

## 2023 Statewide Trails Conference Sessions

### Wednesday, April 12

#### **8:30 AM - 5 PM - Full Day Pre-Conference Workshop**

#### **Trail Contracting - How to Make it a Good Experience**

Mike Shields, Trail Consultant

What makes a good and legally defensible contract for both parties, and what are the pitfalls to avoid? Covers Contract Preparation (contract types, RFQs vs RFPs, “Hybrid” contracts, language, Terms & Conditions, permits and plans, Scope, Bid Schedules, “Engineer’s Estimates”, standard “boilerplate”, legal sufficiency, writing practical and measurable Specifications, drawings and sketches) and Field Administration (the Bidders List, payment terms, time limits, solicitation, Award and Notice to Proceed, lines of authority, Pre-Bid actions and problems, Submittals, the Inspection process and contract Records, Change Orders, Disputes, Claims, Stop Work Orders and Seasonal Shutdowns, accidents, contract Closure vs Termination, Default and Debarment). Includes class exercises and scenarios, discussion of “good”, “bad” and “frustrating” contract experiences, and a binder of reference material.

#### **12:30 PM - 2 PM**

#### **Sustainable Trails 101**

Jon Underwood, [Happy Trails](#)

Sustainable Trails 101 is the base for all the advanced trainings offered by Alaska Trails and others. This is a condensed version of the introductory course on sustainable trail building. Come and learn what it takes to make the great trails that you have been using all these years. This class will emphasize sustainable design elements, trail planning, and management concepts for all trail enthusiasts.

#### **2:00 - 4:00 PM**

#### **Funding Trails in Alaska - State and Federal Grants**

Alaska State Parks will present on a variety of federal grant programs that are administered through the State, most with an annual timeline. Presenters will give an overview of each of the grants and share pro-tips on how to write a good grant application and avoid any common mistakes that have tripped up applicants in the past. State Parks is working to make sure the grants are accessible to a wide audience and are executed in time for the trail season. In addition, the [Chugach Park Fund](#) will present on the funding for their project in Chugach State Park. The presenters will share information on the following grants:

- Recreational Trails Program
- Land And Water Conservation Fund
- Historic Preservation Fund
- SnowTRAC
- Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance - NPS
- South Fork Eagle River Trail Project Funding

More information on these grants at: <https://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/grants/index.htm>

Presenters:

- Claire LeClaire, [Chugach Park Fund](#)
- Kristen Knight Pace, Outdoor Recreation Planner, National Park Service's Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program
- Ricky Gease, Director, DNR Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation
- Danette Berkovitz, Administrative Officer and Grants Manager, Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation
- Jean Ayers, Grants Administrator, Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation
- Natalia Fomina, Grants Administrator 2, Alaska State Parks
- Kathleen Tarr, Grants Administrator, Division of Parks & Outdoor Recreation, Lands & Water Conservation Program and Historic Preservation Fund
- Katie Ringsmuth, Alaska State Historian and Deputy SHPO, Office of History and Archaeology
- Wendy Sailors, Business Development Specialist, Alaska State Parks

## **Thursday, April 13**

### **Transforming Alaska's Outdoor Recreation Landscape**

**9:00 - 10:30 AM**

#### **Creating an Office of Outdoor Recreation in Alaska**

Creating an Office of Outdoor Recreation is the top priority recommendation in the newly adopted Alaska comprehensive outdoor recreation plan (SCORP). What exactly is an Office of Outdoor Recreation and how can it benefit your organizations and interests? This session will start with giving you answers to these questions along with food for thought in the form of lightning talks from local thought leaders and directors from Offices around the country illustrating how these Offices can be forces for progress addressing four key strategic pillars:

- Economic development
- Public health
- Education and workforce development
- Conservation and stewardship

After this smorgasbord of ideas, attendees will break into small groups with time to digest the info and brainstorm with colleagues to identify priorities and develop concepts for a uniquely Alaska version of an Office of Outdoor Recreation. Facilitated by veteran outdoor recreation industry advocate Lee Hart; guaranteed to be info-packed, fast-paced and interactive!

Presenters:

- Lee Hart – President and Founder, [Alaska Outdoor Alliance](#)
- Löki Gale-Tobin, Alaska State Senator
- Tara McKee - Utah Division of Outdoor Recreation
- Rebecca Gillis - State and Local Government Affairs Manager, Outdoor Industry Association
- Brad Garmon, Michigan Outdoor Recreation Industry Office
- Ricky Gease, Director, DNR Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation

**10:45 AM - 12:15 PM**

#### **Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) 2023-2027**

The SCORP 2023-2027 update provided the long overdue opportunity for a comprehensive, project-focused, locally-driven process for guiding investments and strategies for outdoor

recreation. This included addressing needs for infrastructure such as parks and trails, open space acquisition, and broader strategies for funding, marketing, and partnership building. A multi-agency team and a large group of volunteers worked on developing content for the SCORP over the course of 2022. This session will present the final document and ways to utilize it for the trails world.

Presenters:

- Ricky Gease - Director, DNR Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation
- Gary Greenberg - Founder, [Alaska Map Company](#)

### **1:00 - 2:30 PM**

#### **Alaska Long Trail - Update on Progress and Next Steps**

Hear an update on the progress of planning and building a world-class trail system connecting 500+ miles of Alaska's iconic terrain and diverse communities from Seward to Fairbanks. The session will share progress to-date, present the Alaska Long Trail Workbook, report on funding and visioning for the trail, and outline the next steps. The trail will embrace the many ways Alaskans recreate outdoors and bolster the Alaska economy by attracting visitors from all over the world. With some of the world's most stunning wild places, Alaska is overdue in creating a world-class, long trail system of its own. Bring your questions and ideas.

Presenters:

- Mariyam Medovaya - Project Coordinator, Alaska Long Trail
- Xavier Lopez - Alaska Trails Mapping and GIS
- Beth Nordlund - Executive Director, [Anchorage Park Foundation](#)
- Teresa Floberg - Community Development, Denali Borough
- Will Brennan - Recreation Planner, US Forest Service
- Zach Million - Program Lead for Recreation, Travel Management and National Conservation Lands - BLM Alaska

### **2:45 - 3:45 PM**

#### **Tongass Sustainable Trails Strategy**

From fall 2020 through spring 2023, Alaska Trails worked with the U.S. Forest Service and community partners to craft a Sustainable Trails Strategy for the Tongass National Forest. This project sought to create a set of shared priorities and establish the stronger partnerships

needed for an improved, more sustainable set of trails in the Tongass. The process and products of this project were loosely based on Alaska Trails' Statewide Trails Investment Strategy released in the spring of 2020. This process offered an exciting opportunity for the USFS to hear from communities in Southeast Alaska as they shared their priorities for trails and recreation. With the plan now finalized, the focus switches to how best use the information and insights gathered.

This presentation will focus on findings specific to the Tongass, big takeaways from the process of crafting the strategy and ways in which a community-focused planning process could be replicated in conjunction with other land managers.

In addition, partners from the region will speak about existing trail projects in SE AK, several of which are included as recommendations in the TSTS.

Presenters:

- Haley Johnston – Trails Initiative Manager, Alaska Trails
- Ben Hughey – Executive Director, [Sitka Trail Works](#)
- Victoria Houser - USFS Acting District Ranger – Wrangell

**4:00 - 5:00 PM**

### **Updates from Around the State**

There are a lot of great trail projects and programs happening across the state. This panel will give some quick snapshots of those projects – with each presenter providing links to where you can learn more. We hope to inspire others to reach for new heights.

Presenters:

- Cameale Johnson - [Homer Trails Alliance](#)
- Jon Underwood - [Muktuk Marston Trail](#)
- [Jenny Neyman - Tsalteshi Trails Association](#)
- [Travis Cooper - Island Trails Network](#)

## **Friday, April 14**

**9:00 - 9:45 AM**

### **Keynote: Build Trails and Trail Organizations**

**Kim Frederick, [Chinook Associates](#)**

Kim Frederick will reflect on his work with the Colorado Outdoor Training Initiative and other past experience to highlight some ideas on how best to connect trail organizations to the training and resources they need. This will give Alaskans a look at how trail organizations and agencies can work better together and more efficiently. Many non-profits and agencies are running into the same roadblocks and confronting the same challenges. Kim will begin to address some of those, including:

- How do we get boots on the ground? – Recruiting and program development
- Training and workshops – including development on-line resources
- Regional training programs – supporting and developing trail program for volunteers, crew leaders, trail assessments, mapping and more
- Could Alaska develop a common training structure and how could the state benefit from a collaborative training program?

**10:00 - 11:00 AM**

### **Training Crew Leaders for Alaska's Trails**

Building on the keynote themes, three seasoned Alaska trail professionals 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. With experience as leaders and trainers for agencies, non-profits, and in the private sphere, over many regions of the state, the presenters will discuss what makes a skilled, successful, and empowered trail crew leader.

Key topics include:

- Technical & interpersonal skills
- Leadership and learning styles
- Alaska-specific factors/safety

Presenters:

- Christine Byl – Co-owner, [Interior Trails](#)
- Gabe Travis – Co-owner, [Interior Trails](#)
- Blaine Smith - Trails Specialist

## **11:15 AM - 12:15 PM**

### **Community Trail Organizations - Building Local Capacity**

From a statewide group focusing on recreation broadly, to an equestrian group building partnerships to an effort to get mountain bikers across the state to band together – this panel will focus on groups who are trying to increase the efficacy of their efforts by connecting to more partners to share resources, leverage funding and increase their ability to do more work on trails and for trails organizations.

Presenters:

- Joel Todd – Alaska Recreation and Parks Association (ARPA)
- Mary Green and Craig Sanders - Kenai Peninsula Back Country Horsemen of Alaska
- Will Taygan – Alaska Mountain Bike Alliance

## **1:00 - 2:15 PM (concurrent with following session)**

### **Trails as Transportation: A Case Study in Homer**

For this session on mass community action at the policy, awareness, and transportation infrastructure level, the presenter will be addressing a variety of topics on how to best link community goals for transportation and how trails can be an integral part of that. Those topics include:

- Principles of cohesive action. Common Language, Common Ground, Common Goals.
- Case study: Homer Drawdown Non-Motorized Transportation Effort. Lots to brag about.
- What have we learned?
- What are we going to do?
- What can we all do?

The presentation will conclude with a roundtable of problem solving and shared successes along with learned lessons.

Presenter:

- Matt Steffy - Parks Superintendent, City of Homer

## **1:00 - 2:15 PM (concurrent with previous session)**

### **How to Break Rock**

A quick overview of rock mechanics (formation, types, density, strength and hardness, uniformity, dis-continuities, weathering and pre-fracturing) whether as a boulder or bedrock; what kind of breakage do you want (wall slabs vs gravel); the various means of obtaining that breakage (hammers, jackhammers, rock drills, chisel-bits, non-explosive “busters”, high explosives, expansive cements, and wedge-and-feathers); and how does rock react to those means. If you’ve ever hammered on a “boulder” for 20 minutes to no effect, this class will explain why that happens.

Presenter:

- Mike Shields, Trail Consultant

## **2:30 - 3:15 PM**

### **Plan Ahead to Prevent the Spread of Invasive Species**

Trails are a vital part of Alaska’s physical and cultural landscape. They connect communities with the land. But people aren’t the only things traversing our trail system. Invasive species can be introduced and spread through trail construction, maintenance and usage. Invasive species pose a significant threat to Alaska’s environment and economy. A growing number of invasive plants are being found at Alaskan trailheads and are moving along trail networks to establish in both front and backcountry areas. There are simple ways to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species via trail construction, maintenance and usage. We will explore best management practices that can be implemented in construction planning and implementation phases, and throughout the life of the trail. Certified weed-free products, information and consultation resources, and collaborative opportunities will be discussed. We will also share how to monitor for invasive species, where to report them when detected, and present an overview of control options.

Presenter:

- Gooseberry Peter - Agriculture & Integrated Pest Management Program Assistant, UAF Cooperative Extension Service
- Summer Nay - Invasive Plants Program Coordinator, Salcha-Delta Soil and Water Conservation District



**3:30 - 4:30 PM**

**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 in order to inform trail design. This group is collaborating with the Friends of Kachemak Bay State Park to design a potential reroute of the Alpine Ridge trail near Grewingk Lake. They will explain different approaches to analyzing and understanding these datasets for the sake of trail design, using Alpine Ridge as an example.

Presenters:

- Hig Higman- [Ground Truth Alaska](#)
- Ian Moore- [Alaska Map Science](#)
- Betsy Young - [Corax](#)