

# ACTION UPDATE

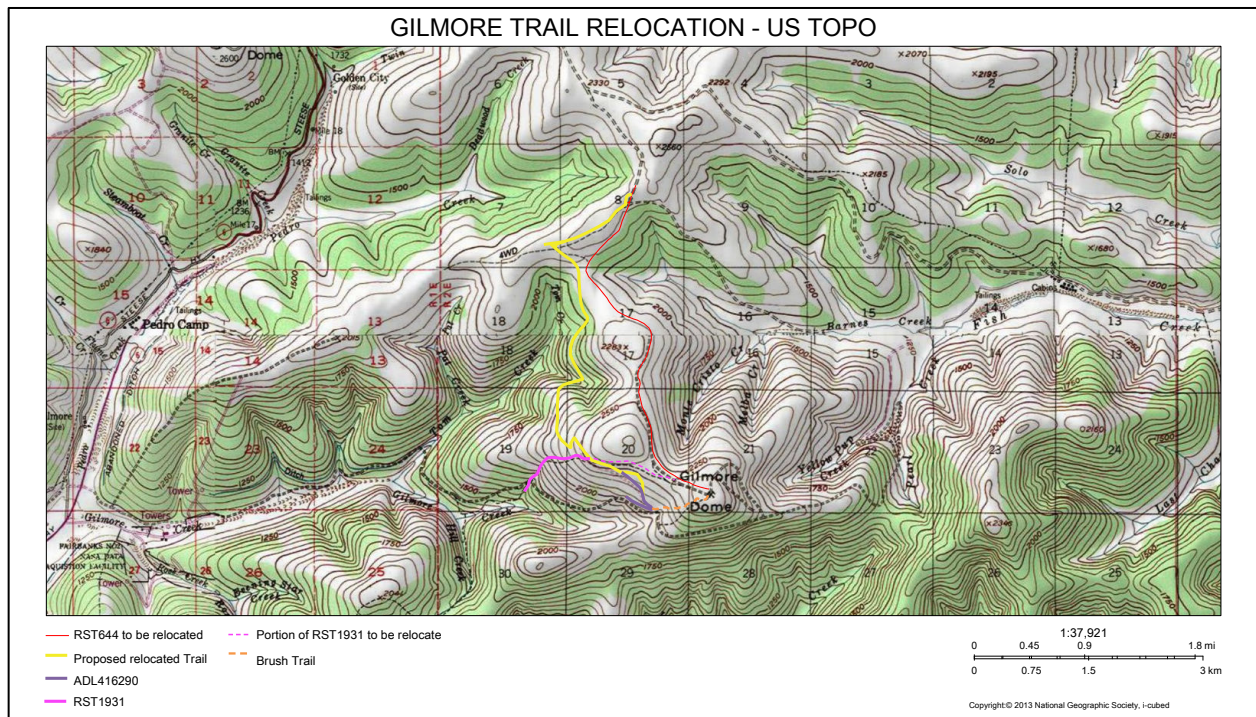
May 2018

## INTERIORWIDE

### COMMENTS DUE ON FORT KNOX MINE TRAIL REROUTE PROPOSAL

Fairbanks Gold Mining, Inc., the company that runs Fort Knox Gold Mine north of Fairbanks, has submitted a reroute plan for two trails west of the mine. The public has until May 7, at 5pm, to submit comments on the proposal.

The trails comprise a route that connects trails in the Cleary Summit area and trails north of Gilmore Trail road. The route is used by a variety of motorized and non-motorized trail users, including by the Gold Discovery Run, held in summer as a part of the Golden Days celebration.



The reroute plan is part of a possible expansion of the mine, which will be decided sometime mid-year, according to Anna Atchison, external affairs manager for the mine. If the expansion goes forward, it would happen on 700 acres of land that was recently transferred to the state Department of Natural Resources from the federal government.

The trails named in the reroute proposal are RS2477 routes, which means they have legal right-of-way protections. However, most of the actual trails are overgrown and use of the majority of the route has shifted to a power line right-of-way and access roads. In any case, the

route is important to protect because it's a vital connector trail that links a number of other trails.

Members of the public can submit written comments to AJ Wait at: [aj.wait@alaska.gov](mailto:aj.wait@alaska.gov). More information on ways to comment and a notice for the proposal, with a link to proposal documents, can be found at: <http://notice.alaska.gov/189477>

Several local trail experts and user groups have looked over the proposal and feel it is generally a good one. However, they would like to see more erosion control features incorporated into the trail design, such as grade reversals, outsloping of the trail tread, and a full bench cut. They also would like to see a certified trail designer or builder involved with the project, if it goes forward.

## **TRAIL RESTRICTIONS DELAYED 2 WEEKS IN CHENA RIVER REC AREA**

Thanks to heavy snowfall along with a late breakup, seasonal trail use restrictions in the Chena River State Recreation Area will be delayed for two weeks, until Friday, May 4.

The Compeau, Stiles, and Angel Creek Hillside trails will close May 4 to all trail uses except walking. The seasonal closures protect the state's investment and sustain summer motorized use of these popular trails by allowing them to thaw and water to disperse without disturbance. Weather dependent, the trails will reopen Thursday, May 24 in time for the Memorial Day weekend.

Other trails that will stay open an additional two weeks are the South Fork, Colorado Creek, and Angel Creek Valley Trails. These are winter-only trails and will remain open to snow machine use until May 4.

To read more on this State Parks press release see: <http://tinyurl.com/y94jrh3k>

## **ESTER DOME SINGLETRACK CLOSED DURING BREAK UP**

The Ester Dome Singletrack trails will be closed during spring break up, as they are every year. They will open when they firm up. When they open notices will be sent out in a variety of ways, such as on the Fairbanks Cycle Club listserv and posted on Ester Dome Singletrack and Goldstream Sports Facebook pages.

Even the smallest of ruts on the trail will channel the water down the trail instead for letting it shed off the side as designed. Once the water starts running down the trail, the erosion will do a lot of damage. Please respect the quality of the trail.

Once break up is over and the trails firm up, they are OK to ride even when wet. This time of year we are all excited to ride but can do much more damage than it looks like due to the power of flowing water.

Thank you for your trail respect. Check with Joel at Goldstream Sports for more info ([joel@goldstreamsports.com](mailto:joel@goldstreamsports.com); 455-6520).

## **TRANSPORTATION GROUP LOOKING FOR BIKE/PED COUNTERS**

The Fairbanks Metropolitan Area Transportation System (FMATS) annual Bike and Pedestrian Counts will be held May 22-24.

A total of 36 location across Fairbanks and North Pole will be counted for two hours. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Alicia Stevens at [alicia.stevens@fmats.us](mailto:alicia.stevens@fmats.us).

Also: FMATS went through a re-branding exercise during the transition to become an independent organization. Once approved as a non-profit organization, we will be recognized and advertising ourselves as FAST Planning. Fairbanks Area Surface Transportation Planning. Be on the lookout for our new name and logo within the next few months!

*(From FMATS newsletter)*

## INTERIOR ALASKA LAND TRUST SEEKING VOLUNTEER STEWARDS

Love exploring the unique landscapes of the Interior? Looking for a bit of exercise while making a positive impact on your community? We're gearing up to train volunteer land stewards! Check out our website for more info: <https://interioraklandtrust.org/contact/volunteer/>

*(From Interior Alaska Land Trust Facebook page)*

## 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](mailto:gcorth@straydogs.us)).

## SPRING TRAILS ARE VULNERABLE, PLEASE USE WITH CARE

Please keep in mind how your trail activities might affect other trail users, especially in the spring.

As snow melts and the ground thaws, 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 into the next winter. They 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.

An alternative to using trails in the spring is to get out on foot or by bike and go explore quiet subdivision roads new to you. You get to be outside, be active, and probably find out new things about your community.

*(Constantine Khroulev photo of a badly rutted Trail Creek Trail in the White Mountains National Recreation Area north of Fairbanks.)*

## REMEMBER TO LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD ON BORO BUDGET

This month the Fairbanks North Star Borough Assembly will be taking public comment on the borough budget. This is an opportunity to speak up for trails (among other things). Public hearing on the budget will begin "at or after 6 p.m." on Thursday, May 3. Sign-up sheets for public testimony on the budget will be available in the lobby at noon on Thursday. People have three minutes to speak, though that can go longer if any assembly members or the mayor have questions. If you can't make the meeting, you can always email or call the Assembly members:

<http://co.fairbanks.ak.us/assembly/Pages/Assembly-Members.aspx>

Fairbanks Borough Mayor has already submitted his budget. It can be found here (7.2MB):

<http://tinyurl.com/ybvppqcrv>. The Parks and Recreation section starts on page 451.

## INTERIORWIDE LINKS

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- Trip Report: Snow bridges are starting to look thin on Michael Creek: <http://tinyurl.com/ybafhg5p>
- Open House Yankovich Rd/Miller Hill Rd Reconstruction and Multi-Use Path (May 15): <http://notice.alaska.gov/189778>

### SLIGHTLY OFF TRAIL

- In Interior Alaska, snow came late and then stuck around with a vengeance: <http://tinyurl.com/yd6vcl4c>
- Paddling Film Festival World Tour, May 4, Blue Loon: <http://tinyurl.com/yatrvhyg>
- State forestry asking drivers to avoid some roads: <http://tinyurl.com/y8tsr5t5>
- Watch for thin ice at Castner ice cave: <http://tinyurl.com/ycqral3w>
- Rental duck blinds discussed for Tanana Lakes: <http://tinyurl.com/yc7rdr49>



## STATEWIDE

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### PARK SERVICE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS

Could the National Park Service help in your community to create close-to-home recreation opportunities and protect nearby nature?

Apply by June 30 to be considered for technical assistance with your locally led conservation and outdoor recreation project.

The community assistance specialists in our Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance program can help you to:

- Increase access to outdoor recreation and the natural world;
- Improve community health with new opportunities for more active living;
- Promote conservation and encourage stewardship of local resources;
- Benefit the local economy by improving quality of life;
- Connect youth to the outdoors and engage the next generation of conservation stewards; and
- Build partnerships that support your project's success!



To find out if we can help your community, review the application process. Then get in touch with Paul Clark, Alaska Region Program Manager ([akr\\_rtca@nps.gov](mailto:akr_rtca@nps.gov)), to discuss your idea. We want to talk with you informally before you apply, to explore and develop your project idea and help you make the best of your application. Please let us know by the end of May if you intend to submit an application.

Still need help deciding to do something great in your community with our help? Watch this short video: <https://www.nps.gov/orgs/rtca/multimedia.htm>

Step right up! Applications are due by June 30:  
<https://www.nps.gov/orgs/rtca/apply.htm>

*(From National Park Service email; photo of RTCA program manager Paul Clark talking with Joe Hall about the newly rerouted portion of the Middle Fork Trail near Anchorage from RTCA webpage)*

### PARK SERVICE ANNOUNCES 2018 CHALLENGE COST SHARE PROGRAM

Round up some partners and grab your tools! The NPS Challenge Cost Share Program is celebrating the 50th anniversary of the National Trails and Wild & Scenic Rivers systems. Applications are being accepted until May 25.

Challenge Cost Share ("CCS") projects are intended to build collaboration between the National Park Service and project partners. For FY 2018, the program will provide \$386,000, to be matched 1-to-1 by non-federal funds and in-kind support. We anticipate supporting approximately 20 projects.

The online application and complete information are available at:

<https://www.nps.gov/ccsp>

Project Goals: Applications are being accepted for projects that will advance any of the following goals:

1. Improvements in recreation opportunities, access and infrastructure;
2. Protection and restoration of trails or rivers/riverside lands;
3. Stewardship through public engagement; or
4. Increasing public use and awareness.

The Challenge Cost Share program is designed to cultivate shared efforts in the NPS mission with National Parks, National Trails, and Wild and Scenic Rivers and their partners. For more information on the program, including eligibility, and qualifying and selection criteria, see:

<https://www.nps.gov/ccsp>

*(From NPS email)*

## **SNOWMOBILE TRAILS PROGRAM APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE**

Grant applications for the state Snowmobile Trails Program are now available. Public notice for 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 programs. Matching funds are not required for safety 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). Or contact either one through the Department of Natural Resources email page (<http://tinyurl.com/3umsvj5>).

## **NATIONAL TRAILS DAY COMING UP THE FIRST SATURDAY IN JUNE**

National Trails Day is happening June 2. As of the end of April there were eight events registered for Alaska. If you are interested in leading or organizing an event, visit [www.nationaltrailsday.org](http://www.nationaltrailsday.org) for information on how to host an event and where to register an event. National Trails Day is the country's largest celebration of trails. Events will take place in every state across the country and will include hikes, biking and horseback rides, paddling trips, birdwatching, geocaching, gear demonstrations, stewardship projects and more.

## SEVERAL TRAIL-RELATED POSITIONS AVAILABLE ACROSS STATE

- Iditarod NHT communications intern for the Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance, Alaska Geographic and the Partnership for the National Trail System for a young adult (ages 18 – 25) for an 11-week summer internship focusing on gathering, creating and distributing media around the 50th Anniversary of the National Trails System Act and the 40th Anniversary of the Iditarod Trail designation as a National Historic Trail. For more information and to apply, contact Eileen Kazura at [ekazura@alaskageographic.org](mailto:ekazura@alaskageographic.org) with resume and cover letter. *(From What's Up? by Peg Tileston)*
- Events And Marketing Coordinator for the Anchorage Park Foundation. Join the staff team this summer! Deepen the public's relationship to parks and trails through outdoor events, outreach, and communications. Full time temporary (May 29-Sept 30). Find the full job announcement and how to apply at <https://anchorageparkfoundation.org/employment-opportunities/>. *(From What's Up? by Peg Tileston)*
- Trip Leaders for the 2018 summer season for Alaska Geographic to lead kayaking, backpacking, or trail-work youth crews. All trips take place from June-August. Expeditions vary in length from 1 to 2 weeks and require a current WFR or WFA medical certification. To find out more about available positions or to apply, send a resumé, cover letter, and references to William Melton at [wmelton@alaskageographic.org](mailto:wmelton@alaskageographic.org) or call 907-771-8466 for more information. *(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 info 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>

## STATEWIDE LINKS

- Eagle Watch (state parks newsletter): <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/eaglewatch/eaglewatcharchive>
- BLM's Frontiers (Winter 2018; several trail-related stories): <http://tinyurl.com/y9zew2g8>
- Training day (Medred on bear spray): <https://craigmedred.news/2018/04/10/training-day/>
- Americans tell Interior to take a hike over proposed park fee increase: <http://tinyurl.com/y959rhwx>
- Wildlife projects helped by gun owners: Pittman-Robertson Act has paved the way for conservation (including trail projects): <http://tinyurl.com/yd4ma3ye>

## SOUTHCENTRAL LINKS

- Bears, bikes and avoiding unnecessary togetherness on Anchorage trails: <http://tinyurl.com/ybl5bmaj>

- Trails Rehabilitation – Benson Boulevard Pathway (Invitation to Bid): <http://notice.alaska.gov/189497>
- USDA Secretary Announces Infrastructure Improvements for Forest System Trails (includes Iditarod National Historic Trail Southern Trek): <http://tinyurl.com/yczhww3h>
- Fairview Loop Pathway and Safety Improvements (project restarted): <http://tinyurl.com/y9bx3quk>
- Trekking in the Chugach: Exploring peaks in Anchorage’s backyard: <http://tinyurl.com/yauvoapy>
- Valdez’s Levitation 49 is Hiring Summer Jobs (including trail crews): <http://tinyurl.com/ycm767b2>

### **SOUTHEAST LINKS**

- Sitka Trail Works newsletter (Spring 2018): <http://tinyurl.com/ybdqdace>
- USCGC Kukui crew makes improvements to Mosquito Cove Trail: <http://tinyurl.com/ychehfcc>
- Forest Service unveils plan for Mendenhall Glacier tourism: <http://tinyurl.com/y9wb7k5f>

### **SLIGHTLY OFF-TRAIL**

- This 90-year-old ‘adventurer’s adventurer’ has an almost unreal resume of rambling: <http://tinyurl.com/yblmd5m5>
- Murkowski suggests taxing outdoor rec gear to help fund park projects: <http://tinyurl.com/y8mvp45z>
- People spent \$1.3 billion visiting Alaska’s national parks last year: <http://tinyurl.com/yb8snx5o>
- Interior ratchets back national park fee hike, proposing smaller increases for many — including Denali: <http://tinyurl.com/ya2wrmw6>
- Denali entrance fee will rise to \$15, not \$30 as previously planned: <http://tinyurl.com/yamk23uc>
- Outdoor Explorer radio show: Prince William Sound and wilderness lodges: <http://tinyurl.com/yapulp9b>

## NATIONWIDE/WORLDWIDE

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### **NATIONWIDE / INTERNATIONAL LINKS**

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#### **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](http://www.americantrails.org/Calendar.html)



**TRAIL GUIDES**

- Our 10 Favorite Dog-Friendly Backpacking Trips: <http://tinyurl.com/y7pd6pqt>
- Seven of the Best Trails to Hike, Bike and Run in Raleigh, N.C.: <http://tinyurl.com/ya5gjlgc>
- Get outdoors: New Kansas trails app features 4,100 miles to walk, bike, canoe: <http://tinyurl.com/y7p936wh>
- The 7 national trails of the Pacific Northwest: <http://tinyurl.com/yah9odpy>
- Best walking trails in Tulsa, OK: <http://tinyurl.com/ydavxgvu>
- 9 picturesque hikes less than an hour from Atlanta: <http://tinyurl.com/yb3du9bm>
- 7 Montreal Running Trails You Can Get To Without A Car: <http://tinyurl.com/yd6nowbm>
- Los Angeles's Top 6 Dayhikes: <http://tinyurl.com/y7wq69lu>

**ADVOCACY/VOLUNTEER**

- Four Ways to Celebrate National Trails Day on a Bicycle: <http://tinyurl.com/ybbtth9p>
- Help Build These 10 Hiking Trails of Tomorrow: <http://tinyurl.com/y9kxjm5o>

**STUDIES**

- Evaluating the Economic Contribution of Shared Use Paths in N. Carolina: <http://tinyurl.com/y8xzm8vw>
  - Infographic: <http://tinyurl.com/yce5bvsu>
- Study quantifies economic benefits of bike trails (Mesa County, Arizona): <http://tinyurl.com/ycm4chez>
- Trails and Cycling in Northwest Arkansas: <http://tinyurl.com/yblczf9d>
- The Human Health and Social Benefits of Urban Forests: <http://tinyurl.com/ybqf2can>

**FUNDING**

- BFGoodrich Tires opens 2018 Outstanding Trails Grant program: <http://tinyurl.com/y7hkjglv>
- Congress Passes Trail Inclusive Spending Bill: <http://tinyurl.com/ya57fnsb>
- National Forest Foundation awards (deadlines Jan 17, June 26): <http://tinyurl.com/px7y6ke>

**TRAILS-RELATED NEWSLETTERS**

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

**OTHER NATIONAL LINKS:**

- The Value of an Active Trapper: Maintaining Trails, Unplugging Culverts, Saving Tax Dollars: <http://www.truthaboutfur.com/blog/value-of-an-active-trapper/>
- Pilot program would allow e-bikes on 5 popular trails in Seattle: <http://tinyurl.com/y9ly9nme>
- Trail Managers Toolbox: [https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page\\_id=23419](https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=23419)
- As It Was: Enthusiasts Track Emigrant Trails in Five States: <http://tinyurl.com/y8cuyn3m>
- Nation's only state trails caucus prompts Ohio trails website (photos): <http://tinyurl.com/y9ujg72g>

- Esri Announces 2018 Storytelling with Maps Contest (deadline May 7): <http://tinyurl.com/ycyflxwz>
- Over a Beer: The Trails Don't Belong to You...(and they don't belong to me, either): <http://tinyurl.com/y73p6n3w>
- 30 Miles for 30 Years Challenge: <http://tinyurl.com/ybacubru>
- Zinke Signs Secretarial Orders to Increase Recreational Opportunities on Public Lands and Waters: <http://tinyurl.com/yat86hfe>
- We'd All Be Bushwhacking Without Trail Crews: <http://tinyurl.com/y9xaa65r>

#### **SLIGHTLY OFF-TRAIL**

- 10 hiking apps and gadgets for hitting the trail this spring: <http://tinyurl.com/yb39ajtz>
- Yosemite National Park Completes New 6-Lane Scenic Driving Trail: <http://tinyurl.com/yd3nf7as>
- 10 Frivolous Items to Bring Backpacking that are Worth the Weight: <http://tinyurl.com/yd9fqmsz>
- The Pursuit of Endurance (book): <http://tinyurl.com/y7fjcy2b>
- What to Do When a Trail Has No Campsites? Get a Room.: <http://tinyurl.com/yb976art>
- So You Pooped on the Trail. What Now?: <http://tinyurl.com/yarly43y>

#### **INTERNATIONAL LINKS:**

- Take a walk through history with new Singapore Trails book: <http://tinyurl.com/y8mvd6yz>
- Our 12 favorite cycling trails through Israel: <http://tinyurl.com/y9m6uvna>
- How mountain biking is saving tiny towns around the world: <http://tinyurl.com/y8x7r4xl>

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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](mailto: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.