

**ALASKA  
TRAILS**



[www.alaska-trails.org](http://www.alaska-trails.org)

# **ACTION UPDATE**

*February 2015*

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Action Updates are produced about once a month between issues of the quarterly Alaska Trails newsletter. Action Updates include new action items, action items previously reported with a deadline not yet passed, and other breaking news of interest to trail users. A copy of this Action Update will be posted to our web site.

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## **ALASKA TRAILS NEWS AND NOTICES**

### **USE “PICK. CLICK. GIVE.” TO DONATE TO ALASKA TRAILS**

Alaska Trails is included in the Permanent Fund Dividend’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.

For more information on “Pick. Click. Give” see: [www.pickclickgive.org](http://www.pickclickgive.org).

### **REGISTRATION COMING SOON FOR STATEWIDE TRAILS CONFERENCE**

Please save the date for the 2015 Alaska Trails Statewide Trails Conference. It will be held Thursday, April 23, through Saturday, April 25, at the Wasilla Sports Complex and the theme will be Partnership. More details to follow soon including: pre-conference sessions, agenda, speakers and more. Thanks to the Mat-Su Health Foundation for their generous support of the 2015 Statewide Trails Conference.

### **WEBSITE MANAGER NEEDED TO HELP PROMOTE TRAILS**

Alaska Trails is looking for a new website manager. If you are interested in helping out with our website, please contact us at [office@alaska-trails.org](mailto:office@alaska-trails.org)

- Check out our Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Alaska-Trails/707066126002590>

## **STATEWIDE NEWS AND NOTICES**

### **OBAMA INCLUDES RIVERS IN ARCTIC REFUGE WILDERNESS PLAN**

President Obama’s administration is recommending Wild and Scenic River designation for four rivers: Marsh Fork of the Canning, Kongakut, Hulahula, and Atigun. This move is part of the administration’s attempt to get the National Wildlife Refuge’s coastal plain designated as wilderness. While there is little in the way of official designated land trails in the refuge, those four rivers are popular water trails. Read more about President

Obama's announcement here: <http://tinyurl.com/o6te8xl>. Read about the refuge's conservation plan here: [www.fws.gov/home/arctic-ccp/](http://www.fws.gov/home/arctic-ccp/).

## RECREATIONAL TRAILS ADVISORY BOARD TO MEET IN ANCHORAGE

The Outdoor Recreational Trails Advisory Board will meet February 3 and 4 in Anchorage to consider grant applications. The public is welcome to attend the meeting which will be held from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. both days in Suite 1270 of the Atwood Building, located at 550 West 7th Ave.

During the meeting, the ORTAB will evaluate grant proposals for the Recreational Trails Program and the Land and Water Conservation Fund. The board will provide recommendations to the director of the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, who will make final decisions on funding for those applications.

Contact Darcy Harris at 907/269-8699 or [darcy.harris@alaska.gov](mailto:darcy.harris@alaska.gov) to reserve a free teleconference line. For special accommodations, auxiliary aid or services, and/or an alternative communication format to participate in this meeting, please contact Darcy at least four days in advance of the meeting to make the necessary arrangements.

For more info on the Recreational Trails Program, go to <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/grants/trails.htm>.

For more info on the Land and Water Conservation Fund go to <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/grants/lwcf.htm> or contact Jean Ayers at 907-269-8694 or [jean.ayers@alaska.gov](mailto:jean.ayers@alaska.gov).

*(From Alaska State Parks Facebook post)*

## KEEP TRAILS IN THE MINDS OF OUR LEGISLATORS

The Alaska Legislature has will soon start its session. Don't forget to keep trails issues in the minds of our legislators. They have many other things vying for their attention. If they don't hear from trail advocates they may think that trails are not important to Alaskans. Contact information for senators and representatives can be found at: <http://w3.legis.state.ak.us/>

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## STATEWIDE TRAILS AND PUBLIC-LANDS RELATED NEWSLETTERS

- Alaska Lands Update (January): <http://dnr.alaska.gov/commis/cacfa/>
- Alaska Nordic Skier (January): <http://anchoragenordicski.com/newsletters.htm>

## STATEWIDE LINKS

- The fiction that is Jon Krakauer's 'Into The Wild': <http://tinyurl.com/n4a7tbz>
- Outdoor Explorer radio show:
  - Alone in the Wilderness: <http://tinyurl.com/qfqmxev>
  - Winter Sports and Climate Change: <http://tinyurl.com/nbqbfh>
- Alaska State Troopers encourage lifesaving selfies for backcountry travelers: <http://tinyurl.com/p658ttw>

### *Southeast links*

- Troopers urge caution after dog caught in trap near Juneau: <http://tinyurl.com/ksynyhc>
- On the Trails: Out and about: <http://tinyurl.com/ky62kto>
- Run softly but carry a big hiking stick: <http://tinyurl.com/kqda7z8>
- Snowshoeing Alaska's Mendenhall Valley: <http://tinyurl.com/mnt9gle>
- What the rains have wrought on Juneau's trails: <http://tinyurl.com/ok9mzur>
- Restoring a piece of local history: Eyak Mountain Trail Project: <http://tinyurl.com/p8q4vss>

## SOUTHCENTRAL NEWS AND NOTICES

### WORKSHOPS HELD FOR ANCHORAGE TRAIL GRANT PROGRAM

Anchorage Park Foundation Challenge grants are available for trail projects on Municipal Park Land in Anchorage. The foundation will host two workshops in February to give applicants time with a landscape architect. Applicants who attend the workshops usually get better scores and their applications.

- February 5 from 6:30 to 9pm at the Spenard Recreation Center
- February 25 from 6:30 to 9pm at the Fairview Recreation Center

The deadline for applying is March 20.

This year the foundation will award a total of \$200,000 to viable community projects, thanks to generous funding from the Rasmuson Foundation. This is your opportunity to leverage your neighbors for the park or trail improvement you want to see, with double the impact. Your project could be awarded up to \$40,000 in matching funds. Projects must: take place in an Anchorage municipal park or on an Anchorage municipal trail be completed by October 1, 2016, and benefit the public.

Watch the foundation's [Facebook](#) page for updates on application availability and deadlines. For more information or assistance contact Alyse Loran at 274-1003 or email [Alyse@AnchorageParkFoundation.org](mailto:Alyse@AnchorageParkFoundation.org) or go to [anchorageparkfoundation.org/programs/challenge-grants/](http://anchorageparkfoundation.org/programs/challenge-grants/)

### PLANNING GROUP TO HEAR CASES ON CHUGACH PARK ACCESS PLANS

The Anchorage Planning and Zoning Commission will hear cases for competing ordinances on the Chugach State Park Access Plan on February 2 at 6:30pm in the Assembly Chambers, Loussac Library.

The cases are:

- CASE: 2014-0211 - An ordinance amending Title 21 to Prohibit Implementation Of The Chugach State Park Access Plan Through The Land Use Permit Process and To Address Park Access Dedication Separately from trail dedication. Petitioner: Municipality of Anchorage
- CASE: 2014-0210 - An amendment to "old" Title 21 to Provide For Implementation Of The Chugach Park Access Plan

*(From What's Up? by Peg Tileston)*

### TRANSPORTATION PLANS SHOWCASED AT ANCHORAGE EVENT

The 2015 Anchorage Transportation Fair will be held on February 4 from 4 to 8pm at the University of Alaska Anchorage Alaska Airlines Center Auxiliary, 3550 Providence Drive. The event is a "super open house" providing attendees a one-stop showcase of transportation projects, planning efforts or existing plans concerning all modes of transportation within the Municipality of Anchorage. Check out the transportation fair website at <http://anchoragetranspofair.blogspot.com/> or go to <http://tinyurl.com/o3c45pd> for a more complete project list and other information Free parking.

*(From What's Up? by Peg Tileston)*

### PRESENTATION TO DISCUSS ATV SALMON STREAM CROSSINGS

One trail-related presentation is being put on as part of the "Winter Conservation Series" being put on by the Wasilla and Palmer Soil and Water Conservation districts. "ATV Salmon Stream Crossings: the Intersection of Machines & Man" will be put on by Chuck Kaucic on Thursday, March 12, from 7-8:30pm at the Mat-Su College. Session registration is via a first-contact, first-reserved basis and is limited to a maximum of 38. The preferable

registration technique is to send an email requesting a space for a specific session to: [distmgr@wasillaswcd.org](mailto:distmgr@wasillaswcd.org). If email is not an option, call 357-4511. When sessions are full, a waiting list will be maintained.

## **MAT-SU WORKSHOP HELD ON ATV SALMON STREAM CROSSINGS**

A workshop designed to introduce and educate people to the intricacies of assessing and constructing fish-friendly ATV trail salmon stream crossings will be held twice in March.

The workshop will be held at two different times and places:

- Wed. March 18, 9 am - 5pm, Mat Su College Rm 202 FSM Bldg
- Sat. March 21, 9am - 5 pm, MSC Rm 103, FSM Bldg

Sessions are free and are limited to 25 participants (first-come, first-registered basis). They are being funded by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough.

The workshop content includes providing factual salmon and stream basics/characteristics; Alaska Department of Fish and Game rules and regulations/permits; local rider input, user interview survey results regarding the rider's perspective toward fish crossings; assessment of crossings in the Mat-Su Core area; technical crossing construction tutorial – assessment, soils, techniques, structures, and options.

Presenters include Mike Bethe, manager, and Sarah Wilber, biologist (Palmer ADF&G office); Mike Campfield, P.E. MSB Environmental Engineer; Mike Shields, nationally known trail builder; and Chuck Kaucic, ATV/Salmon Stream Crossing Assessment and Outreach Project Manager.

To register contact Chuck Kaucic ([distmgr@wasillaswcd.org](mailto:distmgr@wasillaswcd.org); 907/357-4511).

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## **SOUTHCENTRAL LINKS**

- Find yourself in sprawling Kincaid Park with new free app: <http://tinyurl.com/lgfnc3c>
- Christmas trees transformed into trails: <http://tinyurl.com/l8ohogo>
- (Kodiak) Island Trails Network newsletter: <http://tinyurl.com/p5y7v2v>
- Trappers, dogs clash on trails in the Mat-Su: <http://tinyurl.com/owuqkoa>
- Climate science points to dying winter sports in Southcentral Alaska: <http://tinyurl.com/kflq857>
- Anchorage Park Foundation's 2015 Challenge Grant program for parks and trails: <http://tinyurl.com/osjdlq3>
- Video: Nordic skating—really skating—on Girdwood ski trails: <http://tinyurl.com/q9q6kwf>
- Middle Fork loop trail on a fat bike: <http://tinyurl.com/lo62xop>
- Month-long bike fest kicks off Thursday night : <http://tinyurl.com/l246qgb>

## **INTERIOR AND NORTHERN NEWS AND NOTICES**

### **SKARLAND, PEARL CREEK TRAILS MEETING HAS POSITIVE RESULTS**

A meeting held in early January to discuss winter uses of the Skarland and Pearl Creek trails has been described by several people as being very civil despite strong differences of opinion. More than 60 people attended.

The meeting, held at Pearl Creek Elementary School, was called to discuss whether the practice of setting ski tracks should end or change. Changing demographics and winter activities is spurring this discussion. While the trails have long been dedicated to cross-country skiing in winter, more people want to get out and use the trails in the winter with activities other than skiing, such as walking and fatbiking. Even among those who do

like skiing, some don't always like set tracks. But others do, and the tracks have been set by volunteers for many years. No major decisions were made at the meeting but a few positive things have come out of it so far.

- Don Kiely created a Facebook page titled "Skarland & Pearl Creek Park Trail Users" for trail users to better communicate with each other. See it here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1553793074862242/>
- Another meeting has tentatively been set for February, but no specific time has been announced.
- An online map of the Skarland and Pearl Creek Park Trails has also been made available: <http://tinyurl.com/mslhg2s>
- At the January meeting, several people commented that in some areas set tracks were a hindrance because they were in areas people preferred to snowplow or herringbone. Stan Justice, a volunteer groomer of the Skarland Trail, built a new groomer with a winch that allows him to lift the track cutter in those areas. See pictures of the groomer on the Facebook page.

## **PLANNED ROAD IN TWO RIVERS AREA MAY AFFECT TRAILS**

An easement application for a road in the Two Rivers area may affect trails in that area. The public has an opportunity to comment on the application.

The applicant is planning to build a road south from Sands Lane located off Chena Hot Springs Road to property near the Chena River. The application is for a public right-of-way, so access will not be restricted. How such a road would affect local trails is uncertain. The application notice can be seen at: <http://aws.state.ak.us/OnlinePublicNotices/Notices/View.aspx?id=175396>. A link to a location map is at the bottom of that page.

Written comments must be received in writing by the DMLW, Lands Section on or before 5 p.m. Monday, February 23, 2015, in order to ensure consideration.

To submit written comments, to view the full application packet, or to seek additional information, please contact Mandy Willingham (451-2739; [amanda.willingham@alaska.gov](mailto:amanda.willingham@alaska.gov)).

## **DEADLINE APPROACHES FOR WHITE MOUNTAINS ARTIST PROGRAM**

February 6 is the deadline for applications for the Bureau of Land Management for the Artist-In-Residence Program in the White Mountains National Recreation Area this winter. The Artist in Residence program is open to emerging or established artists working in nearly any media – including painting, printmaking, photography, writing, and music. The BLM provides transportation between Fairbanks and a rustic cabin on the White Mountains trail system. Artists are expected to donate the use of a piece of artwork inspired by their time in the White Mountains to help promote public lands. The BLM plans on offering several residencies annually in different seasons and locations, including one in the Eagle or Fortymile region next summer. As the new program grows, other public lands will be considered as well. More information and applications can be obtained from Craig Tanner at [ctanner@blm.gov](mailto:ctanner@blm.gov) or 907-474-2321.

*(From What's Up? by Peg Tileston)*

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## **INTERIOR LINKS**

- Sealed bids due Feb 19 for Plack Road Bicycle/Pedestrian Facility: <http://tinyurl.com/nyfm8xy>

## NATIONWIDE/WORLDWIDE NEWS AND NOTICES

### AMERICAN TRAILS SEEKS DONATIONS FOR LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

American Trails is seeking donations for its Hulet Hornbeck Emerging Leaders Scholarship Program.

This year the program will provide up to 20 young adults with the opportunity to attend the International Trails Symposium coming up in Portland, Oregon, on May 17-20, and receive resources that will help them reach their potential in the trails profession.

The Emerging Leaders Program immerses aspiring trail professionals (ages 19-25) in learning best practices and trends in the field and inspires them to choose a career path so they can leave a lasting legacy on the trails world. Scholarship funds cover the cost of Symposium registration, an experienced mentor pairing, field excursions in Portland, a trail-based service project, and travel and hotel accommodations.

The Emerging Leaders Program Committee is currently reviewing over 100 applications for this program, but it is still seeking sponsorships for these young leaders. With enough support, the committee will be able to bring a full group of diverse young trail enthusiasts to the symposium and inspire them to become tomorrow's leaders in trails and conservation.

For more about the program: <http://americantrails.org/ee/index.php/symposium/2015-youth>

(From American Trails email)

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## NATIONWIDE/WORLDWIDE 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](http://www.americantrails.org/Calendar.html)
- Registration for the International Trails Symposium (May 17-20) is now open: <http://tinyurl.com/m39j8y8>

### RECENT TRAILS-RELATED E-NEWSLETTERS

- Rails-To-Trails Conservancy (January): <http://tinyurl.com/lxutlo9>
- American Trails (January): <http://tinyurl.com/mf8hp9m>
- National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council (December): <http://tinyurl.com/ohjvn5f>
- FHWA's Fostering Livable Communities Newsletter (January): <http://tinyurl.com/nyhxdvh>

### FUNDING:

- Woolrich to make collectible blankets to benefit the nonprofit trail organizations: <http://tinyurl.com/n7d9378>
- Bell Helmets offers \$100,000 grant to fund a gravity mountain bike trail: <http://tinyurl.com/pg332lw>

### STUDIES/REPORTS:

- Cross-party Poll Finds Voters Want Bike/Ped Investments: <http://tinyurl.com/lguf9cv>
- How the Federal Highway Administration Makes Walking and Bicycling Safer: <http://tinyurl.com/qze8lfw>
- Inactivity 'kills more than obesity': [www.bbc.com/news/health-30812439](http://www.bbc.com/news/health-30812439)

### ADVOCACY

- Rails-to-Trails Conservancy online petition to protect federal trail funding: <http://tinyurl.com/kvsyhx5>

#### OTHER NATIONAL LINKS:

- OpenStreetMap powers map data on web sites, mobile apps, and hardware devices: [www.openstreetmap.org](http://www.openstreetmap.org)
- Online trails mapping service: <http://juicytrails.com>
- Colorado Fourteeners Initiative's Sustainable Trails Program: <http://tinyurl.com/mvwnwfk>
- Subscribe for National Trails Day (June 6, 2015) updates: <http://tinyurl.com/mbywzd5>
- Next National Park Service free entrance days are Feb 14-16: [www.nps.gov/findapark/feefreeparks.htm](http://www.nps.gov/findapark/feefreeparks.htm)
- New USGS Nebraska Maps Feature Trails: <http://tinyurl.com/q4c3v9h>
- 7 Tips For Winter Hiking—Plus 6 Of NPCA's Favorite Cold-Weather Trails: <http://tinyurl.com/lvs4n4n>
- Colorado governor calls for statewide bike trails: <http://tinyurl.com/kevwj7b>
- Top 10 long-distance hiking trails in the US: <http://tinyurl.com/nuw94y3>
- Days free, retirees build and maintain Arizona county trails: <http://tinyurl.com/ogtzkha>
- US DOT, AmeriCorps announce effort to expand youth workforce opportunities: <http://tinyurl.com/l3xczqg>
- Rails-to-Trails Hall of Fame routes in Idaho, Montana — and closer: <http://tinyurl.com/kwx87vk>
- The Federal Highway Administration recently revised its Q&A page for its Transportation Alternatives Program including the Recreational Trails Program: <http://tinyurl.com/o9jprzs>
- USFS issues rule for snowmobile and other motorized over-snow travel: <http://tinyurl.com/njfxcyg>
- Accused trail saboteurs had been 'trying to destroy' mountain bikers' structures on Mount Fromme going back a decade: <http://tinyurl.com/l6xxsq5>
- Paper, Smartphone Or Tablet: Montana Club Has Trail Maps Covered: <http://tinyurl.com/lgpxtwr>

#### INTERNATIONAL LINKS:

- 10 of the world's most amazing long-distance trails: <http://tinyurl.com/mpy4qbd>
- Expat hopes to create first mountain biking trails in Abu Dhabi: <http://tinyurl.com/m9m23rh>
- Ramblers seek wider horizons, new trails and stunning views in Malta: <http://tinyurl.com/jwvf7q4>
- The world's greatest walking trails: <http://tinyurl.com/lasb3dg>

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The Alaska Trails board meets via teleconference on the second Tuesday of each month from noon to 1:00PM. If you want to hear more about Alaska trail topics, share trail information, or propose a trail project, join us for an hour. Everyone is welcome. More info: [office@alaska-trails.org](mailto:office@alaska-trails.org)

A copy of this newsletter will also be posted to our web site. Full newsletters come out at the beginning of March, June, September, and December. Action Updates come out most months in between. Deadline for articles is five days before the first of the month. Send stories to Editor Eric Troyer at [eric.troyer@alaska-trails.org](mailto:eric.troyer@alaska-trails.org)

**Enjoy your trail activities safely and be an Alaskan trail steward!**