

ACTION UPDATE

February 2019

INTERIORWIDE

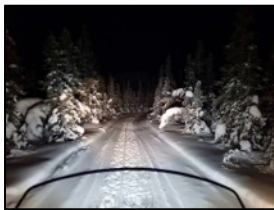
NUGGET CREEK TRAIL IN CHENA RIVER REC AREA FINALLY FROZEN

Nugget Creek Trail (in the Chena River State Recreation Area) has frozen sufficiently for winter travel. The trail begins at 31.4-mile Chena Hot Springs Road, on the right (south) side of the road. Follow the green trail markers down the access road to the Chena River. Carefully choose your crossing and then follow the green trail markers to the cabin. Be cautious as the Chena River and it's south fork often have thin ice or open water even in late winter.



(From Alaska State Parks Facebook page)

WHITE MOUNTAINS BLM TRAIL CREW BACK AFTER SHUTDOWN



Our BLM trail crew is excited to get back on the White Mountains trails in the next few days, and we expect to have updated trail conditions to report later this week. The BLM had minimal presence in the White Mountains during the last month, so we were especially grateful to hear that visitors had done an outstanding job of keeping trailheads, cabins, and trails in good condition. Your efforts are appreciated!

(From BLM White Mountains Facebook page; BLM photo by Jonathan Priday.)

REZONE REQUEST NEAR CREAMER'S/ADMA TRAILS CAUSES CONCERN

A request to rezone property near the Creamer's Field/ADMA trails is causing a lot of discussion and concern among trail users and neighbors. The rezone is being requested by the property owner to enhance his snowmachine touring business, which has been operating in the area for a number of years. The rezone would allow him to keep his snowmachines at the property rather than truck them to the site for tours. Discussion by trail users and neighbors has generally been negative, though some people have spoken in favor. The proposal was denied by the FNSB Planning Commission once, but it came before the Borough Assembly, which sent it back to the Planning Commission. It is now on the Planning Commission's agenda for its Feb. 12 meeting (<http://tinyurl.com/ycp4fswd>). For more on the story:

- KUAC story: <http://tinyurl.com/ycja9qlw>
- Planning Commission minutes (public hearing starts on page 5): <http://tinyurl.com/y9tz9uke>
- There have been posts on the Facebook pages of both the Alaska Dog Musers Association (Jan. 10) and the Alaska Skijoring and Pulk Association (Jan. 11).

INTERIORWIDE LINKS

- New Fort Knox trail reroute gives users a close look at active open pit mine: <http://tinyurl.com/y8bzgwyb>
 - Two members of Arctic Offroad checked out the trail reroute around Fort Knox in late November. Read Brian Accola's report of the reroute here: <http://tinyurl.com/y7bykufd>
- FNSB Winter Trails Challenge: <http://tinyurl.com/ybaxsarb>
- FNSB Winter Activity Guide: <http://tinyurl.com/y87qgrlo>
- Trail report: It's worth the effort to get to the lesser traveled Creamer's Field trails: <http://tinyurl.com/y94p54zw>
- Denali Borough looks at Bison Gulch Trail: <http://tinyurl.com/yblzj9yz>
- Delta Junction Trails Association and the Delta Junction Chamber of Commerce present the annual Walk of Lights on Saturday, Feb. 2: <http://tinyurl.com/y9nhcopj>

SLIGHTLY OFF-TRAIL

- Avalanche 1 class to be offered in Cantwell in February: <http://tinyurl.com/y8rua83b>
- Banff Mountain Film Festival shows in Fairbanks Feb 24: <http://tinyurl.com/ponkqlu>
- Fire fundamentals: Unexpected cold cabin camping is a chance to focus on basic wood stove skills: <http://tinyurl.com/ybh9ld8z>

LINKS TO INTERIOR TRAIL INFORMATION

The web and other sources have lots of information about trails in Interior Alaska (and statewide), but it's often hard to find. Here is a collection of trail-related resources:

<https://www.interioralaskatrails.org/resources/>

(If you find any broken links or other problems please send an email to fbxtrails@gmail.com)

STATEWIDE

BILL WOULD INCREASE SNOWMACHINE REGISTRATION FEES

Rep. Mark Neuman (R – Big Lake) has introduced House Bill 23 to increase registration fees for snowmachines from \$10 for two years to \$20 for two years. Snowmachine registration fees go to the state Snowmobile Trails Program, which 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 projects, though matching funds are not required for safety projects. The Snowmobile Trails Advisory Council

(SnowTRAC) is responsible for reviewing and recommending funding for the Snowmobile Trails Program.

The Curry Ridge Riders snowmachine group commented on Neuman's bill on its Facebook page:

We support this action because we're the only self-funded user group in the General Fund of Alaska and awarded grooming dollars for the Snowtrac program as they are received by every one of us that register our sleds in the state registration program.

Times have changed, costs have gone up and we can't keep providing the kind of service so many of us are accustomed to at \$10 each per winter. If we do, we're going to have keep cutting back on grooming like we are now and noone likes that according to all the complaints lately.

Think about it....\$20 per winter for more groomed trails than you can ride on a tank of gas? That's pretty darned cheap too !

- See the introduced bill here:
http://www.akleg.gov/basis/Bill/Detail/31?Root=HB%20%2023#tab1_4
- For more on the state Snowmobile Trails Program:
<http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/grants/snowmotr.htm>

PUT THE STATEWIDE TRAILS CONFERENCE ON YOUR CALENDAR!

Alaska Trails Statewide Trails Conference will be held at the University of Alaska, Anchorage (UAA) April 18-20.

Alaska Trails' annual conference provides trail users and the wider public a statewide opportunity for training and networking with trail professionals. Government agencies, trail builders and non-profits will be able to share what they have learned and engage in conversations with others to share best practices and new ideas. There are many ways to enjoy Alaska's trails and the conference brings them together all under one roof. Trails and outdoor recreation are a public health asset and an economic engine for the state and the trails conference seeks to raise the profile of trails and their importance to Alaska. There will be an Active Transportation track again this year on Friday, April 19th.



For agenda, registration and other details, please go to: <http://www.alaska-trails.org/trails-conference.html> and for more information, contact Steve Cleary at steve.cleary@alaska-trails.org or 907-334-8049. Updates on the 2019 conference will be posted on our Facebook Event page at: <https://www.facebook.com/events/362704607889730/>

Special thanks to Conference Sponsors: Basecamp Anchorage and ConocoPhillips Alaska for their generous support! If your business or employer is interested in sponsorship, please contact Alaska Trails at 907-334-8049 or office@alaska-trails.org.

(Photo of "Physics for Trail Builders" session from the 2016 Statewide Trails Conference)

ALASKA STUDENT CONSERVATION GROUP SEEKING APPLICANTS

Applications are being accepted for the 2019 AK Corps Teams for the Student Conservation Association (SCA) to work with multiple state and federal partners throughout Alaska. Work projects will be a mix of trail construction and maintenance, invasive species removal and fuels reduction for wildfire management. Project schedules will vary throughout the summer depending on partner's needs. Members can expect to use basic hand tools, power tools, and chainsaws. Teams consist of 5 members and 1 leader and this group of 6 will remain together for the entirety of the season. Season begins on May 13 with Corps Member Training. To see the full position and application information, go to

<https://www.thesca.org/serve/position/2019-ak-corps-teams/po-00726989>.

(From What's Up? by Peg Tileston)

STATE PARKS POSITIONS INCLUDE TRAIL DUTIES

Alaska State Parks is looking for seasonal employees and volunteers. Positions include trail crew and backcountry ranger assistant. Applicants must be at least 18 years old.

- For more information on the volunteer program see:

<http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/vip/index.htm>

- For more information on Alaska State Parks seasonal jobs see: <http://tinyurl.com/7mog8q3>

RIVER FORECAST SITE KEEPS TRACK OF SNOW DEPTH



The National Weather Service's River Forecast Center has a website that tracks snow depths at many locations across the state. In the spring, summer, and fall, the site also tracks several things regarding rivers, including how breakup is going and what river conditions are like. See the snow depth page for the website at:

http://www.weather.gov/aprfc/Snow_Depth

ALASKA GEOGRAPHIC HIRING FOR SUMMER FIELD SEASON

Alaska Geographic is currently hiring Summer Field Leaders for the 2019 summer season for a number of positions including Kayak Guide And Field Leader, Backpacking Field Leader, Youth Trail-Work Expedition Leader. All trips take place from June-August. Mandatory paid training will take place May 17-19. Expeditions vary in length from 1 to 2 weeks. A full season of work is available for the right candidate. Field Leaders are required to have a current Wilderness First Responder (WFR) or Wilderness First Aid (WFA) medical certification, depending on the position. To find out more about available positions or to apply, send a resumé and cover letter to William Melton at wmelton@alaskageographic.org or call 907-771-8466 for more information.

(From What's Up? by Peg Tileston)

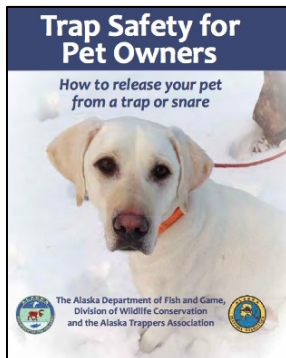
FORAKER GROUP OFFERS CLASSES FOR NON-PROFITS STATEWIDE

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.



RESOURCES HELP REDUCE PET/TRAPPING CONFLICTS

Trapping season is here, so trail users who let their dogs run loose should make sure they know some basic information about traps and trap lines. A pamphlet and videos are available.



PAMPHLET: A pocket-sized pamphlet titled "Trap Safety for Pet Owners" describes the types of traps and snares that may be encountered and provides illustrated instructions on how to free pets swiftly and safely. It is produced by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) and the Alaska Trappers Association (ATA). Copies are available free of charge at department offices, or may be viewed on the website at:

<http://tinyurl.com/m6oulhk>. More information, including video footage featuring trap removal instructions, is found on the department's

website at www.adfg.alaska.gov (see "Sharing the Trails" under the "Hunting > Trapping" dropdown menu), and on the ATA website (www.alaskatrappers.org).

VIDEO: The ATA also sells a 30-minute video, "Sharing Alaska's Trails," that includes information such as how to know if you are on a trap line, trap line safety, the physics of handling and opening traps and snares, and tips for first-aid for pets accidentally caught in traps. The video doesn't promote trapping, but deals with the practicalities of sharing the trails. A three-minute excerpt of the DVD can be found on YouTube



(www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jk242jZwEAQ). To order a copy of the DVD check the

ATA store (www.alaskatrappers.org).

Most trapping seasons run from November 1 to the end of February, but the season for a few species lasts longer. Wolf traps could be active well into April.

USE "PICK. CLICK. GIVE." TO DONATE TO ALASKA TRAILS



Alaska Trails is included in the Permanent Fund Dividend's "Pick. Click. Give" charitable contributions program. It's a secure and easy way to make a donation. When you file for your PFD online, you will be given an opportunity to donate using money from your PFD. If you do, please remember Alaska Trails.

If you use "Pick. Click. Give" you will be able to check a box that authorizes the state to send your name, contact information and the amount you give when it sends

contributions to an organization. We want to acknowledge and recognize your generous support, and this is the only way we will know it's you making the gift.

For more information on "Pick. Click. Give" (<http://www.pickclickgive.org>). To go directly to the Alaska Trails "Pick. Click. Give." page

<http://www.pickclickgive.org/index.cfm/pfdorgs.info/Alaska-Trails>

STATEWIDE LINKS

SOUTHCENTRAL LINKS

- A rogue rodeo cow has been wandering Anchorage trails for months: <http://tinyurl.com/yab3amre>
 - Craig Medred's take: Gone moo: <https://craigmedred.news/2019/01/12/gone-moo/>
- RTC's Trail of the Month for January: Alaska's Tony Knowles Coastal Trail: <http://tinyurl.com/ya83hdqk>
- State decision on application for public easement for Haessler-Norris Trail System near Houston: <http://tinyurl.com/y9homedu>
- Proposed mountain bike trail in the Chester Creek greenbelt is seen as a crime deterrent: <http://tinyurl.com/yacqvql3>
- Anchorage Park Foundation's Community Challenge Grants application period opens Feb 7: <http://tinyurl.com/y8wrmgrt>
- Beacon check stations honor skier killed in Hatcher Pass avalanche: <http://tinyurl.com/ycuet237>
- Outdoor Explorer radio show: Urban outdoor exploration: <http://tinyurl.com/ya4nckfd>

SOUTHEAST LINKS

- Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority approves land exchange (which includes trail): <http://tinyurl.com/yayq9l2s>
- Popular Juneau walking trail to temporarily close for repair: <http://tinyurl.com/yc7vefvj>

SLIGHTLY OFF-TRAIL

- The appeal of ice is undeniable, but watch out for overflow: <http://tinyurl.com/y9e7t7bk>
- Want to rent a public-use cabin in Alaska this summer? Now is the time to make reservations: <http://tinyurl.com/yab5h7wf>
- DNR Commissioner Feige completes leadership team: <http://tinyurl.com/yb342aq9>
- Sitka to host inaugural Alaska Walk and Bike Conference on June 4-8: <http://tinyurl.com/ybv8v8v8>
- Winter light in Alaska might be scarce, but what's there can be breathtaking: <http://tinyurl.com/yaa6ybm5>
- Murkowski aims to revive public lands bill, despite objection: <http://tinyurl.com/yd94p4td>
- Follow those tracks! How to be a detective during a walk through the snow: <http://tinyurl.com/y7fx7uas>

- Lumen wars (on trails): <https://craigmedred.news/2019/01/11/lumen-wars/>
- Outdoor Explorer radio show: Women and minorities in the outdoors: <http://tinyurl.com/yc9by6dd>

NATIONWIDE/WORLDWIDE

SUSTAINABLE TRAILS CONFERENCE TO BE HELD IN MARCH

The Sustainable Trails Conference is heading to Grand Junction, CO, March 17-13. If you or your organization is involved in trail planning and design, construction and maintenance, or fundraising, marketing and management, this conference provides access to the world's highest quality trail professionals - those like you who have made a passion for trails into a life's work.

With multiple 1- and 2-day hands-on workshops, collaborative education sessions, trail-focused vendors, equipment testing, and a new job fair, this year's Sustainable Trails Conference is set up to provide the knowledge, skills, and professional networking to help you and PTBA achieve the mission of continually improving the trails industry.

For more on the conference see: <http://tinyurl.com/ybk2jtzu>

(From Professional TrailBuilders Association press release)

NATIONWIDE / INTERNATIONAL LINKS

WEBINARS, MEETINGS, CONFERENCES, TRAINING, ETC.

- For a listing of upcoming trail webinars workshops, conferences, and other meetings, see the American Trails calendar at: www.americantrails.org/Calendar.html

TRAILS-RELATED NEWSLETTERS

- American Trails news publications: <http://www.americantrails.org/trailtracks/index.html>

TRAIL GUIDES

- The 10 Best Hikes In Asheville, N.C.: <http://tinyurl.com/yaly8oej>

ADVOCACY

- Hike the Hill trails advocacy trip to Washington, D.C. (Feb 10-14): <http://tinyurl.com/ych6dtj>

HEALTH

- Scottish Doctors Are Now Issuing Prescriptions to Go Hiking: <http://tinyurl.com/ydb54rlg>
- The Healthiest People In The World Don't Go To The Gym: <http://tinyurl.com/y6vf5xmz>
- Walking Might Be the Best Exercise There Is: <http://tinyurl.com/ybjbam9f>

FUNDING

- North Face Explore Fund grant (application open Feb 25-April 2): <http://tinyurl.com/hkdfzn3>
- Polaris T.R.A.I.L.S. grants (ATV trail projects; due March 1, Sept 1): <http://tinyurl.com/zcz8u7a>

VOLUNTEERING

- American Hiking Society's Volunteer Vacations: <http://tinyurl.com/ydh95kp8>

STUDIES

- Children Move Less Starting at Age 6: <http://tinyurl.com/y8ejeyho>

BOOKS

- The World is Our Classroom: <https://www.americantrails.org/blog/2018/the-world-is-our-classroom>

OTHER NATIONAL LINKS:

- It's Not OK to Poach Trails in Unstaffed National Parks: <http://tinyurl.com/yaokupqq>
- This Father-Daughter Trip Is Bliss (7-min video): <http://tinyurl.com/ybsmvk89>
- Discovering the North Country Trail: <http://tinyurl.com/y76kbtcc>
- National Forests During Government Shutdown: <http://tinyurl.com/yahepszh>
- Rails-to-Trails Conservancy launches campaign to build trail from Seattle to DC: <http://tinyurl.com/yctd7eh5>

INTERNATIONAL LINKS:

- Ten easy mountain trails to enjoy in Spain: <http://tinyurl.com/ybgm3g5o>
- Netherlands builds Europe's longest heated cycle path: <http://tinyurl.com/yc98xthm>
- 15 Irish walking trails to get the perfect smug Insta on: <http://tinyurl.com/yc6hz3ub>
- Meet the man who just ran Australia's 8 best trails in just 7 days: <http://tinyurl.com/y9td8gca>

SLIGHTLY OFF-TRAIL

- Utah National Forest facilities kept clean during government shutdown by offroading group: <http://tinyurl.com/yckb5q9e>
- AI system teaches robots how to navigate wilderness trails: <http://tinyurl.com/y8n2x6yp>
- Why Kids Need Wilderness And Adventure More Than Ever: <http://tinyurl.com/ybk4vj39>
- National parks face years of damage from government shutdown: <http://tinyurl.com/y93o723h>

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.