



NEWSLETTER

JUNE
2021

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907/334-8049

www.alaska-trails.org

ALASKA TRAILS NEWS AND NOTICES

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES RETURN WITH ALASKA TRAIL STEWARDS

VOLUNTEER, GET VACCINATED Alaska Trail Stewards volunteer events are back! We'd love for you to join us!

The mission of the Alaska Trail Stewards Program is to provide volunteer-based trail maintenance services to public land managers and others who have responsibility for safely and sustainably maintaining trails throughout Alaska.

New to trail work? Not a problem. No experience is necessary, just sturdy boots, a good attitude, and a willingness to learn what it takes to keep our trails great. We can't wait to get out there with you!

Learn more and sign up on our website:
<https://www.alaska-trails.org/volunteer-opportunities>

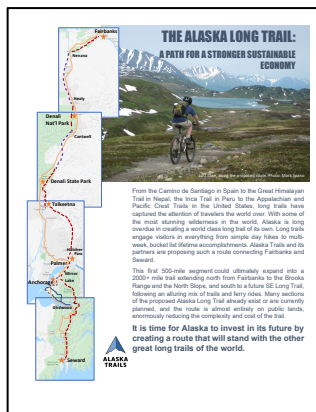
We encourage everyone to get vaccinated. The Centers for Disease Control recently announced that if you're vaccinated, you don't need to mask outdoors (<https://tinyurl.com/ydzdkxmf>). Therefore, we are optimistic about having safe and fun events to build and maintain trails. **The best way for you to join in on that is to get vaccinated and do your part to keep the community safe.**



ALASKA LONG TRAIL GAINS MORE SUPPORT, STILL NEEDS ADVOCACY

ADVOCATE The Alaska Long Trail got a huge boost recently when \$13 million for the project was included in the Senate's version of the Alaska state budget.

An amendment for the trail funding by Sitka Republican Sen. Bert Stedman and Anchorage Democratic Sen. Bill Wielechowski passed the Senate unanimously. We owe a huge thanks to Senators Wielechowski and Stedman, as well as the whole Senate for supporting this worthy project. Gov. Mike Dunleavy expressed his support for the project earlier when he included funding for it in the general obligation bond package that has been scrapped in the wake of more COVID relief funding. U.S. Sen. Lisa Murkowski has expressed her support for the project, too.



Tourism organizations have been rallying around the project.

"We're seeing a clear evolution towards younger travelers with greater interest in active experiences, and COVID has accelerated that trend," Julie Saupe, Visit Anchorage executive director recently told the Senate Transportation Committee. "A trail linking different communities is a proven incentive for travelers to spend more time and money in our communities."

Negotiators with the state Senate and House are now working out a compromise budget. This project will help kick-start our economy, and provide more ways for Alaskans to be active, healthy and happy outside. **We encourage those of you who support the Long Trail to reach out to your representatives and share information about the need for funding this project .**

For more information, including projects list and **how to advocate for this project** see: www.alaska-trails.org/go-bond-2021

To read an Alaska Public Media story on the Senate amendment see: <https://tinyurl.com/f3xn7puy>

SENATOR SULLIVAN CHAMPIONS FEDERAL FUNDING FOR TRAILS

SEND THANKS Trail advocates should thank U.S. Sen. Dan Sullivan for stepping up to help trails across the nation. Alaska Public Media recently had a story about the senator's actions:

Trail and cycling advocates are applauding Alaska U.S. Sen. Dan Sullivan for being the first Republican to co-sponsor a bill that would provide billions of dollars to improve access and connect trail systems.

The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee voted Wednesday to roll the bill into the five-year surface transportation bill, also known as the highway bill.

"For all of us who love the great outdoors, this is a great opportunity to have more trails. for pedestrians, bikes," he said Wednesday, speaking in the committee meeting in favor of the trails amendment. "This is something that's very much looked upon favorably in my state."

To see the rest of the story go here: <https://tinyurl.com/5civzjnh>

For contact information to thank Sen. Sullivan go here: <https://www.sullivan.senate.gov/contact>

ALASKA TRAILS HAS TOOL TRAILERS READY FOR TRAIL PROJECTS

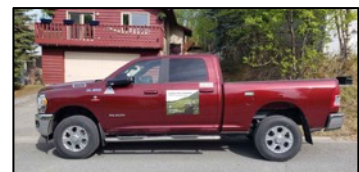


As you start planning trail building and maintenance projects, remember that Alaska Trails has mobile tool caches available to loan to organized trail groups in Southcentral and Interior Alaska. One cache is in the Fairbanks area and the other is in Anchorage/Mat-Su Valley area.

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).

SEEN RECENTLY ON OUR FACEBOOK PAGE

May 25: Alaska Trails is excited to be partnering with the Anchorage Park Foundation again this year on the Youth Employment in Parks (YEP) program! This truck will be pulling the trailer full of tools and supplies for 26 young people working on parks and trails around Anchorage. The crew leaders are training this week and the weather is really cooperating!



May 20: Thank you to Senator Bill Wielechowski and other legislators who supported the amendment to include funding for the proposed Alaska Long Trail! This is a great step towards securing \$13.2M for a portion of the trail construction. The legislature will be making its final decision in the joint House-Senate conference next week.

Now is the time to reach out to your legislators with letters of support to make sure they vote yes!

Shared from

Senator Bill Wielechowski

May 20: I am so happy to report that last night the Alaska Senate accepted my amendment to create the Long Trail - a 500 mile trail from Fairbanks to Seward. It will join world famous trails like the Appalachian Trail, Pacific Crest Trail, the Inca Trail in Peru, etc.

Not only will this be great for Alaskans, I expect this will be a boon to tourism and our economy as people will have another reason to come from all over the world to experience Alaska's amazing outdoors. And I should mention - this is being paid for with federal COVID relief funds designated to help with tourism infrastructure.



May 17: Excited to get out of the office for half a day and check out the second half of the little O'Malley Peak Trail. Kristen Blaine and Spencer are out there all week putting together the route for the second half of this exciting project. We are excited to be collaborating with Chugach State Park and the Chugach Park Fund and are busy putting together procedures for hosting safe volunteer events this summer. Stay tuned for more details.

May 12: Here's hard-working Alaska Trails board member Irene Turletes at a three-day chainsaw training last week. We are grateful to the Student Conservation Association for including us in the training and are excited to be getting more training for our volunteers.

Stay tuned for more info on volunteer events coming up this summer!



May 10: Did you know May is Mental Health Awareness Month? Beyond benefitting physical health, trails have proven mental health benefits as well. Just another reason to be grateful we live in a state with such great trail options!

<https://www.americantrails.org/mental-health-benefits>

May 7: Congrats to Mindy Eggleston of Delta Junction Trails Association who won a \$100 Gift Card to REI for completing the 2021 Statewide Trails Conference Survey! And Thanks to everyone who filled it out to make next years' conference even better!

And since Delta Junction Trails Association has such a great video, I am going to post it here as the sound did not work well during the conference - Enjoy!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iBFoLTgJayo>

May 6: According to new CDC guidelines, fully vaccinated folks don't need to wear masks outdoors, which means we're looking forward to volunteer events again this summer! If you haven't already, this week is a great time to get vaccinated. Thanks to Matson, those who roll their #SleevesUpForSummer during Vaccine Week will be entered to win a \$500 gift card. Sign up here: <https://anchoragecovidvaccine.org>

ALASKA TRAILS LINKS

- Get Alaska's economy back in gear, let's work on its outdoor infrastructure: <https://tinyurl.com/3vpcsrjw>
- Bird to Gird trail maintenance continues through grant and volunteers: <https://tinyurl.com/56wzdua6>

DIRECTOR'S CORNER
Steve Cleary, Executive Director



National Trails Day Kicks Off Return to Trail Volunteering

Trails have been so important to all of us during the Covid-19 pandemic. My family and I have often remarked how much harder the pandemic would have been if we hadn't had access to great trails year-round. Alaska's trails improve our physical and mental health and give us all a chance to unwind and reboot. Trails also boost and diversify our economy in ways that we need to further foster. Trails strengthen our community and give us ways, close to home, to get exercise and recharge. For residents and visitors alike, trails get us out, keep us active, and help us access the many benefits brought by the outdoors.

The increased use during COVID has taken its toll on the trails we love. While we all enjoy these amazing trails, we don't always consider how they are maintained or built. Eroded and over-grown trails



need maintenance to make sure that they don't deteriorate further. This summer, Alaska Trails will team up with local land managers to help protect the trails we enjoy and make sure that Alaskans and visitors can continue to enjoy them. Our Alaska Trail Stewards program is set to return to in-person volunteer events this summer, which means trail users who want to give back have the chance to join up with other volunteers for rewarding trail work opportunities. We are planning safe and fun events with a COVID protocol appropriate to the changing circumstances. We encourage

everyone who wants to volunteer to get vaccinated.

This year, Alaska Trails is using National Trails Day – June 5 – to train its volunteer crew leaders on the latest in trail building, maintenance and safety, including Covid-19 protocols. These leaders will guide events in Chugach State Park and other areas throughout the summer. Alaska Trails will have a trail crew on the Little O'Malley Peak trail and also hopes to help the CSP finish the final portion of the Middle Fork Trail reroute. There will be events on both trails this summer and we hope to see previous volunteers and new faces out there.

Later in the summer, Alaska Trails will host volunteer days in the Mat-Su and on the Chugach National Forest. At our Trails Conference in April, we heard from volunteer groups that are doing great work across the state – including Friends of Kachemak Bay State Park, the Delta Junction Trails Association, the Chugiak Mountain Bike Riders and the Interior Alaska Trails and Parks Foundation. Please get in touch with Alaska Trails to connect with us or the volunteer group in your area.

See you on the trails,

A handwritten signature in cursive that reads "Steve Cleary".

Photo by Nikki Potter: Fairbanks Cycle Club mountain bike ride in Bonanza Creek area of Tanana Valley State Forest.

STATEWIDE NEWS AND NOTICES

ALASKANS TO CELEBRATE NATIONAL TRAILS DAY IN JUNE



VOLUNTEER, JOIN IN Several events will be held across Alaska in celebration of National Trails Day, Saturday, June 5. For information on specific events see the Southcentral and Interior regional news sections.

National Trails Day is the American Hiking Society's signature trail awareness program. It inspires the public and trail enthusiasts nationwide to seek out their favorite trails to discover, learn about, and celebrate trails while participating in educational exhibits, trail dedications, gear demonstrations, instructional workshops and trail work projects. For more info see: www.americanhiking.org/national-trails-day/

SIMPLE ACTIONS CAN HELP BUILD TRAILS STATEWIDE FOR YEARS

MAKE A PHONE CALL, SIGN PETITION You can help trails locally and statewide with a quick, painless phone call to call in support for Trails Build Alaska, an effort to create a trails workforce development program with money from the American Rescue Plan Act. Wouldn't it be great to have more local crews out maintaining trails or building new ones? **Find out more here:** <https://tinyurl.com/2ytfu97u>

Trails Build Alaska is being spearheaded by Trail Mix, Inc, a Juneau trails group. TBA is advocating for the Dunleavy administration and the legislature to create a statewide trails workforce development program. The program has been inspired by Trail Mix's successful COVID-19 Conservation Corps (CCC), as well as similar programs in Sitka and Anchorage. Those programs, funded from the federal CARES Act, quickly got people working on building new trails or repairing existing trails with a strong focus on job training.

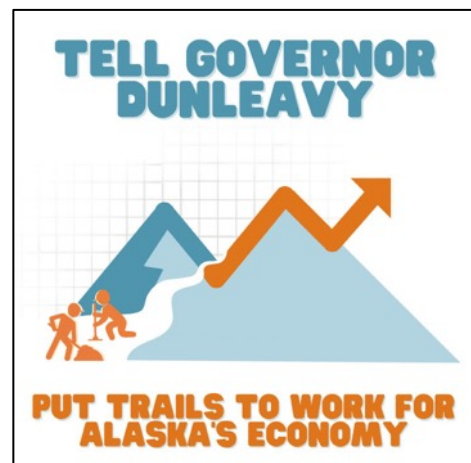
The Trails Build Alaska coalition is asking for a \$12 million allocation from the recently passed Rescue Plan Act for this trails workforce development program to be administered by the State. (The State is receiving more than \$1 billion from the Rescue Plan Act.) Administrators would then pass on 80 percent of the funding to communities to either bolster their existing trails programs or, in places that have no program, to create one. 20 percent of program funding would go towards developing curriculum, coordinating skills training, and supporting community programs.

Shovel-ready projects, such as many subprojects of the Alaska Long Trail, would be first on the list to benefit from such a program.

The investment in trails would benefit the state in the long run in several ways, including:

- Enhancing an visitor industry infrastructure that emphasizes access to the wilds of Alaska.
- Giving a place for residents to exercise, improving their physical and mental health.
- Allowing access to wild resources, such as fish, game, berries, and mushrooms.

Besides making the phone call, you can help by signing this petition telling Governor Dunleavy to put trails to work for Alaska's economy (bit.ly/trailsworkforcepetition). For more information, email sophia@trailmixinc.org.



COMMENTS SOUGHT ON CENTRAL YUKON MANAGEMENT PLAN

COMMENT The deadline for comments on the Central Yukon Draft Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (RMP/EIS) is **June 9**.

This statement aims to shape how the BLM manages about 13 million acres of public lands, including a utility corridor along the Dalton Highway, for the next few decades. When complete, the Central Yukon RMP would combine three existing management plans and provide decisions for managing unplanned lands west of Fairbanks. The Bureau of Land Management Central Yukon Field Office is developing a new resource management plan (RMP) for the Central Yukon Planning Area. The RMP will provide future management direction for approximately 13.1 million acres of BLM-managed public land including the Dalton Highway.

Among many other places, this area includes segment of the Iditarod National Historic Trail.

For more information see: <https://eplanning.blm.gov/eplanning-ui/project/35315/510>

Information can also be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/5jt7vy8>

From What's Up? by Peg Tileston

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:

<https://tinyurl.com/y9ulmffg>

Photo from Denali 101: www.denali101.com/denalinationalpark/birds_of_denali.html

TIPS ON HOW TO DEAL WITH HORSES YOU MEET ON TRAILS

The following public service announcement regarding horses was recently seen on Facebook:

Horses are high-flight prey animals. They are not big dogs! If you encounter a horse on roads or trails, please adhere to the following for your safety and the safety of the rider/horse.

- If you're driving on a road and you encounter horses, please slow down. A horse can bolt sideways at 45 mph and most often are frightened INTO the road.
- If you're walking, biking, or running on a trail, please stop, speak to the rider, and ask how they would prefer you proceed. Horses often have right of way on trails.
- If you have children with you and you encounter a horse, please be sure your children remain still. Talking to the rider as they approach will help their horse understand you're no threat.
- If you approach from behind, please communicate your presence as soon as you're able. Horses are much more likely to become fearful if you are suddenly running or riding up to their hind end. And always keep a healthy distance when passing behind or to the side of a horse, for your own safety.



Thank you for helping keep everyone safe and enjoy the outdoors.

SEEN RECENTLY ON STATEWIDE FACEBOOK PAGES

ALASKA OUTDOOR ALLIANCE

May 18: Outdoor recreation workforce development can help get Alaskans back to work and bolster careers. It worked during the Great Depression, it worked last year in Juneau, Sitka and Anchorage - let's rally to see it spread statewide! <https://tinyurl.com/du6d6k8r>

May 17: Remember the mantra: outdoor recreation infrastructure is critical infrastructure. Outdoor recreation can help lead the economic recovery.

ANCHORAGE PARK FOUNDATION

May 21: Time to support the Alaska Long Trail! A huge shoutout to Senator Bill Wielechowski (D-Anchorage) and Sen. Bert Stedman (R-Ketchikan) for sponsoring an amendment in the Alaska Senate to use \$13.2 million in federal dollars to fund this important job creator. Destination trails will boost Alaska's economy.

Now it goes to conference committee, so please thank your Senators (huge bi-partisan support - unanimous!) and encourage your State Representatives to please vote YES to keep this in the budget. Thank you!

May 24: Thank you Senator Dan Sullivan for co-sponsoring legislation to help complete our active transportation connections. In Alaska we appreciate safe trails for all! Call Senator Sullivan at 202.224.3004 and thank him for his leadership on S.684.

STATEWIDE LINKS

- **Comments** Needed on Arctic River Protection (**comment ddline June 9**): <https://tinyurl.com/36aej84h>
- Advocates don't want conservation corps efforts to trail off: <https://tinyurl.com/du6d6k8r>

SLIGHTLY OFF TRAIL

- Interagency Arctic Research Policy Committee's Draft Arctic Research Plan 2022-2026 (**comment deadline June 11**): www.iarpcollaborations.org/draft-plan.html
- New DNR online maps show navigable waters: <https://tinyurl.com/5dur8jsw>
- The 2020-2023 STIP Amendment 2 **open for comment (until June 6)**: <https://tinyurl.com/ytbnvk6w>
- Four easy steps to keep your campfire from turning into a wildfire: <https://tinyurl.com/yh32m9ov>
- Want a bus into Denali? Limited seating because of pandemic (FDNM): <https://tinyurl.com/xutxdper>
- Beach ball bear defense (Craig Medred): <https://tinyurl.com/dppmt3j3>
- Outdoor Explorer podcast:
 - Trail building in Alaska: Summer of 2021: <https://tinyurl.com/4etvssjs>
 - Dead Reckoning: Learning from Accidents in the Outdoors: <https://tinyurl.com/4hjifce6>
 - Boating safety in Alaska: www.alaskapublic.org/2021/05/28/boating-safety/

TRAILS DAY EVENTS TO BE HELD ACROSS SOUTHCENTRAL



VOLUNTEER, JOIN IN The following events are being held as part of National Trails Day in communities around southcentral Alaska. RSVP is needed where indicated. The events will be held on Saturday, June 5, unless otherwise noted. More information can be found at: <https://americanhiking.org/national-trails-day/find-an-event/>

MAT-SU

- The Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation in partnership with Alaskans for Palmer Hayflats are hosting a variety of activities at National Trails Day at Reflections Lake from noon to 3pm. The event on Saturday, June 5, includes a small pop-up tent and booth, educational material, clean-up and a self-guided walk around Reflections Lake. For more see: <https://tinyurl.com/uy698r3x>

VALDEZ

- Join the Valdez Adventure Alliance on June 5 in a trail maintenance/stewardship project. Drop in at the Shoup Bay Trailhead any time between 10am and 2pm. Snacks and drinks will be provided. All volunteers receive a swag bag thank you gift. Tools for clearing, cutting, and hauling will be provided, or bring your own. For more information email lanette@valdezadventure.com

CORDOVA

- Join the Forest Rangers for an adventure hike at the Haystack Trail, Mile 19 Copper River Highway. We will be going on a mission to discover clues along the trail with the mobile game Agents of Discovery. We'll also be celebrating the last day of Cordova Clean Up Week and making sure the trail is clean! Pack your bag, download the app and come have fun! There will be a morning hike, starting at 10 am, and an afternoon hike, starting at 2 pm. For more see: <https://tinyurl.com/hrr&dthu>

BIRD TO GIRD TRAIL MAINTENANCE CONTINUES

Hikers and bicyclists who enjoy Chugach State Park's popular "Bird to Gird" trail will be pleased to know that the trail will be in great shape soon after the Memorial Day weekend.

Alaska State Parks awarded Alaska Trails \$42,339 through a Recreational Trail Program (RTP) grant from the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation and the Federal Highway Administration in 2020 to clear brush, make the trail more accessible, fill in cracks and paint the center line. Snowline Alaska was able to complete the work of sealing cracks and repainting in 2020.

However, concerns over the COVID-19 pandemic delayed the brushing work last year, recent increases in vaccination rates and lessening of COVID concerns is opening the way for the work to get done this spring, said Ricky Gease, director of the parks division.

"We know many Alaskans are eager to get back on the trail after the long winter and social distancing of the pandemic," Gease



said. "The Bird to Gird trail is very attractive to hikers and bikers, and we are glad to cooperate with Alaska Trails and their dedicated volunteers to return this recreational pathway to a safe and welcoming condition."

While the grant will pay for a contractor to use mechanical brushing equipment to do most of the work, the machines cannot reach all of the hard-to-reach segments, Gease said.

"Alaska Trails is excited to make this amazing trail safer and more fun," said Steve Cleary, executive director of Alaska Trails. "We are grateful for the opportunity to partner with Chugach State Park on this project and we hope to make it annual occurrence to keep this trail in great shape."

With the trail restored to good condition following the pandemic, Alaska State Parks will resume the responsibility for continued maintenance, Gease said.

For more information about hiking, camping and other outdoor recreation opportunities through Alaska State Parks, go to: <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/>

*From Alaska Department of Natural Resources press release
Photo courtesy of the National Recreation Trails database*

SEWARD HIGHWAY PROJECT TO INCLUDE TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS

COMMENT Public comment is being sought on a Seward Highway MP 105-109.5 (Windy Corner to Rainbow Point) road safety project that will include trail aspects. From the public notice:

The Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF) has assumed the responsibilities of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) under 23 U.S.C 327, and is soliciting comments and information on a project that would realign and construct safety improvements to the Seward Highway between mileposts (MP) 105 and 109.5, Windy Corner to Rainbow Point, in the Municipality of Anchorage. The purpose of the proposed project is to implement safety upgrades to decrease high-severity crashes and improve traffic operations to alleviate traffic congestion.

Here are the two trail items mentioned in the public notice:

- Consideration of a separated multi-use pathway connecting the Windy Corner and Rainbow trailheads
- Design a separated pedestrian pathway and secure right-of-way between Windy Corner and Rainbow Trailheads adjacent to the northbound lane

Comment deadline is June 9. Send all comments to: Brian Elliott, Regional Environmental Manager, DOT&PF Central Region Preliminary Design & Environmental, P.O. Box 196900, Anchorage, AK 99519-6900; Email: brian.elliott@alaska.gov

There will also be a **virtual public open house on June 15:** <http://notice.alaska.gov/202513>

For more information see the public notice: <http://notice.alaska.gov/202395>

SEEN RECENTLY ON SOUTHCENTRAL FACEBOOK PAGES

ALASKA STATE PARKS

May 24: **Chugach Alert- Sunnyside Trail (see attached photos)**

We need your help to keep our trails intact! Destroying our trail(s) takes us away from our limited time and money to manage and maintain other trails.

Part of our mission and one of the MANY jobs of our Rangers and Field Staff is to help maintain trails and promote regrowth of vegetation for the enjoyment of all users. And 1000's of volunteer, partner and staff hours have been put in to maintaining this particular trail.



When we see continuous vandalizing of our resources that are in direct conflict with our job and mission, it takes additional time and resources away from other responsibilities and trails to tend to these issues. Please, help us help you by working together to keep our trails nice for everyone.

ANCHORAGE PARKS AND RECREATION

May 20: The Anchorage Chamber of Commerce Citywide Cleanup events continue! Huge thanks to the members and families of the Chamber's Young Professionals group for sprucing up a section of the Tony Knowles Coastal Trail last night.

May 11: Spring is an excellent season to explore Earthquake Park's "Inside the Slide" trail. This winding 1/2-mile pathway leads visitors through shifted landscape left by the now-famous 1964 earthquake.

Before trees and shrubs grow foliage, it's easier to see the texture of the area, and be wowed by nature's power.

Find the trail's beginning just downhill (right) from the Earthquake Park entrance, along the Coastal Trail headed toward downtown. Follow the yellow directional signs to find all 10 interpretive panels.

www.alaska.org/detail/earthquake-park



May 10: A shoutout today to our partners at Rails-to-Trails Conservancy - for being our eyes and ears



in Washington, DC to help us leverage more federal dollars for active transportation infrastructure. They wrote an excellent article about the Coastal Trail in 2019 and they are poised to share an article about the Lanie Fleischer Chester Creek Trail this year. Connecting and improving our Moose Loop trails are a high priority for us. And maybe one day

connecting with the LOWER 48 and across the country to go see them in DC! 🚲🚲🚲

www.railstotrails.org/trailblog/2019/january/15/alaska-s-tony-knowles-coastal-trail/

SINGLETRACK ADVOCATES

May 21: Hillside is OPEN!!! Thank you to the HUGE turn out of volunteers to get the trails ready to roll. We had over 65 people! Remember to Pre Ride, ReRide, then FreeRide. Early trail conditions exist. Enjoy!

May 18: All of Kincaid is OPEN!!! Early season conditions exist. Enjoy the trails and remember to be an annual member of STA. Shred on!

VALLEY MOUNTAIN BIKERS AND HIKERS

May 22: GPRA TRAILS ARE OPEN! Please tread lightly and stay out of the mud while the trails continue to dry out.

MAT-SU BOROUGH RECREATION AND LIBRARY SERVICES

BUY A PASS May 10: Parking Fees will be enforced beginning June 1, 2021.

By purchasing a yearly permit or your daily parking fee, you help keep trails and facilities clean and maintained. Please be aware that the State parking permit does not cover the same trails as the Mat-Su Borough parking permit and you may be fined if you do not have the correct permit.

The fine is \$40.00 and can be used towards the purchase of a trail permit through December 31, 2021.

To receive the annual trail pass, bring the ticket into either:

--Community Development Office, 350 E. Dahlia St. Palmer, AK

--Talkeetna Library, 24645 Talkeetna Spur Rd.

Talkeetna, AK

--Mat-Su Borough Parks Shop, 17704 E. Sullivan Ave, Palmer, AK

The violator has 5 days from the date of the ticket to visit one of our offices, pay the \$40.00 and receive their annual trail pass. Failure to do so will result in the fine being assessed without receiving an annual trail pass.

To avoid receiving a ticket, before you head up to the trail heads, buy your annual Mat-Su Borough Parking Pass online at www.matsugov.us and make sure it is attached to your windshield on the lower passenger side.



SOUTHCENTRAL LINKS

- 2021 National Trails Day at Reflections Lake: <https://tinyurl.com/azf2jeat>
- Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation April newsletter: <https://tinyurl.com/6uk9uf8v>

SLIGHTLY OFF TRAIL

- Lawsuit filed to block decision allowing personal watercraft in Kachemak Bay (ADN): <https://tinyurl.com/36utkmmu>
- **COMMENT** Input sought for proposed Campbell Tract Recreation Area Management Plan (**deadline June 11**): <https://tinyurl.com/3mv3pwcw>

INTERIORWIDE NEWS AND NOTICES

TRAILS DAY EVENTS TO BE HELD ACROSS INTERIOR



VOLUNTEER, JOIN IN The following events are being held as part of National Trails Day in communities around interior Alaska. RSVP is needed where indicated. The events will be held on Saturday, June 5, unless otherwise noted. More information can be found at:

<https://americanhiking.org/national-trails-day/find-an-event/>

FAIRBANKS

- A work party will be held on Sunday, June 6, for the Ester Dome Singletrack trails. The party starts at 1 pm, so be at there a little early. Meet at the Ester Dome Singletrack trailhead, Mile 1 Ester Dome Road. For more information email Geoff Orth: gcorth@straydogs.us

STEESE HIGHWAY

- Pinnell Mountain Trail work parties. See article below.

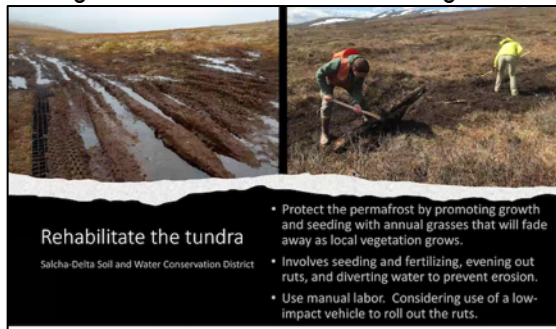
DELTA JUNCTION

- Join the Delta Junction Trails Association for a hike up Donnelly Dome. The hike starts at 11 a.m. with hikers proceeding at their own pace. This event is open to the public. Everyone 16 and over is required to have a military Recreation Access Permit (RAP) and sign out either the day before or the day of the hike. RAPs are available through the internet at <https://usartrak.isportsman.net/>. If the military closes the area, our backup hike location is Coal Mine Road. Check the DJTA Facebook page for updates. For more see: <https://tinyurl.com/4ss329wr>



BLM SEEKS VOLUNTEERS FOR PROJECT ON PINNELL MOUNTAIN TRAIL

VOLUNTEER The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) will celebrate American Hiking Society's National Trails Day® and the 50th anniversary of the Pinnell Mountain National Recreation Trail with two volunteer trail projects June 5–6 and June 26. The public is invited to join BLM staff for one or multiple days to repair damaged sections of the trail near Eagle Summit on the Steese Highway.



“The public’s interest in repairing the Pinnell Mountain National Recreation Trail demonstrates how much people love hiking on those ridges above the tree line,” said BLM Fairbanks District Manager Geoff Beyersdorf. “With these events, we look forward not only to completing a lot of work, but also having good discussions about how to protect and maintain the trail in the future.”

Anyone interested in participating in the trail projects can find more information at the project website at <https://eplanning.blm.gov/eplanning-ui/project/2011169/530> or by contacting the BLM at 907-474-2200 or PinnellMountainTrail@blm.gov. The BLM will provide tools and safety equipment for flattening vehicle ruts, improving drainage, and building boardwalk. The events will follow approved protocols to prevent the spread of COVID-19 following DOI and BLM policy, State of Alaska health mandates, and CDC guidance.

The trail project is part of BLM’s collaborative effort with other federal agencies, the State of Alaska, partners across the state, and the public to enhance the experiences and safety of all users while also being good stewards of the land for future generations. Learn more at <https://www.blm.gov/alaska/recreation>.

From BLM press release; screenshot from BLM slideshow

COMMENTS SOUGHT ON EASEMENT FOR WHITE MOUNTAINS TRAIL

Comments are due June 7 on the BLM request for a public easement for the Colorado Creek Trail, in the White Mountain Recreation Area.

This is an existing trail extending east from the Elliott Highway approximately 12 miles across state land to the “Colorado Creek Cabin” in the White Mountains National Recreation Area. The trail, regularly groomed by BLM, begins at a pullout along the Elliott Highway. This is NOT the trail of the same name that begins at Milepost 31.6 of Chena Hot Springs Road.

BLM has requested that, except for DNR-authorized mining access, use of the easement be limited to non-motorized uses in the summer, and snowmachines and non-



motorized uses (dogsledding, skiing, etc.) in the winter. DNR-DMLW is also considering incorporating an up to ¾ acre area adjacent to the Elliott Highway right-of-way to authorize trailhead improvements.

The purpose of this notice is to gather input before a decision is made on this activity. For more information and to submit comments, contact R. Bruce Sackinger at (907) 451-2720 or e-mail: robert.sackinger@alaska.gov.

From What's Up? by Peg Tileston; photo by Eric Troyer of biker on Colorado Creek Trail in November 2020.

SEEN RECENTLY ON INTERIOR FACEBOOK PAGES

ALASKA STATE PARKS

May 29: ***Attention Northern Region ATV Enthusiasts:***

The Chena Recreation Area trail system is now OPEN to motor vehicles!

We appreciate your patience in allowing our trails to dry after that record setting snowfall.

Please remember that single drive wheel/tracks and any motorized vehicle exceeding 1500lbs and/or wider than 64" are prohibited on State trail systems for the purpose of trail preservation.

Be safe, have fun and have a Happy Memorial Day weekend!



May 3: **Northern Region Closure Update**

Spring high water has destroyed the foot bridge across Mastodon Creek on the Mastodon Trail. The bridge and the trail beyond that point are closed until the damage can be repaired. ❤️ Thank you for your cooperation!

FAIRBANKS TRAIL USERS OPEN GROUP

May 17: An excellent local group worthy of support. While fulfilling its mission, the Interior Alaska Land Trust has helped save a lot of trails in the Fairbanks area: <https://tinyurl.com/y36e9mpx>

NORDIC SKI CLUB OF FAIRBANKS

May 28: Birch Hill Recreation Trails are open to foot traffic, but please stay off the closed and blocked portion of the trails. There are signs up. Some damage has been done to muddy areas by trail users not respecting the earlier closure. Please be patient. Another week of drying should make a difference.



Don't let the dry Stadium fool you. The Stadium and a few of the south facing slopes are drying out nicely, but there are still too many wet areas throughout the park trails.

Looking for trails to bike or ride horses? Try south-facing, well drained trails. Trails that still have a gravel surface or a vegetative mat with roots can be good this time of year. Here's a few possibilities we've heard are good: Tanana Lakes Rec Area trails, Chena Lake Rec Area trails, Secret Trail at Skyline Ridge Park, most of Skarland Trail (please be careful of a couple of muddy spots), forestry roads on the south side of the Parks Highway.

Thank you for your patience!

FAIRBANKS AREA HIKING CLUB FAN PAGE

Jay Ver Hoef shared a link.

May 20: Has anyone else hiked to Devil's Thumb, on the ridge just north of Castner Glacier (Ice Cave)? You just get a glimpse of it when driving from the north. We were there the weekend before last, starting from Trims Creek. It looked like someone tried to cut a trail up there some time ago. Anyone know the history, or maybe it was hunters? We lost the trail, perhaps due to snow, or it was never fully developed. Anyway, it was a bit brushy getting to the alpine, but amazing views from the ridge. Here is a little video if anyone is interested: www.youtube.com/watch?v=FayCd-dTtgw

INTERIORWIDE LINKS

- Trail enthusiasts hold parade in support of workforce development program (FDNM): <https://tinyurl.com/yjmsbttuu>
- Extending Winter Trails into May: <https://tinyurl.com/yw6pvuv3>

SOUTHEAST NEWS AND NOTICES

SEEN RECENTLY ON SOUTHEAST FACEBOOK PAGES

TRAIL MIX, INC.

May 24: 🗡️ Trail Report Week 1 🗡️



We're so excited to start rolling out our weekly trail recap! Each Monday we'll share the Trail Report, which covers the work our awesome crews did the previous week.

Week One covers training week. We're sharing what we did and what our crews are excited for. As the season goes on, we can't wait to share what fun projects we have in store. Scroll through to see pictures of our new crews and what they've been doing!

May 19: ⚠️ Trail damage alert ⚠️

On Treadwell Ditch, there is a new DEEP washout about .5 miles north of the Bonnie Brae junction and 1.5 miles south of Emerson Spur. It's about an 8ft vertical drop on one side 😬. We do not recommend attempting to cross.

Unfortunately, this is not an easy fix, so we ask for your patience as we work towards a solution.

Thanks to everyone who made us aware of this issue and a reminder to please use the trail damage report to alert us to trails that need attention bit.ly/juneautrailsreport



May 20: Call Governor Dunleavy and tell him to support a trails workforce development program! 📞

An excavator and a crowd of people with trail tools visited the Governor's mansion on Tuesday to represent the hundreds of Alaskans we can put back to work on trails with federal stimulus funds.

But Governor Dunleavy needs to hear that Alaskans EVERYWHERE are behind this idea. 100 phone calls from communities all over Alaska would show him that there's widespread support.

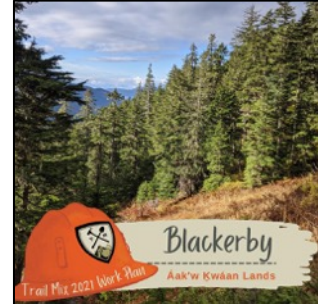
Call the Governor now and tell him you want a statewide trails workforce development program!
bit.ly/tbacallgovdunleavy

Tell us in the comments that you called and what the response was from the Governor's Office.
Gov. Dunleavy photo credit: Austin McDaniel

May 18: The Blackerby trail is a tough hike on a good day, but last December, the Wire Street route up to Blackerby Ridge was washed out by winter storms to the point of being nearly unusable.

This summer, a Trail Mix Crew and volunteers will work to restore this route by removing hazards and obstacles, shaping the terrain, and hardening the tread. Many improvements can be made using “native material,” materials found on-site such as rocks or logs from fallen trees.

Wait no longer, Blackerby fans! We'll have this trail in tip-top shape for type two fun! 😊



May 11: Next on our rollout of summer projects is the Amalga Cabin access trail.



Brand new this year, the Amalga Cabin has experienced a huge amount of traffic from construction machinery and work crews to months of back-to-back cabin users. This trail season, Trail Mix will be engaging a handful of volunteers to reshape and harden the existing trail and create drainage solutions in some areas to better manage water.

This is a great entry level project for volunteers new to trail work who are motivated and don't mind getting their hands dirty alongside a fun crew!

May 4: Another exciting trail project on queue for summer 2021 is the downtown Christopher Trail, which connects Cope Park to the Flume trail across Dzantik'i Héeni (Gold Creek).

The Christopher Trail has been closed since 2016 due to dangerous conditions along a washed-out portion of the trail. Renovation will involve moving the trail uphill and building a retaining wall out of logs. Volunteers will take part in filling in the rerouted portion of trail, forming the new tread and creating drainage solutions.

We're thrilled to restore access at this popular and scenic corner of downtown!



SOUTHEAST LINKS

- Sitka Trail Works' Spring Newsletter & Summer Hikes: <https://tinyurl.com/pp4vaxe2>
- SEARHC sponsors mountain bike trail being built by Sitka Cycling Club: <https://tinyurl.com/33jc6jnb>
- In time for the long weekend, a look at some of Juneau's favorite trails: <https://tinyurl.com/vyaxynae>

NATIONWIDE NEWS AND NOTICES

THE 2021 RTP ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS NOMINATION ARE OPEN

NOMINATE The Coalition for Recreational Trails (CRT) has announced plans for the 2021 Tom Petri Annual Achievement Awards recognizing outstanding trail projects funded by the Recreational Trails Program (RTP), administered jointly by the Federal Highway Administration and state trails programs.

Award winners will be selected from projects nominated by public agencies, trail administrators or other project sponsors. Projects must be completed in order to receive an award. In addition, projects completed before 2012 are ineligible. Project award categories will include: construction and design; maintenance and rehabilitation; public-private partnerships and access to public lands; community linkage; education and communication; accessibility enhancement; multiple-use management and “corridor sharing”; use of youth conservation/service corps and community outreach; engaging public-sector partners; and enhancement of federal lands. In addition, CRT plans to recognize the nation’s top state trails program and top state trails advisory board, again related to RTP efforts.

People are invited to nominate an outstanding project and are encouraged to solicit support from members of congress – both U.S. Representatives and U.S. Senators – to build awareness of excellent RTP-funded projects and the RTP program itself.

The on-line nomination form, including any supporting materials and pictures, should be completed by 5 pm EST, June 30, 2021.

For more information see: www.americantrails.org/crt/2021-rtp-achievement-awards

To see the 2020 Tom Petri Annual Achievement Award Winners: <https://tinyurl.com/2pvchzzx>

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

FUNDING

- National Forest Foundation’s Matching Awards Program (ddline June 9): <https://tinyurl.com/px7y6ke>
- Intl. Mountain Biking Assn. Trail Accelerator Grants: <https://tinyurl.com/scg2fnu>

VOLUNTEER

- American Hiking Society: 2021 Volunteer Vacations, COVID-19 Update: <https://tinyurl.com/y3nr9a4o>
- American Hiking Society Volunteer Vacations crew leaders needed: <https://tinyurl.com/ufrfz8xc>

OTHER NATIONAL LINKS:

- An Introductory Guide to Trail Planning and Development: <https://tinyurl.com/yp2zwx5>
- California’s 1,230-mile coastal trail 70% complete, according to new online map: <https://tinyurl.com/26jv3wr4>
- Levaware systems is offering IoT intelligence to create a new type of trailhead: <https://tinyurl.com/t4wjuzxd>

- Why Trails Matter: <https://www.americantrails.org/why-trails>
- Apps for Trail Management and Volunteers: <https://tinyurl.com/2am7dydf>
- Three Hidden Health Benefits of Hiking, 2021 Edition Guide: <https://tinyurl.com/jmd9xwy2>
- Why We Should Be Turning Former Mines into Trails: <https://tinyurl.com/k3bwmxu3>

SLIGHTLY OFF-TRAIL

- National OHV Conservation Council Safe, Responsible Use PSA Video: <https://tinyurl.com/y4dvvewd>
- A Responsibility Code For River Runners: <https://www.paddlewise.org/>
- P.A.C.K.R.A.F.T. Safety Code: <https://www.packraft.org/pages/packraft-safety-code>
- NRPA Equity Action Plan: <https://tinyurl.com/ytnzcpms>

INTERNATIONAL LINKS

- 18 Trails That Traverse History: www.atlasobscura.com/lists/historical-trails-and-hikes

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