



NEWSLETTER

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www.alaska-trails.org

ALASKA TRAILS NEWS AND NOTICES

TRAIL TALES EVENT TO SUPPORT ALASKA TRAILS AT NEW VENUE

ATTEND Alaska Trails is excited to present another installment of the Trail Tales storytelling series, which will be at a new venue!

We are excited to have the Anchorage Museum as our partner for Trail Tales #16 and to highlight our Alaska Trails Initiative. In the spirit of Arctic Entries, storytellers will share seven-minute stories about their trail experiences, adventures and life in general. Come enjoy this fun event and support Alaska Trails and the museum.

As part of the Anchorage Museum's Wilderness Week, Trail Tales #16 will be held at the museum, 625 C Street, on Thursday, November 7. Doors open at 6:30, stories start at 7:00 pm. Tickets are \$15 and can be bought online at: <http://www.alaska-trails.org/trailtales.html>

The museum's atrium kiosk has beer, wine and non-alcoholic beverages for purchase. Drinks may be brought into the auditorium in a reusable Museum tumbler (available for purchase there, includes a beer or pour of wine!). There are small take-away foods for purchase, too. The Muse Restaurant is open for dinner and drinks starting at 5pm.

We are psyched to have Caroline Van Hemert as one of our storytellers!

Caroline is an Alaskan author, adventurer, and wildlife biologist. Her book, "The Sun is a Compass: A 4,000-mile Journey into the Alaskan Wilds," tells the story of her human-powered expedition from the Pacific Coast to the Chukchi Sea and recently won the Banff Adventure Travel Award.

Caroline grew up in Alaska and continues to explore northern wilderness with her family, which now includes two young sons. You can learn more about her adventures and writing at:

www.carolinevanhemert.com.



(Photo courtesy of Caroline Van Hemert)

ALASKA TRAILS RAISES OVER \$10,000 AT ANNUAL FALL FUNDRAISER!

Our Fall Fundraiser on Friday, October 25, was a celebration of trails and all the great work that our staff and especially our volunteers have done throughout the year. The gathering brought together Alaska Trails supporters to enjoy a relaxing time, to share stories about the past year, and to hear about the successes of Alaska Trails.

In addition, attendees bid on wonderful trips, Alaska Airlines tickets, and gear and prizes donated by local businesses from across the state. From stand-up paddle boarding in Wrangell-St. Elias to an Alaska Railroad trip to Spencer Glacier, and an Alpacka Packraft to an Arctic Circle Adventure - the silent auction at this year's fundraiser had something for everyone to enjoy and bid on – all while raising money for a great cause.

Thanks to all the businesses and individuals who donated to make this Fall Fundraiser such a success. More than 90 supporters gathered at the 49th State Brewing Company in Anchorage to see friends, hear an update on the work Alaska Trails has done this last year and to bid at the silent auction. We were able to raise over \$10,000 to support our work and are very grateful.

ALASKA TRAILS NEEDS YOUR HELP TO PRESERVE, PROMOTE TRAILS

JOIN/RENEW This newsletter is brought to you free by Alaska Trails. Our mission is to enhance the Alaska trail experience by supporting sustainable, world-renowned trails through advocacy and education. We couldn't do this without support from our members. Please join or renew your membership here:

<http://www.alaska-trails.org/join.html>

All year long we strive to:

- Promote the health, social and economic benefits of trails by educating users through forums, conferences, information materials, training and other activities.
- Preserve and improve public trail access by assisting public and private organizations in forming coordinated programs, policies, and standards.
- Promote sustainable trail systems for all users by developing and providing technical assistance for trail projects.

**Thanks to all the donors to the
Alaska Trails Fall Fundraiser:**

Alaska Wildland Adventures

Alaska Airlines

Downtown Bicycle Rental, Sales and Repair

Alpacka Raft / Northern AK Tour Company

Chris Beck / Knik River Lodge / Claire LeClaire

The Hoarding Marmot / Skinny Raven / AIH / Rob Whitney

Eagle River Nature Center / Arctic Valley / Hoarding Marmot

Annie Brownlee / Mooses Tooth / Lisa Oakley / Wildland Chocolates

Grassroots Fair Trade Store / Ginger / Snow Blossom Acupuncture

Curt McClellan / Spenard Builder Supply / ShuzyQ / REI

Revelate Designs / AK Rock Gym / Gemma Winston

Alaska Railroad / Marathon Helicopters / McCarthy River Tours

LONG-TIME STATE RTP ADMINISTRATOR SUBMITS RETIREMENT

The Recreational Trails Program in Alaska has been dealt another blow, but the state parks director says the program will continue as normal.

Grants Administrator Steve Neel, a 24-year state employee, recently announced his retirement. Neel has more than 12 years of experience working in state parks, including working on more than 400 Recreational Trails Program (RTP) projects. How Neel's retirement will affect the program is uncertain, especially because the program's other administrative position, the program manager for the Alaska State Trails, was recently cut.

However, Ricky Gease, director of the state Parks and Outdoor Recreation, says Neel will be replaced soon and the RTP process will continue as planned.

"Pending hiring approval DPOR will have someone in place to incorporate cross training before Steve Neel leaves," Gease wrote in an email. He added that the RTP in Alaska will "stay the same."

The RTP program has many federal requirements. Specific projects and even the entire program could be run into problems if those requirements are not followed properly. Much will depend on how quickly a replacement is found for Neel and the experience and skills of that person.

Even more unfortunate is that Neel will be retiring on December 31, which is just before the Outdoor Recreational Trails Advisory Board (ORTAB) meets to review and recommend funding for the RTP. ORTAB advises the Director of the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation on project funding RTP projects.

But Gease said the ORTAB meeting will go on as planned. He also pointed out that the committee is, as its name states, advisory.

"Just for clarity, it is always up to the Director as to which projects are approved," Gease wrote.

This federal program, which is administered by the state, brings in more than \$1 million a year to trails across Alaska. Darcy Harris was the most recent Alaska State Trails program manager. When her position was slated for elimination as part of the budget process, she quit to take a position with the Municipality of Anchorage. Harris has expertise to approve Environmental Review Checklists, basically a mini-Environmental Impact Statement, required under the National Environmental Policy Act.

The loss of Harris and tight deadlines due to the lengthy budget wrangling resulted in a severe restriction of types of projects accepted for this grant cycle. (See story below.)

There have also been some rumblings that the current RTP grant process is unnecessarily complex and may be streamlined. More will be reported on that as it comes to light.

REC TRAILS PROGRAM GRANT APPLICATIONS DUE IN NOVEMBER

Applications for Recreational Trails Program (RTP) grants are due 4 p.m. on Friday, November 22. The types of projects that will be accepted are severely limited from previous years.

Because the program, which is administered by the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, was caught up in the recent state budget wrangling, the schedule has been modified from previous years. The current remainschedule is as follows:

- November 22: Application due date
- December 30: Qualified applications sent to ORTAB for review
- January 22-23, 2020: Outdoor Recreational Trails Advisory Board meeting for final scoring of qualified applications

- February 2020: Applications recommended for award will be forwarded to Federal Highway Administration for review
- March through June 2020: Award and grant agreements are signed and implemented

Due to staffing cuts and a short timeline, applications for projects are limited to “Stipulation 1” projects, which have either no or minimal environmental, cultural, and social, etc., impacts. This means projects will almost exclusively be limited to brushing and clearing trails and minor trail repair within an existing footprint. (allowable activities listed below).

Eligible applicants include non-profit organizations, educational institutions, state, local and federal government entities, native corporations and tribal governments. The state anticipates that \$1.2 million may be awarded to eligible Alaska projects. The application package is available at <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/grants/trails.htm>.

Projects usually accepted under Stipulation 1 include:

- Purchase of trail maintenance equipment, materials and supplies;
- Rehabilitation contained within the footprints of existing trails and trailhead facilities, including resurfacing or improving the trail facility surfaces;
- Regrading within the footprint of existing trail and/or parking areas;
- Striping and/or re-striping of existing trail facilities;
- Development and distribution of educational materials;
- Replacement, renovation, and/or rehabilitation of existing signs, kiosks, and markers;
- New installation of signs, kiosks and markers at, and along, existing facilities;
- Minor alterations to existing facilities in order to make them accessible to people of different abilities (Example: replacement of stairs with ramps, installing hand rails, etc.).

For more information contact parks.RTPgrantapp@alaska.gov

RTP TRAILS THAT ALLOW E-BIKES CANNOT BE NON-MOTORIZED

People applying for Recreational Trails Program (RTP) grants that include bicycle use should know that the advent of electric bikes complicates matters.

According to Steve Neel, the state grants administrator for RTP grants, “electric bikes are considered motorized recreation” for RTP grants. A trail built or maintained for mountain bikes AND e-bikes would fall in the “diversified” RTP category.

By law RTP funds must be divided three ways: 30 percent for motorized recreation, 30 percent for non-motorized recreation, 40 percent for “diverse” recreational use.

“No trail built with RTP funds as a non-motor trail should allow ebikes on it,” Neel wrote in an email. In a subsequent email, he elaborated further:

Yes, you can designate a mountain bike trail to allow both nonmotorized bikes and e-bikes, and call it diverse, but it is neither nonmotorized nor motorized.

Also note that if you have a mountain bike trail and decide to allow e-bikes, that doesn’t turn the trail into a motorized trail for the purposes of meeting your 30 percent motorized requirement. It might be diverse, but if most of the use is nonmotorized, then you can’t call it motorized.

People wanting more guidance on this issue should refer to the Federal Highway Administration’s “Framework for Considering Motorized Use on Nonmotorized Trails and Pedestrian Walkways under 23 U.S.C. [sect] 217”: <https://tinyurl.com/y6htb8yd>

DENALI WINTER, SHOULDER PLAN HAS POTENTIAL TRAIL CHANGES

COMMENT Trails may be a big part of changes being considered in the Denali National Park Winter and Shoulder Season Plan.

Public comments on the plan can be submitted **until November 15**. The plan and links to comment forms can be found at: <https://www.nps.gov/dena/getinvolved/winter-plan.htm>

The plan is large—more than 70 pages—but page 57 has a chart with five plan concepts that give an idea of things being considered. The least active concept would have minimal changes to trails, and would even cut back on the minimal trail grooming that was started a couple of years ago. The more active concepts call for new trails being built and additional grooming for walking and skiing.

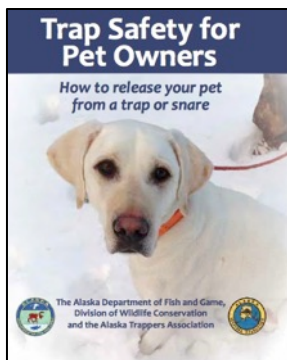
Interestingly, fatbikes, a relatively new addition to winter sports, are not addressed in the plan. When snow is not on the ground bikes are allowed on the park road and a couple of trails near the entrance. The plan does not address if that would continue or if fatbikes would be allowed on other trails.

The park management recently had a public comment period on the Kantishna and Wonder Lake Area Plan, which also included the possibility of adding trails on that end of the park road. A long-time bus driver and naturalist wrote an editorial criticizing some of the plan's proposals. It ran in the Anchorage Daily News (<https://tinyurl.com/y6s9kucs>) and the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner (<https://tinyurl.com/y5zfm2fo>). The formal comment period for that plan ended October 31. That plan can be found at: <https://www.nps.gov/dena/getinvolved/kantishna-plan.htm>

The park has been guided by a principle that large eschews trails in order to keep a wilder experience for park visitors. However, an increasing number of visitors, as well as more guided hikes in the Kantishna area, and more widely disseminated information about popular hiking areas have challenged that principle. Some social trails have been used so much they appear to be formal trails, but they are not signed and often do not follow sustainable trail practices.

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.

PUBLIC INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN SNOWTRAC MEETING

JOIN IN The Snowmobile Trails Advisory Council (SnowTRAC) will hold its annual advisory meeting via teleconference on November 7 from 2 to 4pm. The public is invited to participate via free teleconference; by calling 1-877-226-9607 with Conference Code: 7547916061#. SnowTRAC currently consists of six members who are regionally selected from areas across Alaska. The primary purpose of the group is to advise the director of the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation on funding for eligible grant projects under the Snowmobile Trails Grant Program. The Snowmobile Trails Grant Program is funded through legislative authorization to receive funds from snowmobile point-of-sale registration fees. These funds are used to support snowmobile trail development and maintenance.

(From What's Up? by Peg Tileston)

STATEWIDE LINKS

- **APPLY** Outdoor Recreational Trails Advisory Board recruiting new members: <http://notice.alaska.gov/195957>

SLIGHTLY OFF-TRAIL

- Luc Mehl: Brooks Range Traverse: Part Three of Three: <https://tinyurl.com/y57cpyc7>

SOUTHCENTRAL NEWS AND NOTICES

MAT-SU FOUNDATION ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR PROJECTS

APPLY The Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation is accepting applications for Summer 2020 projects.

Deadline is December 31. The process consists of four steps:

1. Identify a trail or park project: Does the community support it? Is there a non-profit partner or government entity that can take the lead? If yes, then...
2. Visit the foundation website: To review the grant guidelines, funding levels, and match requirements. Does your project qualify? If yes, then...
3. Call the foundation: Share how/why the project contributes to creating world-class trails and parks in the Mat-Su. If the project meets the foundation's requirements it will invite you to...
4. Submit an application: Application forms are on the website. Applications are reviewed quarterly and grant awards are based on available funding.



Read more at: <https://matsutrails.org/our-grants/>

From Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation newsletter

NEWSLETTER HIGHLIGHTS SETTLERS BAY, WILLOW TRAILS

The following stories are from the Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation October newsletter:

SETTLERS BAY COASTAL PARK OFFERS MILES OF TRAILS

If you missed the ribbon cutting last month for Settlers Bay Coastal Park, please don't miss out on exploring this beautiful new Mat-Su Borough Park. There are just over 2-miles of beautiful brand new walking trails at the park, with another three miles of walking and biking trails in the works. Getting to the Park is a bit of a mystery, here are some easy directions: take Knik-Goose Bay Road

to Settlers Bay Road and turn left. Immediately at the bottom of the hill, take a left on S. Settlers Bay Drive and follow it until it turns to a dirt road. The new trails flow out of the new parking area. To read more about the evolution of the park please visit Great Land Trust's Project Page: <https://greatlandtrust.org/projects/settlers-bay-coastal-park/>

TRAIL GROUP MAKES SURE WILLOW AREA HAS WORLD-CLASS TRAILS

The Willow Area Community Organization (WACO), Trail Committee, is herculean in their effort to make sure that Willow has world-class summer and winter trails for the community to enjoy. If you have not had a chance to enjoy the extensive trail systems in Willow, please do, they will not disappoint. Here is the link to all of WACO's trail maps (<https://www.waco-ak.org/committees/trails/>).

CELEBRATE TRAILS, WILDERNESS AT THE ANCHORAGE MUSEUM

ATTEND Fat tire bikes, photography, writers, films and a camp stove cookoff – all are part of the Anchorage Museum's Wilderness Week celebrating the urban and not-so-urban wilderness of the Circumpolar North. The museum will hold a series of programs focusing on Anchorage's distinct position as an urban space in the Circumpolar North and ideas of wilderness and wild places. Includes author talks, photography workshop, film program, family art classes, fat tire bike tours and more.

The programs kick off on November 1 with a First Friday "Passport to Trails." Trail organizations from southcentral will be showcasing their work in a fun and festive environment. Visit each table to get a stamp on your passport - AND - with that completed passport you will be eligible for great prizes!

We want to hear from you about your trail ideas, trail dreams and trail experiences. You will hear about the work these great groups are doing, ways you can get involved and view how trails knit the Alaska community together.

For more on the First Friday event: <https://www.facebook.com/events/719812091867016/>

For more on the entire program: www.anchagemuseum.org/polar-lab/projects/wilderness-week/

RIDE/TOUR Wilderness Week also includes a fat tire bike tour on November 6 starting at 5pm.

Bundle up and hit the road with the Anchorage Museum and Bike Anchorage for a winter urban fat tire bike tour of Anchorage's trails and biking infrastructure. Learn what new projects the Municipality of Anchorage is undertaking to be a multi-modal city. Tour leaves from Anchorage Museum main entrance and covers several miles (may not be appropriate for all ages and skill levels). Free.

Don't have a fat bike? Rent one from Greatland Adventures for \$20: <https://tinyurl.com/y4ko6ehx>. Limited number of rental bikes available. Bikes will be available for pickup at the Anchorage Museum before tour.

(From Anchorage Museum website and What's Up? by Peg Tileston)

AVALANCHE INFO CENTER RAISES MONEY WITH GREAT STORIES

ATTEND Snow Stories 2.0 will be held on November 14 from 8 to 9pm at the Bear Tooth Theatrepub in Anchorage. The event supports the Chugach National Forest Avalanche Info Center. Stars: Roman Dial, Leighan Falley and Paul Thacker and emcee Brooke Edwards, are serving up stories of their lessons learned that you should KNOW BEFORE YOU GO explore and enjoy the backcountry this winter. Friends of the Chugach Avalanche Center help save lives in Alaska every winter in partnership with the US Forest Service and our local snow sports community. General Admission \$20. For more information, go to <https://www.cnfaic.org/mato>.

(From What's Up? by Peg Tileston)

MAT-SU TRAILS FOUNDATION SEEKS DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

APPLY The Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation is seeking to hire a development director. The foundation works within the community to build a wild, accessible, and world-class trails and parks system in the Mat-Su Valley. Come join a small but mighty team to plan and implement our fund development program. This is a full-time position based in the Valley with offices in Palmer. Starting salary range is \$50 to 55k/year, DOE. To read more and apply, go to <https://matsutrails.org/news-and-events/>.

(From What's Up? by Peg Tileston)

SEEN RECENTLY ON THE SOUTHCENTRAL FACEBOOK PAGES

ALASKA STATE PARKS

APPLY October 16: Anchorage area residents: If you are interested in effecting change in the Chugach State Park, here is your chance! Our CAB (Community Advisory Board) has three openings beginning January 1, 2020. Visit our website for more information:

<http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/misc/cspcabrecruit.pdf>

October 1: WE LOVE OUR VOLUNTEERS!



Thanks to everyone who came out and supported Public Lands Day on Saturday, September 28 and worked on the Middle Fork Loop trail in the Chugach State Park with Alaska Trails.

So much more work is going to be done on this trail over the next year, thanks to our many partners and volunteers. Stay posted here and follow Alaska Trails to register for volunteer events.

ANCHORAGE PARKS AND RECREATION

October 21: Campbell Creek Trail is open again! 🎉

Phase 4 construction is over for the season and we do not anticipate any more closures in 2019. Crews will return in 2020 to complete finishing touches.

Thanks for your patience, and enjoy!

SINGLETRACK ADVOCATES

September 28: Kudos to the 30+ volunteers who showed up today to help repair some tread surfaces and bird baths on The Hive and Eh Line and a major jump repair/re-shaping project on Gauer Power. Better flow and more speed = more air and higher fun factor! Woohoo - get some 😊



MAT-SU TRAILS AND PARKS FOUNDATION

October 7: This is what a local hero looks like. THANK YOU, Roy Wahl. Because of your vision, a great new universal access trail exists at the Government Peak Recreation Area at Hatcher Pass. We also want to send out a 🙌🙌🙌 to Trailwerx for the design and construction and 🙌🙌🙌 to our grantees Alaska Trails and Valley Mountain Bikers & Hikers as well as a ❤️❤️💪 to all of the volunteers who helped Roy create this trail.

If you want to know more about the story behind this trail, the Mat-Su Valley Frontiersman wrote a nice article: <https://tinyurl.com/y59zkxqn>

VALLEY MOUNTAIN BIKERS AND HIKERS

October 5: A huge thank you to everyone who came out to celebrate the opening of our brand-new Universal Access Trail at the Government Peak Recreation Area in Palmer--And to celebrate those involved, from inspiration to action. What a lovely day.

CHUGACH MOUNTAIN BIKE RIDERS

September 29: A HUGE Thank you to ACF Church for bringing dozens of volunteers to come out and haul gravel to our new boardwalk project! We appreciate your dedication to our community!

FRIENDS OF STATE PARKS, MAT-SU

September 30: We usually like to post pretty pictures on this page but sometimes we need to show the result of carelessness. These pictures are the burned areas from the Dëshka Fire along the Red Shirt Lake Trail. Thank you Gannett Glacier fire crews who are still on site clearing dangerous trees.



ISLAND TRAILS NETWORK

October 15: As the days become darker, colder and produce more rainfall, it is still refreshing to get outside and walk the trails! Layer up, put on some rain gear and enjoy the Kodiak autumn foliage :). Also, enjoy the new walkway at Ft. Abercrombie built by Travis and volunteers this past summer!

SOUTHCENTRAL LINKS

- Upgraded trail near Westchester Lagoon makes nature into a classroom: <https://tinyurl.com/y5km5g6b>

SLIGHTLY OFF-TRAIL

- It's time to speak for Chugach State Park's bears: No new hunts: <http://tinyurl.com/y4d5fatp>
- State Parks Director Behaves Shamefully in Approving New Black Bear Hunt: <http://tinyurl.com/y5kuzzmk>
- Delay in chairlift delivery pushes back opening of new Hatcher Pass ski area: <https://tinyurl.com/yxrpsp57>
- REI Anchorage classes and events: <https://tinyurl.com/yxz7x26k>
- Outdoor Explorer radio show:
 - Ski swaps and Hatcher Pass Lodge: <https://tinyurl.com/y68qxrbn>
 - The record year on the Chugach Front Linkup: <https://tinyurl.com/y3ke3ltr>

INTERIORWIDE NEWS AND NOTICES

WINTER WALKING TRAIL ACROSS UAF'S SMITH LAKE REROUTED

The east-west walking trail across Smith Lake on the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) campus will be rerouted to the north shore of the lake. Grooming equipment has been stuck several times on that trail due to overflow.

"The problem is the lake ice isn't getting as thick as it used to," according to UAF Trails Manager Jason Garron. "The weight of the snow is pushing the thinner ice down forcing water up on top of it. The

most affected place is the center of the lake where the walking trail goes.”

The ski trails on the lake will remain as they have been in the past, though Garron pointed out that the problem of overflow is affecting the ski trails on the lake more than it used to.

A map of the UAF winter walking trails can be found here: <https://uaf.edu/fs/files/walkingtrails.pdf>

NEW NON-MOTORIZED TRAIL IN CHENA REC AREA READY FOR USE

The Mastodon Trail, the newest trail in the Chena River State Recreation Area, is open and ready for use.

The non-motorized trail will be groomed and maintained by the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, including during the winter.



“The plan is to routinely drag a tire and cut out blow downs over the winter,” Superintendent Brooks Ludwig wrote in an email. “With all the fire scars we anticipate a lot of trees falling into the trail.”

Much of the trail goes through recently fire-scarred land. As of October 26, it was mostly cleared of fallen trees, but a few covered or partially covered the trail near its far end. The trail has

incredible views due to the burns.

“Mastodon Trail stays high contouring the hillside offering many scenic views of the valley and surrounding hills,” Jon Underwood, the contractor who built the trail, wrote in an October 11 post on the Alaska State Parks Facebook page.

The Fairbanks Daily News-Miner recently had a story on the trail: <https://tinyurl.com/y53pljhb>

The trail, which begins at mile 38.6 Chena Hot Springs Road, is about 13 miles long and ends at the Nugget Creek Cabin. Previously that cabin had been accessible only via the South Fork Winter Trail or the little-known and difficult Mist Creek Trail. Now the cabin will be accessible year-round. (See more on the cabin at: <https://tinyurl.com/y2yuxrq9>.) State Parks is partnering with The Folk School Fairbanks to build a new cabin that will be placed near the old cabin, but a little higher on the hillside. The old cabin is slowly sinking and will eventually be torn down, but for a while there should be two cabins available there. The News-Miner also had a story on the cabin project: <http://tinyurl.com/y6e4z2vq>

Winter trail users should be aware that the trail has some icy spots about a quarter-mile on either side of the bridge over Mastadon Creek, at about 3 miles.

One of the challenges for state parks will be to educate motorized users that the trail is for non-motorized use only. The trail is in a section of the recreation area designated for non-motorized use and the funds used to build the trail require that it remain non-motorized. The recreation area has several motorized trails, including the winter-only South Fork Winter Trail, which also accesses the Nugget Creek Cabin. Most other motorized trails are north of Chena Hot Springs Road.

The addition of the trail adds a new possibility for non-motorized winter users. By connecting the Mastodon Trail and the South Fork and Chena Hot Springs winter trails, a loop of about 30 miles can be created, though it includes a couple of short road sections to connect trailheads. An even longer loop could be made by adding the Stiles Creek Trail.

(Photo by Eric Troyer: Corrine Leistikow bikes along the Mastodon Trail in late October.)

SEEN RECENTLY ON THE INTERIOR FACEBOOK PAGES

ALASKA STATE PARKS

October 30: CLOSURE NOTICE:

Alaska State Parks is temporarily closing Colorado Creek Trail within Chena River State Recreation Area due to the Colorado Creek bridge partially collapsing. We anticipate the bridge should be replaced by November 24th.

October 29: Check out these new picnic sites along the multi-use trail system in Lower Chatanika State Recreation Area. A new 3 mile multi use trail has been completed at Olnes Pond with three remote picnic sites along the Chatanika river. This project was funded through the Recreational Trail Grant program and provides the first ATV friendly campground in Alaska State Parks. (A downloadable brochure of the rec area and its trails can be found at: <https://tinyurl.com/y685q2t9>.)



October 24: A new cabin is in the works in the Northern Region of Alaska State Parks! This latest addition is taking shape at Mile 2 of the Compeau Trail within Chena River State Recreation Area. The cabin measures 14' x 16' and will accommodate up to 6 people. The goal is to have it ready to rent by December 1st. We will let you know when it is available to book!

BLM-WHITE MOUNTAINS NATIONAL RECREATION AREA

October 8: Looks like a snowy week for the Fairbanks area. As of yesterday, snow depth in and around the White Mountains after recent storms was highly variable -- Wickersham Dome had received about 7 inches, but areas just a few hundred feet lower in elevation had received 0-2 inches. More snow is expected through the week, and difficult travel conditions are likely. Rivers and creeks remain unfrozen. If you're heading to Fred Blixt Cabin, please be aware that snow accumulation will likely bring down more trees whose roots were burned or otherwise weakened in the Hess Creek Fire this summer.



NORDIC SKI CLUB OF FAIRBANKS

October 18: There have been quite a few posts about Moose Mountain, but there's another way to access skiing up high and close to town. Head out to Old Murphy Dome from the Elliott Highway. Where the plowing stops, the skiing starts! Many thanks to the mushers who groom those trails. You can thank them by sending them some mushing tour activity. There are a few up there who give tours. <http://www.alaskaskijoring.org/trailinfo/oldmurphy.html>

FAIRBANKS CYCLE CLUB

October 17: Is your fatbike looking at you with puppy dog eyes, saying you never take it snowbiking anymore? Well, head up to Moose Mountain, Old Murphy Dome Road, Wickersham Dome. There's snow at higher elevations! These pics were taken on Thursday between Moose Mtn and Old Murphy Dome Road. Get out there!

SKARLAND & PEARL CREEK PARK TRAIL USERS

BRUSH October 30: What do frustrated skiers do? Cut brush! I cleared Thrill Hill and Thrill Hill bypass but all the other trails probably need help.

INTERIORWIDE LINKS

- Transportation projects next summer include pedestrian (and trail) enhancements: <https://tinyurl.com/y2zobmae>
- Fairbanks North Star Borough sees dozens of building project proposals (including several trail and trailhead proposals): <https://tinyurl.com/yyb4pajf>

SLIGHTLY OFF-TRAIL

- **ATTEND** Burgers, Brews, and Bogs (Interior Alaska Land Trust fundraiser, Nov. 2): <https://tinyurl.com/y2ouj7jg>
- Fairbanks REI classes and events: <https://www.rei.com/events/p/us-ak-fairbanks>
- Nenana Fire Department acquires snowbulance: <https://tinyurl.com/yyqb2jhi>

SOUTHEAST NEWS AND NOTICES

SEEN RECENTLY ON THE SOUTHEAST FACEBOOK PAGES

TRAIL MIX, INC (Juneau)

October 23: Thanks to Trail Mix volunteers Lois Killewich and Dave Haas for braving the 36 degree rain yesterday to finish revegetating the new Horse Tram trail. It wasn't too bad out there, as long as we kept moving we stayed warm. The hard work on the trail was already done by our paid Trail Mix crews over the last several months — good work crew members!

The trail when finished next season will link the Boy Scout camp trail with the CBJ Eagle Valley Center near Amalga Harbor, and a new CBJ cabin north of Amalga Harbor. The new trail section is open and folks are welcome to check it out.

Currently the new hardened trail ends about half a mile south of the Boy Scout trail, if you continue further south you will be on a muddy trail following the old horse tram route toward Amalga harbor. The horse tram route was used by miners back in the day to haul supplies on horse-drawn carts to the Amalga mine site. Rubber boots recommended for that section. Or you can turn around where the hardened trail ends, and head out to Eagle Beach on the Boy Scout Trail.



NATIONWIDE NEWS AND NOTICES

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 news publications: <http://www.americantrails.org/trailtracks/index.html>

VOLUNTEER

- American Hiking Society's Volunteer Vacations: <http://tinyurl.com/ydh95kp8>
- Volunteer Stewardship Tools: www.americantrails.org/resources/volunteer-stewardship-tools
- American Trails Volunteer Portal: www.americantrails.org/connect/volunteer
- Conservation International VIP newsletter (October): <http://tinyurl.com/y4czybqt>
- American Hiking Society's 2020 Alternative Spring Break schedule: <http://tinyurl.com/yxbnlema>
- Alternative Spring Break Scholarship (applications due Nov 15): <https://tinyurl.com/y436r6z5>

ADVOCATE

- Tell Congress to Protect, Preserve, and Expand Trails and Public Lands: <https://tinyurl.com/y653vuo2>

TRAIL GUIDES

- 4 Heart-Pumping Mountain Bike Trails in Pennsylvania: <http://tinyurl.com/yxjq9jry>
- Historic hikes: 4 must-visit trails for history buffs: <https://tinyurl.com/y4u8l2co>
- Long Island horseback riding trails for families: <https://tinyurl.com/y6qp9alk>

STUDIES

- New Research Finds Public Investment in Trails, Walking and Biking Infrastructure Delivers Potential Economic Benefits of \$138.5 Billion Annually: <https://tinyurl.com/y53gg3qw>
- Spending at least 120 minutes a week in nature is associated with good health and wellbeing: <https://tinyurl.com/y23zzaly>
- Actually, you do have enough time to exercise, and here's the data to prove it: <https://tinyurl.com/y5ob7vpe>

OTHER NATIONAL LINKS:

- Should government be able to seize private property to build rec trails? Ohio lawmakers study: <http://tinyurl.com/y34t5w2q>
- The impact of an ATV trail system on the local economy: <http://tinyurl.com/y67jml4m>
- 50 years after fire, Cuyahoga River gets water trail designation: <http://tinyurl.com/y3npbluk>
- When Biking and Bears Don't Mix: <https://tinyurl.com/yymha766>

- U.S. parks and trails rely on a volunteer labor force: <https://tinyurl.com/yxpsxgxw>
- Building faster and prettier backyard (mountain bike) trails (7 min video): <https://tinyurl.com/yy7osr3r>
- Equestrians work with Forest Service, Conservation Corps for effective trail maintenance: <https://tinyurl.com/y5943zfv>

SLIGHTLY OFF-TRAIL

- Endurance Exercise May Be a Speed Bump That Slows Down Alzheimer's: <http://tinyurl.com/yy6ntlz3>
- 9 Books That Will Change How You Look at the Outdoors: <https://tinyurl.com/y56jaxhs>

The Alaska Trails board meets via teleconference on the first Tuesday of each month from noon to 1:00 pm. If you want to hear more about Alaska trail topics, share trail information, or propose a trail project, join us for an hour. 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 five days before the first of the month. Send stories to Editor Eric Troyer at fbxtrails@gmail.com