



NEWSLETTER

DEC
2021

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www.alaska-trails.org

ALASKA TRAILS NEWS AND NOTICES

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 or swim (heck, even pogo stick!). You can choose from six different virtual distances – from 125 miles, 1.4 miles a day, to 2,000 miles, which is a whopping 22.3 miles per day. New this year is a 5-person relay of 2,000 miles which is the distance from Ketchikan to Deadhorse. 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:

- 125 miles = Anchorage to Seward, AK, that's 1.4miles/day
- 225 miles = Anchorage to Homer, AK, that's 2.5miles/day
- 350 miles = Anchorage to Fairbanks, AK, that's 3.9miles/day
- 850 miles = Anchorage to Deadhorse, AK, that's 9.5miles/day
- 2,000 miles = Ketchikan to Deadhorse, AK, that's 22.3miles/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 others to this challenge to help you to stay motivated all winter long.

Online registration began November 25 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 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.** Last year nearly \$20,000 was donated through participation and donations – and that was the first year of the RAAWC. 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 4:30pm AKS (8:30pm EST). Join the Facebook group to hear about pop-up Zoom and/or Zwift FREE workouts along with facebook live videos: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/824863588292365>

ALASKA TRAILS IS HIRING A TEMPORARY OUTDOOR REC PLANNER

APPLY Alaska Trails is accepting applications for the position of Outdoor Recreation Planner.

The planner will be employed by Alaska Trails and will also work collaboratively with the National Park Service (Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance program-RTCA) and Alaska State Parks. The purpose of this position is to perform a variety of program and project duties associated with the update of the Alaska Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), now in progress. The main objective of the position is to continue assisting State Division of Parks in setting up the overall process and the specific tasks, products, and schedule needed to create a high value SCORP. The position is temporary and will last through 2022. **Complete job description and application information at our website: <https://www.alaska-trails.org/jobs>. Interested people are encourage to apply ASAP.**



SEEN RECENTLY ON OUR FACEBOOK PAGE



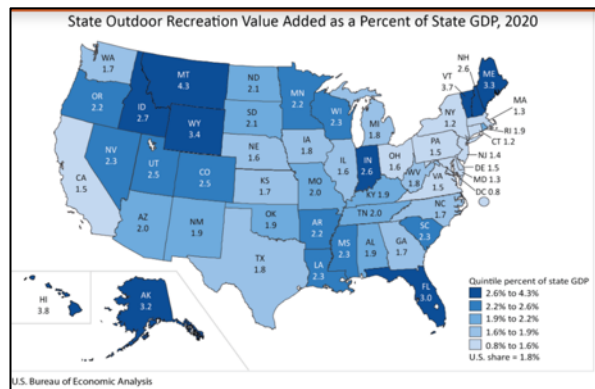
Nov 18: On this #ThankfulThursday we want to give a shout out to all of our anonymous Pick Click Give donors. These donations directly help build, maintain, and advocate for trails across the state. Even though we don't know who you are, we're immensely grateful for your support!

Nov 17: In case you missed our Land Manager Forum on Monday, you can check out the videos on our YouTube Channel. Thanks to all the great presenters!
www.youtube.com/channel/UCtHHzQ3m-UxFJefZzE0N4Aw/playlists

Nov 12: If you're reading this, you probably already know that Alaska has some of the best Outdoor Recreation in the nation. But did you know that we have one of the strongest Outdoor Recreation economies as well?

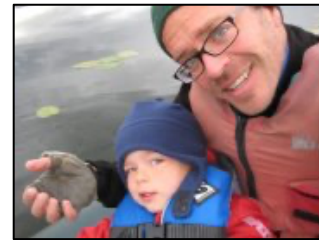
Friday Fun Fact:

Outdoor Rec accounts for 3.2% of Alaska's state GDP, the 6th highest percentage in the nation, surpassing recreation hot spots like Utah, Florida and Colorado. Just one more piece of evidence that not only does outdoor recreation enhance our physical and mental wellbeing in AK, it also supports a durable and diversified Alaskan economy.



Alaska has one of the strongest outdoor recreation economies in U.S.: <https://tinyurl.com/4muw8fzs>

Nov 8: Thanks for the shout out Alaskan Amblers! And congrats on 40 years and your year of 40 adventures! Can't think of a better way to celebrate than enjoying this beautiful place we live.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D-hHm1wslxY>



Thankful for Donors, Partners, Trails

Alaska Trails has a lot to be grateful for. We look forward to a bright 2022 but are not done with 2021 yet. Recreating on trails continues to be a great way for Alaskans to bolster their physical and mental health. From hunting to mountain biking to strolling with family to running hard with friends – trails are a mainstay for life in Alaska. Even with recent COLD temps around the state, trails are more popular than ever, and the gear needed for those adventures continues to fly off the shelf. In this holiday season, we wish you health and good times with friends, that we hope will include some fun trail adventures.

We are grateful to all our financial donors – especially our “Pick.Click.Give.” donors. We had 299 donors contribute \$16,421 – WOW! And a BIG THANK YOU to the Odom Corporation and Brown Jug for donating \$10,500 to Alaska Trails. These shots in the arm are a huge boost to our bank account and our motivation to keep our momentum going. And we are doing



just that. Alaska Trails staff have been meeting with land managers like Chugach National Forest and Chugach State Park to plan projects both for our paid trail crews and our volunteer events. We are excited to help land managers build and maintain trails in 2022. Thinking and planning ahead will continue so that we can hit the ground running in the new year.



The Alaska Long Trail

Planning, mapping and organizing for the Alaska Long Trail continues to make progress toward the overall goal of connecting existing and envisioned trails from Seward to Fairbanks. Thanks to the Rasmuson Foundation for a \$25,000 grant to continue the important work and lay the foundation for significant progress in 2022.

Long trails like the Pacific Crest Trail and the Appalachian Trail have captured the attention of travelers for decades. Alaska is blessed with some of the most stunning wilderness in the world and we are poised to create an enduring trail of our own. Long trails engage visitors in everything from simple day hikes to multi-week, bucket list lifetime accomplishments. And they will bring new opportunities for residents to explore their backyard.

Alaska Trails will continue to work with its partners to highlight the great trails on the Long Trail route that already exist and to connect the dots to make this expansive vision a reality. For more on the Alaska Long Trail see: www.alaska-trails.org/the-alaska-long-trail

See you on the trails,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steve Cleary".

STATEWIDE NEWS AND NOTICES

STATE HUNTER ACCESS PROGRAM APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE

APPLY Applications for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game Hunter Access Program will be available starting December 1.

The 2022 program schedule is now posted on the website (<https://tinyurl.com/3hecnsny>). **Anyone interested in applying should review the updated FAQ's and criteria as you think about project ideas.** Please contact ADF&G with questions. Contact information is on the website.



2022 Program Schedule

- December 1, 2021: Applications available online, application period opens
- February 8, 2022: Proposals received prior to midnight ADT will receive a courtesy administrative review
- **March 1, 2022: Application due date**, application period closes
- September 2022: Applicants that have been selected for award are notified
- January 2023: Award and grant agreements are finalized, signed, and implemented

Grants from this program do not necessarily go toward trails, but they often do. Trail projects from this project benefit all trail users. To see example projects use the “Completed Projects” or “Project Map” on the main page (<https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=hunteraccess.main>).

Photos of Byers Lake bridge from Hunter Access Grant Program webpage

APPLICATIONS DUE ON DEC 31 FOR MOTORIZED RTP GRANTS

If you are applying for a Recreational Trails Program grant, remember that the application deadline is at the end of December.



Mandatory public notices were to have been posted by November 30.

Only applications for Motorized and Safety and Education projects are being accepted this time around. The program requires a balance of non-motorized, motorized, and mixed projects. The state is a little out of balance regarding that. However, trails built or maintained under Motorized are almost always open to non-motorized users,

too. It's just that the primary intent must be for motorized users. Maximum grant amount for Motorized projects is \$300,000 and requires a 10% match.

Deadlines for this round of RTP grants are as follows:

- December 31, 2021: Application due date. All applications must be received electronically or postmarked by this date.

The RTP is the single largest funding source for trails in Alaska. For more information visit the division's website at <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/grants/trails.htm>

The Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation administers Alaska's Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) RTP grant program. The division offers competitive, reimbursable, matching trail grants for maintaining public recreational trails and related facilities, and for safety and educational projects. If you have any questions or concerns regarding the application process, please send emails to Parks.RTPGrantApp@alaska.gov

SUPPORT PARKS AS PART OF YOUR CHRISTMAS SHOPPING

BUY A PASS The holiday shopping season is here. You can use it to encourage people to get outside AND support some of our greatest recreational assets. Buy a pass for yourself or someone else.

- Alaska State Parks annual pass: Support state parks during a time of tight state budgets. Buy a day-use pass and your parking is paid for when you park at a state parks trailhead that requires a fee. Passes are good for the calendar year. Annual boat launch passes are also available: <https://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/passes> (Passes are also available to purchase in person. See the webpage for available locations.



- National Park Service annual passes: The park service offers general passes. It also has a variety of other discounted or free passes for seniors, fourth-graders, people with disabilities, some volunteers, and members of the military: <https://www.nps.gov/planyourvisit/passes.htm>

GET OUT ON THE TRAILS TO RECREATE BUT DO SO RESPONSIBLY

Are you in the know for snow? At the start of the pandemic in the United States, the #RecreateResponsibly campaign became the go-to resource for how to get outside responsibly. As seasons change, so do our practices to stay safe outside and to protect the places we play.

Winter is a beautiful time, but with the new season comes new challenges and safety considerations to take into account. The winter environment changes quickly and access points may be more limited. We want everyone to be able to enjoy this incredible time of year, and we want you to stay safe while doing it. Check out these tips to gauge your winter safety awareness, and do your research to #RecreateResponsibly this season.



- Know Before You Go – Some areas can become dangerous with winter conditions. Research your destination, as roads and facilities may be closed in winter.
- Practice Physical Distancing – Be prepared to cover your nose and mouth. When possible, opt to eat and rest outside. If you feel sick, stay home.
- Plan Ahead – Check local conditions and prepare for the elements, packing extra layers, waterproof clothing, and avalanche safety gear for the backcountry.
- Play It Safe – Know your limits and your gear. Slow down and choose lower-risk activities to reduce your risk of injury.
- Explore Locally – Consider exploring locally, as driving and parking may be more challenging in winter. If you travel, be mindful of your impact on Native and local communities.

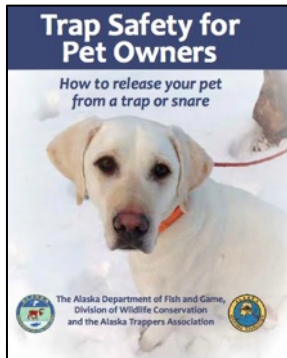
- Leave No Trace – Did you know that the snow is our water supply? Keep our winter playgrounds clean. Pack out any human or pet waste. Be respectful of the land.
- Build an Inclusive Outdoors – Everyone deserves to experience a winter wonderland. Be an active part of making the outdoors safe, accessible, and welcoming for all identities and abilities.

For more information, including how to spread the message, see: <https://tinyurl.com/y6zlyc3>

From Winter Wildlands Alliance

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.

SEEN RECENTLY ON STATEWIDE FACEBOOK PAGES

ANCHORAGE PARK FOUNDATION



November 8: Many thanks to Alaska's Congressional Delegation for supporting the bipartisan infrastructure bill - which means more funding for trails, biking and pedestrian projects.

Check out this post from our friends at Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (<https://tinyurl.com/bk9dk9dt>), and join us in support of the still-in-Congress #BuildBackBetter Act, which will also help improve our ACTIVE transportation future.

STATEWIDE LINKS

- Snowmachine Trail Program grooming awards for 2021-2022 season: <https://tinyurl.com/fzj5dxs>

SLIGHTLY OFF TRAIL

- Outdoor Explorer
 - Trip planning and risk analysis in Alaska with Luc Mehl: <https://tinyurl.com/a6e77dc>

TRAPPING SETBACK ALONG MAT-SU TRAILS PROPOSED

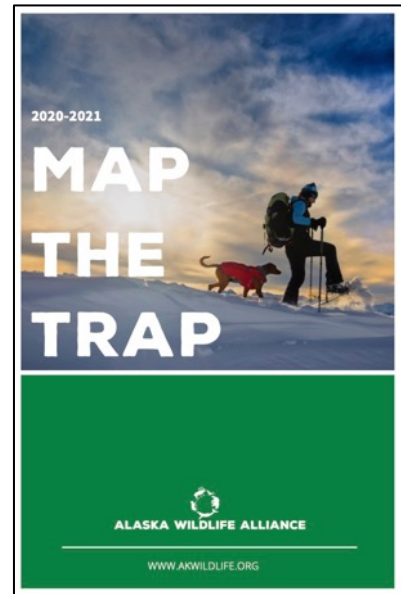
COMMENT In January the Alaska Board of Game will consider a proposal that would institute 50-yard trap setbacks along more than 200 designated multi-use trails in the Mat-Su area.

The proposal, spearheaded by the Alaska Wildlife Alliance, is outlined in a document that describes the trails, including their names and the Alaska game units in which they exist, and the reasoning for the effort. The document, titled Proposal 199, can be found here (<https://tinyurl.com/952du8c2>) or by visiting the Alaska Wildlife Alliance website (<https://www.akwildlife.org/safetrails>).

Justifications for the proposal are in the last three pages of the document. They include reasons for the overall proposal, why the specific trails were included in the proposal, and why a distance of 50 yards was chosen for the setback. Included in the proposal are six problem incidences with trapping during the 2020-21 trapping season that were collected from the “Map the Trap” project run by the Alaska Wildlife Alliance. All involved dogs caught in traps except one in which a motocross rider was pulled off the bike by a snare.

Public comments on the proposal are due by January 9. If you are interested in submitting a comment on the trap setbacks follow the instructions below:

- Access the Board of Game comment portal:
www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=process.comments
- Select ‘Central/Southwest Region Meeting - Comments due 1/9/2022 and fill in your contact information.
- Write your comment about Proposal 199. The Board of Game is a citizen board that makes decisions about state trapping regulations. You don't need to be technical, writing about your thoughts and experiences makes a great public comment.
- **Submit your comment by January 9, 2022, and encourage others to do the same.**



NEW TRAIL BEING BUILT TO CONNECT K'ESUGI KEN TO K'ESUGI RIDGE

A new trail in the Mat-Su in the K'esugi Ridge area is in the works. The story below is excerpted from the Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation October/November newsletter. You can see a video of the project here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1HiWxsFXMTg>.

The Curry Connector Trail Project, located in Denali State Park, will add more than 14-miles of new trail, connecting the K'esugi Ken Campground trails to the existing K'esugi Ridge Trail, and creating a 45-mile trail system in this popular recreation area in Denali State Park.

Improvements to this trail were provided through a cooperative effort between the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Alaska State Parks, Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation, and the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Program (Pittman Robertson Act). Taxes on your purchase of firearms, ammunition, and archery equipment are used to support public access to wildlife resources and improve hunter access.

The Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation is administering the funding, managing the trail construction contract with the trail building company Interior Trails, as well as providing a 25% funding match to complete this 1.2 million dollar project.

The 8-person crew fielded by Interior Trails has completed about half of the segment connecting



earlier phases of the Curry Ridge trail over to Troublesome Creek. They are hoping to be mostly done with construction by the Fall of 2022.

If you've been reading our newsletters at all, you've heard us trumpeting this unique partnership between Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation, Alaska State Parks, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, and Interior Trails. In addition, Talkeetna Air Taxi was instrumental in moving the crew on and off the mountain and slinging materials to strategic locations along the trail. And Northland Lumber

out of Fairbanks was a critical vendor supplying wood for the boardwalks and other building supplies.

Not only were local businesses helped, but investing in trails infrastructure is an investment in our tourism economy. A study by McDowell Group suggests that investing in new trails and the existing system in the Mat-Su could add between 12,000 to 24,000 new room nights annually. New visitor spending could be estimated to increase between \$2 and \$3.9 million annually.

Photo from Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation newsletter: Gabe Travis, Christine Byl, and Wes Hoskins checking out a section of handbuilt rock steps built by the Interior Trails Crew

MAT-SU FOUNDATION RELEASES 2021 IMPACT REPORT

The Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation has released its 2021 "impact update." Projects funded by the group include many trail and trail-related projects.

Thanks to generous community donations, the Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation has provided \$350,000 in funding so far in 2021 for a variety of projects all over the Mat-Su. These projects include grooming equipment for winter trails, trail projects at popular Mat-Su parks including the Matanuska River Park and Settlers Bay Coastal Park, as well as the Curry Ridge Connector Trail Project in Denali State Park.



Read the entire report here: <https://matsutrails.org/2021/11/23/2021-grantees/>

Photo by the Student Conservation Association: Student Conservation Crew Working at Settlers Bay Coastal Park.

SEEN RECENTLY ON SOUTHCENTRAL FACEBOOK PAGES

ANCHORAGE PARK FOUNDATION

Nov 21: We're so proud of Emma and all the young adults that worked hard improving our parks this summer. The Youth Employment in Parks program offers meaningful employment, leadership development and fun with new friends! Read Emma's story in our latest online newsletter.

<https://mailchi.mp/anchoragepark.../a-moose-message-13387742>

SINGLETRACK ADVOCATES

Nov 13: First tracks with STA's new Snow Dog groomer on Ticket to Ride! HUGE THANK YOU to Anson Cheng, Landon Smith, Joe Lestina and Ryan McGhan for donating this Snow Dog to STA. Also, big thanks to Daniel Vetsch and Martin Miller for getting it set up for its maiden voyage this year. It is DEEP out there!



VALLEY MOUNTAIN BIKERS AND HIKERS

Nov 21: MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

The VMBaH Annual Party will be on held at GPRA on December 19th from 4 - 8 pm.

Lots of fun things planned.

Group Ride from 2-4pm for beginners-advanced riders.

Backcountry Bike and Ski will have some fat tire bikes available to use.

Solo stove fires will be keep us warm outside and the Chalet will be open to warm up inside. We will share information about our new trail plans AND we are working on getting food trucks.

Beer and Kombucha will be available for donation.

MAT-SU BOROUGH RECREATION AND LIBRARY SERVICES

November 19: The Mat Su Borough Grooming Crew has been busy packing the multi-use winter trails and removing fallen trees in the core area. There are still a few trails that will be worked on early next week. We need more snow before we can start setting classic ski tracks but there is a good base out there. You can check trail updates at <https://www.matsugov.us/trails>

BUY A PASS November 18: 2022 Annual Trailhead Park Passes will be available starting December 1st! ✨

You can purchase them online at <https://ecommerce.matsugov.us/Pages/CD/AnnualParking.aspx> or in person at Rec Services Division 350 E. Dahlia in Palmer or the Talkeetna Library.

SOUTHCENTRAL LINKS

- Poolside Trails & Nikiski Community Trails: <https://www.kpb.us/nprsa/trails/about>

INTERIORWIDE NEWS AND NOTICES

CAMPAIGN SEEKS TO RAISE FUNDS FOR CHENA RIVER SIGNAGE

DONATE The Tanana Valley Watershed Association (TVSA) is raising funds to install wayfinding, safety, and interpretive signs along the Chena River.

This signage would help make this local water trail more accessible to people. The fundraising campaign started November 12 and will continue until December 21. Any amount can donated and donations be applied to a specific location or category of sign. You will be recognized by name on the TVSA website and Facebook page (with your permission).

Signs being covered by the campaign include:



- Wayfinding Signs - These signs will be mounted on all bridges and large culvert crossings on the Chena River, Noyes Slough, and Chena Slough to let boaters and floaters know where they are on the river.
- Chena River Recreation and Safety Signs - These signs would be posted at all boat launches along the Chena River below Moose Creek Dam to let boaters know distances between launches and provide important safety information.
- Interpretive Signs - These signs would provide information about the importance of clean water and healthy riparian areas to the wildlife that use our rivers (including salmon), and how river users can help.

For more information see: <http://www.tvwatershed.org/>

From Tanana Valley Watershed Association website; photo by Joseph from flickr

FAIRBANKS TRAIL PLAN COMMENTS SOUGHT THRU DECEMBER 29

COMMENT Trail users and advocates can add their voice to the update of the Fairbanks Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan.

The Fairbanks North Star Borough is in the process of updating the plan, which helps guide borough management and policy about trails within the borough. The borough and its contractor have been working over the spring and summer to collect comments and put together maps.



Maps of the east side of the borough are open for comment. Many people have added their comments and the borough collected more comments at public meetings in October and November.

Commenting on the east side map closes December 29. People can comment on the maps on the website or add comments to

existing comments. (Maps for the west side, which were opened for comment first, are open for comment until December 1.)

Go to www.fnsbtrailsplan.com and follow the process. It can take a bit to figure out how to use the maps, but the process is not onerous. Find the zoom button lower right-hand corner and zoom way out to get a good overall view. Then zoom in again to get a more detailed view. On the left-hand side you can find the comment box, which you can drag-and-drop to the correct place. The website also has more information, including links to the meetings.

A final draft of the Trail Plan is expected to be available in summer of 2022.

FAIRBANKS BORO PARKS AND REC OFFERS TRAILS REPORT

Looking for information about winter trails, especially reports on grooming and conditions? The Fairbanks area has a few resources including the borough, Trailforks, and the local ski club.

BOROUGH

The Fairbanks North Star Borough Parks and Recreation Department is now doing a Trail Conditions Report that is updated every Thursday. Right now the focus is mainly on Chena Lake and Tanana Lakes recreation area, but the page has links to other resources. From the page:



Your one-stop source for current winter trail conditions for cross-country skiing, snowmachining, fat-tire biking, snowshoeing, ice skating and walking in the Fairbanks North Star Borough. Our team updates the winter trail conditions report weekly on Thursdays at 11AM throughout the winter season. Additional updates may be available. For additional information and trail maps, please visit this page: <https://fairbanksak.myrec.com/info/facilities/details.aspx?FacilityID=14955>

Check out the report here: <https://fairbanksak.myrec.com/info/facilities/details.aspx?FacilityID=14968>

SKI CLUB

The Nordic Ski Club of Fairbanks also maintains a page that is skiing focused but includes information about multi-use trails.

The NSCF grooms the skiing-only trails at Birch Hill Recreation Area and does grooming reports for those on its website and Facebook page. It also maintains an "Other Local Trails" page that has short descriptions of the trails or trail systems and includes links to maps and other information, including where people can find grooming reports.

- NSCF Trails page (for grooming updates and other info): <https://www.nscfairbanks.org/trails/>
- NSCF Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/NSCFairbanks/>
- NSCF Other Local Trails: <https://www.nscfairbanks.org/trails/other-local-trails/>
 - This includes websites from many places that have winter trail conditions including UAF, ADMA, Chena River State Recreation Area, and White Mountains National Recreation Area.

TRAILFORKS

Trailforks is a multi-use trail user website and smartphone app. It does not have all the trails in the Fairbanks area, but more are being added on a regular basis. In addition to showing people where trails are located, the service allows people to add their own trail status updates. Find out more at:

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

SEEN RECENTLY ON INTERIOR FACEBOOK PAGES

FAIRBANKS TRAIL USERS OPEN GROUP

VOLUNTEER Nov 15: The IALT is a big protector of trails in the Fairbanks area. Here's a way to help out the group!

Shared from
Interior Alaska Land Trust



Super-volunteer opportunity!

We are having an online member drive to try to reach new people. Will you join us as a team member? Just go to givebutter.com/IALT and click "Join the Team" under our banner photo. Team members create a donation page for IALT and share their reasons why they love the land trust with friends and family.

Thank you super volunteers! (Photo by Seth Adams)

<https://givebutter.com/ialt>

COMMENT Nov 4: The recent Interior Trails Newsletter had a mention from the Delta Junction Trails Association about the U.S. Army looking for recreation suggestions on its land. One thing people might

want to advocate for is switchback trails on one or both sides of Donnelly Dome. The current trails are badly eroded and difficult to use. Also, a trail around the base of the dome (or at least on one side) would all people to do a loop hike. Here's the story and contact info:

Oct 19: USAG Alaska is interested in knowing what improvements users would like to see on Army-managed lands. For example, projects under consideration include expanding parking capacity at Manchu Lake and improving the trail and interpretive information at Donnelly Dome.

Users are asked to send suggestions for management projects to this email: usarmy.wainwright.id-pacific.mbx.fwa-isportsman@army.mil

SKARLAND & PEARL CREEK PARK TRAIL USERS

Samuel Dashevsky

Congrats to Stan Justice for working the system to keep Skaarland Trail's narrow pathway intact along Ballaine Rd across from Yankovich!

I saw him by the roadside huddled over blueprints last week with an engineer looking at the electrical obstruction that had been built.

Now we see the installer back on site working overtime doing dirt work and they have ripped out their installation and repositioned it to the east side of the Pedestrian pathway.

Skaarland trail access and the connection between Pearl Creek and UAF trails is already impinged, but if this installation had stayed as 1st built it would have been severed.

Way to go Stan! Thank you for championing our neighborhood trails on the many fronts where you are active .

INTERIORWIDE LINKS

- Troopers investigating vandalism at newly opened trail in Delta Junction: <https://tinyurl.com/csc5ukd8>

SOUTHEAST NEWS AND NOTICES

SEEN RECENTLY ON SOUTHEAST FACEBOOK PAGES

TRAIL MIX, INC.

Nov 23:  Crew appreciation post 

With our trail season officially over, this is a shoutout to the outstanding people who worked with us this year caring for our trails. From our first week of training, this group was ready to learn and get their hands dirty. With many returning veterans from last year's COVID-19 Conservation Corps, there was already a core team of mentors to lead the way.



Trail work requires problem-solving and determination as well as a sense of humor and a love of the outdoors in all its beautiful, muddy, and rainy iterations. Most of all though, it's about people working together as a team so that everyone in the community can continue to

enjoy our trail system.

Thank you to all our crew members this year, especially those who were there from day 1. It was amazing to watch your progress over the course of the season, not just on your trail projects but also the growth in your confidence and skills. You transformed the trails but you also transformed yourselves.

Nov 29: As we hunker down for the winter here at Trail Mix, we're looking back at our amazing 2021 season. This was another groundbreaking season with the crews completing an ambitious 15 trail projects. During those 6 months, our crew members were hard at work graveling, slinging, chopping, and building bridges on trails like the Treadwell Ditch, Lena Point, and Outer Point. We're already deep in planning for next year and are getting excited for another season on the trails.



Nov 18: Out with the old and in with the new! This week we held our own version of demolition derby out at the Eagle Valley Center. Now that the new elevated walkway is complete, it was time to remove the old, broken walkway from the Eagle Valley Center.



To get this project going, crew members first pried off all the low railings with a pry bar. After that began the hard work of stripping the decking from the stringers. Since much of the wood on this walkway was rotting or waterlogged, crew members were able to whack it loose with a sledgehammer. The base of the structure was comprised of large stringers and logs. To move these heavy pieces, crew members first chainsawed the wood into more manageable pieces. Then they pried apart the pieces and carried them away.

Removing the old walkway was the last step to completing our work at the Eagle Valley Center. Huge thank you to Duncan, Dane, Cedar, Liam, Sam, and Ambrose for sticking it out till the end of the season and completing this demolition.

Nov 16: If you want to kayak, cabin, hike, or bike at Amalga Meadows, your journey just got easier with the new Eagle Valley Center elevated walkway!

Perhaps best known for the Amalga Cabin, this area out the road is host to a plethora of outdoor rec opportunities including Horse Tram trail, the SAIL ropes course, Kayak Beach, and the Eagle Valley Center (EVC).

To reach everything besides the EVC, you will now be taking this 160 ft long walkway, which replaced an older structure that spanned the muddy creek bed. To build it, the crew used a helical pier driver to install pairs of piers (metal poles that thread into the ground). The top of the piers were fitted with large brackets to install wood posts, which were braced with beams to stabilize the pair as one unit. These formed the walkway's foundation and allowed the crew to build the rest of the structure across.



Getting this right was important to facilitate easy access to SAIL's ropes course, as some participants may have different mobility needs. The new walkway is also higher than before to ensure the structure will be above typical flood waters, which should make it safer as well as last longer.

This was a big project and involved a lot of our crew members including Laib, Duncan, Ambrose, Sam, Sarah, Brittney, Liam, Maddie, Meghan, Cedar, Sage, Jean, Jessie, Julio, Mike, and Dane. Thanks for your dedication!

Nov 9: From pavement to park at Duck Creek!

Trail Mix partnered with Southeast Alaska Watershed Coalition, MRV Architects, and Juneau Parks & Recreation build a pond and tiny park at Duck Creek as part of improvements associated with the Stephen Richards Drive and Mendenhall Loops Road Roundabout projects.



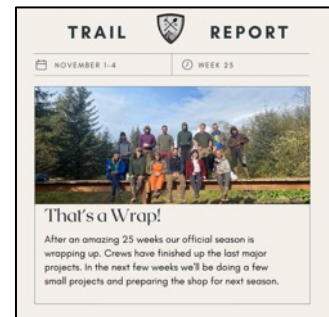
After creating the wetland pond earlier this season, it was onto revamping an old driveway into a green space. The crew started by using a skidsteer to break up the existing blacktop and build a little hillock that will eventually be covered with plants. Then they used gravel to create a curving trail through the area and finished it with a plate compactor to make a clean edge. Two concrete barriers that had blocked vehicles from entering the area were repurposed to serve as benches along the trail.

There is still more landscaping that will happen next spring, but we're glad to have collaborated with so many stellar partners to remake this corridor into an inviting community space.

Thanks to Cedar, Jean, Jessie, Julio, and Dane for working on this!

Nov 8: As the temps start to dip below freezing, our crew members are starting to wrap up a long, productive season. Last week, we completed two major projects. Crew members finished installing railings and building approaches at The Eagle Valley Center elevated walkway. Closer to town, crew members completed work on the Duck Creek Pocket Park. Stay tuned for more in-depth transformations of both these projects!

In the next couple weeks, crew members will be addressing trail damage reports, cleaning up work sites, and doing tool maintenance to finish out the season. Thank you for all the love and support this season!



Nov 2: You've been waiting for it all season. Drumroll please 🥁... the Nielsen Creek Bridge is finished!

Replacing a steep scramble down a ravine into a creek bed, this 46 foot-long bridge is the second largest on Treadwell Ditch (only 4 feet shy of Lawson Creek for those curious). It required excavating rock in order to create space for one of the bridge's abutments, building gabion baskets for the abutments, flying in bridge beams that weigh 2200 pounds, and harnessing up in order to install beam braces and decking.



This was quite an undertaking and nearly everyone helped out on this project at some point, whether on Treadwell Ditch or off site as part of the helicopter support crew. Special thanks to the core crew of Garrett, Jean, Jessie, Julio, and Dane who carried this one through.

While we are so happy to have completed the bridge, there is still work to be done on the trail to bring it level with the bridge.

These approaches will be built next season so please use caution getting on and off.

SITKA TRAIL WORKS, INC.

Nov 18: On snowy days like this, it's hard not to be drawn to the glimmering view of Verstovia. Here's a trail that's been around for quite a few years! The Russians operated a forge about a 1/4 mile up the trail and the "Verstovia" refers to the fact that the mountain is almost exactly 1,000 meters tall, one "verst" in old Russian.

<https://sitkatrailworks.org/mount-verstovia-trail/>



November 10: A PSA from the USFS Sitka Ranger District: Blue Lake Road & Harbor Mountain Road are now gated and closed to cars for the winter season. The roads are open for walking though and both make for a nice family stroll.

Nov 9: Sitka Trail Works on the cover of the Daily Sitka Sentinel! We're starting work on the bridge this month that will connect the two ends of the trail!

Shared from

Daily Sitka Sentinel added a new photo to the album: Front Page Photos 2021.

November 9: CROSS TRAIL CROSSING – Troy Bayne uses an excavator to buttress the embankment of No Name Creek to prepare it for a bridge on the newest section of the Sitka Cross Trail Sunday. The new trail segment goes from Harbor Mountain Road to the Starrigavan boat launch parking lot. When the segment is complete it will be possible to walk from Indian River to the Starrigavan trail system without stepping foot on a highway. (Sentinel Photo by James Poulson)



SOUTHEAST LINKS

- Sitka National Historical Park reopens Totem Trail Loop for daytime use: <https://tinyurl.com/39k5wcwm>

NATIONWIDE NEWS AND NOTICES

ADVOCATE FOR TRAIL PRIORITIES IN BUILD BACK BETTER ACT

ADVOCATE With the House of Representatives advancing the Build Back Better Act, Congress is one step closer to passing historic reconciliation legislation that would provide hundreds of millions of dollars for trails, parks, natural climate solutions, and expanded corps programs to address trail and public lands maintenance needs. The American Hiking Society has been advocating all year for these critical programs, sending multiple letters to Congress, activating the hiking community, and meeting with congressional offices to ensure your voice is heard. The time is now to make your voice heard to ensure these critical investments are included in the final bill.

The American Hiking Society has an easy sign-on letter for you to add your name. (You can personalize it, too.) These provisions would benefit all trail users, not just hikers. **Add your name here:** <https://americanhiking.org/advocacy/include-hiker-priorities-in-the-build-back-better-act/>

From Paperless Trail, the American Hiking Society newsletter

APPLY NOW FOR THE 2022 ALTERNATIVE BREAK SCHOLARSHIP

APPLY American Hiking Society's Alternative Breaks are volunteer trail stewardship projects in America's parks and forests designed specifically for college student groups and young professionals during their spring breaks.

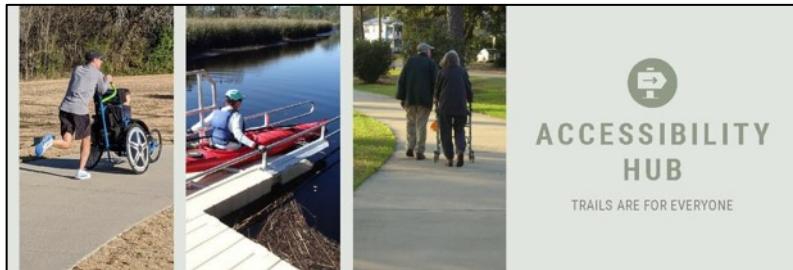
AHS has two scholarships available for college student groups to participate in a week-long service trip that provides leadership training, team-building opportunities, outdoor skills instruction from leaders in the field, and critical conservation work to a park or forest in need. The Alternative Break Scholarship is need-based. All are encouraged to apply, but priority will be given to students that have historically faced barriers to accessing outdoor programming.

Apply here: <https://tinyurl.com/dnfm8>



AMERICAN TRAILS CREATES HUB FOR ACCESSIBLE TRAILS

The demand for outdoor recreation on federal lands has increased dramatically over the last 30-years, and it is expected to continue to rise. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought this into dramatic focus, as trails and public land use across the country are seeing 200-400% increases by Americans seeking the respite and well-being that outdoor recreation can provide. Yet, for a multitude of complex reasons, the majority of Americans—including persons with disabilities—still do not participate in outdoor recreation.



Access for people with disabilities is often perceived as a secondary consideration to other, more pressing needs. One of the underlying issues here is that many people (not just federal land managers) tend to "pigeon hole" the access issue as simply another

special need of yet another minor constituency. For accessibility to receive a higher share of the resources that are available, resource allocators need to recognize that accessibility is an issue that does or will affect everyone. While it is true that the federal land management agencies have been expected to do more with less in recent years, it is also true that accessibility for persons with disabilities can be advanced in ways that compliment and augment other efforts to better serve ALL Americans who recreate on public lands.

To help with this issue American Trails has created a Trail Accessibility Hub:

www.americantrails.org/resources/accessibility-hug

From American Trails website

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

- ConservationVIP News (Nov): <https://tinyurl.com/yvfusuwz>

FUNDING

- National Forest Foundation awards (deadline Jan 13): <http://tinyurl.com/px7y6ke>
- Yamaha Outdoor Access Initiative (OHVs, next deadline Dec 15): <https://yamahaoai.com/>

OTHER NATIONAL LINKS:

- Favorite Nordic Centers in the Pacific NW: <https://tinyurl.com/h5hhzuzc>
- National Recreation Trails Photo Contest (deadline December 15): <https://lnkd.in/gVJ9WfPw>
- Coalition for Recreational Trails 2021 Achievement Awards: <https://tinyurl.com/2p8uyxmd>

SLIGHTLY OFF-TRAIL

- 2021 American Trails Costume Contest Results!: <https://tinyurl.com/3hxr8be8>
- 'Nimblewill Nomad,' 83, is the oldest to hike the Appalachian Trail: <https://tinyurl.com/faccthyw>
- American Trails' 2021 Holiday Gift Guide for Outdoor Lovers: <https://tinyurl.com/y9m5jyna>

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