

ALASKA TRAILS NEWS AND NOTICES

REGISTRATION NOW OPEN FOR STATEWIDE TRAILS CONFERENCE

The 2014 Statewide Trails Conference will be held April 24-26 at Alaska Pacific University in Anchorage.



The keynote speakers will be Troy Duffin, president of Utah's Alpine Trails, Inc., and Christine Byl, co-owner of Interior Trails and author of *Dirt Work: An Education in the Woods*. Breakout sessions during the conference include Trail Maintenance, Mini-Mechanized Equipment, Funding for Trails, Youth Trail Projects, Trail Crews, Health and Economic Benefits of Trails, Easements, Mountain Bike Flow Trails and more.



Two preconference sessions, to be held April 22 and 23, will be Fundamentals of OHV Trail Management and Trail Contracting.

For a conference agenda and registration information please see: www.alaska-trails.org

(Photo of Troy Duffin from Alaska Trails. Photo of Christine Byl from <http://www.alaskawritersdirectory.com>)

ALASKA TRAILS SEEKS TRAIL BUILDER FOR FAIRBANKS AREA PROJECT

Alaska Trails is seeking quotes for an equipment operator with a trail dozer to construct seven miles of new contour trail along the previously flagged Mastodon Trail in the Chena River State Recreation Area.

Alaska Trails has been contracted to facilitate the construction of the trail, which starts at Mile 38.6 Chena Hot Springs Road. The trail corridor has been partially cleared of vegetation about 6- to 8-foot-wide for final mechanical construction of a 4-foot-wide full bench-cut trail. This project will begin July 1 and is to be completed by September 30.

Interested people should submit a cost per hour for trail dozer and operator. The dozer must be no more than 4 feet wide and of at least 80 horsepower.

A more detailed Invitation for Quotes announcement can be found on the Alaska Trails website (http://www.alaska-trails.org/about_us/documents.shtml). The full IFQ, including a location map, may be obtained by contacting Geoffrey Orth (geoffrey.orth@alaska-trails.org). Closing date for bids is 12pm, March 21, 2014.

USE "PICK. CLICK. GIVE." TO DONATE TO ALASKA TRAILS

The application deadline for the Permanent Fund Dividend is March 31. Alaska Trails is included in the PFD's "Pick. Click. Give" charitable contributions program. It's a secure and easy way to make a donation. When you file for your PFD online, you will be given an opportunity to donate using money from your PFD. If you do, please remember Alaska Trails.

If you use "Pick. Click. Give" you will be able to check a box that authorizes the state to send your name, contact information and the amount you give when it sends contributions to an organization. We want to acknowledge and recognize your generous support, and this is the only way we will know it's you making the gift. Since we will not see who contributes until this fall, you can also email Alaska Trails President Geoffrey Orth (geoffrey.orth@alaska-trails.org) and we will keep you informed of our projects in your community.

For more information on "Pick. Click. Give" see: www.pickclickgive.org.

ALASKA TRAILS NEEDS YOUR HELP TO PRESERVE, PROMOTE TRAILS

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://tinyurl.com/mbvb76k>

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.

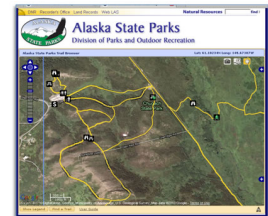
EXECUTIVE BOARD HAS OPENINGS FOR INTERESTED PEOPLE

Alaska Trails is interested in hearing from people who might want to serve as board members. The board currently has several openings. By serving on the board you help guide our group in its mission "to enhance the Alaska trail experience by supporting sustainable, world-renowned trails through advocacy and education." If you would like to run for the board some time in the future please contact us (info on masthead).

ALASKA TRAILS HAS INFO TO HELP GET ALASKANS ON TRAILS

Alaska Trails has an online database of trail guides and other trail-related information found on the Internet. The information is broken down into folders based on regions including statewide, Southeast, Southcentral, and Interior. Clicking on a folder gives a user more folders from which to choose.

People interested in exploring new trails will find an abundance of resources at their fingertips. See the database at: <http://www.alaska-trails.org/cgi/otg/trailguide.cgi>
(Graphic from Alaska State Parks [Trail Browser](#), one of the resources in the database.)



INTERNET SEARCHES CAN PROVIDE FUNDS FOR ALASKA TRAILS



What if you gave Alaska Trails a penny every time you searched the Internet? Well, you can! GoodSearch.com is a search engine that donates half its revenue, about a penny per search, to charities

designated by the user. You use it just as you would any search engine, and, it's powered by Yahoo!.

Just go to www.goodsearch.com and be sure to enter Alaska Trails as the charity you want to support. Just 50 people searching four times a day will raise about \$730 a year without anyone spending a dime! This is an easy way to support Alaska Trails.

ALASKA TRAILS HAS TOOL TRAILERS READY FOR TRAIL PROJECTS



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

The trailers were upgraded recently and have a plethora of trail tools including mcleods, pulaskis, rakes, gloves, and much, much more. If you would like to borrow one of the caches, please contact us (info on masthead).

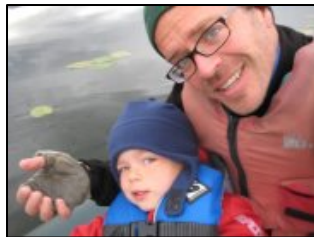
DIRECTOR'S CORNER

Steve Cleary, Executive Director

Trails are a Benefit to Health and Economy

Trails are a relatively inexpensive recreational "facility" that offer so much: access to a wide range of users, transportation corridors for consumptive use of our natural resources, commuter corridors, and a place for healthy social get-togethers. Trails offer a great value when legislators and granters are looking hard at where to spend money. And they are an important resource to promote health to people of all ages.

According to the State Department of Health, Alaskans spend \$459 million a year treating the effects of obesity.



Almost 40% of adults and 30% of kids in Alaska are obese. Taken together, Alaskans who are overweight and obese

account for 65% of the population. For children, it's not only bad for their health, but also negatively affects their academic performance.

There is no single solution to something as pervasive as obesity. The factors contributing to a more sedentary, less healthy lifestyle are many. Solutions have to come in many forms as well so that the different needs and different interests of Alaskans can be met and addressed.

Trails are part of the solution as they offer a year-round source of activity, often right near your home, school or workplace. Whether on feet, bikes, scooters, skis, snowshoes or rollerblades, trails give kids and families a place to exercise and enjoy the outdoors. Many programs – such as the Anchorage and Fairbanks school running programs – introduce kids and their families to trails through things like running events. The fall jamboree my son participated in was part of a series in Anchorage that put nearly 10,000 people on local trails for a series of fun activities. Putting kids and parents on trails they don't know is a

great way to get them active and to raise awareness of great community trails.

Alaska Trails has invited a number of youth-oriented trail groups to present at the upcoming Trails Conference. Connecting the dots between economy, health, youth and community is one of the main goals at the conference.

Trails Conference – All Systems GO!

Registration is now open for Alaska Trails' 2014 Statewide Trails Conference - April 24-26 at Alaska Pacific University (APU) in Anchorage. The theme for the conference is: Cooperation – Working Together to Build and Maintain Alaska's Trails. The conference will bring together a diverse array of trail users and managers from across the state to learn the latest in sustainable trail building and maintenance, trail advocacy and many other trail topics. There will be time for networking. The schedule includes 50 break-out sessions on a range of topics including: trail design and maintenance, trail funding, youth programs, OHV trail projects, partnerships and much more.

For all the details please go to: http://alaska-trails.org/trail_teachers/tconf2014.shtml

Alaska Trails is making a special effort to reach out to the health community to show the links between a robust trail system and individual health. This dovetails nicely with Alaska Trails' research into the economic benefits of trails. Troy Duffin of Alpine Trails in Utah will be a keynote speaker for the event, focusing on his work to make sure that trails were not only included but highlighted in development plans. Many may remember his presentations at the conference back in 2006. We are excited to have Troy at the upcoming conference.

See you on the trails (and at the conference).

2014 RECREATIONAL TRAIL PROGRAM GRANTS AWARDED

Many trail projects around the state have been tentatively awarded 2014 Recreational Trail Program (RTP) grants. The projects are subject to final approval from the Federal Highway Administration.



RTP is a federally funded competitive and reimbursable matching trail grant program.

Grants are available for development and maintenance of recreational trails and facilities, acquisition of trail right-of-way, and development of safety and environmental protection education programs. For more information about the Recreational Trails Program, please visit the program's website at <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/grants/trails.htm>, or contact Darcy B.

Harris, the Alaska State Trails Program Coordinator, (phone: 907/269-8699; email: darcy.harris@alaska.gov).

Below are statewide projects that were tentatively awarded Safety and Education grants. For a description of local projects chosen to receive grants, see the Interior, Southcentral, Southeast, and Western region news later in this newsletter.

- Trail Academy: A \$18,200 grant to Alaska Trails to create a series of advanced trail trainings to trail professionals and volunteers around the state using the Alaska Trails advanced education curriculum modules. Alaska Trails will plan, organize, and conduct three separate trails trainings – one in Juneau, one in Fairbanks, and one in the Anchorage / Mat-Su Valley area. These trainings will each be several days in length and take place in the spring of 2015.
- Trail Mapping and Public Education: A \$58,196 grant to the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation for a position to create and update trail maps within state parks for internal and public use. It provides funding to create Trail Guides for popular summer and winter, motorized and non-motorized trails and make them available on the Alaska State Parks website. The guides will be two-sided, with a trail description on one side and a map on the other. Trail descriptions will include trail mileage, elevation gain, points of interest, and special/safety considerations. One goal of this project is to create new park maps for all major park units in a consistent style and format.

CHANGES IN NATIONAL WATER BILL SPARKS CALL FOR ACTION

The following excerpt is from a post by Don Kiely on the Fairbanks Paddlers listserv regarding an issue affecting water trails:

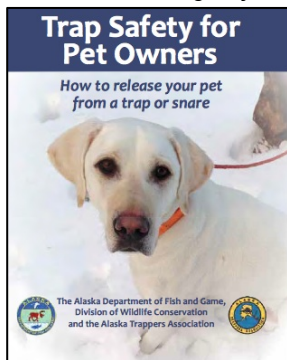
There's a bill pending in Congress, H.R. 3189, "Water Rights protection Act," that could dramatically and devastatingly affect rivers throughout the United States, very much including Alaska. The bill was originally conceived to settle a specific conflict between Colorado's ski industry and the U.S. Forest Service. But as too often happens, the bill making its way through Congress is now overly broad, having been heavily influenced by industries affected by water rights. And that original conflict apparently has already been settled. Yet the bill lives on.

You can read the text of the bill here <<http://beta.congress.gov/bill/113th/house-bill/3189/text>> (go ahead, it's actually quite short).

American Rivers has a post from a few days ago about the effect this bill would have <<http://www.americanrivers.org/blog/hr3189-sucks-rivers-dry-why-you-should-care/>>. And if you know any of the management or the owner of Alyeska Resort, you might ask them why they are supporting the bill <<https://www.americanrivers.org/blog/supporting-a-bill-that-could-hurt-rivers/>> and to please not to! (That link is the only place I've found that says they support it, so take the information there with some reasonable skepticism.)

PAMPHLET HELPS PET OWNERS DEAL WITH PETS CAUGHT IN TRAPS

Pet owners living adjacent to or recreating on public lands are reminded that midwinter in Alaska means fur trapping seasons are open and in full swing. Pets running off-leash and not closely supervised risk having their toes pinched – or worse.



When pets do encounter traps or snares, owners must be prepared to act quickly. That's why the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) and the Alaska Trappers Association (ATA) have teamed up to produce a pocket-sized pamphlet titled "Trap Safety for Pet Owners." The new pocket guide describes the types of traps and snares that may be encountered and provides illustrated instructions on how to free pets swiftly and safely.

Copies of the "Trap Safety for Pet Owners" guide 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 "Trapping" tab), and on the ATA website at www.alaskatrappers.org.

(From ADF&G press release)

STUDENT ASSOCIATION LOOKING FOR DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR



The Student Conservation Association, Alaska Region, is looking to hiring a Conservation Program and Business Development Coordinator.

This person will be coordinating between many of the group's Park, Forest, Refuge and Public Land partners and many of its young adult members. Position description is posted on the group's website (thesca.org) or go to it directly at (<http://tinyurl.com/nyj8rff>).

FORAKER GROUP OFFERS CLASSES FOR NON-PROFITS STATEWIDE

The Foraker Group, which is dedicated to strengthening Alaska's non-profits, offers classes about the proper workings of non-profit groups, which include many trail and trail user groups. If you are a member or employee of a non-profit group consider taking one of the classes, which are offered in several communities and statewide by teleconference. For more information visit the Foraker Group website (www.forakergroup.org/) or call 907/743-1200 or (toll free) 877/834-5003.



KEEP TRACK OF STATE LAND USE PLANS FOR IMPACT ON TRAILS



The state Department of Natural Resources has several plans and studies underway across the state that affect how the state deals with its lands. Often this includes land and water trails.

These plans and studies have opportunities for public comment.

Take a look at the planning web page for the Division of Land, Water, and Mining (<http://dnr.alaska.gov/mlw/planning/>). If you see a plan or study that affects trails important to you, please look into opportunities for public comment.

STATEWIDE LINKS

- Avalanche danger a risk not worth taking: <http://tinyurl.com/mc4w2me>
- Preparedness in the backcountry can be key to survival: <http://tinyurl.com/m9no5be>
- Radio show Outdoor Explorer has recently featured:
 - Alaska Mountain Rescue: <http://tinyurl.com/mb9vs25>
 - Backcountry Skiing: <http://tinyurl.com/konagpm>

STATEWIDE TRAILS-RELATED NEWSLETTERS

- State Parks' Eagle Watch (includes a story about the Byers Creek suspension bridge) : <http://tinyurl.com/qxdcshg>

INTERIORWIDE NEWS AND NOTICES

2013 RECREATIONAL TRAIL PROGRAM GRANTS

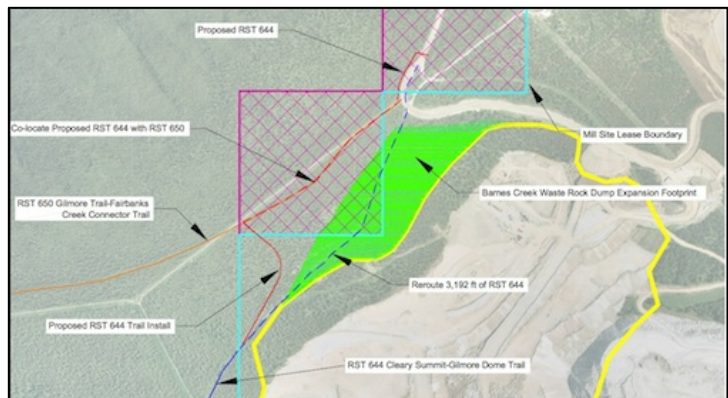
Grants for the following projects have been tentatively awarded from the Recreational Trail Program.

- **Trail Gate:** A \$14,644 grant to Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, Northern office, for the purchase and installation of locking gates at Compeau, Mastodon, Granite Tors, Lower Chena Dome, Angel Rocks, and Angel Creek trails, and the Stiles Creek Trail System (3 gates) in the Chena River State Recreation Area. Temporarily closing these locking gates during spring break-up will help protect natural resources, decrease maintenance costs, and reduce trail degradation. They may also be used to temporarily close the trail for other management or public safety reasons.
- **Tanana Lakes Trail:** A \$50,000 grant to the Fairbanks North Star Borough to build a 2,000-foot section of non-motorized trail within the Tanana Lakes Recreation Area. This trail section will be constructed of gravel and recycled asphalt pavement and will follow the shoreline of Goose Island, providing vistas of the non-motorized lake, which is managed for swimming, paddling and birding.
- **Fairbanks Dog Park Inc:** A grant for \$30,000 will construct an additional 500-foot-long trail loop at the Fairbanks dog park, smooth frost heaves in the existing trail, and link the existing fenced training area to the existing trail. One trail link will include a culvert to convey seasonal runoff.

COMMENT SOUGHT FOR TRAIL REROUTE NEAR FORT KNOX MINE

The state is seeking public comment on a proposal to reroute a portion of the Cleary Summit – Gilmore Dome Trail.

This popular trail is used by a variety of trail users including snowmachiners, mountain bikers, runners and four-wheelers. The affected portion serves as the beginning of the Gold Discovery Run and runs across property owned by Fort Knox Gold Mine. Mine managers want to expand part of the mine's operations into land now occupied by the trail. They have applied to the state Department of Natural Resources for the reroute.



The trail is a legislatively accepted historic trail and RS2477 right-of-way. The portion of the trail being considered for rerouting is between a mile and a half-mile long.

Written comments must be received by the state on or before 5 p.m. on March 14, 2014, in order to ensure consideration. To submit written comments, to view the full application packet, or to seek additional information, please contact: R. Bruce Sackinger; DNR, DMLW, Northern Region Lands Section; 3700 Airport Way; Fairbanks, AK 99709-4699; Phone (907) 451-2720; Fax: (907) 451-2751; E-mail: bruce.sackinger@alaska.gov

See the full public notice and a higher resolution map at: <http://tinyurl.com/qddgjsp>

EL DORADO CREEK TRAIL PULLOUT TO BE REPLACED

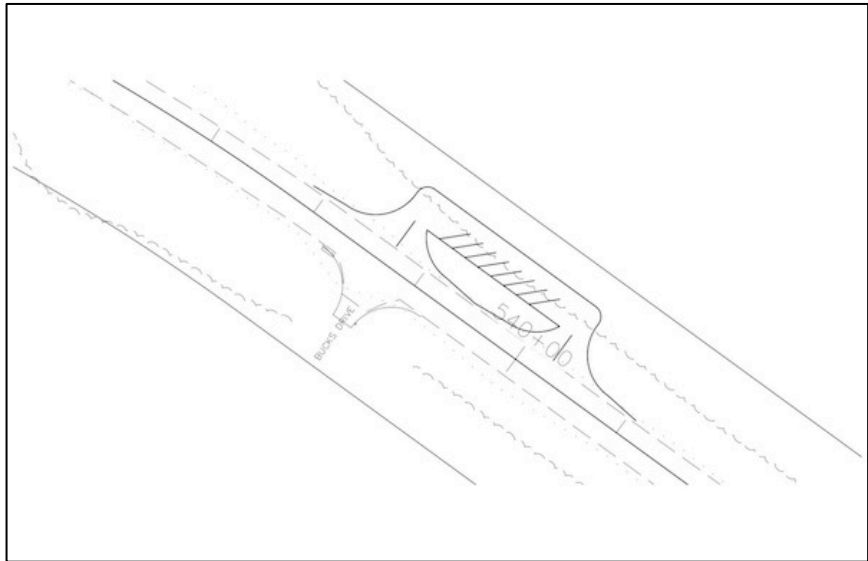
The El Dorado Creek Trail parking pullout will be restored – and improved – this summer.

The pullout along Goldstream Road was removed during fall cleanup of the Goldstream Road Improvements Project. In January, trail users alerted the state Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT) about the loss. Users of the popular winter trail, which connects trails along Old Murphy Dome Road to trails in the Goldstream Valley, often parked their cars in the pullout. People now park along the shoulder to access the trail, which is much more dangerous.

DOT plans to replace the pullout “with a new pullout that is separated from the road to allow for improved safety and maintenance,” according to Judy Chapman, chief planner of the DOT’s northern region.

“The design will be a gravel pullout with room for approximately 8 vehicles, with paved approaches. This pullout is currently in design and will be replaced during the second phase of the Goldstream Road Improvements project occurring this summer.”

Judy also noted that the pullout, as shown in the graphic, “will be shifted a bit to the northwest so that the pullout ingress aligns with Bucks Drive.”



CYCLING LEGEND, TRAILS ADVOCATE REIFENSTUHL DIES

Ultra-athlete and Fairbanksan Rocky Reifenzstühl died recently due to heart problems. Articles about him have been written in the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner and the Alaska Dispatch. While he was well known for his feats as a long-distance biker, on road and trails, he was also a strong trails advocate. Rocky served on the board of the Interior Trails Preservation Coalition until his death and fought hard for trails, especially for preservation of the Equinox Marathon Trail. Rocky ran the Equinox Marathon many times and believed everything should be done to save the event and the trail named after it.

To read stories about Rocky, see the:

- Fairbanks Daily News-Miner: <http://tinyurl.com/p4vuzhf>
- Alaska Dispatch: <http://tinyurl.com/n8ngfup>



(Photo from Rocky's page: <http://www.arcticrecreation.com>)

INTERIOR LINK

- Borough allots \$150,000 for Tanana Lakes Recreation Area (which has a trail component): <http://tinyurl.com/kokhj35>

2013 RECREATIONAL TRAIL PROGRAM GRANTS

Grants for the following projects have been tentatively awarded from the Recreational Trail Program.

Mat-Su Valley

- Willow Grooming Equipment: A \$49,096 grant to the Willow Area Community Organization to purchase a hydraulic, multi-bladed snow groomer/drag and a front blade assembly, including all attachments, for use with a Snowcat tracked vehicle, owned by the Willow Trail Committee. When this project is complete, the equipment will be used for grooming and maintaining the West Gateway Trail System in Willow.
- Polaris UTV purchase: A \$4,000 grant to the Mat-Su Trails Council to help purchase a Polaris diesel-powered UTV. The UTV will be used to support trail maintenance and trail construction projects.
- Wide-track purchase: A \$12,000 grant to the Montana Creek Motor Musers to purchase a wide-track snowmachine to tow groomers on South Fork Montana Creek Trail. A new machine will replace a 10-year-old machine and allow for continued grooming for the users of this trail system.
- Palmer Bike Park: A \$50,000 grant to the Valley Mountain Bikers and Hikers to help build a community bike park within the Matanuska River Park. New trails will incorporate ideas from the Matanuska River Park Master Plan, such as a small pump track trail, dirt jump trail, and beginner-intermediate flow trail.
- Fixing the Trails/ Denali State Park: A \$41,021 grant to the Student Conservation Association to collaborate with Denali State Park to provide a multi-week trail crew that will work to improve, harden, and maintain Troublesome Creek and Byers Lake trails in their most used and damaged sections. The crew will install an 80-foot-long boardwalk on Troublesome Creek Trail. Trail work will focus on tread work and will include drainage control, brushing, and rockwork.
- Fixing Mt. Baldy Trail/ Chugach State Park: A \$47,670 grant to the Student Conservation Association to collaborate with Chugach State Park to support the trail layout, design, re-routing, and repair of the Mt. Baldy Trail. Due to its popularity, the trail suffers from serious erosion and braided social trails. Funding will cover the cost for Interior Trails to do the layout according to federal and state specifications and SCA will provide a multi-week trail crew to begin repair.
- Fox Trails: A \$32,552 grant to the Matanuska Susitna Borough to construct two 36-inch-wide single track non-motorized trails totaling 1.2 miles in the Matanuska Greenbelt on Matanuska Susitna Borough Public Recreation property. The trails will enhance and expand the existing trail network, provide connectivity to adjoining trails, and give trail users more options for dispersed recreation.

Anchorage area

- Girdwood Bridge: A \$50,000 grant to the Girdwood Nordic Ski Club to repair and replace damaged bridges that are crucial for safety of recreational travel and winter grooming. The bridges were placed to connect the cross-country ski trails in Girdwood, and now serve as a main trail connection within the trail system.
- Historic Iditarod Trail repair: A \$10,406 grant to the Friends of Eagle River Nature Center to support improvements to three miles of the Historic Iditarod Trail, which are under the management of Friends of Eagle River Nature Center. Improvements include filling in and hardening low spots, replacing rotting boards and supports of existing boardwalks, and improving access in overgrown areas along the length of trail.

- Nature Center Trails: A \$26,582 grant to the Friends of Eagle River Nature Center to purchase a Bobcat Mini Track Loader to help repair the trails leading from the Eagle River Nature Center. One person will be able to accomplish difficult trail work, including loading gravel and rock, digging trenches, and moving earth.
- Ruth Arcand Trails: A \$50,000 grant to the Anchorage Horse Council to continue its program to rehabilitate, reclaim, and enhance the multi-use trail system within the Ruth Arcand Park. This includes improving elevation, grading, drainage improvements, and the installation and compaction of high-strength geo-tech fabric and appropriate footing material in order to protect trail surfaces from future degradation, improve water quality, and to provide a safer, more enjoyable environment for all park users.

Kodiak

- Kodiak Island Trail Signage Demonstration Project: A \$21,251 grant to the Island Trails Network to purchase sign-making equipment and carry out a series of demonstration projects to begin implementing a uniform and cost-effective system of informational and directional signage throughout the 368-mile trail system of the Kodiak Island Borough. This is in keeping with the Kodiak Island Borough Master Trails Plan and will encourage safety of trail users, to encourage responsible trail use, and to more formally designate existing trails that may have obscure or conflicting names.

Kenai Peninsula

- North Fork Parking Lot: A \$50,000 grant to Snomads, Inc., to construct a 1.4-acre parking lot on state land at the beginning of the multi-use North Fork Trail and adjacent to North Fork Road. This well-used trail accesses prime recreation and hunting areas on the lower Kenai Peninsula. Developing a parking area at this trailhead will increase public access to these resources, and will prevent environmental degradation and adjacent landowner conflicts by establishing sufficient legal parking for all users.
- Water Hole and Straight-in Trail: A \$8,373 grant to Caribou Hills Cabin Hoppers to fill in trail bed washouts, repair and improve drainage and trail tread on Waterhole and Straight-In trails.
- Track Loader purchase: A \$50,000 grant to Tsalteshi Trails Association to purchase a skid steer (compact track loader) with available attachments to enable the organization to mow, mulch, grade, set posts for signs, move downed trees, improve drainage, and landscape, etc., during the summer, and move snow and break up frost heaves in the winter. The group maintains more than 20 kilometers of trails on land owned by the Kenai Peninsula Borough.
- Restoring Kachemak Bay Interpretive Trails: A \$49,989 grant to the Center for Alaskan Coastal Studies to restore 443 feet of heavily-used trail at the Peterson Bay Field Station by brushing trail, clearing, and removing large stumps and roots, and re-routing 170 feet of the trail to higher ground. It will also improve 1,190 feet of trail at the Carl E. Wynn Nature Center so that it is more accessible to young children, mildly impaired individuals, and senior citizens. It will also involve building puncheons and boardwalk at each location in designated spots on the trail.
- Lookout Mountain Maintenance Building: A \$30,000 grant to the Kachemak Nordic Ski Club to complete phase II of the Lookout Mountain Maintenance Building, which was constructed at the Lookout Mountain trailhead with support from a 2013 RTP grant.
- YRC North Peninsula Trail Maintenance: A \$46,569 grant to the Youth Restoration Corps for crews of six high school aged youth (16-19) to work under the supervision of YRC adult leaders with the planned project oversight of North Peninsula Recreation service area to provide needed repair on existing trails. This collective effort will include placement of signs developed by Nikiski High School students, trail brush clearing, gravel placement, and drainage improvement.

MAT-SU BORO ASSEMBLY TO HOLD HEARING ON REC PLANS

Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly will hold a public hearing Tuesday, March 4, on three recreational master plans: Crevasse-Moraine, Lazy Mountain, and Matanuska River Park.

The hearing will be held at the New Assembly Chambers at the Mat-Su Borough Building in Palmer (350 E. Dahlia Ave., Palmer). The meeting starts at 6pm although other issues are on the agenda prior. The agenda and packet will be online: <http://www.matsugov.us/assembly/meetings-agendas-and-minutes>. Three minutes are allowed per person (please sign-up when you arrive). Also feel free to submit comments to Assembly members by phone, email, or letter: <http://www.matsugov.us/assembly/meetings-agendas-and-minutes>

The plans have been unanimously approved by the borough's Parks, Recreation, and Trails Advisory Board, and the Planning Commission. The final step is the Mat-Su Borough Assembly. The plans were introduced at the assembly's meeting on February 18. No public comments on the plans were taken at that time.

See the plans at:

- <http://www.matsugov.us/communitydevelopment/crevasse-moraine-master-plan>
- <http://www.matsugov.us/communitydevelopment/lazy-mountain-rec-area>
- <http://www.matsugov.us/communitydevelopment/matanuska-river-park-master-plan>

(From Sara Wilson Doyle; hiking Crevasse-Moraine photo from: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/mollyinalaska/3499193889/>)



TRAILS FRIENDLY GROUP TO SHOW BACKCOUNTRY FILMS

Envision Mat-Su is hosting the Winter Wildlands Alliance's "Backcountry Film Festival" on Friday, March 7, in Wasilla.



The film will be shown at Rock On Climbing, 1080 Wasilla-Fishhook Road, starting at 7pm.

Envision Mat-Su is a group dedicated to making the Mat-Su Borough "the most livable region in Alaska" and "a model for sustainable development in Alaska." They support "interconnected parks and trails systems, and pedestrian friendly areas."

To find out more about the films see: <http://tinyurl.com/lcxjwdb>

To find out more about Envision Mat-Su see: <http://www.envisionmatsu.org>

SOUTHCENTRAL LINKS

- Kodiak's Island Trails Network Monthly Trails Update: <http://tinyurl.com/ko9xpl9>
- Compass: Anchorage airport still has its eyes on park land: <http://tinyurl.com/kjeun6s>

SOUTHEAST NEWS AND NOTICES

2013 RECREATIONAL TRAIL PROGRAM GRANTS

Grants for the following projects have been tentatively awarded from the Recreational Trail Program.

- Point Bridget Trail Restoration: A \$36,712 grant to the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, Southeast, to repair and reclaim heavily damaged sections of the Point Bridget Trail, improving access to three of the most popular public use cabins on the Juneau road system.
- Eyak Mountain: A \$17,781 grant to the Copper River Watershed Project to complete restoration of the Eyak Mountain Trail, a historic trail originally constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps in 1935.

Work will consist of finishing establishment of 487 feet of new trail bed sections in a public right-of-way and installing 656 linear feet of "step and run" board walk in boggy muskeg meadows to protect these wetlands areas. This one-mile trail connects with a 16-mile network of Cordova area trails.

- Upper Dewey Lake Trails Restoration: A \$49,996 grant to the Municipality of Skagway to fund this project, which is part of a multi-phase process of restoring the Upper Dewey Lake Trail as well as performing deferred repairs to remedy rutted and dangerous sections of the trail bed. The proposed reconstruction will restore safe footing and ease of maintenance.

SOUTHEAST LINKS

- On the Trails: January bushwhacks: <http://tinyurl.com/lkeazpw>
- Juneau man prepares for first of four 100-mile ultras for "Alaska Grand Slam": <http://tinyurl.com/ku6kxgg>
- On the Trails: Hard snow: <http://tinyurl.com/nyqwk8u>

WESTERN AREA NEWS AND NOTICES

2013 RECREATIONAL TRAIL PROGRAM GRANTS

A grant for the following project has been tentatively awarded from the Recreational Trail Program.

- Napaimute Winter Trail System: A \$49,720 grant to the Native Village of Napaimute to purchase wooden markers with reflective tape, locally made by Kalskag High School Vocational-Education students, to mark a winter trail from Crooked Creek to Kalskag. This will link the Middle and Lower Kuskokwim trail systems. The markers will enhance safe travel in marginal weather, and at night for recreational purposes, as well as for public transportation.

NATIONWIDE NEWS AND NOTICES

RECREATIONAL TRAIL PROGRAM AWARD NOMINATIONS DUE SOON

Nominations for the Annual Achievement Awards for Recreational Trail Program (RTP) projects are due in March.

The Coalition for Recreational Trails (CRT), a nationwide federation of trail-related organizations, sponsors the Annual Achievement Awards to recognize outstanding trail projects funded by the RTP. The awards will be presented in Washington, D.C., during Great Outdoors Week in June 2014 as part of the coalition's ongoing efforts to build awareness and appreciation of this highly successful program. Award recipients and their members of Congress are invited to join CRT on Capitol Hill in honoring these outstanding achievements.

The nomination form with at least 700 words of descriptive text, several print-quality photos, and any supporting materials must be turned in by March 28, 2014, to dtaylor@mic.org.

For more information see: <http://tinyurl.com/m693prg>

NATIONWIDE LINKS

MEETINGS, CONFERENCES, TRAINING, ETC.

- For a listing of upcoming trail workshops, conferences, and other meetings, see the American Trails calendar at: www.americantrails.org/Calendar.html

RECENT TRAILS E-NEWSLETTERS

- Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (March 2014): <http://tinyurl.com/cp9er4s>

STUDIES

- Study shows effectiveness of Safe Routes to School programs: <http://tinyurl.com/p6at97m>
- Report shows health benefits to society from cycling outweigh negative impacts: <http://tinyurl.com/lpl3hz3>

OTHER LINKS:

- Dirt Search: Help fund Yukon mountain bike trails: <http://tinyurl.com/kmdez8d>
- An expert's Top 10 Seattle park walks: <http://tinyurl.com/kdkw74c>
- Trail etiquette and safety for equestrians, hikers and mountain bikers: <http://tinyurl.com/kzrl8ex>
- 15 of the world's great horse treks: <http://tinyurl.com/mapv5kr>
- Hiking muddy trails is causing longterm damage (From Idaho, but an Alaska problem, too, especially in spring): <http://tinyurl.com/n2suytr>
- Fat-Biker Fined For Riding On Snowmobile Trails: <http://tinyurl.com/jvgy2u9>
- Uniquely New Hampshire: More snowmobile trails than highways: <http://tinyurl.com/le3dm5u>
- Help Us Identify Walking Efforts in the US by taking survey: <http://tinyurl.com/lfzylam>
- Scenic winter trails across USA (includes Anchorage's Kincaid Beach Trail): <http://tinyurl.com/kggm42s>
- President Obama Lays Out Vision for 21st Century Transportation Infrastructure: <http://tinyurl.com/qjpmdob>

The Alaska Trails board meets via teleconference on the second 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. More info: office@alaska-trails.org

A copy of this newsletter will also be posted to our web site. Newsletters come out at the beginning of March, June, September, and December. Deadline for articles is five days before the first of the month. Send stories to Editor Eric Troyer at eric.troyer@alaska-trails.org