



NEWSLETTER

NOV
2020

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www.alaska-trails.org

ALASKA TRAILS NEWS AND NOTICES

TRAILHEAD TUESDAY CELEBRATES TRAILS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

SUBMIT On our Facebook page we try to highlight a new trail every Tuesday. We'd love for you to submit a trail! This Google form has all the info we need: <https://forms.gle/4aTMouqo5yCc2AT28>. You can also message us on Facebook or send us an email to: steve.cleary@alaska-trails.org. (We'll need a photo and short description of the trail and why you like it. We'd also appreciate if you could include a link that leads to a website with more information about the trail.)

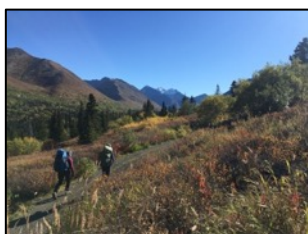
We'll keep including the Trailhead Tuesdays in this newsletter (for our non-Facebook members and everyone else). If you are on Facebook and want to see them sooner, just like our page. Check out these recent Trailhead Tuesdays!

Oct 13: It's [#TrailheadTuesday](#) and today we're heading to the Beaver Pond Trail System in Girdwood, home of the Dena'ina people.

The Beaver Pond Trail System is a 2.75 mile traverse that runs along the foot of the mountains from the Bird to Gird Trail to California Creek. The Beaver Pond Trail is mostly flat/rolling terrain through dense rainforest and crosses several avalanche paths. Abe's Trail and the California Creek Trail are more primitive uphill routes that branch off the Beaver Pond Trail to explore the California Creek Valley. These are year-round multi-use trails, be aware of wildlife and avalanche conditions. Trailhead signage at the California Creek trailhead and waypoint markers on the Beaver Pond Trail were added in 2020 with grant funding from Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm Heritage Area in collaboration with the Girdwood Trails Committee and Alaska State Parks. Planning, design and installation of the signs was a local Eagle Scout project.



Oct 6: Today we're heading to a Southcentral classic: the South Fork Valley Trail in Eagle River, home of the Dena'ina people. This is a popular hike, but perhaps less well known are the inviting side trails. These include a signed route up to Hunter Pass on the ridge separating the South Fork and Ship Creek valleys and a social trail into Hanging Valley. For those with the energy for bigger rewards – continue past either Eagle or Symphony Lakes up into beautiful alpine valleys. The trail head is located by turning right on S. Creek Road off Highland.



More info on the trail here: <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/maps/southforkvalleytrail.pdf>

INITIATIVE MAKING PROGRESS FOR TRAILS STATEWIDE

GET INVOLVED Did you know that Alaska Trails is building a strong coalition of trails organizations and advocates from around the state?

The Alaska Trails Initiative (ATI) is collaborating with leaders in government, business, the health industry, and the non-profit sector to invest in more and better trails all over Alaska.

While Alaska has underinvested in trails for decades, the desire by both residents and visitors to be active and healthy outside has never been stronger, and Alaska's trails and trailheads have seen their busiest summer ever. Better trails create more reasons for visitors to spend time (and money) in Alaska, supporting local businesses and our economy. These same investments support healthier lives and more attractive, better connected communities. With smart expansion in our trail systems Alaska can offer the high quality, intensely used places that many people enjoy, and the quiet, less visited valleys and ridgelines so many of us treasure.

The ATI's has had several recent achievements including:

- Helped secure \$1.3M in funding for trail projects
- Launched the Alaska Long Trail
- Working to "unclog the federal outdoor recreation funding pipelines"
- Trails Sustainable Strategy for Tongass National Forest

To see more about the ATI see: www.alaska-trails.org/alaska-trails-initiative. If you want to get involved or have ideas about the ATI, please contact us at: www.alaska-trails.org/contact

SEEN RECENTLY ON OUR FACEBOOK PAGE

Oct 27: We teamed up with the Student Conservation Association to design some trails in Arctic Valley. Then the first snow came. The crew migrated down to the Middle Fork Trail. Now more snow may have finished the season. Alaska Geographic is also a partner and is putting together a video to inspire young people and show them the career options in the trails realm.

(photos from AK GEO's William Melton last Tuesday)



October 19: Here's the APM story on the Little O'Malley Peak Trail!

Shared from

Alaska Public Media

Oct 19: "With all this craziness going on, it's nice to see an opportunity out here. And this is a place where folks can get away from it and have a good connection with the environment," said Kurt Hensel, superintendent of Chugach State Park.

Just before winter sets in, workers finish work on popular Anchorage hiking trail:

<https://tinyurl.com/y2etzx8y>



October 16: Anyone take photos of Eklutna Lake this summer? Particularly of the overgrown trail? (on the other side from this photo) We are applying for a Recreational Trails Program grant and are looking for photos of the alder bashing. Please post below or contact us at office@alaska-trails.org

October 15: Our Take A Hike - or Whatever You Like Fundraiser was a great success. We raised over \$8,000! Thanks to all those who donated and special thanks to all of our prize sponsors including:

- Beaver Sports
- Alaska Railroad
- Skinny Raven Sports
- Arctic Valley
- The Hoarding Marmot
- Moose's Tooth / Bear

Tooth

- REI

We are very grateful for the great prizes you contributed to make our event a success! The prizes are headed out the door today 😊

Oct 14: Thank you to everyone that participated in Take A Hike! It was a huge success and we couldn't have done it without you. Your support means the world to us, and we're excited to have you alongside as we continue to build and plan and for the future of trails in Alaska.

A big thank you again to all our event sponsors: Moose's Tooth, Skinny Raven Sports, Beaver Sports, Arctic Valley Ski Area, Alaska Railroad, REI, Revelate Designs, and The Hoarding Marmot. Prize winners will be randomly selected and notified in the coming week.



STATEWIDE NEWS AND NOTICES

ALASKA LONG TRAIL FEATURED ON PODCAST/RADIO SHOW

The Alaska Long Trail is featured on Outdoor Explorer podcast/radio show. Below is a description of the trail and show. The radio show aired in late October, but you can still access it as a podcast. To find out more and how to access the show see: <https://tinyurl.com/y3lou92f>

Long trails are found all over the world and have given rise to thru-hiking, which is to travel a trail either straight through from end to end or to break it into smaller segments, returning over and over again until the hiker has completed the trail. In the United States, the Appalachian Trail and the Pacific Crest Trail are the most famous of the bucket list thru-hikes. Alaska already has one of the oldest National Historic Trails, the Iditarod Trail. We also have many mining and timber roads, waterways, and social trails, that if connected and maintained, would be one of the most ecologically diverse trails in the world. Our guests this week, Alaska Trails board secretary Chris Beck, former Governor Tony Knowles, and videographer Max Romey are going to share the planning process, the potential routes, and the economic benefits of the Alaska Long Trail.

FOREST SERVICE SEEKS INPUT ABOUT OUTDOOR RECREATION

COMMENT The US Forest Service - Alaska Region is seeking your input on proposed outdoor recreation and infrastructure projects for 2022, and feedback on project ideas for 2023 through 2025. Use the interactive web map which has details of the proposed projects on the Chugach and Tongass National Forests: <https://tinyurl.com/y2fz3a2m>. (Comments are due on November 3.)

COMMENTS CHANGE PLANS FOR BISON GULCH TRAIL PARKING

Only seven people commented on a proposal to change parking for the unofficial Bison Gulch trail near Denali, but the comments made a difference.

According to the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities will now leave the current parking lot and build another one on the other side of the Parks Highway and a little north of the current one. This will leave current access to the trail. The proposal would have removed the current parking lot when the new one was built.

The department had made the proposal at the request of the Denali Borough, which is seeking to add trails in that area. The current Bison Gulch trail climbs steeply up a ridge and ultimately accesses Mount Healy. Among other things, at least one of the new trails would provide a more gradual approach to the ridge. However, the proposed new trail would be longer than the current trail. That was one of the objections brought up by commenters. Now, if all happens as planned, the new trails would be in addition to the current trail.

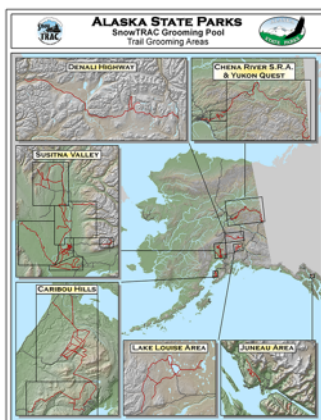
Another commenter brought up a point that the nearby Nenana Canyon would be an excellent place for a new trail. If such a trail is built, the current parking lot would be on the correct side of the highway for access.

For the full FDMN story see: <https://tinyurl.com/y65ayntu>



WINTER TRAIL GROOMING PROGRAMS NEED YOUR HELP

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



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

If you use an area that is clearly groomed and has a grooming fund, make sure to donate. Not all trails that are groomed have a specific grooming fund, but you can also join or donate to the group that is doing the grooming. Look for signs that tell you how you can help.

Another thing you can do is support the Alaska Snowmachine Trails Program, which provides funds for grooming in several areas of the state. The grooming this program provides benefits more than snowmachiners. Anyone who uses the groomed trails benefits, including fatbikers, skiers, mushers, and hikers. You can't donate to the Snowmachine Trails Program, but you can help it by making sure to register your snowmachine, which is what funds the program. You can also serve on the SnowTRAC board, which advises the state administration on how the funds are spent. Finally, you can

advocate for the program. In years past, administrations have tried to cut the program as part of budget cutting measures. However, strong advocacy has kept the program alive.

To find out more about the program see: <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/grants/snowmotr.htm>
Most importantly, get out there and enjoy all the great winter trails we have in Alaska!

NEW DEADLINE FOR RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM APPLICATIONS

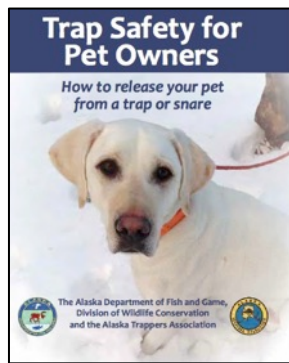
Applications for the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) are now due November 6.

The previous deadline had been October 23. Mandatory public notices for applications had to have been posted by September 23. For more information see: <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/grants/trails.htm>

The Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation administers Alaska's Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) RTP grant. 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

RESOURCES HELP REDUCE PET/TRAPPING CONFLICTS

Trapping season is here, 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

ALASKA STATE PARKS

BUY Oct 28: 2021 is just around the corner and Alaska State Parks Day-use Parking passes will be available on November 2!

Passes will be available online and at limited retailer locations: REI in Anchorage and Fairbanks, Hoarding Marmot (ANC), Paramount Cycles (ANC) Beaver Sports (FAI), and Kodiak Chamber of Commerce. Stay tuned for other locations.



Our DNR Public information Centers will have a limited amount for in-person purchase, but please buy online or with our retailer partners. Thank you! ❤️

DENALI NATIONAL PARK AND PRESERVE

Oct 26: Is the Park open in the winter?

Answer: Yes!

Is the Park Road open?

Answer: Currently open to Mile 3 for vehicles, past that - primitive recreational opportunities abound! like skiing, snowshoeing, fat tire biking, or get out there with a dog friend or two by mushing, skijoring or bikejoring

Camping?

Answer: Yes! - Riley Creek Campground is free to camp in for the winter months.

We have the "Indoor Picnic Area" (located next to the Murie Science and Learning Center) open to all from 9:30 am to 5 pm daily. Inside you can warm up, watch our park films and use the kettle for some warm drinks. Give us a call to do some trip planning - 907-683-9532 (9am-4pm daily.)

During the winter months, our park turns into a winter wonderland with so much potential for winter recreation. Come out and visit! - Help support the park by making sure you pay the entrance fee ... paying online is the easiest way, check out our page on rec.gov:

<https://www.recreation.gov/sitepass/74270>

ALASKA OUTDOOR ALLIANCE

Oct 19: Jen Leahy, Alaska coordinator for the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership, explains why Alaskans should get excited about Congress' proposal to modernize mapping on federal lands, embedding info like travel management and hunting season regulations all at the tap of an app. If you missed the Lunch and Learn, you can watch the video at your leisure. <https://tinyurl.com/y5p63kfu>

STATEWIDE LINKS

SLIGHTLY OFF-TRAIL

- **ENTER** Alaska State Parks 50th Anniversary Photo Contest (run **monthly**): <https://tinyurl.com/qnssp93>
- Road, logging restrictions to end in largest national forest: <https://tinyurl.com/yxvq9fwn>

SOUTHCENTRAL NEWS AND NOTICES

GROUP FIGHTS FOR ACCESS TO STEWART TRAIL NEAR ANCHORAGE

DONATE Access to a trail in the Potter Valley area has been under dispute for several years. Called the Stewart Trail, the old homestead road has been used for years by Anchorage residents. But since 2015, access to the trail has been blocked. Whether the trail is public or not is under dispute. The Alaska Landmine wrote an extensive piece on the issue under the provocative title "One Man's Mountain: How decades of dysfunction on the Anchorage Hillside allowed one man to gate the Stewart Trail and seize control of upper Potter Valley." Read it here (and consider donating to the publication):

<https://tinyurl.com/tlc67bw>

A group called Friends of Stewart Public Trail has formed to fight for public access to the trail. Below is a recent letter from the group.

Friends of the Stewart Public Trail (FOSPT) started the process of affirming public access to Stewart Trail in 2018. Although another summer has gone by with the access obstructed by two property owners, FOSPT is now in the homestretch of getting to a court decision on summary judgment. If successful, this would affirm that the Stewart Trail is a public easement, and access cannot be barricaded. With the encouragement to “get outside” during the pandemic it would have been wonderful to be able to access and use the trail without fear of harassment.



The pandemic is a major reason for the delay in the process with the court system shut down and all activity pushed forward. Attorney for FOSPT, Tom Meacham, filed the motion and memorandum for summary judgment in June. (In short, summary judgment means the facts in the case are not in material dispute, and the judge can rule without a trial.) Defendants Pugh and Cavanaugh recently filed their opposition briefs. FOSPT submitted responses to their opposition briefs in October. This will be followed eventually by oral argument (requested), after which the judge will decide.

Several factors, including the pandemic, number of affidavits, etc. have led to legal costs exceeding original estimates. 100% of donations to the Friends of the Stewart Trail are dedicated to legal costs.

If you would like to help create the public easement and once again gain access to Chugach State Park via the Stewart Trail, please consider a donation.

You can donate either by a check made out to Friends of the Stewart Public Trail and sent to FOSPT, 17801 Steamboat Drive, Anchorage, AK 99516, or via [PayPal.Me/FriendsStewartTrail](https://www.paypal.com/US/cgi-bin/?page=signup).

If you'd like a copy of any of the legal documents, email Friends of the Stewart Public Trail, friendsofthestewarttrail@gmail.com

Photo used under Creative Commons license courtesy Paxson Woelber, The Alaska Landmine

EFFORT ORGANIZED TO SAVE MAT-SU GREENBELT TRAILS

SEND A LETTER The following excerpt came from an email sent out earlier in October from the Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation.

The Future of the Matanuska Greenbelt is Under Threat!

A project is underway to evaluate a potential gravel pit in the heart of the Matanuska Greenbelt. Together, we must act to protect the largest uninterrupted greenspace in the heart of the Mat-Su!

The Save the Matanuska Greenbelt Advocacy Group has released a second letter for community members to send to the University of Alaska Board of Regents urging a transparent process that considers public testimony and an end to the damage of this well-loved recreation area.

Send the second letter: www.savethematanuskagreenbelt.org/call-to-action

What's Happening?

On August 4th, 2020, UAF Matanuska Experiment Farm and Extension Center (MEFEC) Resource Assessment Project began on and near trails and trail access in the Matanuska Greenbelt that pass-through MEFEC lands. The resource assessment project includes evaluating a 70-acre area near the eastern property boundary adjacent to frequently used trails in the Matanuska Greenbelt Trail system.

During the initial assessment process, farm roads and trails that are part of the MGT system were damaged.

The damage occurred on MEFEC and State of Alaska lands, and include the Rabbit Field Road, the Rabbit Field Connector, the Long Lake Connector, and the Long Lake Loop.

Beginning in September, the second phase of assessment began, which included drilling boreholes. UA stated on the project website that "None of the test pits or boreholes planned for the assessment will occur on trails."

Unfortunately, it was discovered that during this phase of assessment, a borehole was drilled in the middle of a well-used trail on MEFEC land.



Since that email came out, more has been done. These two posts were seen recently on Facebook:

MAT-SU TRAILS AND PARKS FOUNDATION

Oct 24: Thank you so much to everyone who made the Matanuska Greenbelt Stakeholder Meeting on Thursday night possible! If you were unable to watch the Livestream, here is the full recorded video of the meeting!

On October 22, 2020, the Matanuska Greenbelt Advocacy committee hosted a stakeholder meeting featuring testimony from various stakeholders across the valley and a facilitated discussion with UA and UAF Leadership.

For more information visit -> <https://www.savethematanuskagreenbelt.org>

FRIENDS OF STATE PARKS, MAT-SU

Oct 23: An excerpt from a recent letter Friends of State Parks, Ma-Su submitted to the University of Alaska Board of Regents regarding the test pits being dug and the prospective gravel pit at the UAF Matanuska Experiment Farm & Extension Center (MEFEC) —

“The MEFEC sits upon and is adjacent to land that holds a great deal of local history. The destruction of this farmland will therefore also be destruction to our heritage. Additionally, this land contributes to the largest, uninterrupted public space in the core of the Mat-Su Valley, shared harmoniously with Borough land (accessed by the Crevasse Moraine Trail System) and State land (accessed through Kepler Park and the Matanuska Lake State Recreation Area). The trails, including those along the farms of the MEFEC, provide unfettered access to over 33 miles of year-round trails for walkers, runners, mountain bikers, equestrians, skiers, snowshoers and wildlife. There is already damage done on some of these trails as the result of digging the test pits. Our community has put tens of thousands of dollars and hundreds of hours of volunteer labor to build and maintain these trails, and the University managed to damage that value in just one week.

Our Board represents many active users of the Greenbelt and are certainly supporters of higher education, but we are disappointed in the University for not consulting those of us who will be negatively affected by these long-lasting and harmful decisions....”

TRAIL NEWS FROM THE ANCHORAGE PARK FOUNDATION

The following notices were included in a recent Anchorage Park Foundation newsletter:

Community Park Projects Need Help

VOLUNTEER Many park improvement projects come to life through the dedicated efforts of community members and volunteers working together.

This summer, our challenge grant recipients had the added challenge of a global pandemic causing project leaders to pause, rethink, and adapt their plans. Many community-led projects are delayed and still working hard to raise the donations they need to meet their grant match. Learn more about how you can support a project in your neighborhood.

Two projects are trail-related: Rabbit Creek Park Trail Improvements and the Folker Park Reflexology Path. See those and all the Community Challenge Grant projects at:

<https://anchorageparkfoundation.org/programs/challenge-grants/>

Safer Crossing Petition

SIGN PETITION Our existing trails and city streets form a 32-mile loop around our beautiful city!



Although this Moose Loop can be completed in its current form, there are some gaps in the route, navigation challenges, and a difficult crossing at Lake Otis on the Campbell Creek Trail. Help advocate for a safer bike and pedestrian crossing by signing this Safe Crossing petition.

See more and sign the petition here: <https://tinyurl.com/y5otsqv3>

Take Learning Outside

Join us for a free virtual learning series aimed at helping parents and educators inspire learning in the outdoors. Make learning fun and engaging through a variety of tools and activities designed to get kids learning from the natural world around them.

This program is sponsored by the Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance. Check it out at:

<https://www.iditarod100.org/itrec-education-program.html>

SEEN RECENTLY ON SOUTHCENTRAL FACEBOOK PAGES

VALLEY MOUNTAIN BIKERS AND HIKERS

Oct 23: If you missed our Stakeholder meeting, it is now on YouTube! <https://tinyurl.com/yxq4jxnx>

SINGLETRACK ADVOCATES



Oct 22: We made great progress on the new Hemlock Burn Trail this fall. But the oncoming winter has stopped construction for this season. We'll finish up the rest of the trail in the spring. The team at Happy Trails did a great job building this beautiful trail! A huge thank you to Chugach State Park and the Municipality of Anchorage for partnering with us on the project. And thank you to all of you for your letters of support for the trail. Photo by @akgreeff

ALASKA STATE PARKS

Oct 19: Thanks to our fantastic trail partners, Chugach Park Fund (CPF) and Alaska Trails for their work on the Little O'Malley trail. The work began with CPF fundraising efforts years ago as they envisioned an ASP 50th anniversary project:

<https://tinyurl.com/y2etzx8y>

The efforts this summer hired locals to do the dirty work (literally) and will benefit all who venture this way in the future.

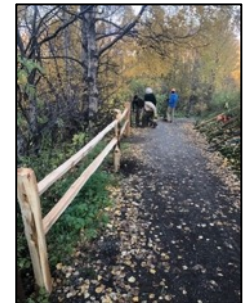
THANK YOU! ❤️ Photo by Dan Saddler



MAT-SU BOROUGH RECREATION AND LIBRARY SERVICES

September 30: The Mat Su Borough Trail Crew spent time installing a split rail fence on the West Butte Trail. This fence is intended to encourage people to stay on the trail and not cut through between trail sections. When people cut through between trail sections, it causes erosion issues that can damage the trail and could lead to trail closures.

More improvements will be coming to the West Butte Trail next season to further help with human caused erosion issues. This project is being funded by a grant from the Mat Su Trails and Parks Foundation and Usibelli Coal. Their help and support are greatly appreciated!



SOUTHCENTRAL LINKS

- Alaska hiking 101: Beware the 'seductively close' end of the trail: <https://tinyurl.com/y5zcganh>
- Aggressive bear causes closure of area near Anchorage park: <https://tinyurl.com/y4tel57o>

SLIGHTLY OFF-TRAIL

- Swimming Alaska (on canoe trails): <https://tinyurl.com/y488gr72>
- **SIGN** Turnagain Pass Plowing Initiative Gains Momentum: <https://tinyurl.com/y6h54cyr>
- Initiative calls on Gov. Mike Dunleavy to restore Turnagain Pass snow plow funding: <https://tinyurl.com/y46q36bg>

INTERIORWIDE NEWS AND NOTICES

SHORT TRAIL TO TOLOVANA HOT SPRINGS CLOSED BY LANDOWNER

The shortest trail to the popular Tolovana Hot Springs has been closed by a landowner.

The hot springs has at least one other trail that accesses it, but the one used by most people is a 10-mile trail that starts on the Elliott Highway. A one-mile portion of the beginning of that trail has been closed by Doyon, Ltd., the landowner.

According to Doyon, "it is willing to work with Tolovana Hot Springs for access and worked for about a year to reach agreeable terms for a permit for the Tolovana Hot Springs business to use the trail and parking lot for their business." You can read the full text of Doyon's statement here:

<https://tinyurl.com/y5ftywsg>

The owners of Tolovana Hot Springs have not commented to the media about the situation.

The business has hot tubs and rental cabins on land that it leases from the federal Bureau of Land Management.

Both KUAC and the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner have done stories on the issue.

- KUAC - Tolovana Hot Springs Access Blocked: <https://tinyurl.com/y39ume8z>
- FDNM stories
 - Go for a soak, end up with a ticket?: Doyon issues trespass notice for Tolovana Hot Springs trailhead: <https://tinyurl.com/y67lmay5>
 - Doyon issues statement on Tolovana Hot Springs access: <https://tinyurl.com/yyuork7r>

PORTIONS OF ADMA TRAILS INCLUDED IN REFUGE ADDITION

Portions of several Alaska Dog Mushing Association trails now have greater protections because of several land deals by The Conservation Fund.

The nonprofit group, which has dual goals of environmental preservation and economic development, recently finalized land deals that resulted in 530 acres being added to Creamer's Field Migratory Waterfowl State Game Refuge. Several portions of ADMA trails cross that land. Much of the ADMA trail network is already in the refuge.

To read the group's press release about the land being transferred to the refuge see:

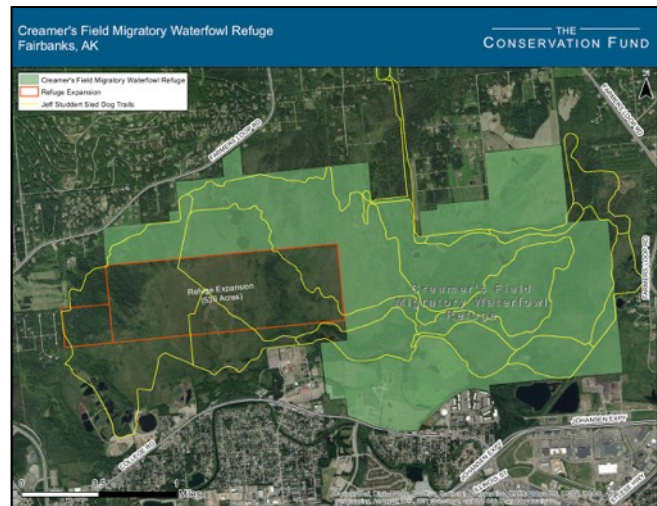
<https://tinyurl.com/y5bdycq4>

The Fairbanks Daily News-Miner also did a story: <https://tinyurl.com/y4oqfsx7>

While the land transfer has generally been praised by trail advocates, it was not without controversy. The largest chunk of land was involved in a subdivision in which protections for other parts of ADMA trails were given up. You can read about that here:

- The Case of the ADMA Trails and Creamer's Field: <https://tinyurl.com/r29c5vx>
- The Continuing Case of the ADMA Trails and Creamer's Field: <https://tinyurl.com/wbh8xph>
- Planning Board Approves Variance Affecting ADMA Trails: <https://tinyurl.com/txh6kxm>

The Conservation Fund is reportedly trying to secure more land to add to the refuge.



VOLUNTEERS CLEAR MASTODON TRAIL OF MOST DOWNED TREES

CLEAR TREES, BRUSH Much of the Mastodon Trail, the newest trail in the Chena River State Recreation Area has been cleared thanks to volunteers.

In the September issue of this newsletter it was reported that the Mastodon Trail, a nonmotorized multi-use trail finished last year, had many downed trees across it. The trees were largely damaged by a forest fire last summer, making them susceptible to falling.

Since that time three volunteers spent a couple days of their time working to clear the trail. Here is an email explaining what happened from Tom Paragi, one of the volunteers.



Over the last two sunny Saturdays, Jim Brader and I (joined this past Saturday by Ned Rozell) biked in with my chainsaw and cleared the fallen dead trees from the 2019 Nugget fire off the Mastadon trail. By the second trip we made it almost to the old dozer line crossing near mile 10, so most of the way to Nugget cabin. We also kicked loose rocks off the tread so it is a great bike trail until we get too much snow. Encourage people to get out and enjoy it. Last weekend before any snow there were at least 15 people on the trail based on our encounters, possibly more who took shorter trips. There is no shortage of dry wood for winter camping!



Once non-motorized trails are built, we don't need expensive machinery or government programs to do most maintenance, we simply need users willing to volunteer a little time periodically. I've attached my photos of my simple trail clearing machine (chainsaw chaps and saw gear on front rack), plus Ned and Jim walking bikes uphill as we frequently stopped to clear deadfalls. Ned took the photo of me undercutting a large spruce snag across the trail.

I encourage people who use non-motorized trails to consider taking a small saw or hatchet when hiking, biking, or skiing to help keep trails clear of smaller deadfalls or shrubs that snow bends over the trail. Everyone pitching in a few minutes on their trip helps keep trails open for all to enjoy and spread out the work.

Last winter 3 people helped me open about 40% of the Mist Creek trail, which was also affected by the Nugget fire. I hope to chip away at it again once the river freezes near the shooting range at 36 mile CHSR and get it open to the Mastadon trail this winter. It is a much shorter route for packraft loops out the South Fork in summer and ski loops to the cabin in winter.

Top photo of trail work by Ned Rozell; bottom photo of a trail-clearing outfitted bike by Tom Paragi

DRIVEWAY ON GOLDSTREAM TRAIL CAUSES CONCERNS

There has been a bit of a change on a small part of a Goldstream Valley trail.



Someone has built a driveway along a small portion of the Tanana Valley Railroad Trail that runs along the south side of Goldstream Valley on the west side of Ballaine Road. The driveway takes off from the northern part of Miller Hill Road and heads west.

This trail gets much more use in winter, so many people might not have noticed the change. It's uncertain if and how the driveway will affect trail users. I have been told that the driveway owners don't plan to block the trail. They have cleared a space just off the trail and hope to build a place before full winter hits. However, I have not talked to

the landowners directly. If they don't block the trail, and it's not plowed down to dirt/gravel, then it may not be a problem. Time will tell.

For more on this story see: <https://tinyurl.com/y3e7ft3y>

CHANGES MADE TO UAF TRAIL TO IMPROVE DRAINAGE

The University of Alaska Fairbanks is doing some drainage work on a section of the Skarland 6-Mile Trail in an attempt to make the trail tread drier during summer and fall.

Trails Manager Jason Garron recently installed three six-inch pipes along a section of trail south of Ballaine Lake in order to help water drain away from the trail. Parts of that section of trail are often wet throughout the summer. Wood chips have been used to cover the surface of the trail. While that worked for a while to keep the trail dry, the chips are organic and eventually decompose until they reach a point where they start becoming part of the muck.

Stan Justice, from the UAF Trails Club, has proposed adding more pipes in other areas to help drain water from the trail. He has also proposed that gravel be added to the trail to create a more durable surface that drains better, using the T-Field road as an example.

SEEN RECENTLY ON INTERIOR FACEBOOK PAGES

BLM-WHITE MOUNTAINS NATIONAL RECREATION AREA

October 2: E-bikes can be a great way for more Americans to recreate on & experience #publiclands. Check out Alaska's Quartz Creek trail in the BLM-White Mountains National Recreation Area on your #ebike today. It offers 16 miles of beautiful scenery! Expanded ebike opportunities coming soon to a community near you.

Read: <https://tinyurl.com/y6e8npaz>

FAIRBANKS AREA HIKING CLUB FAN PAGE



Maxwell Plichta > Fairbanks Area Hiking Club Fan Page

Oct 4: I made the trek out to Mastodon Dome (south of Eagle Summit) yesterday and was dismayed to discover destruction on par with the Pinnell Mountain Trail. Seeing the damage first hand has really impacted me. I'm planning on calling and or emailing AKDNR and AKFG to voice my concerns. If anyone has advice about who specifically to get in touch with I would appreciate the help.

INTERIORWIDE LINKS

- A good summer on the trails for hikers looking for a challenge (FDNM): <https://tinyurl.com/yya8ebdf>
- One last hike before the snow hits (FDNM): <https://tinyurl.com/y3ahwrd2>
- After trail damage during Fortymile caribou hunt, worries persist about next opening (FDNM): <https://tinyurl.com/y4ov9fto>

SLIGHTLY OFF-TRAIL

- Exercising outdoors a great idea during the pandemic (FDNM): <https://tinyurl.com/y5st956m>

SEEN RECENTLY ON SOUTHEAST FACEBOOK PAGES

CITY AND BOROUGH OF JUNEAU

Oct 9: Eaglecrest Ski Area's CCC Trail Crew has nearly completed the Dick's Lake Trail, a beautiful hiking loop located at the top of Black Bear Chairlift.

The beginning portion of the trail follows the cat track traverse to East Bowl Chutes. There's a fork a short distance in, and hikers can loop left for excellent views of the ski area, Fish Creek Valley and beyond. Going right leads straight to Dick's Lake.

The trail is about 2,000 feet long, and only a 200-foot section at the farthest end of the loop remains to be finished.

If you're hiking on the mountain, be sure to make way for heavy machinery and Eaglecrest staff as they work hard to finish up their projects before the snow falls. 🌨️



TRAIL MIX, INC.

DONATE/BID Oct 28: Trail Mix's annual fundraiser is when we ask our community to support our work of building and maintaining Juneau's trails. Just like our trail crews, we're adapting to pandemic restrictions and are holding an online auction that will take place Nov 18-21, 2020.




There are 2 ways to support us: you can donate an item or experience to be auctioned off, and you can bid.

We already have some fabulous items that we're excited to share with you, but we'd love to see your

crafts, hobbies, and skills supporting Juneau's trails.

If you'd like to contribute to the auction, go to bit.ly/trailmixauctiondonation to register your item or experience. Otherwise, hang tight as we'll be sharing more soon.

Oct 27: This #transformationtuesday is a project we're especially pumped about! SAIL  is taking over the Eagle Valley Center challenge course, and we are assisting by upgrading the surrounding trails. This means removing slippery boards and widening the trail to make it easier for people with mobility devices to access the challenge course.

There's still more work to do, but we are looking forward to when the trail and challenge course are ready to welcome visitors again.

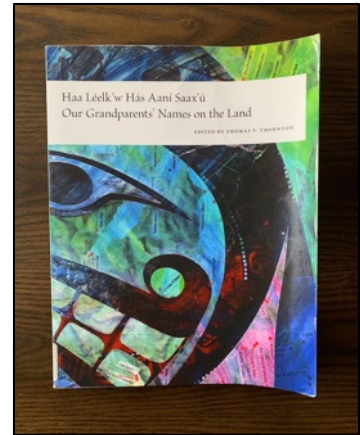


Oct 12: It's Indigenous Peoples Day, so we wanted to pull back the curtain on how we include place names and land acknowledgments for our posts.

Haa Léelk'w Hás Aaní Saax'ú / Our Grandparents' Names on the Land is an incredible, detailed compendium of research from the Southeast Native Subsistence Project that was published with the support of @shinstitute. This book includes maps, place names, translations, photos and history and is available from Juneau Public Library. There are over 3000 Tlingit, Haida and other Native place names in here!

When traveling outside of Southeast, we also recommend the Native Land app or website (native-land.ca), which uses your location to provide the Indigenous territories you are on.

Why does this matter? To quote the introduction of Haa Léelk'w Hás Saax'ú: "Above all, the aim of this book is to promote respect for Native names on the land. Respect not only for their resilience and resonance but for all of their significations — their meanings. Native place names have much to teach us about the landscapes we inhabit, but we must have the patience to unpack their meanings and the willingness to understand the cultural perspectives and natural phenomena that inform them."



Oct 13: Did you know we're building 9 new bridges on Treadwell this season? This #transformationtuesday shows what happens after a bridge is installed. Swipe ← to check out the bridge approaches, built of logs (aka stringers), rocks, and gravel, to make the transition from trail to bridge a super smooth one for the user.

On Treadwell, we have both a trail crew and a volunteer group that work on different aspects of these improvements, so it's truly a team effort. Thank you to crew members Justine, Julio, and Jesse and volunteers Dave, Eric, Joe, and Bill!

October 6: This #transformationtuesday is all about water management 💧 on Red Mill. Swipe to see how the crew added slate to improve trail tread and removed ineffective water bars (an old trail technique that has since fallen out of favor).

Ambrose and crew members had to use sledgehammers to break up slate found on site before spreading it on the trail. These large angular pieces settle and allow water to pass through without washing out all the fines (the tiniest rock pieces) in the gravel.

That plus 64 drains (see our story for a beautiful montage) make this trail update complete.

A big thanks to crew members Elias, Holly, Laib, James, and Ambrose for all their work!



September 29: It's #transformationtuesday and we're throwing confetti 🎉 for the completion of the Granite Creek trail update. Swipe to see these haphazard boards form orderly steps.



This construction allows for a gradual navigation of these inclines instead of loose planks becoming potential slides or seesaws.

Shoutout to crew members Elias, Holly, Laib, James, and Ambrose for building all these boardwalk steps!

SAIL (SOUTHEAST ALASKA INDEPENDENT LIVING)

October 1: So excited to see the new trail upgrades happening at the Eagle Valley Center Challenge course! HUGE thank you to our partners the Juneau Parks & Recreation and Trail Mix, Inc. for the amazing work to get this challenge course back up and off the ground.... course grand opening coming at you Spring 2021! 😊

SOUTHEAST LINKS

- Gavan Hill Trail Hike In Horrible Weather- Sitka (video, 7 min): www.youtube.com/watch?v=gqSI1cll5lc
- The fall issue of Sitka Trail Works' "On the Paper Trail" is here!: <http://sitkatrailworks.org/news/>
- Trail Mix and city plan ahead as building season wraps up: <https://tinyurl.com/y2vzvyf6>

SLIGHTLY OFF-TRAIL

- Hiking East Sister here in Sitka (video, 6 minutes): <https://youtu.be/zGf7ISW3jKA>
- Climbing Harbor Mountain - Sitka (video, 4.5 min): www.youtube.com/watch?v=cS7RoikEzDY

NATIONWIDE NEWS AND NOTICES

THE 2020 NATIONAL RECREATION TRAILS PHOTO CONTEST IS OPEN

ENTER American Trails sponsors the annual contest for photographs of designated National Recreation Trails across the country. The annual contest provides awards in several categories and shows off entries (and previous winners) on the NRT website.

The goal is to highlight the diversity of the NRTs and to make more Americans familiar with these great trails. Contest organizers are looking for good photos of trail users as well as special facilities, art on the trails, management issues, construction, and volunteers. They also want to see entries that cover the many types and uses of National Recreation Trails throughout America.

The deadline for submissions is December 15.

For more information see: <https://tinyurl.com/y6epgn2z>

2021 SAFE ROUTES TO PARKS APPLICATIONS OPEN NOVEMBER 9

APPLY The Safe Routes Partnership invites communities and organizations working to improve safe, equitable access to local parks to apply for the 2021 Safe Routes to Parks Activating Communities program. The program provides tailored technical assistance for seven communities to develop Safe Routes to Parks action plans and awards \$12,500 to each community to begin implementing those plans.

Applications will open November 9 and will be accepted until December 18, 2020.

Find out more at: www.saferoutespartnership.org/healthy-communities/saferoutestoparks

From Safe Routes Partnership E-News

VOLUNTEER VACATIONS TRAIL CREW REQUESTS DUE DECEMBER 1

REQUEST A CREW The following message was included in the American Hiking Society October Paperless Trail newsletter. For more see there Volunteer Vacations Host Information website:

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

We understand that with volunteer cancellations and increased visitation, trail building and maintaining needs have gotten backlogged or remained incomplete. We are hopeful to be able to send you a crew of eager volunteers, ready to assist with your trail needs in 2021 through the Volunteer Vacations program. Requests for trail crews for 2021 are due December 1, 2020.

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/Calendar.html

TRAILS-RELATED NEWSLETTERS

- American Trails "Trail Tracks": www.americantrails.org/communications/newsletter

VOLUNTEER

- American Hiking Society's Volunteer Vacations: <http://tinyurl.com/ydh95kp8>
- American Trails [Volunteer Portal: www.americantrails.org/volunteer-opportunities](http://www.americantrails.org/volunteer-opportunities)
- Conservation Volunteers International Program newsletter (Sept): <https://tinyurl.com/yxeqp2ra>

OTHER NATIONAL LINKS:

- Purple Mountains: A Film About One Man's Journey to Find Common Ground In The Mountains — One Voter At A Time: www.purplemountainsfilm.com/
- Sometimes All it Takes is One Volunteer: <https://tinyurl.com/yxjt4yqp>
- Best Pants for Trail Work: <https://tinyurl.com/y6mgyy5l>
- An 'Awe Walk' Might Do Wonders for Your Well-Being: <https://tinyurl.com/y2xue9rm>
- Trump Administration Adds 1,275 Miles to the National Trail System: <https://tinyurl.com/y2a58u4d>

SLIGHTLY OFF-TRAIL

- No, That Mountain Lion Wasn't "Stalking" a Runner: <https://tinyurl.com/y59sdx7>
- Hiking in 6-Inch Heels: <https://tinyurl.com/yy6djwcl>

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