

**ALASKA
TRAILS**



www.alaska-trails.org

ACTION UPDATE

November 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.

ALASKA TRAILS NEWS AND NOTICES

THANK YOU FOR HELPING US BUILD, MAINTAIN TRAILS

Thanks to the Alaska Community Foundation for providing a small grant for the Adopt-A-Trail program. Through their Strengthening Organizations grant program, Alaska Trails will be able to obtain assistance with putting together a comprehensive framework for the Adopt-A-Trail program. This is the same grant program that enabled Alaska Trails to complete a business plan in 2013.

Thanks also to Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend donors. On October 30, Alaska Trails received \$5,375 dollars through the Pick Click Give program. We will put this money to good use to promote, build and maintain sustainable trails across Alaska. Thanks again.

To continue helping us with our mission please shop at AmazonSmile, and Amazon will make a donation to Alaska Trails: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/73-1677483>

ALASKA TRAILS' TOOL TRAILERS FEATURED IN NEWSLETTER STORY

Our popular tool trailers were recently featured in the National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council newsletter. Here's an excerpt:

During June to October of 2011 alone, the two trailers were responsible for generating over 4,000 volunteer hours. In 2013, Alaska Trails was awarded a Recreational Trails Program (RTP) Grant to replace the popular tool trailers and purchase new tools and equipment to outfit them.

Read more at: <http://tinyurl.com/mcmd2xj>

TAKE A SHORT SURVEY, MAYBE WIN A BOOK

Help us plan the 2015 Statewide Trails Conference AND be entered to win a copy of *Dirt Work – An Education in the Woods* by Christine Byl. Your input is important to us as we plan the next conference. Please complete the brief, 10-question survey by November 15 to be eligible to win a great book. Here's the survey link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/GBPH388>

PLEASE COMMENT ON OUR PROPOSED RTP PROJECTS

Alaska Trails is planning to submit three Recreation Trail Program (RTP) grants and would like your input on the proposed projects. The three projects include: the Adopt-A-Trail program, OHV Mapping project and Edmonds Lake – Mirror Lake mountain bike trails. Please contact Steve Cleary at office@alaska-trails.org for more information on the projects and to provide your input.

STATEWIDE NEWS AND NOTICES

APPLICATIONS DUE IN DECEMBER FOR LWCF GRANTS

December 5 is the deadline for preliminary applications Land And Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Grants. The federal LWCF program provides up to 50 percent matching funds for acquisition or development of parks and other outdoor recreation facilities, including trails. State, regional and local governments with the authority to provide park and recreation services on public lands are eligible to apply. The preliminary application package, including maps, an example budget, and rating criteria is available online at <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/grants/lwcf.htm> or by contacting Jean Ayers, the grants administrator (jean.ayers@alaska.gov; 907/269-8694).

(From What's Up? by Peg Tileston)

SNOWTRAC GRANTS APPROVED FOR TRAIL GROOMING

More than \$200,000 will be divided among 17 organizations across the state for snowmobile trail grooming this winter. A total of \$218,858 will be allocated to the organizations from the Fairbanks, Mat-Su Kenai Peninsula and Juneau areas. In addition, \$15,000 set aside for a rural transportation safety project was not awarded this year. It will be offered again during next year's Snowmobile Trails Grant cycle starting April 1.

The Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation approved funding for the grooming after receiving input from the Snowmobile Trails Advisory Council (SnowTRAC), a statewide citizen advisory board.

The Snowmobile Trail Grant Program offers competitive and reimbursable matching grants for developing and maintaining public snowmobile trails and related facilities and for safety, education, and trail signing projects. The Snowmobile Trail Grant Program's Grooming Pool provides funding for trail grooming, signing, and maintenance. The program is funded with money generated through snowmobile registration.

For more information contact Darcy Harris, trails program coordinator (907/269-8699; darcy.harris@alaska.gov).

PARK SERVICE PROGRAM ANNOUNCES PROJECT LIST

The NPS Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance program in Alaska will be providing technical assistance to the following projects this fiscal year:

- Delta Junction Community Trails: Develop a community-wide trail system and organization to encourage health, tourism, and enhanced public safety while protecting public access to trails, land, and water.
- Fairbanks Peirce Park: Create the Peirce Park Living Lab – a place where community, stewardship, and science education meet, where students and community members have opportunities to learn and apply science, engineering, math, and the arts in a natural setting.
- Homer Poopdeck Platt Park: Develop the Kachemak Heritage Land Trust's Poopdeck Platt Park into a place of community pride recognized by all as a living example of how conservation connects people and the land.
- Homer Woodard Creek Coalition: Re-establish Woodard Creek as a prized community asset that will enhance conservation efforts, promote recreational outlets, protect against flooding hazards and enhance the quality of life for residents and tourists alike.
- Anchorage Youth Connections: Strategically expand the Anchorage Park Foundation's Youth Employment in Parks (YEP) program to design and implement conservation projects such as trails and habitat restoration in neighborhoods of need.

For more information on this National Park Service program see:

www.nps.gov/akso/community/rtca/index.cfm

(From Lisa Holzapfel and Heather Rice)

INTERNSHIP HELPS STUDENTS EXPLORE CAREERS

The Alaska National Park Service Academy seeks qualified candidates for a 2015 Spring Break career development orientation and summer internship in Alaska. Learn about careers in natural and cultural resource management, biology, education, facilities management, engineering, field research, business, wildlife, multimedia production, trail crew, and more.

Applicants must be age 18-25; reside in Alaska; and identify as either under-represented, rural, or a racial/ethnic minority. Twenty selected members will spend Spring Break (March 15-21, 2015) at Kenai Fjords National Park in Seward. Travel, food, and lodging are included. Summer internships are based at Alaska national park sites in Denali, Anchorage, Katmai, Fairbanks, Lake Clark, Skagway, Sitka, Gates of the Arctic, and more. Summer interns will receive free travel and housing, a living allowance (\$160 to \$280 per week), and most interns can be eligible for a \$1,400 AmeriCorps Education Award.

To apply: Thoroughly complete an application at <http://thesca.org/serve/program/nps-academy> -- including the Young Adult Conservation Internship portion. Email or call SCA Alaska recruiter Jeff Chen (jchen@thesca.org; 907/717-8414) for an application fee waiver. Applications and interviews are considered on a rolling basis through December 1. Early applicants will receive priority.

Learn more at <http://thesca.org/serve/young-adult-programs>.

(From What's Up? by Peg Tileston)

STATE PARKS ADVISORY BOARDS SEEKING APPLICANTS

Several Southcentral state park advisory boards are seeking new members. Seats are open or will be open on the Chugach, Southern Kenai Peninsula, Kachemak Bay, Seward, and Valdez state park advisory boards.

The application deadline for the Chugach State Park Citizens Advisory Board is November 7. The application deadline for the other boards is November 14.

State park advisory boards are primary tools that state park officials use to involve the public in the management of state parks. The boards generally meet monthly from September through May. Applications can be found at:

- Chugach board: <http://tinyurl.com/k5yzwc2>
- The other boards: <http://tinyurl.com/3hpf99>

For more info see the news releases at: <http://tinyurl.com/kkw7dbj>

STATEWIDE LINKS

- Trail breakers for the Copper Basin 300 (a Lego movie): <http://tinyurl.com/k486txn>
- A film about the 2001 Iditasport Extreme race: <http://vimeo.com/84178875>
- Recreational Trails Program applications are due Nov 15: <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/grants/trails.htm>
- An Alaskan Mountain Runner Exposed: Matias Saari: <http://tinyurl.com/k5ousno>
- Prospect of Donlin gold mine brings support, despite potential effect on Iditarod Trail: <http://tinyurl.com/peo9mo4>
- The Alaska Nordic Skier is now available online. The October issue (4.6MB) has several stories about work on cross-country ski trails around the state: <http://tinyurl.com/mu6wqfn>
- Take care of your hands so they can take care of you: <http://tinyurl.com/mycqujc>
- Alaska land access fights hinge on one word in 34-year-old law: <http://tinyurl.com/kmzoacg>
- Outdoor Explorer radio show
 - Winter Public Use Cabins: <http://tinyurl.com/m3q4nzc>

- Sifting Through The Goods: Ski Swaps: <http://tinyurl.com/n4yzlz5>
- Babies in the Elements: <http://tinyurl.com/ko9uovg>
- Glacier Trekking: <http://tinyurl.com/q5ugswh>

Southeast links

- Public hearing charts course for Wrangell trails: <http://tinyurl.com/lsnjm45>
- Windfall Lake Trail improvements dubbed 'art': <http://tinyurl.com/ks47yp5>
- On the Trails: Porcupines: I'm stuck on you: <http://tinyurl.com/me668yy>
- Off the Beaten Path: Dogs of our lives: <http://tinyurl.com/lcwojqk>
- How I got my PFD one day early (really, it's about trails): <http://tinyurl.com/op7dsqv>

SOUTHCENTRAL NEWS AND NOTICES

COMMENTS DUE ON PROPOSAL TO FIX GIRDWOOD PATH

Comments are due by November 15 on a proposal to rehabilitate an existing pathway in Girdwood.

The pathway runs from Forest Station Road to Crow Creek Road. The proposed work would include, as needed, providing structural section repairs to the pathway; replacing or repairing retaining wall structures along the pathway; improving drainage and culverts; and relocating utilities. For more information, contact Sean Holland, project manager, (907/269-0670; sean.holland@alaska.gov) or Joy McLaurin, environmental impact analyst, (907/269-0529; joy.mclaurin@alaska.gov). Submit comments to Brian Elliott, Regional environmental manager (brian.elliott@alaska.gov).

(From What's Up? by Peg Tileston)

PROJECT TO PROTECT STREAMS, ATV ACCESS

As requested by the Wasilla Soil and Water Conservation District (WSWCD), the state legislature, under the leadership of Rep. Lynn Gattis, funded a project to assess ATV salmon stream crossings in the Mat Su.

The project's two-fold approach is to: 1) conserve salmon resources/habitat; and 2) protect the rider's right to responsibly ride. The final deliverable will be a prioritized list of impaired crossings that will support future project proposals for funding on all levels—federal, state, municipal, non-profit, and private entities.

Site visits began in August and will be completed next spring. Thus far, nearly 30 sites have been assessed. Data will be crunched over the winter with additional site visits commencing in April-May depending on the weather. Please consider sharing crossing information to reduce field time and increase the quality of the final product.

Contact: Chuck Kaucic, district manager, Wasilla Soil and Water Conservation District, dismgr@wasillaswcd.org

(From Chuck Kaucic)

BIKE PARK, 4 MILES OF SINGLETRACK BUILT IN MAT-SU VALLEY

The following was posted in the Valley Mountain Bikers and Hikers (VMBaH) October newsletter:

2014 was a big year for VMBaH as we built the already-popular Palmer Bike Park and 4 miles of new singletrack at Government Peak Recreation Area. We are proud of our accomplishments, and we are extremely grateful to all of our volunteers who donated lots of hours and sweat to making sure the hand finishing work was done right.

Palmer Bike Park is about 95% done, with some light maintenance to do in the Spring, once the ground thaws.

Government Peak Singletrack still has some work left to be done to complete the hand finishing work, and we will continue that at the beginning of next season.

Without you volunteers, we would not have made it this far! You have helped us bring several miles of brand new trail to the Valley! Thank you, thank you, thank you!

SOUTHCENTRAL LINKS

- Application for Public Access Easement - Aurora Dog Mushing Trails south of Big Lake, Alaska (comments due Nov 3): <http://tinyurl.com/mvqnaes>
- IRS Volcanoes Traverse (definitely off-trail): <http://tinyurl.com/p5ub8fs>
- Two Lake Louise-area snowmachine trails being considered for public easements: <http://tinyurl.com/ngm3ybe>
- Tsalteshi Trails celebrates an exciting year: <http://tinyurl.com/osjgb9f>
- Anchorage Park Foundation newsletter (includes update on trail work under Youth Employment in Parks): <http://tinyurl.com/ljcsp4d>
- Capturing autumn, the fleeting season, on Kesugi Ridge: <http://tinyurl.com/p6mbp4t>
- Lost hiker survives 2 chilly nights in Alaska's Chugach State Park: <http://tinyurl.com/kptj25m>
- Notice regarding rehabilitating Girdwood pathway: <http://tinyurl.com/ov57cfs>
- Memories are found during hike to Lost Lake: <http://tinyurl.com/mgu63b2>
- Get outdoors, but do it with your fellow Anchorageites: <http://tinyurl.com/pezj5re>
- (Kodiak) Island Trails Network newsletter: <http://tinyurl.com/o7fnwe7>

INTERIOR AND NORTHERN NEWS AND NOTICES

CYCLE CLUB DONATES TO PROTECT ESTER AREA TRAILS

The following message was sent to the Fairbanks Cycle Club list serve. It was also posted on the club's website: www.fairbankscycleclub.org.

The FCC board voted to approve a \$5400 dollar donation to help fund the legal effort to protect access to trails through Ester Valley.

Four multi-use trails (Fireplug, Willow Creek, Social Security and the Tri-Con Mine road) no longer have access through the valley, stemming from a dispute between miners. Geoff Orth has made a great case for preserving access to the trails through the valley (see below). He has put out several calls for financial help, and since "preservation of the sport of bicycling in Alaska" is in the club's by-laws, the opinion was that it was appropriate to make a donation. The board is proud to help out, and we hope you feel the same.

Geoff's Ester Valley Summary:

"This is a multi-use, multi-season trail/road providing critical access to public lands further west in Ester Valley and Ester Dome. The Ester Valley Trail/Road has existed since 1903, prior to any mining claims being staked, thus establishing a R.S. 2477 designation (R.S. 2477 status creates a right-of-way before the land was private). In addition, there has been open and continuous recreational use by the public since the mid 1960s, thus creating a prescriptive easement (AS 09.45.052 (d)). There are also right-of-way easements in

recorded warranty deeds. These are easements, granting public access, that the landowner cannot interfere with. The Largents, by blocking access, are in effect trying to privatize a public resource without going through a public process.

We have received funding from 51 sources, averaging \$970 each. For the record, my wife and I have contributed \$28,000.

Donations Received 57,603

Eva Creek Trail Legal Fees -9,082

Eva Creek Settlement Compensation 2,000

Ester Valley Trail Legal Fees -56,226

Current Balance \$-5,706

FAIRBANKS NEWSPAPER ENCOURAGES PEOPLE TO GET OUTSIDE

The Fairbanks Daily News-Miner recently ran a package of stories in its Outdoors section aimed at getting people ready for winter recreation. Most of the stories had strong trail-related parts. Links to the stories are below:

- Fairbanks packed with winter recreation clubs and organizations: <http://tinyurl.com/n8jcgbyb>
- Play nice: Rules of the road for Fairbanks ski trails: <http://tinyurl.com/ngtd8hg>
- Alaska athletes Sonny Lindner and Nancy Fresco talk winter clothing from the base up: <http://tinyurl.com/m6tbor3>
- Take a day to ski or hike this winter around Fairbanks: <http://tinyurl.com/nd87g3k>
- 10 things to check off on your winter activities to-do list: <http://tinyurl.com/ltjmph>

NEW CROSS-COUNTRY SKI TRAILS PLANNED FOR KOPONEN LAND

Friends of the Koponen Homestead is planning to have 1.6 miles of contour cross-country skiing trail built on the homestead, which sits between Chena Pump and Chena Ridge roads on the west side of Fairbanks.

The group has put out a Request for Qualification as part of the process of finding a trail-building contractor. The group is being selective, not wanting a contractor with little or no trail-building experience. Qualifications for the project include: at least three references from similar jobs; membership in the Professional Trail Builders Association or similar organization; 40 hrs of formal "sustainable" trail training; 10 miles of "sustainable" trail constructed; a mandatory pre-bid walk-through and interview; sufficient insurance; and proper licenses and bonding. The contractor will also have the proper equipment, including a minimum 80-horsepower trail dozer no wider than four feet and a minimum 15-horsepower mini-excavator no wider than 40 inches.

The project is planned for July 2015. The trail corridor will be cleared about seven feet wide with the final result being a five-foot-wide bench-cut trail. Interested contractors should submit by November 14 a cost-per-foot proposal that includes trail layout, corridor clearing and full-bench construction.

For the full RFQ package, please contact the project manager, Geoffrey Orth, at gcorth@straydogs.us.

INTERIOR LINKS

- Volunteers replace washed-out Goldstream Creek bridge: <http://tinyurl.com/kt3k9fq>
- Lawsuit reroutes Ester village trail: <http://tinyurl.com/m6jxpjv>
- Advice I wish I'd had when learning to cross-country ski: <http://tinyurl.com/lmeqkor>
- Fall snowmachine checkup can prevent costly repairs: <http://tinyurl.com/nnta2w3>
- Mining company drops Fairbanks downhill ski area from exploration plan: <http://tinyurl.com/nshvlgz>

NATIONWIDE/WORLDWIDE NEWS AND NOTICES

AMERICAN TRAILS CONTEST DEADLINE APPROACHES

American Trails is sponsoring the 2014 National Recreation Trails Photo Contest.

The entry deadline is December 15, 2015. The contest has several categories. Its goal is to highlight the diversity of the trails and to make more Americans familiar with these great trails.

For more information on the photo contest see: <http://tinyurl.com/p5ku38v>

DEADLINE FOR NATIONAL RECREATION TRAIL NOMINATIONS DUE

There are two processes for nominating National Recreation Trails. One with a deadline and one without:

November 1 is the deadline for trails on land administered by and associated with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (National Forests, National Grasslands, and National Recreation Areas and associated lands).

There is no no set deadline for all other trails, which follow Department of Interior process. These trails include those that are on private, city, county, or state land, or lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management, National Park

Service, and U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

To find out more about National Recreation Trails and the nomination process, see:

<http://tinyurl.com/nkp5rb>

NATIONAL TRAILS FUND APPLICATION OPENS NOVEMBER 1

Not many people know that in addition to fielding volunteer crews through its stewardship programs and advocating for hikers in the nation's capital, American Hiking Society also operates one of the largest privately funded trail-building grant programs in the United States. Since 1998, the National Trails Fund has awarded nearly \$600,000 to hiking clubs and organizations to help finance critical trail projects.

Thanks to National Trails Fund sponsor L.L.Bean, on November 1, American Hiking Society will begin accepting requests for grants valued up to \$5,000 for trail projects in 2015. If you're a member of a hiking club, land trust, friends group, or other organization that is planning a trail project, encourage them to sign up as a member of AHS' Alliance of Hiking Organizations, fill out the grant application, and your group could be eligible to receive a 2015 National Trails Fund grant. For more information, visit www.AmericanHiking.org/National-Trails-Fund/.

(From [American Hiking Society](http://www.AmericanHiking.org)'s e-newsletter)

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

RECENT TRAILS-RELATED E-NEWSLETTERS

- Rails-To-Trails Conservancy (October): <http://tinyurl.com/o9xl7zb>
- American Trails (October): <http://tinyurl.com/kg5mcwf>
- Fostering Livable Communities Newsletter (October): <http://tinyurl.com/8y98hzt>

GRANTS:

- AT&T gives \$3,500 to hiking trails project in Kentucky: <http://tinyurl.com/ol4ehdt>

STUDIES:

- Trails, pickleball popular with Illinois fitness enthusiasts, survey says: <http://tinyurl.com/m3avh9u>

OTHER NATIONAL LINKS:

- American Planning Association's 2014 Great Public Spaces (two are trails-related): <http://tinyurl.com/md2fw6x>
- A walk in the park: Google Maps hits the trails in California: <http://tinyurl.com/lrtrbmh>
- 6 Great Seattle trail runs: <http://tinyurl.com/nddw7mc>
- 11 Scenic Bike Trails for Fabulous Fall Rides in North America: <http://tinyurl.com/k232tmc>
- Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center names its 50th Walk Friendly Community: <http://tinyurl.com/nobl6ar>
- Walking Is The Superfood Of Fitness, Experts Say: <http://tinyurl.com/nkpxqp3>
- How Hiking Is Good for Body and Mind: <http://tinyurl.com/kxkvgu5>
- Help the US Department of Transportation identify projects of national and regional significance (survey closes Nov 17): <http://tinyurl.com/olfgaqa>
- Secret trails near Downtown LA require a smartphone to find them: <http://tinyurl.com/me63sop>
- The Walking Classroom (a great fit for trails): <http://tinyurl.com/pvbfo4c>
- Call for Presentations for International Trails Symposium in Portland, Oregon (deadline Jan 9): <http://tinyurl.com/n6tpbyr>
- Florida's Award-Winning State Parks and Trails Continue Record-Breaking Success: <http://tinyurl.com/mu8vdsd>
- Pennsylvania leads nation in rails-to-trails miles: <http://tinyurl.com/nm2ur6c>
- Trails Are Going High Tech. Are You Ready?: <http://tinyurl.com/ok88lct>
- App helps runners find new trails abroad and in their backyard: <http://tinyurl.com/n59a2qf>
- Barrett Brown Changed Single-Track Construction, Maintenance: <http://tinyurl.com/kyp7ff7>

INTERNATIONAL LINKS:

- A Proposed Floating Cycleway on the Thames Is Hilarious—and Insulting: <http://tinyurl.com/po8ktzu>
- World's best urban jogging trails: <http://tinyurl.com/krgh3bs>
- Video of completed Seaside Greenway in Vancouver (Canada): <http://vimeo.com/106894206>
- Inca trail appointed UNESCO World Heritage status and a new Inca road to Machu Picchu discovered: <http://tinyurl.com/nn9jgp7>

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!