

INTERIOR TRAILS NEWSLETTER

Dedicated to the preservation and maintenance of trails in interior Alaska

DEC 2023

STATE PARK PASS PRICES TO GO UP, 2024 PASSES AVAILABLE NOW

Alaska State Parks annual parking passes can be purchased beginning Nov. 15, and are good to the end of 2023 and throughout 2024. A price increase for the 2024 calendar year will go into effect on Jan. 1, 2024.

A Division of Parks & Outdoor Recreation (DPOR) Director's Order beginning in January includes moderate fee increases to the annual parking pass, day-use parking, permits and some State Parks cabin throughout the state. The additional revenue will go to the division's budget to help maintain Alaska State Parks facilities and support outdoor recreation in Alaska.

"Since prices go up at the beginning of the new year, we expect to sell a lot of 2024 passes prior to that – so don't wait to get your pass," warned Director Ricky Gease of the Division of Parks & Outdoor Recreation. "When you consider how many outdoor experiences you can squeeze into an entire year, the annual Alaska State Parks pass is quite a deal. It's also a great holiday gift!"



2024 Annual Parking Passes can be purchased for \$60 until Dec. 31, 2023, at:

- <https://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/passes>
- DNR Public Information Centers in Anchorage and Fairbanks
- Retailers throughout the state (including REI in Anchorage, one of the most popular places to get the pass) by Nov. 30

On Jan. 1, 2024, the cost of the pass will change to \$75. The 2024 passes have been honored since November 15 at all DPOR-managed parking areas. Parking areas at Pillars Boat Launch, Arctic Valley, Eagle Rock Boat Launch and Eagle River Nature Center are not covered by the parking pass and fees must be paid directly to the managing organization.

The 2024 Boat Launch passes will also be available on Nov. 15, priced at \$150 each. Disabled veterans with appropriate documents can obtain a Disabled Veteran Camping Pass, good for five years, at no charge.

Annual passes make great holiday gifts! For information on group discounts for purchasing a large amount (25 or more), contact Wendy Sailors at 907-269-8738 or wendy.sailors@alaska.gov

From a Division of Parks & Outdoor Recreation press release

INTERIOR TRAILS AND PARK FOUNDATION NOW OFFERING GRANTS

APPLY The Interior Alaska Trails and Parks Foundation is now offering grants up to \$10,000 for trail and/or park projects in Interior Alaska! Deadline is March 30.

Previous IATPF funded projects have included trailhead kiosks and improvements, supporting volunteer trail projects, brushing the Alaska Dog Mushing Association race trails, and organizing volunteer crews for trail projects.

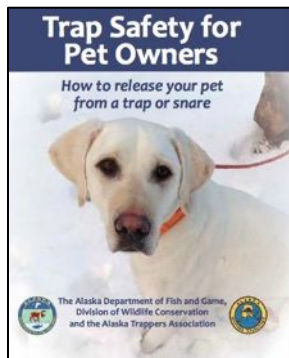
LINKS TO INTERIOR TRAIL INFORMATION

- List of apps that have many interior Alaska trails: www.interioralaskatrails.org/resources/web-sites/
- Interior Alaska Trails (a collection of trail-related resources): www.interioralaskatrails.org/resources/. (If you find any broken links or other problems please send an email to fbxtrails@gmail.com)

Project proposals will need to meet a number of criteria. [Find out more here: https://www.iatpfoundation.org/project-grants](https://www.iatpfoundation.org/project-grants)

RESOURCES HELP REDUCE PET/TRAPPING CONFLICTS

Trapping season opens November 1, 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),.

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.

ACTION NEEDED TO HELP SLOW CLIMATE CHANGE

TAKE ACTION Climate changes affects everyone, especially winter sports enthusiasts like snowmachiners, mushers, cross-country skiers, and fatbikers.

A warming climate can mean shorter winter seasons, and more extreme events like snow droughts and rain-on-snow events. These will just get worse unless we slow climate change, which means we need to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions.

But can the actions of one or two people make a difference? They sure can. Especially if more people are doing the same. [Here are two things you can do right now to help make a difference.](#)

Join “Fix My Funds” <https://fixmyfunds.org/>

FixMyFunds

Fix My Funds is a group of climate and financial experts working to help you take control of your investment power and shift the economy toward a sustainable future. This group regularly has sign-on letters and petitions urging investment businesses to make more sustainable choices.

Take a personal action

Turn down the thermostat. Heck, you already know how to deal with the cold when you're outside. Do the same when you're inside! Turn down the heat in your house and put on another layer or two. Turning down the heat helps reduce the amount of fossil fuels we are using. And maybe it'll make you be able to handle those outside winter temps just a little better!



Climate change may seem like an overwhelming problem, but we humans created it one step at a time, and we can solve it that way, too. Let’s do what we can to ensure that future winters still have usable snow for us and for our children, grandchildren, and beyond.

SEEN RECENTLY ON INTERIOR FACEBOOK PAGES

FAIRBANKS TRAIL AND WATERWAY USERS

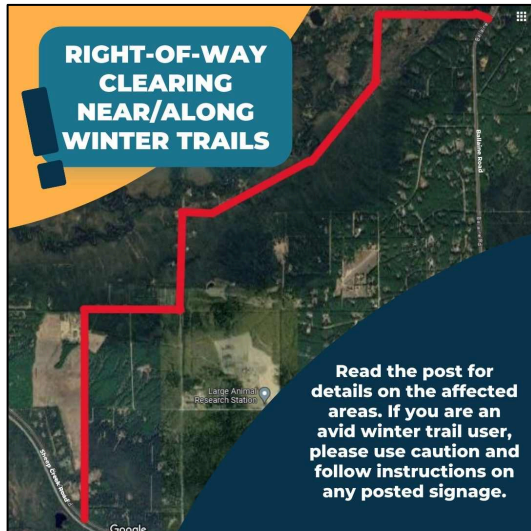
Nov 12: The latest destination marketing video by Explore Fairbanks has many images of land and water trails. It's good to see. Trails are a huge part of the Interior Alaska experience. It's good to remind our local leaders of that when dealing with funding and other trail issues.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gq8_pRgrzqY



GOLDEN VALLEY ELECTRIC ASSN.

November 1: ATTENTION WINTER TRAIL USERS: GVEA is performing right-of-way clearing in areas



that include extensive winter trail traffic in the Goldstream Valley. Winter trail use will be temporarily effected by crews using equipment in these areas. Please pay close attention to any posted signage and follow instructions to keep yourself, your furry companions and our crews safe.

- Crews will work north from Gold Hill Road toward Sheep Creek Road, beginning along Lullabelle Lane.
- They will continue north of Sheep Creek Road along Hay Way Road.
- Crews will go north of Hay Way Road until they reach Lawlor Road.
- After working along Lawlor Road, they will begin working north along Miller Hill Road, turning east along Railroad Drive and working in a northeast direction until

they reach Ballaine Road.

Among other trails, the Tanana Valley Railroad Trail (west) and Goldstream Winter Cycling Trail will be covered in this clearing section.

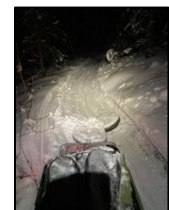
If you have any questions about right of way clearing, please call the Operations department at (907) 452-1151 ext. 5870.

FAIRBANKS CYCLE CLUB

Nov 26: Goldstream Sports is now grooming the Ester Dome Singletrack trails!

Shared from Goldstream Sports

Nov 25: Ever thought about fat biking the EDS? We are grooming it. Check it out. The red outer loop and the Henderson drop have had multiple passes with the groomer.



ALASKA DOG MUSHERS ASSOCIATION



November 7: Reminder that trapping season started Nov 1. Please be aware on the trails and keep your dogs safe. We will be hosting an educational evening with the Alaska Trappers Association on Thursday December 14 at 7pm on how we can all safely Share the Trails and how to release traps if your animal is caught. We do ask that all dogs on the trail system and property be leashed for their safety and that of mushers, sled dogs, and other users.

<https://tinyurl.com/2fxbpcau>

NORDIC SKI CLUB OF FAIRBANKS

Nov 25: The Two Rivers Ski Trails have a new map. Head out there for a ski on some groomed trails. Nicely behaved dogs are welcome! And if you're looking for other places to ski, check out our Other Local Trails for Skiing page.

<https://www.nscfairbanks.org/trails/other-local-trails/>



ALASKA SKIJORING & PULK ASSOCIATION

Nov 13: Unfortunately, we just got word that Midnight Sun does not plan to open ski trails to the public this winter. As many of you may know, ASPA has historically groomed and maintained this trail system on a volunteer basis. We thank those who have donated in the past for us to be able to provide this service to the community. We will continue to maintain Creamer's Field, and grooming there should begin this week now that we have a bit more snow. Please consider making a trail donation so we can continue our efforts.

<https://alaskaskijoring.org/store/>

Shared from

Midnight Sun Golf Course

Nov 13: After careful consideration, the Midnight Sun Golf Course has decided not to open public ski trails for the 2023-2024 winter season. We deeply care about the Fairbanks community, and our mission is to serve people who experience disabilities and disadvantaged youth. Additionally, Midnight Sun Golf Course is dedicated to providing jobs for people of all abilities. In order to do this well, we will focus our efforts on sustainable operations in the winter, which include Fairbanks Snowmobile Tours, Virtual Golf, and Midnight Sun BBQ & Pizza. Our experience has been that the ski trails have not provided the support to further our mission, and so we will be taking a break from opening trails to the general public this winter.

INTERIOR LINKS

- Sharing Trails workshop: Thursday, December 14: <https://tinyurl.com/2fxbpcau>
- Early Season at Eleazar's (ski trip in White Mountains): <https://tinyurl.com/y95e22wd>

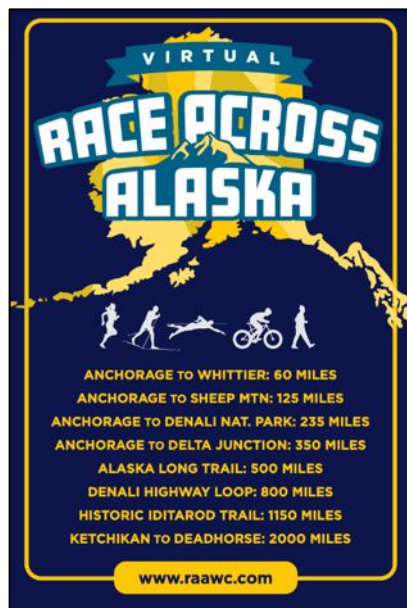
SLIGHTLY OFF-TRAIL

- 'Tis the season for some Christmas trails music!: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FEeG2PtW8do>

STATEWIDE

VIRTUAL RACE ACROSS ALASKA BENEFITS YOU AND ALASKA TRAILS

ENTER/DONATE The Race Across Alaska Winter Challenge, a multi-sport challenge, is a great way to get outside while challenging yourself to stay happy and healthy during winter. And you can also be helping Alaska Trails to help build and maintain some of the best trails in the world!



Here's how it works. You can run, walk, fatbike, indoor bike, XC ski, swim, or any activity you like. You can choose from eight different virtual distances – from 60 miles to 2,000 miles, which is a whopping 22.3 miles per day. Now that's a challenge. The goal is to log as many miles as you can over the three months of winter to get (virtually) from location A to B. You can also participate as a team (friends/family/school).

You will have the ability to log your miles, track your progress, collect virtual badges, so how you rank up to others on the leader board daily. You can invite other to this challenge to help you to stay motivated all winter long.

Online registration has begun, and the virtual race starts on Winter Solstice – December 21. **See the website for more details:** www.raawc.com/Race/AK/Anchorage/AlaskaChallenge

RAAWC is a fundraiser for the Alaska Trails and two other

worthy nonprofits: Nordic Skiing Association of Anchorage and Challenge Alaska. **For every racer that participates, \$10 will be donated to the non-profit of your choice OR you can divide between all three PLUS racers can donate additional funds.** Last year more than \$55,000 was donated through participation and donations! Alaska Trails is very grateful for the financial support from the race, but also the boost it gives to the community by inspiring an active, healthy lifestyle.



The official race cannon will be fired at the Zoom Kickoff Party on December 21 at 6pm AKS (10pm EST). Join the Facebook group to hear about pop-up Zoom and/or Zwift FREE workouts along with facebook live videos: www.facebook.com/groups/824863588292365

STATE BOARD TO REVIEW RTP GRANT APPLICATIONS

On December 8 the Alaska Outdoor Recreation Trails Advisory Board (ORTAB) will meet from 9am to 4pm to consider 9 (nine) RTP (Recreational Trails Program) grant applications. The public is welcome to join the virtual meeting. Click here to join the meeting: <https://tinyurl.com/2p9etrcx>. To see the full agenda, go here: <https://aws.state.ak.us/OnlinePublicNotices/Notices/Attachment.aspx?id=144889>.

From What's Up? by Peg Tileston

FORAKER GROUP OFFERS CLASSES FOR NON-PROFITS STATEWIDE

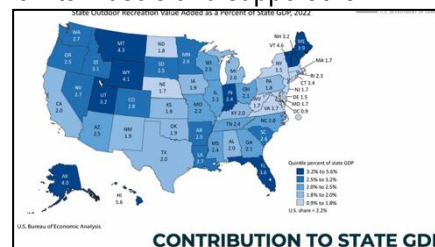
The Foraker Group, which is dedicated to strengthening Alaska's non-profits, offers classes about the proper workings of non-profit groups, which include many trail and trail user groups. If you are a member or employee of a non-profit group, consider taking one of the classes, which are offered in several communities and statewide by teleconference. For more information visit the Foraker Group website (www.forakergroup.org/).



SEEN RECENTLY ON STATEWIDE FACEBOOK PAGES

ALASKA OUTDOOR ALLIANCE

Nov 17: We're up! A lot! Alaska's outdoor recreation continues to flex its muscle and support the argument that investing in outdoor recreation infrastructure is good for health and economic well-being. New federal data shows that in 2022, AK's outdoor rec economy accounted for \$2.6 Billion or 4% of state GDP, up from \$2.2 Billion the year before. Join AOA on Zoom on Dec. 6 to dig into the details to learn how RVing, recreational boating and fishing, snow sports, camping and hiking create jobs and commerce.



Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/9845415428?omn=84793158634>

STATEWIDE LINKS

SLIGHTLY OFF-TRAIL

- Hike Along the Northern Alaska Range, Denali National Park (Luc Mehl): <https://tinyurl.com/36mwbc5h>
- The Avalanche Factor—Modern Era of Avalanche Education (Luc Mehl): <https://tinyurl.com/5xwfnpzf>

NATIONWIDE/WORLDWIDE

NATIONAL RECREATIONAL PHOTO CONTEST OPEN NOW

ENTER American Trails sponsors the annual contest for photographs of designated National Recreation Trails across the country. The annual contest provides awards in several categories and shows off entries (and previous winners) on the NRT website. Winners receive a certificate, Trail Boss mug, coaster, and stickers, as well as recognition on our website and in one eNewsletter!

Deadline is December 15 of each year. Learn more: <https://buff.ly/3ZkVBLn>

GRANT OPPORTUNITY: TRAILS CAPACITY GRANT PROGRAM

APPLY American Trails administers the Trails Capacity Program and invests in building nationwide trails community capacity by funding trail stewardship training, maintenance, research, and education. This grant program targets funding for small local trail projects that engage the community and connect trail assets to a broader spectrum of users. **The application portal opens on December 4. Find out more here:** <https://www.americantrails.org/the-trails-capacity-program>

From American Trails newsletter

FEDERAL HIGHWAY FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES TABLE UPDATED

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) updated the Pedestrian and Bicycle Funding Opportunities Table. See https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/funding/funding_opportunities.pdf. If you see the September 2022 version, then your computer cached the old table. Refresh (perhaps several times, and/or delete your cache), and you should see the November 2023 version.

The table is public information. You may share with anybody who wants to know about Federal funding for pedestrian, bicycle, and trail programs and projects.

Revisions include:

- Reorganized the program order.
- Added the Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program and SMART Programs.
- Included the Neighborhood Access and Equity Program eligibility under Reconnecting Communities.
- Removed the FTA Associated Transit Improvement program (the requirement was repealed).
- Added activity or project types:
 - Charging stations for electric bicycles and scooters
 - Encouragement and education activities
 - Public education and awareness programs
 - Technical assistance
- Revised a few categories:
 - Several project types added eligibility for electric outlets and charging.
 - Landscaping: added shade trees.
 - Resilience, Spot Improvements, Stormwater: revised for clarity.

From email Julius Adolfsson, Active Transportation Planner & Statewide Bike-Ped Coordinator

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/training/calendar

TRAILS-RELATED NEWSLETTERS

- American Trails "Trail Tracks": www.americantrails.org/newsletter

VOLUNTEER

- Am. Hiking Society's 2023 Volunteer Vacations: <https://americanhiking.org/volunteer-vacation-trips/>
 - Alternative (to Spring) Break: <https://americanhiking.org/volunteer-vacations/alternative-break/>
- Conservation International VIP newsletter (Nov 2023): <https://tinyurl.com/yzjhtkyy>

FUNDING

- FOX Factory Trail Trust (**applications reviewed quarterly**): <https://trailtrust.com/>
- Yamaha Outdoor Access Initiative (OHVs, **quarterly deadlines**): <https://yamahaoai.com/>

OTHER LINKS:

- Winter Recreation Planning: <https://www.americantrails.org/resources/winter-recreation-planning>
- Outdoor rec economy tops \$1.1 trillion, fueling efforts for support: <https://tinyurl.com/yhwnsx7x>
- REI sign-on letter of support for Outdoors for All Act: <https://tinyurl.com/3rvd7r2c>

- Free Foundations of Sustainable Trails e-Course Series: <https://tinyurl.com/8ypxw8th>

INTERNATIONAL LINKS

- Hong Kong's extreme trails, irresponsible hikers are a risky combination: <https://tinyurl.com/8u78z2zf>
- The Trans Bhutan Trail: Restoring Ancient Pathway During the Pandemic: <https://tinyurl.com/2ukfn5hd>
- 10 Otherworldly Looking Hiking Trails: www.thetravel.com/otherworldly-hiking-trails-around-the-world/

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, president of the Fairbanks Cycle Club, a member of several Interior trail user groups, and editor of the Alaska Trails newsletter.