

**ALASKA
TRAILS**



www.alaska-trails.org

ACTION UPDATE

April 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

REGISTRATION STILL OPEN FOR STATEWIDE TRAILS CONFERENCE

People can still register for the 2014 Statewide Trails Conference, which will be held April 24-26 at Alaska Pacific University in Anchorage.

The keynote speakers will be Troy Duffin, president of Utah's Alpine Trails, Inc., and Christine Byl, co-owner of Interior Trails and author of *Dirt Work: An Education in the Woods*. The conference will have 50 breakout sessions, including Trail Maintenance, Mini-Mechanized Equipment, Funding for Trails, Youth Trail Projects, Trail Crews, Health and Economic Benefits of Trails, Easements, Mountain Bike Flow Trails and more.

Two preconference sessions, to be held April 22 and 23, will be Fundamentals of OHV Trail Management and Trail Contracting.

For a conference agenda and registration information please see: www.alaska-trails.org

For more information contact Alaska Trails: 907/334-8049 or office@alaska-trails.org

SCHOONOVER JOINS ALASKA TRAILS BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Alaska Trails welcomes Beverly Schoonover to its board of directors. Beverly is the executive director of SAGA (Southeast Alaska Guidance Association) and currently manages the Alaska Service Corps program. Beverly joined SAGA in 2012 after previously serving as director of the Juneau Watershed Partnership since 2007. She has served as a two-term AmeriCorps member in Oregon and has previous work experience in economic development and environmental education.

Beverly holds a bachelor's degree in community development from Portland State University and a master of science in development practice from Oxford-Brookes University in Oxford, England. She and her husband Albert make their home in Juneau, where they enjoy the local trail system all year long.

FRED MEYER, BAGOYS HELPS YOU HELP ALASKA TRAILS

Trail supporters can now help give Alaska Trails a little extra money when they are doing their shopping at Fred Meyer, with 11 stores throughout the state, and Bagoy's Florist and Home, with two locations in Anchorage.

Fred Meyer is donating \$2.5 million per year to non-profits in Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington, based on where their customers tell them to give. Here's how the program works. 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. If you do not have a rewards card, they are available at the customer service desk of any Fred Meyer store.

Bagoy's is helping 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.

Thank you to both these retailers for helping organizations such as ours do good work.

SPRING TRAILS ARE VULNERABLE, PLEASE USE WITH CARE

Alaska Trails asks that you please keep in mind how your trail activities might affect other trail users, especially in the spring.

As snow pack disappears, the ground thaws and the trails become extremely muddy. Using really muddy trails at this time can result in ruts that stay all summer when the trails dry out. Those ruts can make the trails difficult to use all summer and help create erosion by keeping water on the trails.

Early season damage of trails is a recurring problem. Many people are chomping at the bit to get outside once the snow melts. And some people love to get as muddy as they can while out on the trails. But with a little thought this problem can be greatly reduced.

- **Try to be patient.** Stay off the trails if you can. If you are unsure if a trail is ready to be used, check it out with the commitment to turn back if you are doing too much damage.
- **Choose low impact.** If you use the trails in several different ways, choose the method of travel that will cause the least amount of damage if you do run into some muddy sections.
- **Pick your trails carefully.** Use well-drained trails with lots of southern exposure. They typically dry out the quickest. If you just have to get muddy, please limit your activities to trails that are already thrashed. A little more damage probably won't make a big difference, but a trail in nice shape can be damaged for a season in a hurry.

If we all head out onto the trails with other users in mind, everyone will have a better trail experience.

ALASKA TRAILS LINKS AND NOTES

- This piece by Steve Cleary, Alaska Trails executive director, highlights how trails help our health and economy: <http://tinyurl.com/o5dxbhm>
- The Alaska Trails 2013 Annual Report is available at: <http://tinyurl.com/nar2d7a>
- The Alaska Trails site now includes a list of professional trail builders in the state: www.alaska-trails.org/resources/
- Thanks to all those who contributed to Alaska Trails through Pick Click Give when they signed up for their Permanent Fund Dividend.

STATEWIDE NEWS

SNOWMOBILE TRAILS PROGRAM APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE NOW

Grant applications for the state Snowmobile Trails Program were available starting April 1. Public notice for grant applications must be posted by June 10. Grant applications must be submitted or postmarked by July 1.

This program, administered by the state Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, provides reimbursable, matching grant funds for trail easement acquisition, development and maintenance of trails and trail-related facilities for snowmobile use. The program also provides funds for snowmobile safety and educational programs.

Matching funds are not required for safety and educational grant programs. Grant funds are generated from annual registration fees paid to the State by snowmobile owners statewide. For more information on the Snowmobile Trails Grant Program and the Grooming Pool, please visit: <http://tinyurl.com/q33aj9m>

For general grant questions regarding the program please contact the Grants Administrator (907/269-8709). For project development questions please contact the State Trails Coordinator (907/269-8699). Contact either one through the Department of Natural Resources email page (<http://tinyurl.com/3umsvj5>).

STATEWIDE LINKS

- Program shows Native Alaskan youth new career options: <http://tinyurl.com/n62ndvq>
- Where the trails have no name: <http://tinyurl.com/k8zmmgz>

STATEWIDE TRAILS AND PUBLIC LANDS RELATED NEWSLETTERS

- *Alaska Lands Update* (March): <http://tinyurl.com/lgwtsqg>
- State Parks' *Eagle Watch* (March, 5.9MB): <http://tinyurl.com/qxdcshg>
- BLM *Frontiers* (Winter, 2014): <http://tinyurl.com/lzqll54>

SOUTHCENTRAL REGION NEWS AND NOTICES

ANCHORAGE PARKS, TRAILS BOND ON APRIL 1 BALLOT

On Tuesday, April 1, Anchorage residents will have a chance to vote on a \$2.5 million parks and recreation bond. The bond proposal—Proposition #4—includes the following projects:

- **Areawide Greenbelt Trail Resurfacing and Safety Upgrades** \$1,500,000 *Rehabilitate and resurface Anchorage's major multi-use greenbelt trails – Chester Creek Trail and Campbell Creek Trail (and associated spurs and connectors).*
- **Valley of the Moon Park Improvements and Kincaid Park Facility Upgrades** \$1,050,000

If the proposition passes, the bonds would increase property taxes by \$1.32 for every \$100,000 of assessed property value.

(From an email by the [Anchorage Park Foundation](#))

SOUTHCENTRAL LINKS

- Mark Gronewald, former Mat-Su Borough Trails Program coordinator, has launched a new trail company called Trailwerx: www.trailwerx.com
- A winter hike on Anchorage's South Fork(Campbell Creek) Rim Trail: <http://tinyurl.com/lkghe4w>
- On The Trail in the Seward area: <http://tinyurl.com/mgt8jff>
- Winter Bikepacking Resurrection Pass Trail: <http://tinyurl.com/l9lk4f2>

- Second Fat Tire Bike Race is Held in Talkeetna: <http://tinyurl.com/kexozgx>
- Outdoor Explorer radio show: Eklutna Traverse: A Changing Adventure?: <http://tinyurl.com/o3gdztl>
- Mat-Su Valley trails group to hold bike film fundraiser on April 11: www.vmbah.org/trailpost-news/

INTERIOR REGION NEWS AND NOTICES

OPEN HOUSE TO FEATURE AREA TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

A "Super Open House" in April will have information about planned 2014 transportation projects in the Fairbanks and North Pole areas.

The open house, hosted by the state Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF), will be held April 19 from 10am to 2pm at the Hutchison High School and Career Center (3750 Geist Road, Fairbanks).

Staff from DOT&PF and the Fairbanks Metropolitan Area Transportation System (FMATS) will be on hand to answer questions. In addition, road equipment will be on display for the kids; the Safe Routes to School mascot, Reflectosaurus, will be making an appearance; there will be job opportunities from ADOT&PF, Local 71, and the University of Alaska Fairbanks Community and Technical College; and lunch will be generously provided by Local 71.

For more information contact FMATS (<http://tinyurl.com/mm6oyc5>) or the local DOT&PF offices (<http://tinyurl.com/mvepgsk>).

PUBLIC COMMENT SOUGHT ON STAMPEDE TRAIL PERMIT

The Division of Land has received a Land Use Permit (LUP) application from Alaska Travel Adventures for the continued operation of a guided Jeep tour along a segment of the Stampede Trail.

The proposed five-year LUP renewal would be for the same operations of a support camp for half-day guided sightseeing tours and commercial use of the Stampede Trail from the Eightmile Lake turnaround to the support camp. Customers will access the camp in self-drive 4WD Jeeps guided by Alaska Travel Adventures. The support camp lies within Section 16, Township 12 South, Range 9 West, Fairbanks Meridian. The Stampede Trail portion lies within Sections 10, 11, 14, 15 and 16, Township 12 South, Range 9 West, Fairbanks Meridian. This Land Use Permit is being adjudicated pursuant to AS 38.05.850.

The public is invited to comment on this proposed Land Use Permit renewal. The casefile LAS 24466 is available for review at the address listed below. Any comments, objections, or expressions of interest concerning this proposed Land Use Permit should be received in the office no later than 5 pm on April 18, 2014. Please direct any questions to Stu Pechek at 907/451-2733.

For more information see: <http://tinyurl.com/mrm2dy5>
(From state Department of Natural Resources announcement)

NEW LOGGING ACTIVITY IN TWO RIVERS MAY AFFECT TRAILS

The following email was originally sent to the Two Rivers Dog Musers Association:

The State of Alaska Division of Forestry Fairbanks Area has recently sold timber sale NC-1570, which is down the Two Rivers Rd. This sale involves opening up the road to the end and then constructing 2.6 miles of secondary forest road to access the sale. The logger moved in this week to begin the work with his dozer. It was brought to my attention today by a musher that there were berms blocking access to existing trails. I have made contact with the logger and he is aware that part of his responsibility is not to

block these access points. I wanted to write this email as a means of letting people know that there is now an additional contractor working in the area (in addition to the two that are also currently active). I have hung a new sign on the road, but I realize if you are accessing this area by trail you would not see it. I will be hanging additional signs in the area of the construction for obvious safety concerns. Please feel free to contact me with question or concerns,

Thank You
Kevin D. Meany, Resource Forester (acting)
Fairbanks Area Forestry
907-451-2602
kevin.meany@alaska.gov

(From an [Alaska Dog Musers Association](#) listserv message)

INTERIOR LINKS

- Delta Junction Trails Association is working to create community trail plan: <http://tinyurl.com/k6ofezr>
- Artists-in-residence program in White Mountains offered by BLM (Deadline for this is past, but story says more are coming): <http://tinyurl.com/kq4bydh>
- Fairbanks Metropolitan Area Transportation System newsletter (Winter 2014): <http://tinyurl.com/mmrd2mg>
- Fairbanks climber working on bigger, better climbing guide: <http://tinyurl.com/jw44nvb>
- Friends take snowmachining trip from Fairbanks to Nome: <http://tinyurl.com/kmptyo3>

SOUTHEAST REGION NEWS AND NOTICES

COMMENTS SOUGHT ON JUNEAU AREA RECREATION WORK

The Juneau Ranger District is beginning environmental analyses of adjustments and improvements to three recreation areas and wants the public's input on the proposed adjustments. The three proposals, Lena Beach Recreation Area Renovation, West Glacier Spur Road Area Enhancements, and Treadwell Ditch Trail Bridge Construction, are all intended to improve recreation conditions, and safety at popular Juneau recreation sites. The public, organizations, and government agencies are encouraged to get involved in these analyses by reviewing the proposals and by identifying the items to be considered, potential project design additions or alternatives, and the potential impacts of these projects.

An open house on the projects has already been held, but comments are being accepted until April 18. A full press release with links to information about the projects and instructions on how to submit comments can be found at: <http://tinyurl.com/kylsbml>

TALK TO FOCUS ON CHANGES TO MENDENHALL GLACIER REC AREA

John Neary, director of the Mendenhall Glacier Visitor Center near Juneau, will talk about changes being considered for the Mendenhall Glacier Recreation Area, including changes to trails in the area.

The talk will be held Wednesday, April 2, at the Mendenhall Glacier Visitor Center from 7 to 8pm. The talk is the last *Wildlife Wednesday* of the season sponsored by Alaska Wildlife Alliance, Southeast Chapter.

Neary will speak of the challenges of accommodating 450,000 visitors and residents who value the Mendenhall Glacier Recreation Area for outstanding views of a shrinking glacier. Examples of changes being

weighed include more viewing platforms, trails, solutions to traffic congestion and more. Get a sneak preview of changes to come and add your ideas to the mix. Free, open to the public, refreshments served. For more information, contact Patricia Wherry at 907/208-3374 or see: <http://tinyurl.com/kag7c8j>.

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

SOUTHEAST LINKS

- On the Trails: Winter wanderings: <http://tinyurl.com/kmk3rxw>
- Alaska Brewing picks Trail Mix as nonprofit partner: <http://tinyurl.com/lec7el3>
- On the Trails: Puzzles near Peterson Creek: <http://tinyurl.com/l4x7kog>

NATIONWIDE NEWS AND NOTICES

WHAT THE SUPREME COURT CASE MEANS FOR RAIL-TRAILS

On March 10, the U.S. Supreme Court handed down its decision in the case of *Marvin M. Brandt Revocable Trust et al. v. United States*. The issue in this case was whether the federal government retains an interest in railroad rights-of-way that were created by the federal General Railroad Right-of-Way Act of 1875, after the cessation of railroad activity on the corridor.

The Brandt property lies along the corridor of the Medicine Bow Rail Trail in Wyoming, a former disused rail corridor inside Medicine Bow National Forest that was converted into a public trail. As the only national organization in America solely committed to defending the preservation of former railroad corridors for continued public use, Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC) filed an "amicus brief" in December 2013 supporting the established legal precedent that says the United States does retain an interest in the corridor.

The Supreme Court ruled 8 to 1 in favor of Marvin Brandt. While RTC is disappointed by the decision, after examining the details of its potential impact, we believe that the vast majority of rail-trails and rail-trail projects will not be directly affected.

For more see: <http://tinyurl.com/qy9op8v>

(From [Rails-To-Trails Conservancy](#))

NATIONWIDE/WORLDWIDE LINKS

RECENT TRAILS-RELATED E-NEWSLETTERS

- Rails-To-Trails Conservancy (March 2014): <http://tinyurl.com/q2459ht>
- American Trails (Feb/March 2014): <http://tinyurl.com/ot4dqq2>
- National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council (March 2014): <http://tinyurl.com/pqohtw3>

STUDIES:

- Health benefits from cycling outweigh negative impacts: <http://tinyurl.com/lpl3hz3>

GRANTS:

- 12 Finalists for IMBA-Bell Built Grants Announced: <http://tinyurl.com/o42h4tc>

- IMBA Small Grants Program (Deadline Is May 30): <http://tinyurl.com/qxg6eq4>

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

OTHER LINKS:

- Seattle likely to ask voters for more parks money: <http://tinyurl.com/lo62hxm>
- Ex-worker at Rainier helps track trail sign to Scientology founder: <http://tinyurl.com/q9quods>
- LA's Hidden Urban Trails: app on approach: <http://tinyurl.com/n4tcqff>
- Defy death on the world's most dangerous hiking trails: <http://tinyurl.com/ogvr44z>
- Digital Maps for the National Park Service: www.nps.gov/npmap/
- National Water Trails System: www.nps.gov/watertrails/trail
- LA announces 180-mile network of family-friendly bikeways: <http://tinyurl.com/m7gumcf>
- 2013 Recreational Trails Program annual report: <http://tinyurl.com/kf2m37n>
- Recreational Trails Program (RTP) database: www.recreationaltrailsinfo.org
- Hiking Scottish trails: <http://tinyurl.com/lz5p73d>
- World's best hiking trails: <http://tinyurl.com/nb6vm5q>
- The Appalachian Trail's most memorable stretches: <http://tinyurl.com/moz666a>
- Want an adventure? Hike the Ozark Trail: <http://tinyurl.com/nnf8cud>
- Tacoma mountain bikers blaze their own trails: <http://tinyurl.com/n3yawwn>
- Pennsylvania study: 158K used local trails in 1 year; economic impact over \$7M: <http://tinyurl.com/l64fv5a>
- White House honors Teens To Trails founder as 'Champion of Change': <http://tinyurl.com/muykv3h>
- Video: stunning new mountain bike trails in Northern Ireland: <http://tinyurl.com/nxbh4en>
- Pipeline pathways provide opportunity for trails: <http://tinyurl.com/njz44ny>
- Guidelines published for water recreation access sites: <http://tinyurl.com/n4n9s23>
- LaHood Predicts Short-Term Extension of Transportation Law: <http://tinyurl.com/pl7er3r>
- Proposal includes rerouting Pacific Coast Trail: <http://tinyurl.com/mqxumpv>
- The power of storytelling (geared to women and bikes but relevant to any cause): <http://tinyurl.com/kzbcm9x>

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!