

INTERIOR TRAILS QUARTERLY

Dedicated to the preservation and maintenance of trails in interior Alaska

December 2018

INTERIORWIDE

TRAIL REROUTE AROUND FORT KNOX GOLD MINE COMPLETED

A reroute of trails around the Fort Knox gold mine has been finished, according to Anna Atchison, external affairs manager for the mine.

The reroute was done to accommodate expansion of the mine. 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.

Chuck Johnson, of Cleary Summit, checked the reroute out recently. He said the powerline trail, which had previously been used to by trail users in the area, is being gated.



“The trail is great, just needs snow now,” Johnson wrote in a November 25 email. “Not enough up here on Cleary Summit for riding or skiing.”

The trail was officially finished November 21, when all the paperwork with the state was signed off, Atchison said. The design stayed the same from what was submitted after the project’s public comment period, Atchison said. The trail includes grade reversals to control water erosion, a feature requested by trail users who commented on the project.

Now that the trail is finished, it is the responsibility of the state of Alaska. However, Atchison said the mine plans to monitor it for a couple of years and would be willing to correct any problems regarding design and construction.

“We will inspect the trail after break up to make sure the storm water is diverting correctly,” she said.

Also, Atchison said the mine plans to make a monetary donation to a nonprofit group that can maintain the trail in the future. That group has not yet been selected.

The Fairbanks Daily News-Miner reported on the project in a July story about trail projects around the Interior: <http://tinyurl.com/ycgd2zmx>

(Photo of portion of rerouted trail by Chuck Johnson.)

SUPPORT SOUGHT FOR BETTER ACCESS TO PARK WITH TRAILS

The Interior Alaska Land Trust is trying to get people to comment in support of a pedestrian tunnel under Chena Pump Road to allow better access to the Chinook Conservation Park (formerly known as the Chena Greenbelt), a public conservation park the group is working on. Below is a post that was on the group's Facebook page:

The FMATS long-range plan is currently open for public review and we need your help!

We have plans underway to develop a public conservation park on the strip of land alongside Chena Pump Road between Chena Ridge and Old Chena Ridge Roads. We envision trails, bridges, and access to the newly-restored historic Cripple Creek channel. Check out the summer and winter trail maps for both pedestrian and motorized users at <https://interioraklandtrust.org/>

We expect this park to be popular, however we're currently facing the issue of safe access. There is no good way for pedestrians to cross Chena Pump road, including students attending Woodriver Elementary school. After a conversation with the executive director of the Fairbanks Metropolitan Area Transportation System (FMATS), the ball is beginning to roll on a pedestrian tunnel underneath Chena Pump Road. What this project needs now is public support. FMATS link for public comment: <http://maps.kittelson.com/FMATS2045>

You can support this project by clicking the link above, zooming in to Chena Pump Road, commenting on the project, and liking the comments of others. To comment, click on the road (red). A blue box will pop up with a link for "Add a comment."

CABIN REMOVED, BRIDGE BUILT ALONG EL DORADO CREEK TRAIL

An iconic, crumbling cabin along the El Dorado Creek Trail was recently removed.

The cabin, which was about three miles along the trail north of Goldstream Road, was reportedly removed by a miner working in the area. It had sat on land owned by the federal Bureau of Land Management. The cabin was not usable as a safe shelter.

"We have been looking in to this," John Haddix of BLM wrote in a recent email. "As I understand the issue at this time a local miner decided to remove the cabin. He has told us that his father built the cabin and that he has deeds to the cabin that he can provide. We are waiting on him to provide the deeds. The property is in the process of being conveyed to the state, and the miner stated that he was concerned that it would not be conveyed with the cabin on it."

Trail users also report that the miner has graded and brushed out the trail from the cabin site northeast to the Alaska Pipeline corridor. The trail/mining road had become eroded in the past several years, and overhanging brush had started to partially block portions of the trail.

Also, trail users report that a bridge has been built across a creek along the trail within a



half-mile north of Goldstream Road. No reports yet on who built and installed the bridge. Time will tell whether it can withstand the large overflow ice that sometimes builds up there.

(Photo of cabin in April 2018 by Corrine Leistikow)

INTERIORWIDE LINKS

- Off-road vehicle group looking for pics from White Mountains NRA:
<http://tinyurl.com/y744zbuh>
- Alaska sues feds over Fortymile forks in latest 'submerged lands' lawsuit:
<http://tinyurl.com/yd4zm3q5>

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

SUPPORT PARKS AS PART OF YOUR CHRISTMAS SHOPPING

The holiday shopping season is here. You can use it to encourage people to get outside AND support some of our greatest recreational assets. Buy a pass for yourself or someone else.

- Alaska State Parks annual pass: Support state parks during a time of tight state budgets. Permits are \$50 and, of course, your parking is then paid for when you park at a state parks trailhead that requires a fee. Passes are good for the calendar year. Annual boat launch passes are also available for \$100: <https://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/passes>
- National Park Service annual passes: The park service offers general passes for \$80. It also has a variety of other discounted or free passes for seniors, fourth-graders, people with disabilities, some volunteers, and members of the military:
<https://www.nps.gov/planyourvisit/passess.htm>

GROUPS THAT JOIN HIKING SOCIETY CAN APPLY FOR MICRO-GRANTS

Do you have a trail maintenance backlog? Do you need help funding small trail projects? If so, Join American Hiking Society's Alliance Organization today (<http://tinyurl.com/ybn8p6s2>). Once you join as a new member or renew your Alliance membership, you will qualify to apply for a micro-grant up to \$3,000 from the National Trail Fund. The application process opens in January. More information can be found about the program here: <https://americanhiking.org/national-trails-fund/>



STUDENT CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION SEEKS TEAM MEMBERS

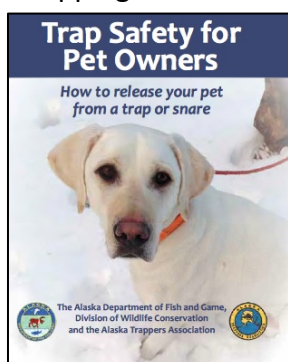
The Student Conservation Association (SCA) is seeking applicants for its 2019 AK Corps Teams, which work with multiple state and federal partners throughout Alaska. Work projects will be a mix of trail construction and maintenance, invasive species removal and fuels reduction for wildfire management. Project schedules will vary throughout the summer depending on partners needs. Members can expect to use basic hand tools, power tools, and chainsaws. Teams consist of 5 members and 31 leaders. 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)

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.

STATEWIDE LINKS

- NFF, REI And SCA Partner To Preserve History And Improve Recreation On The Iditarod National Historic Trail: <http://tinyurl.com/y6uz33cj>
- Opinion: Park Service should take serious look at making Denali’s winter shelters public: <http://tinyurl.com/ybqfq6x7>

- The best biking trail in every state (includes Anchorage's Kincaid Park): <http://tinyurl.com/ycm8krhh>

SOUTHCENTRAL LINKS

- In the Valley, a farm-to-trail link increases recreational opportunities: <http://tinyurl.com/y8yc9cyg>
- Nordic Skiing Association of Anchorage's Interactive Ski Trail Map: <http://tinyurl.com/y8duba7c>
- State to keep Bird to Gird trail open this winter after public ignores closures: <http://tinyurl.com/y7sdnwaa>

SOUTHEAST LINKS

- Juneau hiker finishes country's three major trails: <http://tinyurl.com/ydfnqshy>
- Trail Mix celebrates 25 years of work: <http://tinyurl.com/y78twbbp>
- Sitka Trail Works seeks new board member: <http://tinyurl.com/ybn7kcf3>

SLIGHTLY OFF-TRAIL

- Udder surprise: Loose cow startles Anchorage cyclists: <http://tinyurl.com/y9rg27ff>
- Proposed land deal could benefit JBER, ER-Chugiak Parks and Rec: <http://tinyurl.com/yazax9sg>
- If you venture to places where trappers may work, keep your dog close: <http://tinyurl.com/ybk4dwbx>
- Adventure means trying something new: <http://tinyurl.com/y95gavh3>
- Walker releases funds to advance Ambler Road project: <http://tinyurl.com/ycr4tgt6>
- 2018-2021 STIP Amendment 2 available for comment until Dec 17: <http://notice.alaska.gov/192125>
- Don't let (Southcentral) Alaska's out-of-whack weather bring you down: <http://tinyurl.com/yakmupks>
- Alaska Roadless Rule Citizen Advisory Committee submits final report: <http://tinyurl.com/y9h4odny>
- Outdoor Explorer radio show:
 - A conversation with Roman Dial: <http://tinyurl.com/y8lv6rak>
 - Crossing the Alaska Range: <http://tinyurl.com/yd2wnvvnv>

NATIONWIDE/WORLDWIDE

SENATORS INTRODUCE REC TRAILS PROGRAM FULL FUNDING ACT

The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) has aided trail construction and maintenance projects and programs nationwide since 1991. Created through landmark surface transportation legislation, RTP reflected Congressional belief that federal gas taxes paid on motor fuel used in

motorized non-highway recreational activities should be used to benefit those paying the tax as well as other users of recreational trails.

Tens of millions of hikers and bikers, equestrians and ATVers, snowmobilers and skiers, canoeists and others now enjoy better outdoor experiences because of this action. And RTP's accomplishments unite the efforts in every state of federal agencies, state and local governments, volunteers and recreation businesses.

Now, the bipartisan efforts of four United States senators promise to dramatically increase the benefits of RTP's proven formula. U.S. Senators Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Jim Risch (R-ID), Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH) and Richard Burr (R-NC) recently introduced S. 3604—the RTP Full Funding Act of 2018—to require a study to estimate the total amount of taxes collected on non-highway recreational fuel, improve reporting on expenditures from the RTP, and streamline RTP funding distribution to the states by reducing unnecessary paperwork.

Read more: <https://nhsa.com/senators-introduce-rtp-full-funding-act/>

(From New Hampshire Snowmobile Association website)

FIGHT FOR ONE OF LARGEST U.S. TRAIL FUNDS CONTINUES

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) has expired, so, what is next?

Our fight is definitely not over! In the coming weeks, the LWCF Coalition will be working with our partners across the country and champions on Capitol Hill to secure the future of LWCF on behalf of the places we love and all of the recreation and economic benefits it brings to the American people. Don't forget, we have a \$887 billion recreation economy that relies on access to our outdoors!

With lots of conversations about the future of the program, here is a quick update on the importance of authorization with full dedicated funding, where LWCF currently stands, and how you can get involved.

Read more: <https://www.lwcfcoalition.com/blog/2018/11/1/lwcf-expired-whats-next>

(From LWCF Coalition website)

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

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

CONTESTS

- National and International Trails Awards (nomination deadline Dec 3):
<http://tinyurl.com/y7rbfw7g>
- National Recreational Trail photo contest (deadline Dec 15): <http://tinyurl.com/y72do9vl>

TRAIL GUIDES

- Mountain bike trails near Cleveland: 5 great MTB trails: <http://tinyurl.com/y9b5dyrp>
- The 10 Best Hikes In Asheville: <http://tinyurl.com/y9yotmt9>

VOLUNTEERING, ADVOCACY

- Help restore the Land and Water Conservation Fund: <http://tinyurl.com/ycnd7vpc>
- American Hiking Society post-election sign-on letter: <http://tinyurl.com/ydx6xcuu>
- 2019 Alternative (Spring) Break by American Hiking Society: <http://tinyurl.com/y7kvwvzg>

FUNDING

- Doppelt Family Trail Development Fund (applications open Dec 1): <http://tinyurl.com/yaq7szxe>
- National Forest Foundation Matching Awards Program (deadline Jan 23): <http://tinyurl.com/px7y6ke>
- People for Bikes grant application process opens Dec 10: www.peopleforbikes.org/pages/apply-now
- IMBA Trail Accelerator Grants (deadline Jan 30): <http://tinyurl.com/y78jnrw7>

STUDIES

- Not Exercising Worse for Your Health Than Smoking: <http://tinyurl.com/y7o2z4lf>
- Study finds improving bike, pedestrian infrastructure cuts driving, CO2 emissions: <http://tinyurl.com/ycpfcjsc>

OTHER NATIONAL LINKS:

- A Backcountry Skier Shares Trails With Grizzly Bears in Yellowstone: <http://tinyurl.com/y7zoh6a9>
- Celebrating 50 Years Of National Trails: <http://tinyurl.com/ydf2m4t6>
- A Day in the Life of a Mountain-Bike Trail Builder: <http://tinyurl.com/yd2mn35n>
- A Veteran's journey of discovery on the Arizona Trail: <http://tinyurl.com/ycwwx762>
- The Psychology and Science Behind How Hiking Trails Are Created: <http://tinyurl.com/yarvxt2o>
- Ride And Groom: Snowmobile Partnerships With States And Clubs: <http://tinyurl.com/y9w4zofl>
- Apply to Be an American Hiking Society NextGen Trail Leader (deadline to apply is Dec 3): <http://tinyurl.com/y925jvh8>

INTERNATIONAL LINKS:

- 5 Hong Kong Running Trails Under 5km: <http://tinyurl.com/yar6o82e>

SLIGHTLY OFF-TRAIL

- Free Solo trailer – free solo climb of El Capitan (2:30 video): <http://tinyurl.com/ydccetoj>
 - More Than 5,600 Events for Walk to School Day 2018: <http://www.walkbiketoschool.org/>
 - The Healthiest People in the World Don't Go to the Gym: <http://tinyurl.com/y8eogg7u>
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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. 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.