pipeline is a network of over 200 organizations (including the Alaska Wilderness League) and tens of thousands of everyday people who are working to hold the financial sector accountable for its role in the climate crisis.

Take a personal action

When buying a car, consider a hybrid or electric vehicle. Technologies for both have come a long way. All the major manufacturers are making models, including sedans, wagons, SUVs, and trucks. Many come in AWD versions. More and more are being sold and prices have been coming down. Alaska organizations are working hard to install fast-charging stations for electric vehicles in high-use areas. Consumer Reports has an excellent guide (www.consumerreports.org/cars/hybrids-evs/buying-guide/), but there are many others. Just let your Google fingers do the walking.

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

ALASKA STATE PARKS



Oct 21: Stay posted. 😊 As the weather evolves, there are some new closures and updates at state parks around the state:

📍 Campground open status: <https://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/asp/open.htm>

📍 Park Condition reports: <https://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/asp/curevnts.htm>

📷 Photo: Outdoor enthusiast on the trail to a Lynx Lake cabin in 2021- because part of the adventure is getting there! 🏔️

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT - ALASKA

Oct 12: #DidYouKnow there's no age or education level requirement to serve on the BLM Alaska Resource Advisory Council? Any Alaskan who demonstrates expertise in one of the interest groups represented can be considered to fill a seat on the council. Interest groups include the public-at-large, recreation, environmental groups, Alaska Natives, mineral development, hunting and more! 🙌 Want to #GetInvolved in #YourPublicLands management? Learn about the application process and required documents here: <http://ow.ly/jLFb50L4V5r>

! Applications are due on November 4, 2022.

👥 Youth and adult volunteers gather to help with an Eagle Scout project that focused on trail maintenance along the Salmon Run Trail on the Campbell Tract in Anchorage. The Eagle Scout project was part of the 2018 National Public Lands Day volunteerism event.



STATEWIDE LINKS

- Lost on the trail? You'll probably meet the Alaska National Guard: <https://tinyurl.com/m5y6sr4p>
- The Iditarod Trail Invitational 2022 (Jay Cable blog post, a bit late): <https://tinyurl.com/ycyt9wb6>

SLIGHTLY OFF-TRAIL

- Paddlers arrive in Bethel after 700-mile journey down the Kuskokwim: <https://tinyurl.com/mr3ywwkh>
- Forest Service to build new cabins in the Tongass and Chugach: <https://tinyurl.com/mry34az5>
- Rescued from wilderness? This is what happens once you hit SOS (ADN): <https://tinyurl.com/2p9d3ekh>
- UAF gets federal grant to preserve 'Into the Wild' bus: <https://tinyurl.com/55jc32kv>
- Lunch & Learns Offer Outdoor Funding Intel, Economic Impact Trends: <https://tinyurl.com/ys2etu98>
- **BLM Seeks Applicants** for Alaska Resource Advisory Council: <https://tinyurl.com/yhtkf9h4>
- Luc Mehl offers free Windy.com webinar for finding good weather (Nov 2): <https://tinyurl.com/3rz6pvj4>

SOUTHCENTRAL NEWS AND NOTICES

FUND RAISES MONEY FOR EAGLE RIVER SOUTH FORK IMPROVEMENTS

DONATE Improvements to the final three miles of the South Fork of Eagle River in Chugach State Park are on the horizon for Summer 2023.

The Chugach Park Fund, a non-profit "field of interest fund" of the Alaska Community Foundation, is working to match a \$115,000 grant from the Rasmuson Foundation to rebuild the trail. Like many older routes in the Chugach, the South Fork trail is at times muddy, brushy and a bit hard to follow. The state funded a rebuild of the first two miles several years ago, but the final three miles -- ending at Symphony and Eagle Lakes -- will get work done in 2023. When complete, the trail will be a sustainable, dry trail with proper drainage and slope.



The Fund needs to match the Rasmuson grant; a \$30,000 donation from Conoco-Phillips brought significant progress along with several other individual and corporate donations. **Your donation at <https://alaskacf.org/chugach-park-fund> can help get us to the finish line!**



Questions and comments can be addressed to chugachparkfund@gmail.com

Since its start in 2016, the Chugach Park Fund has raised about \$250,000 to support trail work in the park. The work, which tracks with state park management plans, has included rerouting the Little O'Malley Peak trail to a sustainable, non-gully, grade; work on the Middle Fork Loop; and brushing on several trails including Rabbit Lake and Eklutna Lake. Alaska Trails is our frequent trail work partner and has

managed several volunteer events on behalf of the Fund.

Donors this year have included Bass Pro Shops - Cabelas, GCI, Alyeska Pipeline Service Company, Northrim Bank, Northern Skies Federal Credit Union, Matson, Skinny Raven, Moose's Tooth/Beartooth/Broken Tooth, Costco and the Erin K. Johnson Fund.

Photos courtesy of John Quinley. Top: Crew on the Little O'Malley. Bottom: South Fork Eagle River area in need of work.

STEWART TRAIL ACCESS COURT BATTLE NOT OVER YET

DONATE The Stewart Trail, a popular access point to McHugh Peak, was ruled to have a public easement several weeks ago. However, that does not mean issue is settled for good. The landowner, who believes the public easement does not exist, is still fighting. See an update below from an email from the Friends of the Stewart Trail.



In other events related to the adjudication of the case, on October 10, one of the defendants filed a motion for reconsideration. It is attached. We are confident the judge will not reverse her September order confirming that the Stewart Trail is a public easement.

The short-term timeline for actions is as follows:

- We have 30 days to file a motion opposing their reconsideration motion. We plan to have it filed next week. (Done)
- The judge will rule on reconsideration. It is unclear how long this will take, but we hope it will be 2 to 3 weeks.
- Should we prevail on reconsideration, the defendants will have 15 days to file their opposition to our September 28 motion for entry of final judgment, which was emailed out to you on October 3.
- We would then file in opposition to their motion.
- The judge will issue the entry of final judgement. Again, it is unclear how long this will take, but we hope it will be 2 to 3 weeks.
- Upon the judge issuing the entry of final judgement, the gate will be ordered taken down. We have requested that this happens within ten days.

The gate could be down by the end of the year, or shortly thereafter.

Should the defendants appeal at that time, we are confident the judge would leave the trail open during the appeal process.

For more info on the earlier ruling see this Alaska Landmine story: <https://tinyurl.com/32xtc6ks>

Also see: Friends of the Stewart Trail Facebook page: <https://tinyurl.com/47297845>

The group is still fundraising. To donate see: <https://tinyurl.com/3jeaukr2>

Photo of Stewart Trail from Wikimedia Commons

BLM HAS NEW MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR CAMPBELL TRACT

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Anchorage Field Office has signed a decision on the Recreation Area Management Plan (RAMP) for the Campbell Tract.

The Campbell Tract was reserved for use by the BLM as an administrative site in 1982 and designated a special recreation management area (SRMA) in 1985. The plan affects 730 acres of public land that provides visitors with extensive recreational and wildlife viewing opportunities in the heart of Anchorage. The Campbell Tract sees nearly 500,000 visitors a year and has seen steady growth in visitors over the past 30 years. This increase in traffic required an updated management plan to handle new recreation use patterns and technology. The signed decision focuses on a long-term vision and a commitment to improve day-use recreational activities and implements the following actions



- Design and build a narrow year-round multi-use single-track trail.
- Conduct routine maintenance (as staff and funding allow) on existing trails and roads within existing disturbance.
- Authorize and manage seasonal development of the existing unmanaged winter only single-track trails in designated corridors.
- Remove hazard trees and perform maintenance on an existing fuel break.
- Rehabilitate and expand the Campbell Airstrip Trailhead parking area.
- Authorize BLM to manage commercial and competitive special recreation permit activities and events on the Campbell Tract.

The RAMP also considered the use of e-bikes on the Campbell Tract however this RAMP does not include a decision on e-bikes. While the 1985 SRMA designates Campbell Tract as closed to all motorized vehicles, the decision on e-bikes has been deferred to allow more time to analyze the closure of Campbell Tract to all motorized vehicles. A decision on e-bikes will be considered further in an upcoming travel management plan for the area.

BLM sought public input for the RAMP through a scoping period in May and June of 2021 and through the release of the draft environmental assessment in March and April of 2022. Maps and other planning documents associated with the project can be found on the NEPA Register Documents Page: <https://eplanning.blm.gov/eplanning-ui/project/2013694/570>

From What's Up? by Peg Tileston

Photo of Campbell Tract Loop Trail from American Trails website

MAT-SU FOUNDATION HIGHLIGHTS SEVERAL TRAILS PROJECTS

The Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation had several trails-related items of interest in their October newsletter. Find out more about the group here: <https://matsutrails.org/>

CITY OF WASILLA MCCOMBS CROSS COUNTRY TRAILS

In 2021, the City of Wasilla received a \$50,000 grant from the Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation to improve existing trail loops at Bumpus Recreation Area. This project widened existing trails to better accommodate a variety of non-motorized users, including equestrian and cross-country groups.

Previously the Bumpus Trail System did not meet the requirements to host High School Cross Country Events, but are now used by multiple schools in the area!

The Bumpus Recreation Area is continuing to develop a variety of opportunities for the community and connects to the city bike trail system allowing thousands of residents to walk and roll in the area. The parking lot expansion included in this project helps to accommodate all the extra users.



SETTLERS BAY COASTAL PARK ACCESSIBLE SCENIC OVERLOOK



Over the summer, Great Land Trust wrapped up work on an accessible scenic overlook platform at Settlers Bay Coastal Park. The overlook is a short walk from parking and offers gorgeous views of the Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge, Upper Cook Inlet, and the Chugach Mountains including iconic Pioneer Peak. With interpretive signs and a nice bench, the overlook is a perfect spot to take a break during a hike around the park, and a great place to watch for all kinds of birds and wildlife.

ADVERTISING AVAILABLE ON OUTERSPATIAL APP

Beginning in 2023, the Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation will begin offering a limited amount of annual advertising spots for local businesses and organizations in the Alaska Community of the OuterSpatial Trails app. With 400+ users each month (and growing!) this is a great opportunity to advertise your business and show your support for trails and parks in the Mat-Su! This sponsorship will help fund annual licensing fees and development for the free-to-use app, as well as support all the work of the Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation. If you are interested in becoming a trail app sponsor, please contact us at info@matsutrails.org. Thanks for your support!

SEEN RECENTLY ON SOUTHCENTRAL FACEBOOK PAGES

ALASKA STATE PARKS

Oct 28: Mountains to sea! Our partners at the Anchorage Park Foundation completed this Video Trail Guide to help you plan one more day of adventure in Anchorage!

"It's pretty cool to be able to have trails that flow through all the way from the mountains to the sea!" Chugach State Park superintendent, Ben Corwin.

A perfect video guide to your own adventure where you can start or stop at any number of locations in Anchorage – the opportunities are endless!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MfjZZc_helQ


BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT - ALASKA



Photo by Scott Justham (BLM)

Oct 13: A big THANK YOU to all the volunteers who came and helped out late last month for National Public Lands Day! With all the help, we spread almost 600,000 pounds of gravel to improve trail quality on the Campbell Tract.

Thank you for being passionate about our public lands, and we are already looking forward to next year's National Public Lands Day!

 : Volunteers spreading gravel on the Campbell Tract.

ANCHORAGE PARK FOUNDATION

October 17: Anchorage Park Foundation is hiring a full-time (35 hours/week) Business Manager to join our team and provide financial support services, grant management, and administrative support. We have a fun team! To apply send a résumé and cover letter to info@anchorageparkfoundation.org. Pay starts between \$60k and \$65k with generous vacation and sick leave plus health care and cell phone stipends. This position is open until filled, with first review of applications November 14, 2022, and interviews planned the week of November 28, 2022. Full job description here: <https://tinyurl.com/5828tmj4>



October 9: Congratulations and thank you to Airport Heights neighbors for all their hard work to eradicate birdherry/chokecherry/prunus padus invasive trees at Tikishla Park and the Chester Creek Trail. It's so beautiful there now. More than 100 volunteers have tackled it over the summer. We appreciate you!

FRIENDS OF KACHEMAK BAY STATE PARKS



Oct 20: Great news for Trails on Homer side of the Bay! Alaska State Parks has posted a response to the positive public comments about a trail in Cottonwood Eastland. The proposed trail needs modifications which will provide a sustainable design that will help protect park resources and reduce future maintenance costs. This will take time, but the project is going forward. Alaska State Parks supports a short-term solution to access the park via borough land near mile 17 East End. The Park management plan recommends a long-term solution that the park acquire management authority for general state land near mile 17 East End Road and develop a trailhead and parking lot.

Currently, the Department of Natural Resources is working on an Interagency Land Management Assignment (ILMA) that will give the park authority to manage this parcel.

DNR full update: <https://tinyurl.com/3rmjmzs4>

Public Comments: <https://tinyurl.com/ytvyvx2r>

Oct 15: "You are here" signs installed along the Grewingk Valley trail (Glacier spit to Glacier Lake) on Friday! After a few visitors have gotten lost, the Park saw a need for better signs along this most



popular Trail to show hikers where they were. It took a village to get these printed and up! Thanks to Dave Brann who headed up the project: first working with Ranger Jason to determine the sign locations and then coordinating with Brentwood Higman to design the maps at a very affordable price. (Thanks Hig!) Then Northwest Printing did an excellent job printing them at the best price they could give us. Dave then attached the beautiful signs onto 4x4 treated wood posts.

Then finally we coordinated good weather with the State Park boat, ranger Carter, a four-wheeler and a trailer, tools, and three hearty volunteers: Kevin Walker Louis Dupree and Michael Singer who dug holes and put in all five signs with Kathy texting them and asking for pictures. Thanks for the great pictures Michael! Then Alans Water taxi (Kachemak Bay adventures) picked them up when the volunteers got done early, so State Park didn't have to return to pick them up! (Also Robert Archibald helped Carter put the 4 Wheeler on the boat Thursday when we could not find any other volunteers) Great job everyone!!

October 5: Friends Volunteers did some more work for State Parks on the Portlock Trail this past weekend. Thanks to Jane Wiebe and Nicky Szarzi for initiating and organizing volunteers and doing all the hard work to open this amazing trail back up. The trail from Humpy flats up to the Portlock Plateau tundra is in excellent shape. #volunteerrockstars #trails

Shared from Kathy Sarns Irwin is with Pat Irwin and Anna Dickerson at Kachemak Bay State Park.

October 3: Did some volunteer trail work on the Portlock Trail this past weekend & stayed at Humpy yurt. The trail is beautiful all the way up to the tundra from Humpy Creek Thanks to Jane Wiebe and Nicky Szarzi and friends that cleared it this summer.

Because we didn't have big sharp power tools we could bring the dogs, and everyone is 'dog tired' today! Thanks to Mako's Water Taxi for boat rides and Pat Irwin for shuttling and getting dinner for late return Sunday. 🐶

Kobuk and I jumped into the Humpy Creek river to clean up before going home. It was magical and cold as heck !



ALASKA STATE PARKS



Oct 19: ****Kachemak Bay Update****

Alaska State Parks has been working on addressing access issues in the Cottonwood-Eastland unit of Kachemak Bay State Park. In an attempt to find resolution, we received public comments and have posted them along with a statement on the path forward. Check it out on the Kachemak Bay State Park page on our website:

<https://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/aspunits/kenai/kachemakbay.htm>

📷 The spectacular scenery from the proposed trail alignment in the Cottonwood-Eastland unit.

MAT-SU BOROUGH PLANNING DEPT.

September 28: The Bike & Ped website has been revamped! Check it out to get up to date on project status, review new project documents, and learn more about bike and pedestrian opportunities throughout the Borough! www.matsubikeandped.com

ALASKA HUTS ASSOCIATION

Oct 24: We are very excited to officially unveil a new yurt at Manitoba Mountain! The Silvertip Yurt will be available to book starting on November 1st. It (cozily) sleeps up to 7, has its own stove, woodshed, and outhouse, and affords a little more privacy than staying at the Manitoba Cabin.

We want to extend a special thank you to everyone who helped us get this project over the finish line: everyone who attended Woodstock this year and others who worked on small projects to get it together before the ground froze, like building an outhouse, a woodshed, and putting finishing touches on the yurt.



Oct 20: Thanks to M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust, the Lars Spurkland Hut is one huge step closer to reality!

Shared from M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust



Oct 20: Alaska may be a land set apart, but with the help of Alaska Huts Association, more and more people are getting to witness its backcountry beauty first-hand. Read how this nonprofit provides accessible wilderness experiences on our latest blog.

<https://bit.ly/3MP4AhN>

SOUTHCENTRAL LINKS

- Cooper Landing group takes trapping proposals to Board of Game: <https://tinyurl.com/3rn8zc8p>
- Mat-Su Trails Foundation Grant Applications Open (ddline Dec 16): <https://matsutrails.org/ourgrants/>

SLIGHTLY OFF-TRAIL

- A two-year drive successfully renames two Southcentral Alaska mountains: <https://tinyurl.com/3f8ydzkn>

INTERIORWIDE NEWS AND NOTICES

FAIRBANKS BORO TRAILS PLAN UPDATE NEARING COMPLETION

TESTIFY An update of the Fairbanks Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan has one more step before it is completed.

The plan update must be voted on by the Fairbanks North Star Borough Assembly. That should happen at the assembly meeting on November 10.

At the Oct 27 assembly meeting an ordinance approving the plan gets introduced and referred to the assembly's Committee of the Whole on Nov 3 and then to the regular assembly meeting on Nov 10.

The borough Planning Commission and Platting Board have both recommended adopting the plan with some amendments (see below).

If you approve of the plan, please let the assembly know. Either attend the Nov 10 meeting and testify or contact assembly members. (Or do both.)

THE MEETING

Assembly meetings start at 6pm and can be attended via Zoom. Get more information on the meeting and how to attend here: <https://www.fnsb.gov/415/Stay-Connected-with-the-Assembly>

An agenda for the meeting can be found here (or will be soon): <https://www.fnsb.gov/407/Agendas-Minutes-Audio>

EMAILS, PHONE CALLS

To contact assembly members, go here: <https://www.fnsb.gov/Directory.aspx?DID=64>

PLANNING COMMISSION AND PLATTING BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

The Planning Commission and Platting Board recommended approval with the following amendments:

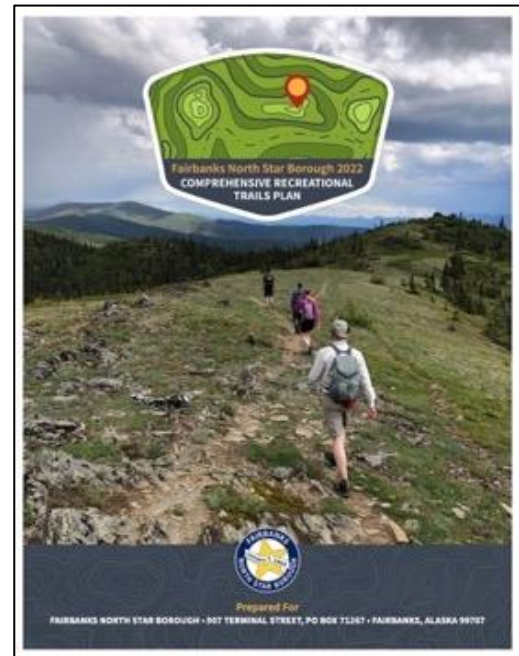
- Explore all feasible means to enhance the trail plan map readability.
- Remove the Ace Lakes Connector Trail (I-B32) from the plan
- Remove the branch connector trail from West Isberg Road to trail I-AR4 Fairbanks-Nenana Upland Forest Traverse

MORE INFORMATION

This is the first update to the trail plan since 2006 and the first major overhaul since it was first adopted in 1985.

For more information:

- The ordinance accepting the plan: <https://tinyurl.com/mr3zsabk>
- The current trail plan: <https://tinyurl.com/yckeyez9>
- Trail plan update site: <https://www.fnsbtrailsplan.com/>



IMPROVEMENTS, KIOSKS PLANNED FOR ADMA TRAILS

In a recent newsletter the Alaska Dog Musher's Association announced some trail improvements for their trails in and near Creamer's Field Migratory Waterfowl Refuge, run by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game:

We are working with the IATPF (Interior Alaska Trails and Parks Foundation) for collaboration and funding to improve parts of the trail by the 19.8 mile turn. They have received permitting and funding to



be able to mow and mulch areas of the trail to smooth out the tussocks and make safer, cleaner runs for all trail users. We are just waiting on weather and trail conditions to be adequate for the work to be done, hopefully this spring or fall. Thank you IATPF!

We also received funding from GVEA through their GoodCents program to install informative kiosks at the Musher's Hall and throughout the trail system. We may ask for volunteer help building and installing the kiosks when the time comes. We are working with ADFG for permitting

to have the kiosks on the refuge, and may put them on skids so be able to move them as needed. The kiosks will have a trail map, QR code to easily pay trail fees, trail etiquette and right of way instructions, race schedule and trail grooming info, ADMA contact and other info.

Photo from ADMA newsletter

BIRCH HILL PROJECT IMPROVES TRAILS FOR SKIING, GROOMING

Work started this autumn on a multi-year project to improve the Birch Hill trail system.

The full project will make changes across the entire system, including borough's Birch Hill Recreation Area and adjoining Fort Wainwright lands, to improve environmental stability, trail safety, and reduce overall maintenance.

The project will start slowly this year, with only back-sloping on the Black Loop trails and specific trail improvements required for the Junior National Cross Country Ski Championships, which will be held in March 2023.

"The project should really get rolling next summer," according to NSCF project coordinator Bruce Jamieson, "with the remaining 23 miles or trails being reviewed and upgraded for standardized maintenance implemented for long term sustainability."

The bulk of the work is being funded by a grant from the Recreational Trails Program, a federal program administered by the state. Under the grant rules, the club has until the end of September 2024 to complete the work, though Jamieson expects it will be finished sooner than that.

These improvements are needed in part because of how Birch Hill trails and skiing have grown over the years.

"The major revision that produced the general configuration of the trail system as it exists today, was executed in the summer of 1981 in preparation for the 1982 Arctic Winter Games," according to



Jamieson. "Since then, the sport has changed dramatically, both because of the evolution of ski technique to include skating and because of major improvements in grooming technology and equipment."

Most of the past work on the trail system has been done based on the needs of specific projects and/or events. This project aims to bring the trail system up to a unified standard, which will help make skiing more enjoyable and grooming better and more consistent.

Story by Eric Troyer; photo of Birch Hill trail work by Bruce Jamieson

SEEN RECENTLY ON INTERIOR FACEBOOK PAGES

NORDIC SKI CLUB OF FAIRBANKS

Oct 23: Signs have been flipped at Birch Hill! Skiing only for the winter! Get out your rock skis and go have some fun! Grooming crew is packing the trails.

UAF NORTH CAMPUS

Oct 24: Rolled all main trails except Smith and Ballaine lakes. Snow is very thin. Trails signs will start going up today. We are now on winter usage.

Oct 21: We are excited to share that we have updated our winter and summer maps. You can find them on our website (<https://uaf.edu/trails>) under Trail Maps. Thanks to UAF Nanook Recreation Outdoor Adventures for creating the updated maps!

BLM-WHITE MOUNTAINS NATIONAL RECREATION AREA

Oct 14: ⚠️ Attention trail users

Due to inadequate snow cover, the summer off-highway vehicle limitations in the White Mountains National Recreation Area and the neighboring Steese National Conservation Area will remain in effect through October 31, 2022.

The winter season limitations will begin November 1, 2022.

📷 BLM picture of a caribou hunter riding an ATV on the Quartz Creek Trail.



SOUTHEAST NEWS AND NOTICES

SEEN RECENTLY ON SOUTHEAST FACEBOOK PAGES

TRAIL MIX, INC.

Oct 27: That's a wrap! 🛠️

The end of the season is always such a bittersweet time for us at Trail Mix. Last Thursday, our fantastic crew members celebrated the end of the season and said goodbye. 🙌 Our crew members worked hard from April to October to make Juneau's trails better, one pulaski swing at a time.

💎 A huge thank you to Jesse, Hunter, Mary, Laib, Liam, Duncan, Sarah, Julio, Jestoni, Erin, Owen, Sage, Nick, Quinn, Henry, Ambrose, Garrett, Dane, Mark, and Sam. 💎 You are all incredible. Your endless enthusiasm and dedication made for a wonderful trail season. We're already counting down the days until next April. 🛠️



Oct 25: Boy Howdy! 🤖 It's almost time to gather together for our Annual Auction & Dinner, which is taking place at Centennial Hall on November 19th. ✨

Coming back after a two-year break, we had an incredible summer working alongside our trail-loving community for volunteer events. 🛠️ Now, it's time to gather together again as a community for our in-person Annual Auction and Dinner. 🤖

Head to tinyurl.com/trailmixaucaction22 to snag your tickets today! 📺 You won't want to miss out on a tasty dinner and unique items to bid on!



Oct 20: It's official: Prop 2 wins! 🗳️ Yesterday election results certified that Proposition 2 had received 6120 yes votes, winning with 67% of the total. Wow.



Thank you to everyone who supported Prop 2! Recreation makes for a stronger Juneau, and Prop 2 will invest up to \$6.6 million in family recreation including trail maintenance and a new public use cabin.

As we wrap up our field season for the year, we are so grateful that we are able to help care for this beautiful place, Lingít Aaní, and that our community values our trail system just as much as we do.

Oct 11: Mud be gone! 🧑‍🌾 The hardworking members of our Volunteer Trail Maintenance Team have been making the Treadwell Ditch a better place to hike or ride one gravel bag at a time. 🪨

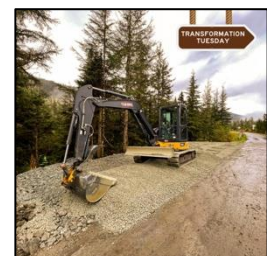
For this transformation, the volunteer crew cleared away chunky roots and rocks. Then, they compacted gravel down over the surface to create a smooth, sturdy section of trail. 🌱



Oct 6: We ❤️ our volunteers! Thank you to the Girl Scouts of Juneau, SheJumps, and all the members of the community who showed up to our last volunteer day of the season! 🌲 We moved so much gravel, solidified squishy sections of trail, and built some nifty drains.

Oct 4: When you pull up to Montana Creek this winter to recreate, you can thank our crew members and all-star volunteer Jack Kreinheder for the extra room! 🚚 Last month, our crew members developed their chainsaw skills while clearing away trees near the Hank Harmon Rifle Range. 🪚 With the trees cleared, Jack hopped in his excavator to pull up the remaining debris and clear the way for gravel. After many loads of gravel, Jack smoothed everything out into a nice, compact parking lot! 🤖

Thank you Jack, Sage, Nick, Owen, and Hunter for your hard work on this project!



SITKA TRAIL WORKS

Oct 28: Thanks to everyone who came out for our Trail Plan Open House and Annual Meeting! Lots of great discussions about the conceptual plans for improvements to our trail system.

If you weren't able to make it, don't worry, we'll be launching a broader public engagement process soon!

October 14: The main line of the Cross Trail Phase 6 Extension is complete! This week, Troy and the crew finished laying a finer grain top cap of gravel for hard-packed, smooth feel. You can now bike from Harbor Mountain Road to Starrigavan!

Please be mindful of the re-vegetation occurring on the side the trail by keeping dogs from digging in recently seeded areas.

Next steps in the project will be focused on the spur Connector Trail to the 4800 Block of Halibut Point Road, which we anticipate finishing by next spring.



Oct 9: For 9 days in late September and early October, a Sitka Trail Works crew made improvements to the Sea Lion Cove Trail on north Kruzof Island.

In the 16 years since that last major maintenance effort, wind, rain, and decay have taken their toll on the trail tread. There were spots with three foot drops onto slippery logs and steps that were entirely washed in clay mudslides. While we couldn't restore every foot of the trail with limited time and



resources, we were able to address many of the most hazardous sections.

At the beginning of the trail in the estuary, with the help of volunteers, we cleared spruce and alder branches that had covered the gravel sections of trail. On the ascent from the estuary, we rebuilt several particularly difficult steps, constructed new tread where the hill had eroded, and reconstructed an old stairway knocked over by a fallen tree. Several days were spent rebuilding one dangerous stair that was rotting, slick, and slanted. We used dead standing cedar to cut new

planking, steps, and a sturdy handrail. We also addressed huge mudholes in the first mile by hiking up large rocks and cobble to improve drainage, then covering with sand and gravel from the estuary. After the lake at the halfway point, the trail drops down a couple hundred feet of elevation over an old rock slide, and some the footing there was really treacherous. We tried to replace as much as possible with stone stepping, which is exceptionally labor intensive, but holds up to the elements better than anything else.

Fortunately, we had a tremendous outpouring of community support. The Coast Guard came through in a huge way, helicoptering lumber and gravel closer to project sites, saving us days of work and allowing us to tackle far more than we could have if we were limited to hand carrying. Their flight crews were able to use the project as training, so it was a win-win. Local volunteers also contributed over a hundred hours of labor to the project; brushing, hauling gravel, transporting materials to the site.

SITKA CYCLING CLUB



Oct 20: Last week we had some serious trees fall blocking our single track trails. Thanks to Emily and Lione (and doggo Lenny!) for getting straight to the maintenance.

If you notice any trees that come down in these storms, please reach out to us! You can email sitkacyclingclub@gmail.com

SOUTHEAST LINKS

SLIGHTLY OFF TRAIL

- Juneau slated to get new cabins thanks to federal funding: <https://tinyurl.com/yeywppft>
- Sitka celebrates construction, opening ceremony for new pump track: <https://tinyurl.com/ycxx2wn4>

NATIONWIDE NEWS AND NOTICES

AMERICAN TRAILS, FOREST SERVICE ANNOUNCE NEW GRANT

APPLY American Trails recently announced a new funding opportunity: The National Forest System Legacy Roads and Trails Fund, aka the Legacy Trails Grant Program.

The goal of the program is to support projects that restore, protect, and maintain crucial watersheds on our national forests and grasslands. American Trails is administering this grant program with awards up to \$100K per project. The program opens to applications in early October. **The deadline to apply is December 15.**



The Forest Service identifies and prioritizes watershed acres or areas where Forest Service roads and trails may impact water quality in streams and water bodies. Grant administrators will be looking to fund projects that restore fish and aquatic organism passage, improve trail resiliency, preserve trail access, decommission unauthorized trails, and convert unneeded Forest Service roads to trails. Protecting threatened, endangered, and sensitive species, and community water sources are among the top priorities for projects that improve and maintain trail access. Emergency operations, such as evacuation routes during wildfires, floods or other natural disasters also benefit from this program.

Find out more: www.americantrails.org/legacy-trails-program

AHS ACCEPTING 2023 VOLUNTEER VACATION HOST APPLICATIONS

APPLY The Volunteer Vacations program is designed to send you a crew of eager volunteers, ready to assist with your trail needs. Volunteer Vacations are week-long trail building/maintaining projects organized by American Hiking Society and hosted by the Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, USDA Forest Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service, state parks, trail organizations and other nonprofit partner groups across the country. Most projects are one-week or shorter in length, consist of 6-15 crew members, and involve trail maintenance and building tasks on hiking trails on public lands. For more information, review the Host Information webpage. **Applications due no later than November 7, 2022.**

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

From Paperless Trail, the American Hiking Society newsletter

SAVE THE DATE! HIKE THE HILL HAPPENS FEBRUARY 12-17, 2023

PARTICIPATE Celebrating its 26th year, Hike the Hill is a joint effort between American Hiking Society and Partnership for the National Trails System to bring together the trails community to advance shared trail priorities with congressional and federal agency leaders including: trails funding, public lands management and conservation, equitable access, and other top priority issues that sustain trails and improve access to public lands. Find out more here: <https://americanhiking.org/advocacy/#hike-the-hill>



From Paperless Trail, the American Hiking Society newsletter

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

- American Hiking Society's Alternative Break: <https://tinyurl.com/27dkaaay>
- Conservation Volunteers International Program newsletter (Oct): <https://tinyurl.com/3bbyfmfv>

FUNDING

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

OTHER NATIONAL LINKS:

- How trail designers build good hikes: <https://tinyurl.com/22s3u3w2>
- The Most Scenic Hiking Trails in the U.S. for Fall Foliage: <https://tinyurl.com/dr89nefv>
- National Recreation Trails Photo Contest (**deadline Dec 15**): <https://tinyurl.com/58a3xz7v>

INTERNATIONAL LINKS:

- Bhutan -- and its incredible cross-country trail -- is open: <https://tinyurl.com/23f5682d>
- The most scenic bike trails around the world: <https://tinyurl.com/ywty6793>

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