

INTERIOR TRAILS QUARTERLY

Dedicated to the preservation and maintenance of trails in interior Alaska

June 2014

INTERIORWIDE

SURVEY EXPLORES OUTDOOR RECREATION IN INTERIOR



People have until June 30 to complete an online survey about outdoor recreation in interior Alaska.

The purpose of the survey is to gather information about local demand for recreation. Hopefully this community-based approach can facilitate more cooperative and effective planning in order to better provide the benefits we desire from our public places. Access the survey at: <http://tinyurl.com/q3yban0>

The survey is part of an effort by the University of Alaska Fairbanks, School of Natural Resources and Extension along with the Bureau of Land Management, Eastern Interior Field Office to examine how Fairbanks area residents hope to benefit from recreation in interior Alaska. This research differs from previous

studies in the following ways:

- The researchers are interested in recreation on ALL land in and near the Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB), not just one site.
- Survey takers can describe what they WANT to do for recreation, not just what they usually do based on existing opportunities.
- Researchers have coordinated with many agencies (e.g., FNSB Parks and Recreation Department, Alaska DNR State Parks, US Army Fort Wainwright) to ensure they address a breadth of relevant issues and have a wide distribution of results.

The survey is a fun way to describe your outdoor recreation trips, routines and goals. Its success relies on lots of honest information that accurately represents our community. By taking the survey, you will be eligible to win a \$30 gift certificate to your choice of Beaver Sports or Frontier Outfitters. A total of 20 gift certificates will be awarded.

For more information contact Peter Fix (pjfix@alaska.edu) or Bryant Wright (rbwright@alaska.edu).

(Photo: Corrine Leistikow (left) and Andrea Dubenizic push their bikes up a steep section of a firebreak trail that connects Two Rivers with the Compeau Trail. By Eric Troyer)

ALASKA TRAILS HAS TOOL TRAILERS FOR PROJECTS



As you start planning trail projects, remember that Alaska Trails has a mobile tool caches in the Fairbanks area available to loan to organized trail groups in Interior Alaska. The trailers were upgraded recently and have a plethora of trail tools including mcleods, pulaskis, rakes, gloves, and much, much more. If you would like to borrow one of the caches, contact Geoffrey Orth (geoffrey.orth@alaska-trails.org).

GRANT AVAILABLE FOR RURAL SNOWMOBILE PROJECT



A grant for a snowmobile safety and trail signing project in rural Alaska will become available on July 1.

The one-time \$15,000 grant can be used for snowmobile safety and trail signing/marking projects on trails used primarily as transportation corridors in rural Alaska, off the road system. The money for this grant had been previously allocated in 2013 but not used by the original grantee.

To apply for these grant funds please visit the Snowmobile Trails Program website (<http://tinyurl.com/q33aj9m>) and submit an application for a Safety, Signing, and Educational Project. For additional information, contact State Trails Program Coordinator Darcy Harris (907/269-8699; darcy.harris@alaska.gov)

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 an annual appropriation by the Legislature, based on revenue from snowmobile registration fees.

(Photo from Bethel Family Clinic: <http://www.bethelclinic.org/page/5/>)

RIVER FORECAST CENTER WEBSITE TRACKS WATER LEVELS



The National Weather Service's River Forecast Center has a website that tracks several things regarding rivers, including how breakup is going and what river conditions are like. See the website (<http://aprfc.arh.noaa.gov/>). For a brief overview of how the weather service's hydrologic program works in the state, see the web-guide slideshow

(<http://aprfc.arh.noaa.gov/pubs/Presentations/boaterwebguide.pdf>).

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 LINK

- Denali National Park offers bears, moose, wolves, and more: <http://tinyurl.com/lwvf9cm>

STATEWIDE

ALASKA TRAILS HAS INFORMATION ON STATEWIDE TRAILS

Alaska Trails has an online database of trail guides and other trail-related information found on the Internet. The information is broken down into folders based on regions including statewide, Southeast, Southcentral, and Interior. Clicking on a folder gives a user more folders from which to choose.

The online trail maps are extremely varied. Some are produced by government agencies, such as the Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation or the National Park Service, while others are produced by private groups or individuals, such as TrailMapper, a statewide resource that allows users to add their own trails and descriptions.

People interested in exploring new trails will find an abundance of resources at their fingertips. See the database at: <http://www.alaska-trails.org/cgi/otg/trailguide.cgi>

STATEWIDE TRAILS-RELATED NEWSLETTERS

- State Parks' Eagle Watch: <http://tinyurl.com/qxdcshg>

STATEWIDE LINKS

- Be bear aware while out on the trails: <http://tinyurl.com/pzgb3cd>
- Ned Rozell, science writer for the University of Alaska Fairbanks Geophysical Institute, chronicled a three-week research snowmachine trip north of the Brooks Range. The four articles are:
 - Summer comes early in the far north: <http://tinyurl.com/l9d6rqs>
 - Riding the bumps of the far northern trail: <http://tinyurl.com/lk8ojhl>
 - Teshekpuk Lake Observatory a special place: <http://tinyurl.com/k8jqj24>
 - Three weeks in the saddle way up north: <http://tinyurl.com/kbw7xtv>
- Alaska moved from 45th to 43rd in this year's Bicycle Friendly States rankings: <http://tinyurl.com/lbpwgpw>
- Trails Conference speaker Duffin starts new non-profit in Utah: <http://tinyurl.com/lnv4pz8>
- Chill out when backpacking: <http://tinyurl.com/q5xvfe7>
- Alaskan adventures from the editors of Alaska Coast magazine: <http://tinyurl.com/kop6p9l>
- Bug Season Arrives (Outdoor Explorer radio show): <http://tinyurl.com/jwxwd3v>
- Bears are awake; humans must be aware: <http://tinyurl.com/omawews>
- Hike and fly on Anchorage's Flattop Mountain: <http://tinyurl.com/mtjnocy>
- Rules of the Road for Multi-use Trails: <http://tinyurl.com/po4md9y>
- The 2014 Anchorage Park Foundation Park and Trail Projects: <http://tinyurl.com/n6etdsh>
- Anchorage's Bike, Walk and Bus Commuter Challenge starts June 2: <http://tinyurl.com/qhg73tw>
- Butte trail head neighbors contend with crowds, parking issues:

<http://commuterchallenge.bicycleanchorage.org>

- A wilderness escape, just across Kachemak Bay: <http://tinyurl.com/kkv4dbv>
- Fred Felkl, unsung hero of Auke Lake Trail: <http://tinyurl.com/lcpkm7n>
- On the Trails: March meanders: <http://tinyurl.com/nxxv9le>
- Unsung Heroes of the Trails: Marc Scholten: <http://tinyurl.com/kadjozq>

NATIONWIDE/WORLDWIDE

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 E-NEWSLETTERS

- Rails-To-Trails Conservancy (May): <http://tinyurl.com/kvbl447>

STUDIES

- Stabilized Engineered Wood Fiber for Accessible Trails: <http://tinyurl.com/lelh799>
- 2014 US Report Card on Physical Activity for Children: <http://tinyurl.com/kn5e6dh>
- *Trail Planning, Design, and Development Guidelines*, by Minnesota DNR, now available as

OTHER LINKS:

- Following simple rules make multiuse trails safe for everyone: <http://tinyurl.com/okkoke8>
- Iowa By Trail app is launched: <http://tinyurl.com/ndl36fh>
- Top 10 Trails in Minnesota: <http://tinyurl.com/pda7tkq>
- How to keep your dog happy and safe on trails: <http://tinyurl.com/q7vhmvs>
- Learning trails help kids develop skills outside the classroom: <http://tinyurl.com/jvwfu6t>
- Scenic trails that showcase the best of America: <http://tinyurl.com/l5bvnfo>
- Best Coastal Bike Trails: <http://tinyurl.com/pfwokrj>
- Florida Coast to Coast Bike Trail Funding Approved: <http://tinyurl.com/oycenh7>
- Clear signs help trail users stay oriented: <http://tinyurl.com/k8zbyzm>
- American Hiking Society holds fundraising campaign against fracking: <http://tinyurl.com/oh98pql>
- Trails-to-Rails-to-?: The Brandt Case and its Potential Impact on the Nation's Trails: <http://tinyurl.com/oa35zdp>
- BLM faces another Western standoff, now with four-wheelers: <http://tinyurl.com/mbw3t3u>
- Northwest Rails to Trails Hall of Fame routes: <http://tinyurl.com/qc6b3rd>

- Bills seek to alleviate funding problems of wildfire suppression: <http://tinyurl.com/lttzby>
- Man sues Oprah over trail access in Colorado: <http://tinyurl.com/o3kxv3h>
- Day hiking trails often described by their shape: <http://tinyurl.com/lhydqtq>
- Mountain Biking Not Worst Thing for Trails: <http://tinyurl.com/llqmt47>
- Outdoor activities 'worth £480m to economy in Wales': <http://tinyurl.com/mb9rf4a>

REGULAR NOTICES

TRAIL EASEMENT MIGHT LOWER YOUR PROPERTY TAX

If you've got a recreational trail running across your property that is open to the public, you may qualify for a reduced property tax.

State law requires that land subject to a public recreational use easement (which can include trails) must be assessed at its true value. This recognizes that such easements restrict what a landowner can do with the property subject to the easement. (See AS 29.45.062 and AS 34.17.100. Find Alaska Statutes at www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/folio.asp.)

However, the land or trail in question must have a legal easement. Granting an easement to the state is free and fairly easily. Download the two-page "Public Recreation Easement" form under the "Land Forms" tab at <http://dnr.alaska.gov/mlw/forms/>. Granting the easement will also give the landowner tort and liability immunity (AS 34.17.055).

If you think you may qualify for a property tax reduction due to this law, contact your local government's Assessing Department.

COMPREHENSIVE TRAIL PLAN HELPS PRESERVE TRAILS

If you've got a trail you like and you're not sure if it's protected for future use by the public, check to see if it's included in the Fairbanks borough's Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan. The plan was first adopted more than 20 years ago and trails are added to it regularly. If your favorite trail is not included in the plan then you should strongly consider getting it added. The plan is one of the best ways to protect a trail from being lost to development. To find out more about the plan and how to get a trail added contact Borough Trails Coordinator Tom Hancock (459-7401; thancock@co.fairbanks.ak.us).

Another way to find out about the trails plan is to attend a borough Trails Advisory Commission meeting or contact one of the members (see info below).

BORO TRAILS ADVISORY COMMISSION MEETS MONTHLY

The Fairbanks borough's Trails Advisory Commission (TAC) meets the second Tuesday of each month at Pioneer Park, at 6 p.m. unless otherwise announced. For further information, contact the Parks and Recreation Dept. at 459-1070 or email parks@co.fairbanks.ak.us.

The commission advises the borough government on matters relating to trails within the borough, especially relating to the Comprehensive Recreational Trail Plan. A list of TAC

members can be downloaded at <http://co.fairbanks.ak.us/Boards/trailscomm-members.pdf>.

KEEP TRACK OF LAND USE PLANS FOR TRAILS IMPACT



The state Department of Natural Resources has several plans and studies underway across the state that affect how the state deals with its lands. Often this includes land and water trails. These plans and studies have opportunities for public comment.

Take a look at the planning web page for the Division of Land, Water, and Mining (<http://dnr.alaska.gov/mlw/planning/>). If you see a plan or study that affects an area with trails important to you, please look into opportunities for public comment.

FORAKER GROUP OFFERS CLASSES FOR NON-PROFITS



The Foraker Group, which is dedicated to strengthening Alaska's non-profits, offers classes about the proper workings of non-profit groups, which include many trail and trail user groups. If you are a member or employee of a non-profit group consider taking one of the classes, which are offered in several communities and statewide by teleconference. For more information visit the Foraker Group website (www.forakergroup.org/) or call 907/743-1200 or (toll free) 877/834-5003.

LINKS TO INTERIOR TRAIL INFORMATION

- Fairbanks Area Trail Conditions (Facebook): www.facebook.com/fairbankstrails
- TrailMapper (local and statewide trails): www.trailmapper.org
- University of Alaska Fairbanks (trail maps, conditions) www.uaf.edu/fs/northcampus/
- Skijoring trails page: www.alaskaskijoring.org/trails/
- Goldstream winter trails: www.acsalaska.net/~brucemc/trail_maps/mapsof.html
- Fairbanks Cycle Club ride maps: www.fairbankscycleclub.org/Rides/
- Ester Dome/Happy Valley Singletrack: www.fairbankscycleclub.org/Rides/EDS.pdf
- Alaska state park trails (includes Chena River SRA): www.alaskastatetrails.org
- Nordic Ski Club of Fairbanks trails page: www.nscfairbanks.org/index.php/trails
- Jim Whisenant Trails at Birch Hill Recreation Area:
www.co.fairbanks.ak.us/ParksandRecreation/Facilities/BH/Default.htm
- Equinox Marathon Trail: www.equinoxmarathon.org
- UAF trails (maps, conditions, etc): www.uaf.edu/fs/northcampus/
- Creamer's Field: www.creamersfield.org
- Goldstream Sports classic ski trail: goldstreamsports.com/new/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Ski-trail-sign-map-20122.pdf
- Happy Trails, Inc. (video and pics of some local trails): www.happytrailsak.com
- White Mountains National Rec Area (trail maps, conditions):
www.blm.gov/ak/st/en/prog/nlcs/white_mtns.html

- SnowTRAC trails (groomed for snowmachines; includes Yukon Quest, Chena River SRA, Denali Highway): <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/grants/groompl.htm>
- Fairbanks Snow Travelers Trails database (requires account): www.snowtravelers.org
- BLM Eastern Interior Office (Pinnell Trail, Fortymile River, Beaver and Birch creeks, etc): www.blm.gov/ak/st/en/fo/fdo/eastern_interior_field.html
- Pinnel Mountain Trail guide: www.bottomdollar.us/Pinnell%20home.html
- BLM Glennallen office (trails off Denali, Richardson and Edgerton highways): www.blm.gov/ak/st/en/fo/gdo/trails.html
- National Park Service units: www.nps.gov/state/ak/index.htm?program=all

(If you know of more please send me an email: fbxtrails@gmail.com)

LINKS TO INTERIOR TRAIL USER GROUPS

Dog mushing groups

Alaska Dog Musers Association: www.sleddog.org/

Alaska Skijoring and Pulk Association: www.alaskaskijoring.org/

Two Rivers Dog Musers Association: www.trdma.org/

Misc.

Alaska Outdoor Council: www.alaskaoutdoorcouncil.org/

Alaska Trappers Association: www.alaskatrappers.org/

Arctic Audubon Society: www.arcticaudubon.org/

Chena Flats Greenbelt Project: <http://interioraklandtrust.org/chena-flats-greenbelt-project/>

Delta Nordic/Ski Trail Club: <http://deltanordicskitrail.ning.com>

Ester Trails Committee: www.estercommunity.org/committees/trails.html

Fairbanks Cycle Club: www.fairbankscycleclub.org/

Fairbanks Mountaineers: www.meetup.com/FairbanksAreaMountaineers/

Friends of Creamers Field: www.creamersfield.org/Welcome.html

Fairbanks Paddlers: www.fairbankspaddlers.org/

Interior Alaska Trail Riders Association (for horseback riders):

www.ptialaska.net/~lnorth/

Nordic Ski Club of Fairbanks: <http://www.nscfairbanks.org/>

Running Club North: www.runningclubnorth.org/

Mountain climbing groups

Alaska Alpine Club: www.alaska-alpine-club.com

Alaskan Alpine Club: www.alaskanalpineclub.org/

Off-road groups

Arctic Offroad: www.arcticoffroad.com/

Fairbanks Offroad Lions Club: www.fairbanksoffroadlions.com/

Snowmachine groups

The Fairbanks Snow Travelers: www.snowtravelers.org/

University of Alaska Fairbanks-related

UAF Trails Club: <https://sites.google.com/a/alaska.edu/trails/>

UAF Outdoor Adventures: www.uaf.edu/outdoor/

UAF North Campus Recreation: <http://facilities.alaska.edu/uaf/ncampus/index.cfm>

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.