

ACTION UPDATE

July 2014

INTERIORWIDE

PARK SERVICE PROGRAM SEEKS PROJECT APPLICATIONS

If you are interested in getting technical assistance about trail projects, consider applying for assistance from the National Park Service-Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA). The RTCA staff program has assisted many communities throughout Alaska with a variety of outdoor recreation and natural resource conservation programs. They help partners: think and plan strategically; communicate ideas and build relationships; find funding sources; navigate state and federal regulations; design and construct trails; and create conservation networks.

People interested in assistance for the next fiscal year (Oct 2014–Sept 2015), should submit an application to the Anchorage RTCA office no later than August 1, 2014. The application is available on the website (<http://go.nps.gov/alaska/rtca>) under “How to Get RTCA Help.”

All sorts of organizations may apply, including local, state, federal and tribal governments, nonprofits and unincorporated groups. (Federal applications must have at least one non-federal committed partner.) Interested people should give the Alaska RTCA staff (Lisa Holzapfel [907/644-3586](tel:9076443586); Heather Rice [907/644-3587](tel:9076443587)) a call to discuss project ideas before submitting an application.

(Submitted by Lisa Holzapfel)

WATCH FOR BIRD NESTS WHEN WORKING ON TRAILS

Trail work sometimes requires downing trees or clearing shrubs. When doing so make sure not to violate the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, which makes it illegal for anyone to “take” migratory birds, their eggs, feathers, or nests. “Take” includes destroying or damaging active bird nests or eggs. Different areas of the state have different sensitive periods generally occurring between April 15 and July 25. However, if you encounter an active nest *at any time* leave it in place and protected until young hatch and depart. “Active” is indicated by intact eggs, live chicks, or the presence of an adult on the nest.

For a PDF document with more information and recommended time periods for avoiding vegetation clearing see: <http://tinyurl.com/kwubruc>

INTERIORWIDE LINKS

- Comment sought on Yanert Trail Parking Area, Mile 228 Parks Highway:
<http://tinyurl.com/k8jqthr>
- Racing through the wilderness from Chena Hot Springs to Circle Hot Springs:
<http://tinyurl.com/ksx6lmh>

FAIRBANKS/ESTER AREA

TRAIL PULLOUT STILL INCLUDED IN GOLDSTREAM WORK

The El Dorado Creek Trail pullout will be built.

A rumor was circulating that the pullout for the popular Goldstream-area trail would not be built. However, several officials at the state Department of Transportation and Pubic Facilities have said it will be built.

“Last week we received our Corp modification permit and reevaluated the environmental document to include this work,” Linda Mahlen, a DOT planner, wrote in an email. “Don’t know exactly when the contractor will work it in, but the change order was already agreed to and issued.”

An informal pullout for the winter trail had existed along Goldstream Road for years. However, during road work last year the pullout was removed. Concerned trail users contacted DOT officials, who changed the road work contract to have the pullout included.

ESTER TRAILS DEFENSE STILL IN NEED OF DONATIONS

The April issue of the Interior Trails Quarterly had a story about Geoffrey Orth’s fight to save public access to Ester area trails. While he did win access to the Eva Creek Trail, recently used by the Sluicebox 100 endurance race, his court case on the Ester Valley Trail is still working its way through the legal system.

The Fairbanks Daily News-Miner recently had a story about the dispute. Read it here: <http://tinyurl.com/oj6y4fd>

The Ester Valley Trail, which accesses several other important trails, is still blocked by a locked gate. The landowner is trying to fight Orth’s lawsuit with an avalanche of legal paperwork. The legal bills are still mounting. Despite more than \$30,000 donated, the Ester Trails Defense fund is now nearly \$20,000 in the hole. Here is Orth’s most recent cost breakdown:

Donations Received	32,577
Eva Creek Trail Legal Fees	-9,082
Eva Creek Settlement Compensation	2,000
Ester Valley Trail Legal Fees	-44,410
Current Balance	\$ -18,916

In a recent email, Orth highlighted the most important parts of his fight:

Obviously, with litigation, there are no guaranteed outcomes, but I feel we have a very strong position; and if we don't act, we are setting a precedent and are guaranteed to lose access to these trails. If you've already donated, then stand aside for now... if you haven't, now would be a good time to reach for your wallet.

Remember, 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 1960's, 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 without going through a public process.

If you have not donated and you care about access to Ester area trail please send donations payable to *Law Offices William Satterberg*, 709 4th Avenue, Fairbanks, AK 99701-4416. Write fbo Ester Trails Defense on the "memo" line and let Orth know so he can track the funding. (Satterberg's office also takes credit/debit cards at: 907/452-4454.)

For more information contact Orth at: gcorth@straydogs.us

STATEWIDE

GROUP RECEIVES NATIONAL AWARD FOR TOOL TRAILERS

The Coalition for Recreational Trails (CRT) recently honored the Alaska Trails Mobile Tool Trailers with a 2014 Annual Achievement Award for outstanding use of Recreational Trails Program (RTP) funds in the category of Use of Youth Conservation and Service Corps. The award was presented at a reception in Washington DC on the evening of June 11.

Alaska Trails is a statewide non-profit group dedicated to building and maintaining Alaska's world-class trails. Alaska Trails has two mobile two trailers – one in Fairbanks and one in Anchorage, that have supported over 30 miles of sustainable trail building by local, state and federal agencies, service groups since 2007. Both trailers are equipped with safety equipment and more than 50 different hand tools. During June - October of 2011 alone, the two trailers were responsible for generating over 4,000 volunteer hours.

Alaska Trails was awarded an RTP grant in 2013 to replace the popular tool trailers and purchase new tools and equipment to outfit them. The Anchorage trailer was instrumental in hand-finishing six miles of new single-track mountain bike trails in Anchorage in 2013. The trailers have been used by many youth trail builders including the

Student Conservation Association (SCA), the Anchorage Youth Employment in Parks, and the Chugach Children's Forest.

"We are honored by this award and are proud that our tool trailers have helped inspire the next generation of trail stewards," said Steve Cleary, Alaska Trails executive director. "These trailers put the right tools in the hands of the right volunteers. They help keep costs down by harnessing great volunteers and they really get people to take a deep interest in their trails."

The CRT Achievement Awards were presented in Washington, D.C., in the Rayburn House Office Building (B-354) on Capitol Hill on June 11.

For a list of the rest of the 2014 CRT Achievement Awards see:

<http://tinyurl.com/nhs2rb6>

STATEWIDE LINKS

- 15 fantastic U.S. bike trails (includes Tony Knowles Coastal Trail): <http://tinyurl.com/m2mcpr4>
- Bringing Your Dog Along: (Outdoor Explorer radio show) <http://tinyurl.com/qexoyqn>
- Alaska has one of highest percentages of commuters who walk or bike: <http://tinyurl.com/l6cxfdf>
- Orienteering and Wilderness Navigation (Outdoor Explorer radio show): <http://tinyurl.com/p3y65zo>
- Water 'trail' creates new way to explore Homer area coastline: <http://tinyurl.com/p8sk37n>
- Kachemak Bay Water Trail (Outdoor Explorer radio show): <http://tinyurl.com/kfmbtbtk>
- Moose charges mountain bikers in Kincaid Park: <http://tinyurl.com/neonu5r>
- (Kodiak) Island Trails Network newsletter: <http://tinyurl.com/le4fv7m>
- Thrilling new bike trails in Kincaid open in July, will host world race: <http://tinyurl.com/pmg2wls>
- Bike, walking advocates in Homer push safety, awareness: <http://tinyurl.com/ktvbsbg>
- Kobuk Valley National Park exhibit at Anchorage Museum through Sept 7: <http://tinyurl.com/o96o2vz>
- Missing Hiker Prompts 'Prepare for the worst' editorial: <http://tinyurl.com/m7bmrkd>
- On the Trails: Going to Granite Creek Basin: <http://tinyurl.com/p8pxtrx>
- Part I: 2014 Juneau trail roundup: <http://tinyurl.com/ltq3mb2>
- Part II: 2014 Juneau trail roundup: <http://tinyurl.com/nnd6qvo>

STATEWIDE TRAILS AND PUBLIC LANDS RELATED NEWSLETTERS

- The May edition of Eagle Watch (Alaska State Parks) is done but has not been posted to the Alaska State Parks webpage (<http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/>). Check for it under the "Newsroom" dropdown menu.
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NATIONWIDE

NPS LEADS HEALTHY PARKS, HEALTHY PEOPLE PROGRAM

Healthy Parks Healthy People is a global movement that harnesses the power of parks and public lands in contributing to a healthy civil society. The idea originated with Parks Victoria, Australia, and was brought to global prominence at the 1st Healthy Parks Healthy People Congress in April, 2010.

The National Park Service's Healthy Parks Healthy People US program was established in 2011, to reframe the role of parks and public lands as an emerging, powerful health prevention strategy. With this renewed focus on health, we hope to bring about lasting change in Americans' lifestyle choices and their relationship with nature and the outdoors.

Although Healthy Parks Healthy People US is based within the National Park Service, the program works with national, state, and local parks, as well as business innovators, healthcare leaders, scientists, foundations and advocacy organizations to foster and build-upon the role that parks play in the health of our society.

For more on the program see: <http://tinyurl.com/3pc2act>

FOREST SERVICE SEEKS COMMENT ON OVER-SNOW VEHICLES

The U.S. Forest Service has published a Federal Register Notice seeking public comment on a proposal that would help standardize where and when over-snow vehicles, such as snowmobiles, are used on national forests and grasslands. See www.fs.fed.us/publications/over-snow-vehicle-faqs.pdf.

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 (June): <http://tinyurl.com/kxlceql>
- American Trails (June): <http://tinyurl.com/pzsua3w>

STUDIES:

- The Cost of Air Pollution: Health Impacts of Road Transport: <http://tinyurl.com/pdol5n3>
- State Revenue Sources that Fund Bicycling and Walking Projects: <http://tinyurl.com/k796mpp>

GRANTS:

- IMBA/USA Cycling Trail Tune-up Grants Available (deadline Aug 31): <http://tinyurl.com/nmf44qk>
- Three bike trail projects awarded \$100,000 by Bell Helmets: www.bellhelmets.com/bellbuilt/

OTHER LINKS:

- Top 5 Scenic Mountain Bike Trails in the Western USA: <http://tinyurl.com/q72usto>
- Top 5 Scenic Mountain Bike Trails in the Eastern USA: <http://tinyurl.com/ks3dxc6>
- 20 Scenic Mountain Bike Trails in the Western USA: <http://tinyurl.com/k6mb4yz>
- 20 Scenic Mountain Bike Trails in the Eastern USA: <http://tinyurl.com/pxy8bra>
- National Park Service Announces 21 National Recreation Trails in 11 States: <http://tinyurl.com/qhczxw9>
- Mapping Out Boise's Hillside to the Hollow: <http://tinyurl.com/qh6mntn>
- 10 Trails Every Hiker Should Tackle: <http://tinyurl.com/lm57hwa>
- Woman Plans New Adventure Following 1,000-Mile Alaskan Trek: <http://tinyurl.com/qgzb7kg>
- Representative Honored With Recreational Trails Coalition Lifetime Achievement Award: <http://tinyurl.com/myqqrgs>
- Bill Would Create Volunteer Program For National Forest Trail Maintenance: <http://tinyurl.com/lgzb3pk>
- Best trails for Seeing Hawaii Volcanoes National Park's wonders: <http://tinyurl.com/kpdmj5a>
- Liberals Want Walkable Communities, Conservatives Prefer More Room (both want access to outdoors): <http://tinyurl.com/mgew95g>
- Trail Design and Layout video from North Country Trail Association: <http://vimeo.com/93167371>
- 10 Best Summer Hiking Trails in the US: <http://tinyurl.com/ohtaxbn>
- The Newest National Water Trails: <http://tinyurl.com/lbcd4un>
- ATV trail providing 'overwhelming' tourism boost for St. Paul, Va.: <http://tinyurl.com/olfh7ak>
- State to recognize 'Pure Michigan' trails: <http://tinyurl.com/pm6ylnq>

SLIGHTLY OFF-TRAIL:

- How Does Tourist Monitoring Alter Fish Behavior In Underwater Trails?: <http://tinyurl.com/ls64nam>
- Atlas of Inuit Arctic Trails: <http://tinyurl.com/ofreeos>

Interior Trails Quarterly is a free email newsletter that comes out four times a year: March, June, September, and December. ITQ Action Updates come out once a month in between regular editions of the ITQ. Both are written and distributed by Eric Troyer, a lifelong Alaskan and trail user. To submit items, get on or off the

mailing list, report problems, or anything else email Eric at fbxtrails@gmail.com. Note: submissions may be also be used in the statewide Alaska Trails newsletter.

DISCLAIMER: Interior Trails Quarterly and ITQ Action Updates are not products of any organization. However, I am a board member of the Interior Trails Preservation Coalition, a member of several Interior trail user groups, and a member of Alaska Trails and editor of its newsletter.