

ACTION UPDATE

August 2018

INTERIORWIDE

NEWS-MINER STORY COVERS THREE BIG INTERIOR TRAIL PROJECTS

Several big trail projects are in the works in the Interior.

Closest to Fairbanks is the Ester Dome North Side Trail, which is in the planning stages. It would be built entirely on state Department of Natural Resources lands and is still in the process of gaining approval from the department. A little farther out is a reroute of a trail (officially two trails) north of Fairbanks. The reroute will accommodate expansion of the Fort Knox mine. Finally, a non-motorized trail in the Chena River State Recreation Area should be completed this year. This trail, which will provide year-round access to the Nugget Creek Public Use Cabin, has been under construction since 2011.

Fairbanks Daily News-Miner Outdoors Editor Sam Friedman covered these projects in a story in mid-July. Read the story here: <http://tinyurl.com/ycgd2zmx>

FAIRBANKS TRAILS CHALLENGE OFFERS REASONS TO GET OUTSIDE

The Fairbanks Summer Trails Challenge offers great motivation for getting outside and exploring Fairbanks area trails. This summer's challenge runs through September 30.

Don Kiely recently posted this praise of the challenge on Facebook:

In a wicked flurry of activity today, Carol Kleckner, Pixel, and I hit half of the FNSB Trails Challenge signs, nearly all of the in- and near-town ones, hiking some great trails along the way. What a great way for me to recover from yesterday's Chena Hot Springs Run and Soak! #FNSBtrails

We got the Sandpiper Trail at Tanana Lakes, Chena River Walk downtown, both Birch Hill ones, Cranberry Trail, and After Hours Trail.

I'm in total awe of whoever thought up this at the borough! So many people are getting out on the trails, in many cases exploring new ones. And based on all the posts on Facebook of the form "I'm going to look for the X sign, anyone want to join me?", it's enhanced the social aspect of trails too.

Now, on to the more challenging ones! Or at least the ones further out from town and longer distances!



Find out more about the challenge at: <http://www.co.fairbanks.ak.us/pr/Pages/Trails-Program.aspx>

ALASKA TRAILS HAS TOOL TRAILER READY FOR PROJECTS



As you start planning trail building and maintenance projects, remember that Alaska Trails has a mobile tool cache available in the Fairbanks area to loan to organized trail groups in the Interior. The trailers were upgraded recently and have many trail tools including mcleods, pulaskis, rakes, gloves, and much, much more. If you would like to borrow one of the caches, please contact Geoffrey Orth (gcorth@straydogs.us).

INTERIORWIDE LINKS

- Hike and raft at the Granite Tors: <http://tinyurl.com/ycqx2urz>
- Delta Junction area trail guide: <https://www.salchadeltaswcd.org/trails/>
- Summertime and the paddling is easy with Alaska Dream Adventures: <http://tinyurl.com/y9ro9m5j>
- Trip report: Canoe excursion is a small sampling of the Yukon's tough offerings: <http://tinyurl.com/ya6joye9>

STATEWIDE

RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM APPLICATIONS ARE AVAILABLE

It's time to get your Recreational Trails Program grant application started.

RTP grants provide reimbursable, matching funds to develop and repair recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both non-motorized and motorized recreational trail uses. Grants are also available for trail-related environmental protection, safety, and educational projects. The grants are administered through the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation. The timeline is as follows:

- All application and informational documents will be available at <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/grants/trails.htm> on or before July 15;
 - Applicants must begin public outreach on their proposed projects by September 15;
 - Grant applications must be submitted by October 15.
- Questions? Contact Darcy Harris at 907-269-8699 or darcy.harris@alaska.gov.

STATEWIDE LINKS

- Eagle Watch (state parks newsletter): <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/eaglewatch/eaglewatcharchive>
- BLM *Frontiers* news journal (Summer 2018): <http://tinyurl.com/y9zew2g8>
- Alaska Parks & Hiking Trails (guide): <http://www.alaska.org/things-to-do/parks-and-trails>

SOUTHCENTRAL LINKS

- Campbell Creek restoration puts Anchorage teens to work: <http://tinyurl.com/y7f6god2>
- KAYAK AK (Kachemak Bay): <http://coast-magazine.com/kayak-ak>
- Mineral Creek Trail in Valdez is a gem: <http://tinyurl.com/yaddx429>
- Local guidebook author makes Anchorage-area backcountry trails accessible: <http://coast-magazine.com/trail-time>
- Popular Eagle River trailhead reopened after last month's fatal mauling: <http://tinyurl.com/ydxk52te>

TIS THE SEASON

- Bear shot after it smashes SUV window and climbs inside at Anchorage trailhead: <http://tinyurl.com/yde98ymg>

SLIGHTLY OFF-TRAIL

- Medred: A skeptic's take on the husky that 'rescued' the deaf hiker: <http://tinyurl.com/y8e7lfyh>
- 2018-2021 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program Amendment 1 is available for Public Comment (deadline August 12): <http://dot.alaska.gov/stwdplng/cip/stip/index.shtml>
- An ode to Crocs, those ugly shoes that are so useful in Alaska: <http://tinyurl.com/y8c4eqxi>
- Outdoor Explorer radio show: National park journeys: <http://tinyurl.com/y9chnhcp>
- Fees are increasing for some state trailheads and public use cabins: <http://notice.alaska.gov/190590>
- A new hut with dramatic views rose up this summer in Alaska's Hatcher Pass backcountry: <http://tinyurl.com/ybn4m5uk>
- Stinging, burning, biting: Midsummer hiking on the Kenai means a beatdown of a bushwhack: <http://tinyurl.com/yayjcbbj>

NATIONWIDE/WORLDWIDE

TELL YOUR SENATOR: DON'T LEAVE TRAILS BEHIND

Congress is working on its budget for next year and infrastructure is expected to get a boost in funding—but some leaders want to leave out trails. Tell your senator to restore funding eligibility for trails of all types in the new budget funding.

As part of a plan to rebuild America, Congress is providing an additional \$10 billion in next year's budget for all types of infrastructure. But the current funding bill specifically denies eligibility for trails, walking, and biking projects from those new funds.

Sen. Amy Klobuchar (MN) recently introduced an amendment (S.3538, amending S. Amdt. 3399 to H.R. 6147) to restore eligibility for trails for the new funding. Write your senator now to support making trails, walking and biking eligible for new transportation funding!

Motorized and nonmotorized trail use accounts for nearly 12 percent of all trips in the U.S.—that’s why trails, crosswalks, sidewalks, and bike lanes are so important for a balanced transportation system. Yet these projects receive less than 2 percent of federal transportation funding.

These are wise investments that help create healthier, more connected communities. They also give us greater transportation choices and boost local economies, benefiting everyone.

This link from our partners at Rails-To-Trails Conservancy will automatically connect you with your senator when you enter your address: <http://tinyurl.com/ydhj5xvu>

(From American Trails email)

CRUCIAL TRAIL FUNDING PROGRAM WILL EXPIRE WITHOUT ACTION

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), one of our most important programs for preserving the outdoors, will expire on September 30 if Congress does not act to permanently ensure it continues by “reauthorizing” it.

Before we get into what we can do to get it renewed, let’s take a step back to shine a light on the history of the LWCF and all it has accomplished. LWCF funds have expanded and completed hundreds of new trails (including National Scenic and Historic Trails, which are celebrating their 50th Anniversary this year!), built our National Parks, and funded many of your favorite local parks.

Wow, right?! You may be asking yourself, “How do we pay for such a great program?” Here’s the great thing, it doesn’t cost the taxpayer anything!! The LWCF is funded by fees from offshore energy development with the idea that if the government permits drilling offshore, some of the money raised should go to preserve our most cherished places on land. That’s why in 1964 Congress passed the LWCF to safeguard natural areas, water resources and our cultural heritage, and to provide recreation opportunities to all Americans.

Fast forward to today, this crucial program is set to expire on September 30 if Congress doesn’t act (the program was last reauthorized in 2015 with overwhelming bipartisan support). So, what is AHS doing to make sure Congress acts? In partnership with a coalition of organizations, AHS is joining with congressional leaders to raise the public attention and build momentum to get this legislation passed.

To read more and find out how you can take action see: <http://tinyurl.com/yb9pg994>
(From American Hiking Society website story)

APPLY FOR AN EMERGING LEADERS SCHOLARSHIP!

The online application is now available for the Hulet Hornbeck Emerging Leaders Scholarship Program at the 2019 International Trails Symposium (ITS) and Training Institute. This program will bring 16 young adults, ages 21-28, to Syracuse, New York April 28 to May 1, 2019.

At the ITS, Emerging Leaders will learn from experts, get practical experience with a service project, network with professionals, engage in discussions with career advisors, and take a step closer to a career in the trails world, so they, too, can leave a lasting legacy on the world— as Hulet did.

Diversity and inclusivity are important to us so that we can meet everyone’s deepest needs, values, and long-term interests. We welcome individuals of all backgrounds to apply regardless of past trails experience. We are more interested in potential.

The deadline to apply is October 15. For more info: <http://tinyurl.com/y7bkhhdu>
(From American Trails email)

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

CONTESTS

- National and International Trails Awards (Call for award nominations will be available by August 1): <http://tinyurl.com/y7rbfw7g>

TRAIL GUIDES

- Ultimate Summer Hike Guide to 10 Awesome Michigan Trails: <http://tinyurl.com/y9mtzp75>

STUDIES

- Building Connectivity Through Recreation Trails (Virginia): <http://tinyurl.com/yd9yfsy>

TRAILS AND HEALTH

- Writing Prescriptions to Play Outdoors: <http://tinyurl.com/ydejhku2>
- Take a Walk in the Woods. Doctor’s Orders.: <http://tinyurl.com/y7b73wcb>
- Improving Public Health Through Public Parks And Trails: <http://tinyurl.com/y9qlxtbj>

FUNDING

- Polaris T.R.A.I.L.S. Grant (for ATVs; Sept 1 and March 1 deadlines): <http://tinyurl.com/zcz8u7a>

TRAILS-RELATED NEWSLETTERS

- For the latest American Trails news publications: <http://www.americantrails.org/trailtracks/index.html>
- National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council (July): <http://tinyurl.com/ybys3r49>

BOOK

- Escape by Bike: Adventure Cycling, Bikepacking and Touring Off-Road: <http://tinyurl.com/y8899962>

OTHER NATIONAL LINKS:

- Three Trail Terrors To Conquer In National Forests: <http://tinyurl.com/yby9rftn>

- Accidentally released emails show Trump officials dismissed benefits of protected public land in favor of logging and drilling: <http://tinyurl.com/ycj6p6rk>
- Horses As Trail Users: <https://www.americantrails.org/resources/horses-as-trail-users>
- This 1946 map shows how Native American trails became the streets of Brooklyn: <http://tinyurl.com/y7dy4blq>

INTERNATIONAL LINKS:

- World's longest and most extreme hiking trails: <http://tinyurl.com/y8bh9wjj>
- 7 Famous Pilgrimages Around the World That You Can Walk or Cycle: <http://tinyurl.com/y8jgsrnq>

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 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.