

ACTION UPDATE

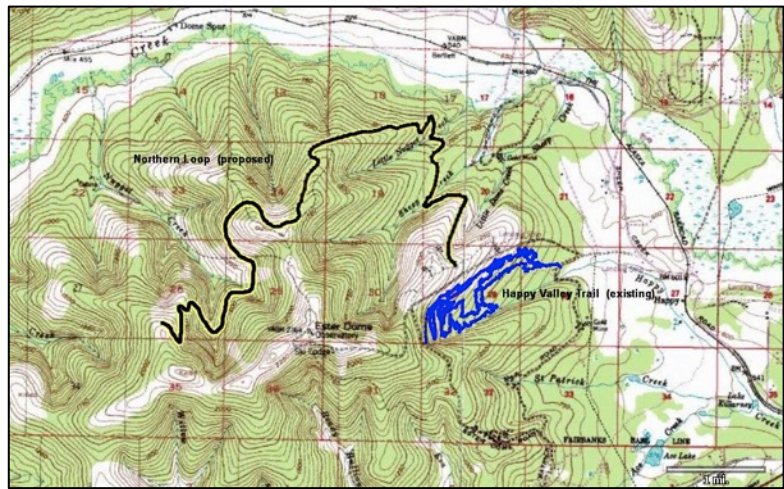
July 2018

INTERIORWIDE

COMMENTS SOUGHT ON TRAIL PLANNED FOR ESTER DOME

Comments are due on a new motorized multi-use trail being planned on the north side of Ester Dome.

The new year-round trail would connect the Equinox Trail, where it parallels Ester Dome Road on its north side, to the Nugget Creek Trail near the top of Ester Dome. This trail would allow a route to the top of Ester Dome that avoids using Ester Dome Road. It would be entirely on state land.



However, construction of the trail is not guaranteed. An application for a public access

easement has been filed with the Department of Natural Resources. That application must first be approved by the DNR, which is accepting public comments. The deadline for comment is July 16. To comment see: <http://notice.alaska.gov/190401>

Geoff Orth, a local trail consultant and advocate, is heading up the project and is working with the Fairbanks Cycle Club. Orth also led the effort to create the Ester Dome/Happy Valley Singletrack Trails. Those trails were built for non-motorized use, but Orth says this route calls for a motorized multi-use trail because of a lack of year-round trail access to the top of Ester Dome on that side of the dome.

If the easement application is approved, construction of the trail would start sometime in 2019 and would probably take 2-3 years, according to Orth.

(Graphic: Black line shows proposed trail. Blue lines show Ester Dome/Happy Valley Singletrack Trails.)

TRAIL, CABIN CLOSURES PLANNED FOR STATE PROJECTS

It's going to be a busy summer season for recreational access upgrades in the Chena River and Lower Chatanika state parks recreation areas and several closures are planned.

Trailhead upgrades are planned in the Chena River State Recreation Area at the Compeau, Mastodon, and Upper Chena Dome trailheads. This work will improve hunter access, increase parking, and add restrooms. State Parks is also making a variety of upgrades at the

Olnes Pond and Whitefish campgrounds at the Lower Chatanika State Recreation Area – adding culverts, re-grading the access road, and other maintenance.

The Upper Chena Dome Trailhead, Angel Creek Hillside Trail, and Upper and Lower Angel Creek public use cabins will close July 5 and reopen July 28. The closures are necessary because the Upper Chena Dome trailhead is the only access point and safe parking area for the Angel Creek Hillside Trail and cabins.

The Compeau Trailhead will close July 28 and reopen on August 12. However, the Compeau Trail will remain open and accessible from Twin Bears Camp at Mile 30 of the Chena Hot Springs Road. The public can obtain current closure information by calling the Alaska State Parks Northern Region office at 451-2695.

Construction at the Lower Chatanika State Recreation Area was planned to begin on June 11. The Olnes Pond campground and day-use area at Mile 10.5 of Elliott Highway were to close to the public on June 11. The Whitefish campground and day-use area at Mile 11 of the Elliott Highway will remain open during construction at Olnes Pond. Once Olnes Pond reopens, Whitefish will close for construction. Both campgrounds and day-use areas will briefly reopen from June 29 to July 9 to accommodate campers during the July 4th holiday.

The projects are being funded by a federal Pittman-Robertson Act grant at a cost of approximately \$2.4 million. For more information contact Brooks Ludwig, 451-2698, brooks.ludwig@alaska.gov

(From Alaska State Parks press release)

TRAILS NORTH OF FAIRBANKS TO BE REROUTED FOR MINE PROJECT

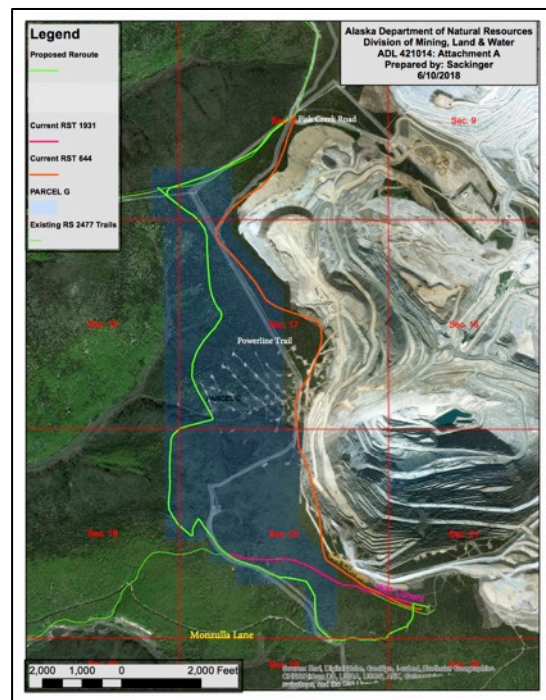
A portion of some trails connecting Gilmore Trail road and Cleary Summit will be rerouted to accommodate expansion of the Fort Knox gold mine. The reroute is expected to take place this summer.

The state Department of Natural Resources recently approved the reroute after a public comment period that ended on May 7.

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.

Recent stories in the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner and the Alaska Journal of Commerce discuss the mine expansion:

- FDNM: Fort Knox expansion to extend mine life to 2030: <http://tinyurl.com/ya25vce9>
- AJC: Interior gold mine gets new life, \$100M expansion: <http://tinyurl.com/y9s77h87>



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

- Agriculture easement established along Equinox trail on Sheep Creek Road: <http://tinyurl.com/ybev85we>
- Angel Creek trailhead, public use cabins closing next month: <http://tinyurl.com/yamwmbnr>
- Around, not across: Fastest in this year's AlaskAcross: <http://tinyurl.com/y8tb9v2p>
- Mount Healy was too gusty for hiking last Friday: <http://tinyurl.com/ydc8fygz>
- A winding trip up Angel Rocks: <http://tinyurl.com/y9qgdahe>
- Fairbanks summer Trails Challenge: <http://www.co.fairbanks.ak.us/pr/Pages/Trails-Program.aspx>

SLIGHTLY OFF-TRAIL

- Camp-made yogurt wins camp cookout contest at Angel Creek cabin: <http://tinyurl.com/y9pr2vot>

STATEWIDE

RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE IN JULY

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>
- Outdoor Rec Trails Board recruiting new members (deadline Aug 1): <http://notice.alaska.gov/189969>
- The governor declared June 2 Alaska Trails Day: <http://tinyurl.com/ycvcotmh>
- 14 Places To Canoe, Kayak In Nat Forests (incl Prince William Sound): <http://tinyurl.com/yag7xpyo>
- 5 of the Coolest Wheelchair-Accessible Trails to Visit at US National Parks (includes Denali National Park trail): <http://tinyurl.com/yb9q5vs5>
- As parks suffer from overuse, time to remember trail etiquette (opinion): <http://tinyurl.com/yboeen2r>

TIS THE SEASON

- Beware the bruins: <http://tinyurl.com/yd85j76p>
- Being bear aware can save your life: <http://tinyurl.com/y77u9ooe>
- Protect yourself: <https://craigmedred.news/2018/06/22/protect-yourself/>
- Hiker encounters large brown bear on Flattop Mountain, underscoring importance of bear awareness: <http://tinyurl.com/y9gxxdhs>
- Bear advice dispute:
 - Afraid of bears? There are far more dangerous things in the Alaska outdoors: <http://tinyurl.com/y8nuh7q4>
 - Bad bear advice might be worse than no advice at all: <http://tinyurl.com/yctc4crj>

SLIGHTLY OFF-TRAIL

- State Set to Release Emerging Sector report at Confluence Sept. 12 – 13: <http://tinyurl.com/ya7y7oe4>
- It's a bluebird day in Alaska and you're at work? Find a way to steal away: <http://tinyurl.com/yqr88be3>
- When the Brooks family ventured to the Brooks Range for a summer adventure, winter reared its head: <http://tinyurl.com/y9qhbv9c>
- Outdoor Explorer radio show:
 - River stories: <http://tinyurl.com/y7nt8o9f>
 - Nature as therapy: <http://tinyurl.com/ydbj9csn>
 - Revisiting minimizing your impact: <http://tinyurl.com/y88jhfnp>

SOUTHCENTRAL LINKS

- Walk on the Wild Side (Southcentral trails): <http://coast-magazine.com/walk-wild-side>
- Anchorage volunteers trim branches along city trail in effort to improve safety: <http://tinyurl.com/y9zyfotj>

- 12 Anchorage-area hikes you can do in about 5 hours or less: <http://tinyurl.com/yc563f46>
- Iditarod Trail Celebrates 40 Years as Designated National Historic Trail: <http://tinyurl.com/y92bdsnt>
- This is Singletrack Advocates (video): <http://tinyurl.com/ya952q6p>
- New app for navigating Mat-Su trails: <http://tinyurl.com/ybq6defu>
- Lake Louise Boat Launch Improvements!: <http://tinyurl.com/ya7vbw6z>
- Hatcher Pass Explorations: <http://tinyurl.com/yctm6abp>
- New Smokey's Track completed in Willow: <http://tinyurl.com/y9suqzlf>
- Sterling Highway reroute to alter trails, recreation sites: <http://tinyurl.com/y8xhhvhp>
- Refuge repairing boat launch, trails, and cabins: <http://tinyurl.com/y88kr9fs>
- Outdoor Explorer radio show: Whittier, gateway to the Prince William Sound: <http://tinyurl.com/y6w4azol>
- 'I'll never forget him': Alaskan husky rescues injured hiker crossing frigid Eagle River along Crow Pass Trail: <http://tinyurl.com/yayzjjwg>

SOUTHEAST LINKS

- Mendenhall Auto Center makes donation to trail improvement club: <http://tinyurl.com/y722eaa6>

NATIONWIDE/WORLDWIDE

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

TRAIL GUIDES

- 8 top trails to hike, bike or paddle in the Cable (Wisconsin) area: <http://tinyurl.com/y8zne398>
- 5 Glacier National Park loop trails: <http://tinyurl.com/ydhq53jx>
- 4 linked trails and 100 miles of biking bliss in western Wisconsin: <http://tinyurl.com/yaemm2yc>
- 10 Beautiful Trails for Hiking and Running: <http://tinyurl.com/yaxotj7q>
- Adirondacks overcrowded: 13 trails where you can find peace and quiet: <http://tinyurl.com/y9omhbt3>
- A guide for walking in, around Manhattan trails: <http://tinyurl.com/y88k6gmp>

FUNDING

- Horseback riding trails grant (application due August 1): <https://www.agha.com/step>
- Gearjunkie & Merrell Donate \$10,000 To Hiking Trails: <http://tinyurl.com/ycdyscju>

TRAILS-RELATED NEWSLETTERS

- For the latest American Trails news publications:
<http://www.americantrails.org/trailtracks/index.html>
- National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council (June): <http://tinyurl.com/yct9guz>
- Conservation Volunteers International Program (June): <http://tinyurl.com/y7uzr449>

OTHER NATIONAL LINKS:

- How to Break Free of the Campground (in national forests): <http://tinyurl.com/yb39v33n>
- 3,954 Miles of Trail Improved on National Trails Day: <http://tinyurl.com/yaragtda>
- Coalition for Recreational Trails, 2018 Annual Achievement Awards:
<http://tinyurl.com/yarafwxl>
- New National Recreation Trails designated for 2018: <http://tinyurl.com/ya8e4br9>
- Trail Etiquette: Who Has The Right Of Way?: <http://tinyurl.com/ych9s8bu>
- American Hiking Society Supports North Country National Scenic Trail Route bill:
<http://tinyurl.com/y7gvmqfu>
- In Southwest Va., Trails Connect Region To Economic Growth: <http://tinyurl.com/yax2jv2j>
- Virtual tour to feature SE Michigan hiking, biking and water trails:
<http://tinyurl.com/yctdwssj>
- 2017-18 Recreational Trails Program Annual Report: <http://tinyurl.com/y7nf7ou9>

INTERNATIONAL LINKS:

- Five beautiful biking trails near Stockholm, Sweden: <http://tinyurl.com/yc87vpvy>
- 5 x Helsinki's best nature jogging trails: <http://tinyurl.com/ybdku225>

SLIGHTLY OFF-TRAIL

- A Guide To Mosquito Repellents, From DEET To ... Gin And Tonic?:
<http://tinyurl.com/yctwat9bc>

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.