

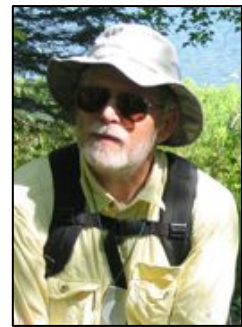
ALASKA TRAILS NEWS AND NOTICES

ALASKA TRAILS TO OFFER TRAININGS IN ANCHORAGE

Alaska Trails is offering the following classes in September. To register for a course, schedule a training course or to obtain more information, please contact Alaska Trails at [907/334-8049](tel:9073348049) or office@alaska-trails.org. For more information on the courses – please see: www.alaska-trails.org/trail_teachers/courses.shtml

Introduction to Sustainable Trails 101

- Instructor: Jack Mosby
- Date / Time: Wednesday, September 24, 5-9pm
- Location: BP Energy Center, Anchorage
- Description: This class will emphasize sustainable design elements, trail planning, and management concepts for all trail enthusiasts. Also learn the importance of using a clinometer in a short outdoor exercise. This is a pre-requisite for Alaska Trails advanced trainings.
- Course fee: \$50



Trail Drainage Structures & Basic Terrain Hydrology Slope Structures and Trail Stability

- Instructor: Mike Shields
- Date / Time: Thursday and Friday, September 25 and 26, 8:30am-5pm
- Location: BP Energy Center, Anchorage
- 2-day Course fee: Non-Profit - \$250, Agency/Gov't - \$375, For-Profit - \$500 (**Receive a \$50 discount by signing up before August 15**)
- (Minimum 8 participants)
- Both days are interactive advanced modules designed as continuing education lessons for natural resource professionals and technicians who have been through the Alaska Trails "Introduction to Sustainable Trails" training.



Day 1 – Trail Drainage Structures & Basic Terrain Hydrology

This class is designed to acquaint the trainee with both the typical structures used for controlled trail drainage (including the trail itself), and the natural surface and subsurface hydrology affecting that drainage.

Day 2 – Slope Structures and Trail Stability

This class is designed to acquaint the trainee with both the structural nature of a trail and the variety of structures that may be used to improve trail and slope stability, including the variables of soil-slope mechanics.

Note: If there is space, people can sign up for a single day. Contact Alaska Trails at [907/334-8049](tel:9073348049) or office@alaska-trails.org for more information.

(Photos courtesy of Jack Mosby: Top-Jack Mosby; Bottom-Mike Shields, second from left, during a trail training in 2013.)

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.

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.)



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).

THREE EASY WAYS TO HELP FUND ALASKA TRAILS

With the help of other organizations, you can help Alaska Trails continue advocating for trails.



BAGOY'S: Anchorage-based Bagoy's Florist and Home helps through its Helping Hands web fundraising program (<http://tinyurl.com/oavza6p>). When you order online from Bagoy's (www.bagoys.com) there is a check box at the bottom of the payment page that says "This is a Helping Hands order." When you check that box, the list of enrolled organizations are shown and you can choose Alaska Trails from the list.

FRED MEYER REWARDS: Sign up for the Community Rewards program by linking your Fred Meyer Rewards Card to Alaska Trails at www.fredmeyer.com/communityrewards. You can search for Alaska Trails or by our nonprofit number – 91035. Then, every time you shop and use your rewards card, you are helping Alaska Trails earn a donation! You still earn your rewards points, fuel points, and rebates, just as you do today.



GOODSEARCH: 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.
list.

DIRECTOR'S CORNER

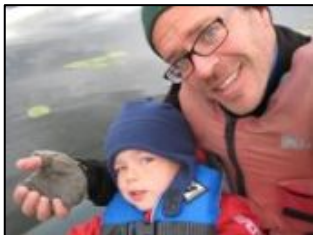
Steve Cleary, Executive Director

Checking the trail behind and ahead

As the summer winds down and fall colors start to pop, it's a great time to get out on trails before the season changes to winter. It's also a good time to look back on summer trail projects and look ahead to what's next.

LOOKING OUT FOR RTP

The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) continues to be a great source of funding for trails in Alaska. Please let your elected officials – both state and federal – know that you support



the program. Alaska Trails revamped its tool trailers and put on the 2014 Trails Conference through the RTP program. In conjunction with the

Valley Mountain Bikers and Hikers, we are working on some new trails in Government Peak through RTP. The new round of RTP grant application will be due in November.

WATCH FOR ANNOUNCEMENTS

If you have cable and tune into History, TNT, the Outdoor Channel or Discovery you may soon see one of four trail-related public service announcements (PSAs). In coordination with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Student Conservation Association (SCA), Alaska Trails is airing four different PSAs. Keep an eye out for them on your TV or view them all at: <http://www.blm.gov/ak/st/en/prog/akcttm.html>

ADOPT-A-TRAIL PROGRAM STARTED

Alaska Trails is planning new ways to make trail dollars go farther. This has led to the formation of an Adopt-a-Trail program. The project is an effort to bolster the amount of trail building and maintenance that government land managers

can accomplish by engaging and training volunteers and enlisting the help of local corporations. Alaska Trails will be the liaison between the land managers, the business partners and the volunteers – connecting time, energy, money and skills with the maintenance need for trails. We are excited to be developing this program and would welcome your input.

NEW MEMBERS ON BOARD

With the retirement of long-time board members Geoff Orth and Jack Mosby, Alaska Trails was in need of some new energy on its board of directors. I am happy to report that it has arrived. Five new board members were added to the board in August. I am excited to have them on board and they are excited to roll up their sleeves and help chart the course of Alaska Trails into the next decade. You can see the new board at: http://alaska-trails.org/about_us/directors.shtml

PRESENTATION AND PUBLIC LANDS

I am also excited to be presenting at the National Tribal Transportation Symposium in late September in Anchorage. I am on a panel regarding the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program and how trails can be a part of students making their way to and from school on foot or bike, especially in villages. Incorporating trails into daily routines is a healthy, sustainable way for kids to get exercise.

National Public Lands Day is a great way to give back and it's coming up on Saturday, September 27. Read about three upcoming events in the Statewide section.

Happy Trails,
Steve

TRAILS GRANT PROGRAM INCREASES LIMIT FOR MOTORIZED PROJECTS

The Alaska Trails Program announced recently that the limit for Recreational Trails Program motorized trail projects has been raised to \$100,000 from \$50,000.

Increasing the motorized trail project grant amount will help the program attain the required expenditure ratio of 30% motorized, 30% non-motorized and 40% diversified, and allow for more work to be done or trail equipment to be purchased for a motorized trail project. The limit for non-motorized and diversified trail projects will remain at \$50,000.

The new grant cycle started on August 15. Paperwork and instructions are available on the Trails Program web page <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/grants/trails.htm>. The grant application deadline is November 15. Posting public notice for your project should be done a minimum of four weeks before the deadline.

For more information please visit the State Trails Program website <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/aktrails/> or call Darcy Harris, the program manager (907/269-8699, darcy.harris@alaska.gov).

(Photo of RTP-funded Glacier Lake Trail care of [Happy Trails, Inc.](#))



NATIONAL PUBLIC LANDS DAY FEATURES THREE ALASKA EVENTS

One event each will be held in Anchorage, Sitka, and Ketchikan on National Public Lands Day in September.

National Public Lands Day is the nation's largest, single-day volunteer effort for public lands. It is officially held on September 27 this year, though several events have already been held in Alaska earlier this summer.

The following events will be held on Sept. 27:

Campbell Tract/Campbell Creek Science Center (Anchorage); 8am - 5pm

- Work includes improving trails and other things. All projects will be performed primarily with hand tools such as shovels, rakes, wheelbarrows and handsaws. For more information contact Jeff Brune (907/267-1255; jbrune@blm.gov).



Sitka National Historical Park; 8am - 5pm

- Beach and park clean up. Groups and individuals are welcome. For more information contact Jon Fish (907/747-0110; jon_fish@nps.gov).

Southeast Alaska Discovery Center (Ketchikan); 8:30am - 3pm

- Weeding and clean-up of center's native plant garden, Leave-No-Trace exhibit maze, and a free BBQ. Bring gloves (and rain gear if needed) and help clean up litter and remove weeds from the gardens surrounding the center. The volunteer work project takes place from 8:30 a.m. to noon. Afterwards, enjoy a free barbeque for your efforts from noon to 1pm. For more information contact Leslie Swada (907/228-6290; lswada@fs.fed.us)

National Public Lands Day began in 1994 with three sites and 700 volunteers. It proved to be a huge success and became a yearly tradition, typically held on the last Saturday in September. For more information on National Public Lands Day and Alaska-specific events see: www.publiclandsday.org.

TRAIL EASEMENT MIGHT LOWER YOUR PROPERTY TAX

If you've got a recreational trail running across your property that is open to the public, you may qualify for a reduced property tax.

State law requires that land subject to a public recreational use easement (which can include trails) must be assessed at its true value. This recognizes that such easements restrict what a landowner can do with the

property subject to the easement. (See AS 29.45.062 and AS 34.17.100. Find Alaska Statutes at www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/folio.asp.)

However, the land or trail in question must have a legal easement. Granting an easement to the state is free and fairly easily. Download the two-page "Public Recreation Easement" form at <http://dnr.alaska.gov/mlw/forms/>. The link for the PDF document is about halfway down the page under "Land Forms." Granting the easement will also give the landowner tort and liability immunity (AS 34.17.055).

If you think you may qualify for a property tax reduction due to this law, contact your local government's Assessing Department.

RIVER FORECAST SITE KEEPS TRACK OF SNOW DEPTH



The National Weather Service's River Forecast Center has a website that tracks several things regarding rivers, including how breakup is going and what river conditions are like. See the website (<http://aprfc.arh.noaa.gov/>). For a brief overview of how the weather service's hydrologic program works in the state, see the web-guide slideshow

(<http://aprfc.arh.noaa.gov/pubs/Presentations/boaterwebguide.pdf>).

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

- Right of way changes affect all Alaskans (including trail users), not just Railbelt: <http://tinyurl.com/k2upnx6>
- Competitor dies in grueling Alaska backcountry race: <http://tinyurl.com/oe6y3ga>
- Austrian completes rugged -- perhaps unprecedented -- overland journey from North Slope to Cook Inlet: <http://tinyurl.com/mruopax>

STATEWIDE TRAILS-RELATED NEWSLETTERS

- BLM *Frontiers* (Spring-Summer, 2014): <http://tinyurl.com/lzqll54>
 - Includes a story about the Tripod Flat Public Shelter Cabin along the Iditarod National Historic Trail

WORK PARTIES SCHEDULED FOR GOVERNMENT PEAK TRAILS

The Valley Mountain Bikers and Hikers are hosting volunteer work nights for the construction of the new Government Peak Singletrack trails. The schedule through September:

- 6:30-8:30pm on Thursdays (September 4th, 11th, 18th, and 25th)
- 9am-1pm on Saturdays (September 6th, 13th, 20th, and 27th)

Meet in the parking lot of the ski chalet at Government Peak Recreation Area. Workers are encouraged to wear work gloves, work boots, water and snacks for themselves.

More information at: <http://vmbah.org/>

PUBLIC COMMENT SOUGHT ON CHUGACH ACCESS PLAN

A public hearing will be held 6pm on September 9 at the Anchorage Municipal Assembly on the Chugach Access Plan. The intent of the Chugach Access Plan is to systematically address concerns that have been raised over the years and provide an organized strategy for securing and improving access to the park that is consistent with planned municipal development into the future. Since this plan is intended to serve as a tool to aid both the State and the MOA in decision making, it will require adoption by both entities to be implemented. Currently, the plan is going through the municipal adoption process for incorporation as an element of the Municipality of Anchorage's Comprehensive Plan. For more information, go to: <http://tinyurl.com/ct2yvdy>

STATE PARKS TRAIL CREWS TACKLE PROJECTS FROM DENALI TO VALDEZ

Alaska State Parks crews and volunteers have been busy improving trails throughout Southcentral Alaska. Below are some of the projects that have been happening:

Clearing K'esugi Ridge Trail

After recruiting, hiring, and training the four-person trail crew for Denali State Park, the crew was deployed into the field to work on K'esugi Ridge Trail. They set up spike camp in the Skinny Lake region. Then, under the direction of Natural Resource Technician Justin Dipaola-Allen, the crew brushed about 4,000 feet of trail corridor and cleared K'esugi Ridge access trails of winter deadfall.

Pic

Chicken Lake Cross Park Trail Construction

Progress on the Chicken Lake Cross Park Trail in Nancy Lake State Recreation Area is continuing this season with a flurry. Under the direction of our awesome trail crew leader, Carter Forney, about 600 black spruce logs were harvested, trimmed, and transported by ATV to the trail site where they were installed as supporting corduroy.

(Photo: Trail crew hauling and installing spruce pole corduroy.)



Connecting Flattop Trail to Glen Alps

Natural Resource Specialist Blaine Smith, Natural Resource Tech Ben Corwin and their crew of ACCs, Mike Fuller, Dawson Foster, John Mathot, and Jordyn Steele are working to connect the Flattop Trail at Glen Alps to the new satellite parking lot, while making it more sustainable. So far, they have moved and placed over 25.5 tons of barrier rocks and 91 tons of D1 and pit run gravel.

(Photo: Mike Fuller and Jordyn Steele moving heavy barrier rocks.)

Eklutna Lake Trail

The Eklutna Lake Trail improvement project is mostly complete. The Design and Construction crew placed two retaining walls on the bridge abutments to combat erosion and replaced a culvert farther down the trail.

Canyon Road Gets Some Love

Prior to July, driving on Canyon Road in Chugach State Park was a bumpy ride. Poor drainage caused some serious erosion and two gigantic boulders ensured that only courageous drivers with a flair for creative driving got through.

In late July, work began and the culvert that had become plugged with debris was replaced. The inlet and outlet of the new culvert was well armored with rock to protect the road from future drainage problems. The next major steps were removing the old gate and the culvert at the end of the road and installing a rock drainage basin to divert water effectively from the creek and uphill trail. The old gate was replaced with barrier rocks and a barrier post where the trail begins.



From then on, work focused mainly on grading the road for a new surface course. For example, the grade of the road below the first culvert was made less steep by placing material at the bottom of that hill. After that, all that remained to do was to place compost on the shoulders and cuts so that natural vegetation could take hold. These improvements will make for a more pleasant ride, allowing less courageous or creative drivers to access the Rabbit Lake trailhead at the end of Canyon Road.

(Photo: View of the end of Canyon Road from the beginning of the trail.)

Fixing Up Mineral Creek Trail

Kenai/Prince William Sound Area recently finished relocating and upgrading Mineral Creek Trail in Valdez. The previous trail was an old cat trail that historically provided access from the road system to Port Valdez. It's one of the few public access points along the beach in Valdez, but over the years Valdez's lush vegetation began to choke out the trail and the creek washed it out in places.



In winter, locals use the trail for snowshoeing. They also escape the snow by using this trail to find bare ground during low tide. The improved trail is 0.6 miles long, six feet wide, and provides a nice easy walk to access the saltwater beach for birding and beachcombing.

District ranger Jack Ransom, Valdez ranger Travis Russell, ACC Carrie Mercier, and superintendent Jack Blackwell all participated in making this project happen with the help of staff from the Valdez Parks and Recreation Department. Northern Area also helped by loaning their Yanmar tracked dump truck, which was a huge help in completing the project.

The project was funded by a grant from the US Forest Service.

(Photo: Ranger Jack Ransom operating the skid steer loader)

(All stories and photos from Eagle Watch, the state parks newsletter)

SOUTHCENTRAL LINKS

- *Outside Magazine's* 16 Greatest Places to Live in America (Anchorage rates #4 in part because of trails): <http://tinyurl.com/m9nvndh>
- Events boom at Tsalteshi Trails in Soldotna: <http://tinyurl.com/mhjvhez>
- Dispatch from Alaska: Finding Fish with a Raft and UTV: <http://tinyurl.com/psz6s6r>
- Crevasse-Moraine trail clean-up day Sept. 27: <http://tinyurl.com/o74ejrb>
- Route of multiday tour of Kachemak Bay: <http://tinyurl.com/kz8ry9n>

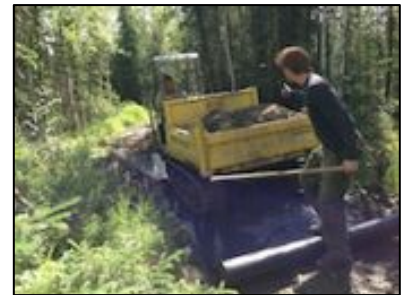
- Girdwood bike park a blast for all skill levels: <http://tinyurl.com/lf38jil>
- Tireless work puts Kincaid Park one-way bike trails on the map: <http://tinyurl.com/kbmr4mx>
- Gonzo for grayling along Eagle River trails: <http://tinyurl.com/klog7b7>
- Recent Outdoor Explorer radio shows:
 - Hiking the Chugach: <http://tinyurl.com/k68zebt>
 - Matanuska outdoor gems: <http://tinyurl.com/m3n7aqf>
- Come autumn, this trio of Southcentral trails is perfect for hikers: <http://tinyurl.com/lkc6zxt>

INTERIORWIDE NEWS AND NOTICES

CREW MEMBERS, VOLUNTEERS IMPROVE CHENA RIVER REC AREA TRAILS

Alaska State Parks crews and volunteers have been busy improving trails in the Chena River State Recreation Area. Below are some of the projects that have been happening:

- The Northern Area Trail Crew worked on Granite Tors Trail this past month clearing seven miles of trail corridor. They also repaired sections of boardwalk and rebuilt the Rock Creek bridge at mile 1.5 of the Granite Tors Trail. Seventeen Dynamic Adventures volunteers from the United Kingdom helped with the work. These ambitious workers from the United Kingdom carried in planking and supplies to rebuild the bridge.
- Maintenance workers Doug Avara and Marty Schatz started work on rerouting the Stiles Creek Extension Trail. The reroute will be constructed using today's best management practices and will eliminate a very dangerous and steep section of trail.
- Ranger Ian Thomas received the first ever Yamaha Trail Grant for Alaska. Thanks to his wordsmithing and tenacity, the Northern Area will receive \$10,000 to upgrade and repair ATV trails and two half-off vouchers to purchase Yamaha ATVs.



(From Eagle Watch, the state parks newsletter. Photo: Trail crew workers harden Stiles Creek Trail.)

WORK NEAR EQUINOX MARATHON TRAIL HIGHLIGHTED BY COOPERATION

A trail advocacy group, a state agency and a contractor are working together to make a portion of the Equinox Marathon Trail safer without disturbing the character of the single-track trail.

Recently, Stan Justice, president of the Interior Trails Preservation Coalition (ITPC), met with Justin Ireys of the state Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and contractor Karl Benson to discuss a project to fill three abandoned mining shafts near a recent reroute of the Equinox Trail between St. Patrick and Ester Dome roads. ITPC had asked that the shafts be filled for the safety of trail users and their pets. DNR responded by requesting bids for proposals to fill the shafts. DNR made efforts to protect the trail by not allowing the contractor to cross the trail or restrict use of the trail during the work. ITPC was pleased with the response but also concerned that the wording of the proposal might create a wide, clear swath on either side of a portion of the trail, which is now a tight, windy singletrack used mainly by hikers, runners, and bikers.

Justice raised this concern with DNR. Ireys responded by meeting at the site with Justice and Benson, the contractor who won the bid proposal. The three men came up with a plan that should get the work done and protect the trail character. Benson will have gravel dropped beside St. Patrick Road and haul it in to the mine shafts with a rubber-tracked Bobcat. He will enter just north of the trail and go up around an existing but abandoned building then traverse over to the shafts. There will be one crossing of the trail. Benson will keep impact to a minimum and will berm his access point from St. Patrick Road.

ITPC also suggested that the work might be an opportunity to improve parking at the trailhead. People have occasionally been parking along St. Patrick Road to access the trail. While the work was not included in the bid proposal, Benson said he may be able to widen St. Patrick road a tad for parking.

The work should be done in the next two weeks and should be finished before the Equinox Marathon on Saturday, Sept. 20.

(From Eric Troyer, newsletter editor and member of the ITPC)

FAIRBANKS MAYOR DECLINES TO STOP ESTER TRAIL BLOCKAGE

Fairbanks Borough Mayor Luke Hopkins has declined to take strong action against a miner who has blocked an Ester-area trail.

Hopkins says his administration is working with the miner to reroute the trail, but meanwhile the existing trail remains blocked.

While this situation involves trails, the issue centers on public access to a public right-of-way, so it's about more than trails. Here's the background:

A couple of years ago a miner put a locked gate across the Ester Valley Trail, which at that point is more road than trail. The miner claims he closed the trail because he has had problems with vandalism and theft. Trail advocates say the trail is clearly protected under the RS2477 statute and by a prescriptive easement because of decades of use by the public.

Blocking the Ester Valley Trail affects more than the trail itself because the trail provides access to several other trails, including the Tri-Con Mine Road/Trail, the Ester West Ridge Trail, and the Willow Creek Trail.

When the trail was blocked, trail advocates asked the borough to intervene so that the public could continue using the trail. Borough employees did start talking to the miner, but discussions have focused on rerouting the trail and have not included a demand to unblock the trail.

Finally fed up with the borough's refusal to act decisively, trail advocates Geoffrey Orth and Sheryl Reily filed suit against the miner. They have asked for and received donations to help fund their court fight, but still they have spent thousands of dollars of their own money. They are not asking for personal access but for public access.

Recently, a number of people, including Fairbanks Cycling Club President Joel Buth, lobbied Mayor Hopkins to get involved more directly and forcefully. But Hopkins has declined.

In an email to Buth, Hopkins wrote:

*"Your questions regarding legal issues and positions that the borough should take involving the court complaint need to be reviewed with the following borough policy from the adopted FNSB Trail Plan that directs the Borough administration on public access for a trail that is **not** accepted in the FNSB comprehensive trail plan, as is the status of this trail."*

However, Orth and Reily argue that the fact that the lawsuit revolves around a trail is beside the point. They say the main issue here is the public's right of access to a public right-of-way (ROW).

In an email to trail advocate Douglas Yates, Hopkins elaborated further:

The Borough has been involved in the on-going mediation for public access for this trail. As in other similar trail situations, I have this position after thoroughly been advised by my legal office.

I stated in the previous email, ROW access is given by the owners to all surrounding lands as required by the federal regulations covering this active mining claim.

Orth, Reily, Buth, Yates and other trail advocates in the area (including this newsletter's editor) feel that Mayor Hopkins is shirking his duty to protect the rights of the public. They believe that the mayor should demand that the existing right-of-way be unblocked until a new trail of equal quality is built and a right-of-way is secured for it.

To find out more on the situation, contact FCC President Joel Buth (455-6520; pres@fairbankscycleclub.org) or Geoffrey Orth (gcorth@straydogs.us). To get the other side of the story (or to lobby for opening the trail) contact Mayor Hopkins (907/459-1300; Mayor@co.fairbanks.ak.us).
(From Eric Troyer, newsletter editor and member of the Interior Trails Preservation Coalition)

COMMENTS SOUGHT ON PARKS HIGHWAY PROJECT

Public comment is being sought on proposed Mile 231 Parks Highway improvements that include trail connections. The deadline for submitting comments is September 30.

The project scope includes constructing a new pedestrian bridge across the Nenana River, trail connections, a rest area, and intersection improvements. The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOTPF), in cooperation with the Alaska Division of the Federal Highway Administration, is currently working on conceptual designs, preliminary engineering, and environmental studies.

The DOTPF also requests information and comments on resources in the study area that may be affected, including historic properties, archaeological sites, wetlands, and floodplains.

The agencies held an open house on the project on August 28.

Submit comments to: Lauren Little, P.E.; 2301 Peger Road; Fairbanks, AK 99709-5316 Telephone: 907/451-5371; Fax 907/451-5126 Text Telephone (TDD): 907/451-2363 Email: lauren.little@alaska.gov

NEW ELDORADO CREEK TRAIL PARKING AREA IN PLACE

Users of the Eldorado Creek Trail now have a new place to park along Goldstream Road.

The state Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOTPF) built a new gravel parking area across from Buck's Drive. The old parking area, a wide spot on the shoulder of the road, was removed during last fall's cleanup of the Goldstream Road Improvements Project.



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 old pullout. When it was removed trail users still parked along the shoulder of Goldstream Ro, which was much more dangerous.

In January, trail users, including members of the Interior Trails Preservation Coalition, alerted the DOTPF about the loss. Agency personnel responded by planning and then building a new, improved parking area with room for

about eight vehicles. The new parking area is separated from the road and has an entrance and exit.

(From Eric Troyer, newsletter editor and member of the Interior Trails Preservation Coalition)

FAIRBANKS TO HOST PARKS AND REC CONFERENCE

The annual Alaska Recreation and Parks Association conference will be held in Fairbanks from September 24 to 26. The Fairbanks North Star Borough Parks and Recreation Department will host the event. The educational session on Friday, Sept 26, will be trails-specific and will include Steve Taylor, project coordinator for the Fairbanks parks department, and Brooks Ludwig, superintendent of the Northern Area Office for the state Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation. For more information on the conference see: <http://tinyurl.com/m74dr6r>

INTERIOR LINKS

- After 25 years, outdoors editor Tim Mowry is packing up camp: <http://tinyurl.com/l8tq7rk>
- Firefighters come to the rescue of Stampede Trail hikers: <http://tinyurl.com/q9yggws>
- More bear sightings reported in Goldstream, Goldhill areas: <http://tinyurl.com/op9anb4>

SOUTHEAST NEWS AND NOTICES

SOUTHEAST LINKS

- First section of Raven Trail in Petersburg rebuilt: <http://tinyurl.com/mtz474m>
- Why the FAA is paying for new hiking Trails in Juneau: <http://tinyurl.com/kex7j3b>
- On the Trails: Hiking to Granite Basin: <http://tinyurl.com/ls9jp22>
- Southeast Adventure: Observation Loop: <http://tinyurl.com/ost4xun>
- First downhill mountain bike trail planned in Juneau: <http://tinyurl.com/ll4ewwe>
- Peterson Lake Trail sees continued improvements: <http://tinyurl.com/n6f3qyw>
- On the Trails: Marmots, gentians: <http://tinyurl.com/ojtxokm>
- Summer hikes around Juneau: Part II: <http://tinyurl.com/oxm5l7r>

NATIONWIDE NEWS AND NOTICES

TRAILS AWARDS NOMINATIONS DUE IN SEPTEMBER

American Trails is again collecting nominations for its National and International Trails Awards Program. Deadline for nominations is September 15.

The program recognizes contributions of volunteers, professionals, and other leaders who are working for the betterment of trails both nationally and internationally. Awards are given in up to 19 different categories.

Winners will be announced at the 22nd American Trails International Trails Symposium (ITS) Awards Banquet in Portland, Oregon on May 19, 2015. To learn more about the awards and symposium see: <http://tinyurl.com/lfracz>

TRAIL FUNDING SOURCE NEEDS CONSTANT ADVOCACY



It was fifty years ago today that the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) passed in the House of Representatives in a bipartisan manner on a voice vote.

The Land and Water Conservation Fund is a critical program for conserving public landscapes: sometimes through enabling the outright purchase of land and sometimes through easements that allow a trail corridor to be established on private land. The funds for LWCF do not come from taxpayer dollars, but from the revenues collected by the federal government from offshore oil and gas leases. The idea behind the program's creation was to use a portion of the income from the depletion of one public resource to conserve another public resource.

Even though "full funding" for LWCF was established by Congress to be \$900 million annually, that does not mean all the taxes collected from offshore energy development go to LWCF; last year the Department of the Interior collected approximately \$9 billion, or 10 times what would fully fund LWCF. Yet of the \$900 million authorized in 2013, just \$306 million was enacted by Congress. Additionally, that \$900 million was authorized in 1964. Had it kept pace with inflation it would now be approximately \$7 billion!

Read more: <http://tinyurl.com/jw92zqw>

(From American Hiking Society)

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

ADVOCACY

- Help Fix the Forest Service Backlog of Trail Maintenance!: <http://tinyurl.com/pk827ok>

RECENT TRAILS E-NEWSLETTERS

- Rails-To-Trails Conservancy (August): <http://tinyurl.com/kvll0f6>

OTHER NATIONAL LINKS:

- Inman (S.C.) to equip trails with pages from children's books: <http://tinyurl.com/jwtw6vl>
- Cyclists blaze trail for ecotourism in Florida: <http://tinyurl.com/mtxd4fn>
- Lake Mead National Recreation Area closes trails due to high heat: <http://tinyurl.com/lannt7p>
- Mountain Biking Basics: Trail Etiquette: <http://tinyurl.com/ms7hc4g>
- Governor announces new Wisconsin State Parks, Forests and Trails App: <http://tinyurl.com/o9lnmof>
- World's most beautiful bike trails: <http://tinyurl.com/qdmsocd>
- The trail less traveled: Building the Continental Divide Trail: <http://tinyurl.com/o3vlg83>
- 10 trails every hiker should tackle: <http://tinyurl.com/men7qzs>
- Backcountry adventurers discover packrafting: <http://tinyurl.com/mkggha3z>
- Google's Street View adds Waikiki Beach, other Oahu parks and hiking trails: <http://tinyurl.com/mlvv4wt>
- Guard dogs continue to frighten hikers on Colorado high mountain trails: <http://tinyurl.com/mev85vr>
- Colorado OHV group perseveres, builds a safer water crossing for all user groups: <http://tinyurl.com/ly7quf6>
- A must-see video: "Trails Unlimited: Training The Next Generation": <http://tinyurl.com/qfwr9dg>
- Small trailer tackles big trail-building jobs: <http://tinyurl.com/outf72v>

INTERNATIONAL LINKS

- 11 top South Africa bike trails: <http://tinyurl.com/qf7scqo>
- Germany's 10 best hiking trails: <http://tinyurl.com/qbzcjkw>
- 5 of the world's most dangerous hiking trails: <http://tinyurl.com/l8l8eq8>
- Seven epic walking trails around the world: <http://tinyurl.com/mp8z49k>

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