

INTERIOR TRAILS NEWSLETTER

Dedicated to the preservation and maintenance of trails in interior Alaska

August 2020

ASSEMBLY VOTES TO PROTECT SOME PEEDE AREA TRAILS

Cam Webb, organizer of the "Keep Peede Trails Public" campaign, sent out this email on July 23.

Great news! The Borough Assembly just voted unanimously to rezone the Peede Tract (the 166-acre parcel at the heart of the Borough's Brock/Repp land) to 'Outdoor Recreation'. This should now prevent sale and development of this parcel.

There's lots more work to do to keep the rest of the land public, but any new action on that is probably some time out.

Thanks for your actions, your support, and for just caring about the fate of the land.

To find out more about this effort see: <https://peedetrails4all.org/>

ALASKA TRAILS HAS TOOL TRAILER READY FOR PROJECTS



ORGANIZE A PROJECT 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).

WATCH FOR BIRD NESTS WHEN WORKING ON TRAILS

Trail work sometimes requires downing trees or clearing shrubs. When doing so make sure not to violate the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, which makes it illegal for anyone to "take" migratory birds, their eggs, feathers, or nests. "Take" includes destroying or damaging active bird nests or eggs. Different areas of the state have different sensitive periods generally occurring between April 15 and July 25. However, if you encounter an active nest at any time leave it in place and protected until young hatch and depart. "Active" is indicated by intact eggs, live chicks, or the presence of an adult on the nest.

For more information and recommended time periods for avoiding vegetation clearing see: <https://tinyurl.com/y9ulmffg>

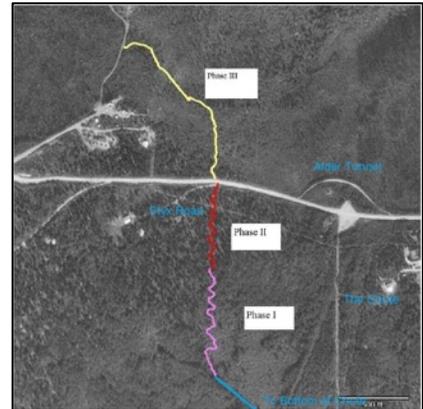
LINKS TO INTERIOR TRAIL INFORMATION

A lot of information about trails in interior Alaska exists, 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)

SEEN RECENTLY ON THE INTERIOR FACEBOOK PAGES

STAN JUSTICE > RUNNING CLUB NORTH

USE A NEW TRAIL July 24: The Section Line Trail has been brushed out - it needs traffic to wear in. For decades RCN tried to get year round access to the chute but it was not to be. FNSB pointed out the section line and after year of effort DNR determined that there is a 66 foot easement along the section line and approved brushing out a trail. Reminds me of the Rolling Stones song - You can't always get what you want....you get what you need. No longer do you have to worry that the property owner will accost you for being on the chute or zipper. RCN only has race day permission to use the trail.

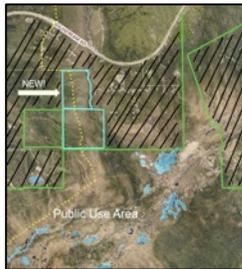


From the intersection of Styx Road and Ester Dome Rd the new trail goes both directions North and South. The South trail drops off the edge of Styx Road and the North trail starts on the original Equinox but goes straight along the section line.

Watch for trip hazards as it is a rough trail. Please don't cut the switchbacks. Enjoy!

It's worth noting that the affected property owners have been notified. They don't necessarily like it, but DNR has made a determination that a section line easement that permits public access exists there. Please respect private property and stay on the trail.

INTERIOR ALASKA LAND TRUST



July 11: We're excited to have more land conserved thanks to Sara Tabbert and Brandon McGrath-Bernhard! They contacted us about a conservation easement on their southern 40 acres back in 2012, and reached out again early last year about conserving the western 25 acres of their property above it. This is a beautiful parcel, and contains the Eldorado Creek Trail, which continues south into the Goldstream Public Use Area!

To learn more about conservation easements, visit our website:

<https://interioraklandtrust.org/conservation-options/>

FAIRBANKS AREA HIKING CLUB FAN PAGE

VOLUNTEER July 21: The still relatively new Interior Alaska Trails and Parks Foundation is starting to partner with BLM on trail projects. The one they've decided to start with this summer is to brush the Table Top Mountain trail in the White Mountains, off Nome Creek Road up the Steese.

They are proposing the weekend of **August 21-23** as the project dates. It would involve camping a couple of nights, some training on the tools, and then going to town on the trail.

An IATPF trailer with hand tools will be on-site, and BLM will provide gas brushcutters and PPE to use on the project. A BLM field training for operators on equipment safety and use will happen on that Friday (8/21).

They need about six volunteers. If you're willing to help, please contact Geoff Orth at gcorth@straydogs.us or (907) 479-0014.



July 16: Here is a short fun hike I found. Only a couple of miles but ends at some funny looking tors. Drive past the main Wickersham Dome trailhead about a mile and take the old road. Find the trail on the N side of the creek where it diagonals up steep road cut.

Many are aware of the similar trail that leaves from the second creek old road and gets to a ridge that can be followed to the summit of Wickersham Dome.

FAIRBANKS AREA SURFACE TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

COMMENT (Some projects involve urban trails, especially the Airport West Bicycle & Pedestrian Facility.)

July 18: 🗣️ Opportunity for public comment!

💰 The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is the tool we use to plan/prioritize projects & track our spending. The 2019-2023 TIP is being amended & we need your input!

🌐 Please head to www.fastplanning.us/TIP3, read the summary, analyze options A & B, & leave your comments in the comment box provided.

📅 The **comment period will close on August 15th.**

NORDIC SKI CLUB OF FAIRBANKS

July 21: Parks and Rec reopened the Birch Hill Warming Hut earlier this week. It is sanitized twice a day every day. Please practice social mitigation and follow all other procedures that are posted in the Warming Hut.

Construction on the Birch Hill Recreation Area entrance road has begun so expect roundabout blockage, one lane traffic, and traffic control flaggers. Construction will also soon begin on the bypass exit for the new/far parking lot around the old garage and is expected to last until August 14.

Birch Hill staff is working on a new patch of topsoil to groom, fertilize, and grow grass. The patch is in front of the Timing Building. Please avoid this area.

INTERIORWIDE LINKS

- Misadventures on our Dawn to Dusk Summer Trails Challenge: <https://tinyurl.com/y7cprqt2>
- Cutting My Teeth on Sawtooth Mountain: <https://tinyurl.com/y7lk9sgb>
- Building a trail to unclimbed rocks near Birch Lake: <https://tinyurl.com/y59uk8fp>
- Biking the Back Way to Hutlinana Hot Springs (from Sept 2019): <https://tinyurl.com/y5jjozp2>
- Fairbanks Borough gets federal grant to update road and trails plans: <https://tinyurl.com/yxjudxsm>
- Fairbanks Summer Trails Challenges **ends Sept 30**: <https://tinyurl.com/y5j4ql4y>
- Alpine Paradise Off the Richardson Highway: <https://tinyurl.com/y6f2hyta>

SLIGHTLY OFF-TRAIL

- AlaskAcross 2020: the last 'race' standing: <https://tinyurl.com/y74vpb2g>
- Far Mountain Traverse: <https://tinyurl.com/yy89qtof>

STATEWIDE

FORMER GOV KNOWLES ADVOCATES FOR ALASKA LONG TRAIL

Former Alaska Governor Tony Knowles has written a great editorial advocating for the Alaska Long Trail, an Alaska Trails project.

You can read the editorial in the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner (<https://tinyurl.com/y6mbww9w>) or the Anchorage Daily News (<https://tinyurl.com/y2cqmcu8>). You can also read about the project on our website: www.alaska-trails.org/the-alaska-long-trail.

The Alaska Long Trail is a different concept than the Trans-Alaska Trail (<http://aktrail.org/>), which would turn the gravel pad of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline into a long trail from Valdez to Deadhorse. The concept of the Alaska Long Trail currently runs between Seward and Fairbanks. While different, the two concepts are not necessarily mutually exclusive. If both are completed, they could meet in Fairbanks, providing for more routing options.



SEEN RECENTLY ON THE STATEWIDE FACEBOOK PAGES

ALASKA STATE PARKS

ATTEND July 31: ****Training schedule UPDATE for Recreational Trails Program****

The Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation is hosting a training opportunity for the Alaska Recreational Trails Program!

The training is offered to Alaska RTP grantees to learn how to 'Mitigate High Risk' for awarded projects in accordance with Code of Federal Regulation, 2 CFR 200. This training is intended for current and prior Alaska grantees who are familiar with the Recreational Trails Program, but all who are interested are welcome to attend!

****The training that was originally scheduled for July 28 is rescheduled for August 13, 2020. Details at: <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/grants/trails.htm>**

Photo credit: Lauren Wells, K'esugi Ridge



MORE DETAILED STATEWIDE TRAIL NEWS IN ALASKA TRAILS NEWSLETTER



Most of the news in the Interior Trails Newsletter is also included in the monthly Alaska Trails newsletter, a statewide newsletter put out by the group Alaska Trails. The Alaska Trails newsletter also has news from other regions of Alaska, including Southcentral and Southeast. If you are interested in getting the Alaska Trails newsletter, which is also free, send an email to office.alaskatrails@gmail.com. Please include "Request Alaska Trails newsletter" in the subject line. Eric Troyer, editor and publisher of the ITN, is also the editor of the Alaska Trails newsletter.

STATEWIDE LINKS

- Rex Trail opens up to larger vehicles: <https://tinyurl.com/y6stuppy>

SLIGHTLY OFF-TRAIL

- **ENTER** Alaska State Parks 50th Anniversary Photo Contest (run **monthly**): <https://tinyurl.com/qnssp93>
- June Featured Big Wins for Alaska Outdoors: <https://tinyurl.com/yb9h9n9z>
- Granite tors evidence of ice-free Alaska: <https://tinyurl.com/ycoul3ou>
- 2020 Alaska Mountain Wilderness Classic (Luc Mehl): <https://tinyurl.com/y2zfs9au>
- Plan E: Nabesna Road Bike and Hike: <https://tinyurl.com/y226nhux>
- 'Into the Wild' bus likely lands a home at Fairbanks museum: <https://tinyurl.com/y2d9szfr>
- Siberia wildfire smoke could remain over Alaska for weeks: <https://tinyurl.com/yxgv732l>
- Denali Park officially opens with a few changes: <https://tinyurl.com/y5977yc7>

NATIONWIDE/WORLDWIDE

CONGRESS PASSES BIPARTISAN GREAT AMERICAN OUTDOORS ACT

In July, the House of Representatives passed the Great American Outdoors Act, a bill that would authorize billions in funding for two major park-related needs, the National Park Service deferred maintenance backlog and the Land and Water Conservation Fund. It now heads to the White House, where President Trump is expected to sign the bill into law.

"This bill is a conservationist's dream," said National Parks Conservation Association President and CEO Theresa Pierno.

The legislation includes components from two previous bills that NPCA has strongly supported, the Restore Our Parks Act and the Land and Water Conservation Fund Permanent Funding Act.

Excerpted from a NPCA blog post. See the rest of the post here: <https://tinyurl.com/y4fdctjk>

RTP AWARD SUBMISSION DEADLINE EXTENDED TO AUGUST 15

SUBMIT The Coalition for Recreational Trails (CRT) sponsors the Tom Petri Annual Achievement Awards as part of the ongoing effort to build awareness and appreciation of the highly successful Recreational Trails Program. Outstanding projects, State trail programs, and State RTP advisory committees funded by this program are honored at the awards ceremony.

The deadline for submitting your projects has been **extended to August 15, 2020** in order to accommodate the COVID-19 related delays our nominating agencies, organizations, and individuals are facing. This annual award is traditionally presented at an in-person awards ceremony on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. For 2020, the award will be announced and celebrated during an online "virtual" ceremony later this fall. Honorees will be invited to participate in the next "live" event, anticipated in June 2021.

For more information on CRT and the awards program visit www.rectrails.org.

From American Trails email

NATIONWIDE / INTERNATIONAL LINKS

TRAILS AND THE PANDEMIC

- Masks And The Outdoor Exerciser: Advice For Runners, Bikers, Walkers, Hikers: <https://tinyurl.com/y3r8vfaz>
- Recreate Responsibly publicity toolkit: <https://tinyurl.com/ya25g2fe>

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 "Trail Tracks": www.americantrails.org/communications/newsletter

VOLUNTEER

- American Hiking Society's Volunteer Vacations: <http://tinyurl.com/ydh95kp8>
- American Trails Volunteer Portal: www.americantrails.org/connect/volunteer
- ConservationVIP Community News (mid-summer 2020): <https://tinyurl.com/y5u7e63f>

FUNDING

- Polaris T.R.A.I.L.S. grants (ATV trail projects; due March 1, **Sept 1**): <http://tinyurl.com/zcz8u7a>
- Check Out NOHVCC's Grant Opportunities Webpage: <http://tinyurl.com/y6zvxfns>

GUIDES

- Grab a Buddy and Hit One of These Mountain Bike Trails Near Boston: <https://tinyurl.com/y8mdyxwk>
- 13 Incredible Hiking Trails in California: <https://tinyurl.com/y5po6x2z>
- 9 Best Hiking Trails Near NYC: <https://tinyurl.com/y4wv3v>

OTHER NATIONAL LINKS:

- The "Bearded Jeeper" shares video of clean up event: <https://tinyurl.com/ybdvtgpp>
- Rails-to-Trails Conservancy 2019 Impact Report: <https://tinyurl.com/yan6vbql>
- TRAILS Project Earns the 2020 Esri SAG Award: <https://tinyurl.com/yax3aaey>
- Coronavirus pandemic gives new momentum to bike rides, local trails: <https://tinyurl.com/y59hwzbn>
- The art of crosscut: Keeping trails safe and accessible one log at a time: <https://tinyurl.com/yyojpzpx>

INTERNATIONAL

- Spain's new 'Lord of the Rings'-inspired hiking trail is epic: <https://tinyurl.com/y9bruo38>
- 10 of the UK's best family cycling trails: readers' travel tips: <https://tinyurl.com/yypbx9zg>

SLIGHTLY OFF-TRAIL

- This Camping Season, Make Sure Your Firewood Is Artisanal Firewood: <https://tinyurl.com/yadfncup>
- Five Things I Wish I Knew Before My First Outdoor Adventure With Kids: <https://tinyurl.com/yxwvemd>

Interior Trails Newsletter is a free monthly email newsletter 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, from which this newsletter is excerpted.

DISCLAIMER: Interior Trails Newsletter is not a product 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.