

ALASKA TRAILS



www.alaska-trails.org

ACTION UPDATE

October 2014

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.

STATEWIDE NEWS AND NOTICES

PUBLIC POSTING FOR RTP APPLICATIONS DUE IN OCTOBER

People interested in applying for state Recreational Trails Program grants need to remember to post public notices about their projects by October 15.

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.

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. Officials hope that 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.

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).

HOMER FESTIVAL SEEKING OUTDOOR FILM SUBMISSIONS

October 15 is the deadline for submission for the films to be shown at the Homer Outdoor Film Festival on November 15.

Official Rules:

- Films must be in a .mov or .mp4 file and submitted on a zip drive, along with the Film Submission Entry to HoWL Headquarters, 1554 Homer Spit Road, Homer, AK 99603 or submitted by sharing via Dropbox with howlalaska@gmail.com.
- Films must be 15 minutes or less in length. Up to 3 long films (6-15 minutes) will be selected for screening. Up to 15 short films (0-6 minutes) will be selected for screening.
- Films must have an "outdoor" thematic element.
- Films must either be shot in Alaska or made by an Alaskan filmmaker.
- Films must be "PG-13" and suitable for a young audience.
- Entry does not guarantee screening at the festival. All films will be juried prior to the festival and filmmakers will be notified by November 1 whether their film was selected for screening. There will be a cash prize of \$250 for the audience's choice award of Best in Show.

(From What's Up by Peg Tileston)

STATEWIDE LINKS

- Is it time to regulate ATVs clogging Alaska trails during hunting season?: <http://tinyurl.com/l5tnl5z>
- Ultra-Endurance Athletes (on trails): <http://tinyurl.com/ohppn9f>
- Overlapping trail uses by hunters, mushers, runners can be accommodated: <http://tinyurl.com/mak9oqr>
- True North, a relatively new blog about trails in Alaska: <http://truenorthalaska.weebly.com>
- National Public Lands Day cause for celebration: <http://tinyurl.com/mjgf6dv>
- Outdoor Explorer radio show: Backcountry Gourmet: <http://tinyurl.com/m6yhcp7>
- Anchorage startup makes pre-packaged trail food healthy: <http://tinyurl.com/m9ccpzo>
- National Public Lands Day cause for celebration: <http://tinyurl.com/mjgf6dv>
- Three recent public service announcements:
 - Be Snow Smart - Avoid Cold Weather Injuries: <http://tinyurl.com/pbqpcwn>
 - Thanks Safe Riders: <http://tinyurl.com/of72ews>
 - Thanks for being a good example: <http://tinyurl.com/pr9no3b>

Southeast links

- A Real Juneau Hiker: Windfall Lake: <http://tinyurl.com/lqxqv2>
- On the Trails: Highbush cranberries: <http://tinyurl.com/p8lufj4>
- On the Trails: The last throes of summer: <http://tinyurl.com/knxujux>
- Landslide destroys trail restoration projects near Sitka: <http://tinyurl.com/lk8vfcf>

INTERIOR AND NORTHERN NEWS AND NOTICES

CHENA RIVER REC AREA PROJECTS KEEP STAFF, OTHERS BUSY

The Northern Area office of State Parks has been busy this summer with trail projects in the Chena River State Recreation Area (SRA):

- State Parks teamed up with Forestry to finish trail clearing projects in Chena River State Recreation Area this fall. Thanks to the Recreational Trail Program grant, they have been able to tackle some much needed clearing on the Granite Tors and Chena Dome trails.
- Jon Underwood with Happy Trails Inc. is working on Mastodon Trail this fall. The trail has finally dried out enough to work on. State parks staffers have their fingers crossed, hoping that the weather holds and so they can push ahead toward completing the trail all the way to the Nugget Creek public-use cabin.
- Trail work continues on the Stiles Creek Extension in Chena River SRA. Eight hundred pounds of annual rye grass has been seeded along the new trail corridor to help stabilize the trail shoulders and prevent erosion.
- Nine trail gates have been installed at major trailheads in Chena River SRA. These gates, which were funded through the Recreational Trail Program grant, will help park staff manage trail closures during public emergencies and seasonal trail restrictions.
- Northern Area maintenance staff installed a new entrance sign at the Upper Chena Dome Trailhead in Chena River SRA, replacing the last wooden entrance sign in the Northern Area state parks. This marked the end of an era of using wooden signs.
- Boy Scout Eric Cater of Troop 78 assembled a huge crew of volunteers to build a pedestrian bridge on the nature trail at Twin Bears Campground in Chena River SRA. The bridge was his Eagle Scout community service project.

(From Eagle Watch, the state parks newsletter)

PORTION OF EVA CREEK TRAIL IN ESTER HAS BEEN RE-ROUTED

A section of the Eva Creek Trail (aka the Back Door Trail) has been rerouted due to a cooperative effort between a landowner and a trail advocate, who calls it a “positive outcome for the landowner and trail users.”

Landowner Milt Behr worked with advocate Geoff Orth to reroute the trail to the edge of his property. The Eva Creek Trail connects Ester to the Farmer Mine Trail (a portion of the Equinox Marathon Trail). According to Orth, “While this location is extremely close to the exposed and open GVEA utility clearing, I believe it’s a reasonable compromise. The trail will lose some of its character, but it’s a workable solution.”

According to the agreement, the trail will remain open all year. Behr does retain the right to cross the trail with roads that will access his property and to reroute the trail again if he needs to.

The reroute is the result of a out-of-court agreement caused by a lawsuit brought against Behr by Orth when Behr tried to close the trail. The agreement resolves the lawsuit.

INTERIOR LINKS

- Students build trails in Denali National Park: <http://tinyurl.com/kzgm3ah>
- Fairbanks Metropolitan Area Transportation System newsletter (Summer): <http://tinyurl.com/qhbeupv>

SOUTHCENTRAL NEWS AND NOTICES

MAT-SU’S RIPPY TRAIL REBUILT TO SUSTAINABLE STANDARDS

The Rippy Trail in the Mat-Su Valley was rebuilt this summer using sustainable trail standards.

The trail, east of Butte, winds for more than three miles, passing through birch forest punctuated by cottonwood-lined creeks and south-facing bluffs. It crosses Jim Creek on a 55-foot aluminum bridge. The trail has superb views of the Knik River, Knik Arm, and the Knik Glacier, and is used by both motorized and non-motorized users. However, please note that vehicles with a curb weight of greater than 1,500 pounds are prohibited from using the trail.

Two local ATV tour businesses included the Rippy Trail in their tour package as soon as the new trail opened, according to trail contractor Jon Underwood.

The state Department of Natural Resources project was made possible with a US Fish and Wildlife Coastal Impact Assistance Program grant. Trail contractor Happy Trails, Inc., of Fairbanks, did the work along with Mike Shields, Mark Gronewald of Trailwerx, and Gabe Travis and Christine Byl of Interior Trails.

(From Travis Jensen, DNR, and Jon Underwood, Happy Trails)

TRANSPORTATION FAIR INCLUDES INFO ON TRAIL PROJECTS

The Palmer - Mat-Su Transportation Fair will be held on Wednesday, October 22, in Raven Hall, Alaska State Fairgrounds from 4 to 8pm. The Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities, cities of Palmer, Wasilla, and Houston, the Alaska Railroad Corporation, Mat-Su Community Transit, and the Mat-Su Borough have teamed up to bring you the latest on roads, rails and trails at this one-stop information destination. The fair provides an opportunity to view information on *many transportation projects* underway in the Mat-Su Borough. In 2013, close to 400 people showed up to learn about projects in the Mat-Su. For more information, go to

<http://matsutranspofair.blogspot.com/>.

(From What’s Up by Peg Tileston)

SOUTHCENTRAL LINKS

- From Alyeska to Twentymile to Turnagain Arm: Iconic Alaska packraft trip: <http://tinyurl.com/kr5a6wm>
- Anchorage Assembly to take up Chugach Access Plan: <http://tinyurl.com/p65sqyv>
- (Kodiak) Island Trails Network "Trails Update": <http://tinyurl.com/lj83eg9>
- As daylight ebbs, hiking safety is paramount: <http://tinyurl.com/qfwu24d>
- Adventure Within Range (Holly Brooks training in Chugach National Forest): <http://tinyurl.com/lale8rl>
- Alaska's original grizzly-wrangling scientist dead at 89: <http://tinyurl.com/oytpb7p>
 - (Editor's note: Will Troyer, the subject of this article, was my father. In addition to his science work, he was instrumental in getting the Swan Lake and Swanson River canoe trail systems built. He also cut and maintained trails in the Cooper Landing area.)

NATIONWIDE/WORLDWIDE NEWS AND NOTICES

PUBLIC LETTER ENCOURAGES HEALTHY TRANSPORTATION

The Partnership for Active Transportation is circulating a sign-on letter to encourage the U.S. Department of Transportation to require the inclusion of public health considerations in transportation planning and to improve the provisions related to walking and biking. This will ensure that safe and convenient active-transportation networks are available for millions of Americans, which will help prevent chronic diseases and premature deaths associated with a lack of physical activity and ultimately save billions of taxpayer dollars spent on health care.

Read more: <http://tinyurl.com/mqps2dm>

(From American Trails' Supporting Trails [page](#).)

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

STUDIES:

- Nature Trails Fight Youth Obesity: <http://tinyurl.com/o625khg>

RECENT TRAILS-RELATED E-NEWSLETTERS

- Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (September): <http://tinyurl.com/ls7l292>
- American Trails (September): <http://tinyurl.com/p3zwp9>

OTHER NATIONAL LINKS:

- GoPro video of unicyclists riding the rocky trails of Moab, Utah: <http://tinyurl.com/qf479xt>
- 6 best trails to taverns: <http://tinyurl.com/oq862m2>
- Top 12 bike trails in Snohomish and King County: <http://tinyurl.com/kbd65x3>

- Washington state seeks plan for 1,000 miles of recreation trails: <http://tinyurl.com/n7rkyqz>
- The fight to ride electric mountain bikes on the trail: <http://tinyurl.com/l2tyszn>
- Tony Southwell rides the Great Divide Mountain Bike Route: <http://tinyurl.com/or6az8t>
- Ohio OHV group's custom trailer helps build trails and good PR for them: <http://tinyurl.com/ps4agfo>

INTERNATIONAL LINKS:

- Spain Vacation: Fascinating hiking trails in Cuenca province: <http://tinyurl.com/pdf2l9l>
- Top 10 walking tracks and bike trails of Western Australia: <http://tinyurl.com/lc2qwrz>
- 12 best hiking trails to experience fall in Canada: <http://tinyurl.com/mbgrcr7>

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. 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. 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

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