

INTERIOR ALASKA TRAILS NEWSLETTER

Dedicated to the preservation and maintenance of trails in interior Alaska

MARCH 2024

LAND PURCHASE WOULD PROTECT GOLDSTREAM VALLEY TRAIL

DONATE Your help is needed to restore access to a vital piece of an important Goldstream Valley trail that has been blocked since 2020.

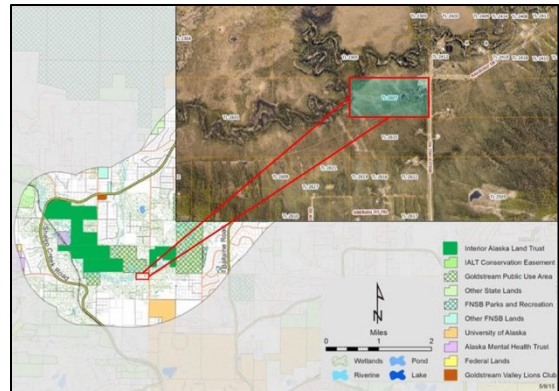
In early February, the Interior Alaska Land Trust (IALT) announced that it has worked out a deal to purchase the property over which that trail section runs. However, the land trust needs donations to raise the money to make the purchase. See the IALT Facebook post below.

Exciting News! The Interior Alaska Land Trust (IALT) has agreed to purchase another important parcel in Goldstream Valley. This parcel contains a crucial section of the historic east-west Railroad Trail, enhancing access to the Goldstream Public Use Area to the north and protecting existing and future trail access.

A generous community member has offered to match donations up to \$25,000. However, we still need to raise an additional \$25,000 to ensure this parcel is protected in perpetuity for the community. Your support is essential. Please consider making a donation today to help us secure this important piece of our local greenspace. Every contribution brings us closer to our goal, thanks to our matching donor.

Thank you for your continued support.

Our work is not possible without you. Visit <https://interioraklandtrust.org/donate/> to make a difference now.



The IALT donation page does not have a specific place to donate to this effort, but you can add a note that explains your donation intentions. Here's an example: " For Goldstream Valley land to protect part of Tanana Valley Railroad Trail."

This story is an excerpt from an Interior Alaska Trails blog post. To read the rest of the post and learn more about this issue go here: <http://tinyurl.com/mtc4vnse>

WINTER TRAIL GROOMING PROGRAMS NEED YOUR HELP

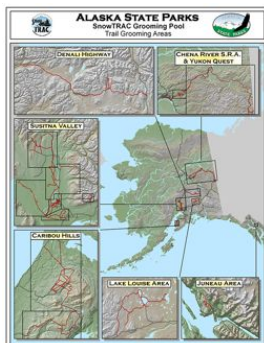
DONATE/SERVE Many winter trails activities require (or at least are much improved by) grooming, such as snowmachining, skiing, mushing, and fatbiking. If you engage in an activity that is improved by grooming, please remember to support those efforts. There are several ways you can help.

If you use an area that is clearly groomed and has a grooming fund, make sure to donate. Not all trails that are groomed have a specific grooming fund, but you can also join or donate to the group that is doing the grooming. Look for signs or Facebook posts that tell you how you can help.

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)

You can also support the Alaska Snowtrail Grant Program, which provides funds for grooming in several areas of the state. The grooming this program provides benefits more than snowmachiners.



Anyone who uses the groomed trails benefits, including fatbikers, skiers, mushers, and hikers. You can't donate to the Snowmachine Trails Program, but you can help it by making sure to register your snowmachine, which is what funds the program. You can also serve on the SnowTRAC board, which advises the state administration on how the funds are spent. Finally, you can advocate for the program. In years past, administrations have tried to cut the program as part of budget cutting measures. However, strong advocacy has kept the program alive.

To find out more about the program see:

<https://dot.alaska.gov/snowtrails/program.shtml>

Most importantly, get out there and enjoy all the great winter trails we have in Alaska!

SLOW CLIMATE CHANGE: STAY INFORMED, REDUCE SINGLE CAR TRIPS

ACT Climate changes affects everyone, especially winter sports.

A warming climate can mean shorter snow 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.

One way you can help is to keep informed. Save Our Snow, established in 2004, is an impartial compiler and publisher of data on what the ski industry and ski resorts are doing to combat climate change.

The site and the "Green Resort Database" were first conceived by snow sports writer and researcher Patrick Thorne, who has spent the past three decades collecting information on ski resorts around the world. Increasingly aware of climate change's effects on ski areas, and what ski resorts were doing to combat it, Thorne felt uniquely placed to bridge the information gap that was apparent in the general media and ski industry reporting.



Check out Save Our Snow here: <https://saveoursnow.com/>

Take a personal action



Carpool, bike, or take public transportation for your commute or to do errands. Each of these actions help reduce the number of trips taken by a single person in a car. While taking a car might be convenient, transportation adds almost 30 percent to greenhouse gases.

ALASKA STATE PARKS POSITIONS CAN INCLUDE TRAIL WORK

Alaska State Parks has a variety of seasonal positions through its the Alaska Conservation Corps (ACC), which are paid jobs, and its volunteer program. Tasks will vary and may include trail work, maintenance, fee station, or office work. Most positions begin in late May or early June. Some offices will start recruitment as early as March. You may wish to call the office in the area you wish to work in, to find out what positions they are offering this year and when applications are being accepted. For more information see:



- ACC: <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/misc/accinstr.htm>
- Volunteer Program: <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/vip/index.htm>

SEEN RECENTLY ON INTERIOR FACEBOOK PAGES

FAIRBANKS TRAIL AND WATERWAY USERS

February 29

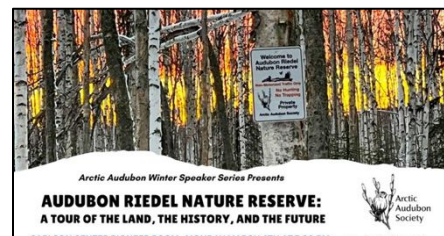
This nature reserve has several trails on it!

Event by Arctic Audubon Society

Audubon Riedel Nature Reserve: A Tour of the Land, the History, and the Future
Monday, March 4

Join the Arctic Audubon Society for the next winter program, Audubon Riedel Nature Reserve: a Tour of the Land, the History, and the Future. The program will be on Monday, March 4 at 7:00 pm at the Carlson Center Pioneer Room! This program is free, and everyone is welcome!

The Audubon Riedel Nature Reserve began 40 years ago due to Elonore Riedel's desire to ensure that her 160-acre homesteaded would remain intact and undeveloped. In December 1984, Elonore and husband Charles deeded the 160-acre homestead to Arctic Audubon Society. Since then, the Reserve has expanded to 320 acres through a purchase of 40 acres by Arctic Audubon as well as gifts of 40 acres from the Mayo family and 80 acres from the Herning family. Join us for a virtual tour of this beautiful Reserve near 5-Mile Chena Hot Springs Road. Together we will explore the land, wildlife, trails, history, and future of the Audubon Riedel Nature Reserve. The Reserve has a rich history with many twists and turns along the way. We invite the community to enjoy this land and help us shape its future.



Listen to Board Members Gail Mayo, Darla Theisen, and Mary Zalar present about the local nature reserve owned by the Arctic Audubon Society and how it has influenced their lives. Learn more at this talk! For more information, contact us at 907-479-2954 or visit <https://www.arcticaudubon.org/>

February 22

Here's a great story on Rove Co., which has been offering free meetups, skiing, and other activities, around the Fairbanks area.

Rove Co officially started in 2022 with an apparel line and a schedule of community meet-ups. The goal was to get cooped-up Alaskans outdoors in a safe, connective, kid-friendly way. Attendees might snowshoe, cross-country ski or hike while hanging out together.



The groups quickly grew in popularity, so much so that Blum began offering meetups in multiple locations, alongside adults-only overnight trips in the Alaskan wilderness.

"I found my community and started to feel confident and in a good place myself as a mother taking my child into the outdoors," she said. "I felt like I could be in a position where I could keep creating this community for others, too."-- <https://militaryfamilies.com/fitness/rove-co-transforms-alaska-tundra-into-welcoming-community/>

Find out more about the group here: <https://rovecooutdoors.com>

February 27

This article is aimed at cross-country ski racers, but it is valid for anyone who travels for winter recreation. It's a paradox since airline travel is a big driver of climate change.

Shared from
FasterSkier
February 26

Man-made ribbons of snow have become an all-too-common occurrence at ski races this season, as North America experiences the warmest winter on record.

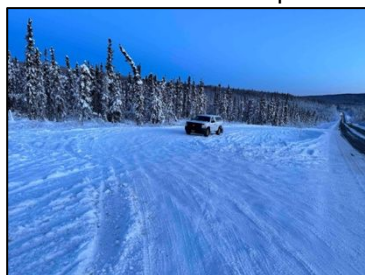
For ski racers, a biting paradox is at play, asking whether it's possible to balance the travel demands and interests long-vested in the sport with advocacy for climate change policies that might be essential for nordic skiing to have any sort of long-term future.

World Cup champions Gus Schumacher and Jessie Diggins, actively involved with the climate group Protect Our Winters, are leaning into, as leading climate author and avid nordic skier Bill McKibben calls, "imperfect advocacy," our Nat Herz reports! <http://tinyurl.com/48tdt52d>
(Photo: American Birkebeiner Ski Foundation)



February 19

THANK The Alaska Department of Transportation has cleared the El Dorado Creek Trailhead on Goldstream Road across from Buck's Drive. This photo is from how it looked earlier this winter. The department has also been keeping the Goldstream Creek pullout cleared off Ballaine Road. **If you care about having winter access to these trailheads, please thank Mr Sakalaskas.** These trailheads would have eventually become almost unusable, especially once the snow starts getting soft. Jason Sakalaskas, Maintenance and Operations Chief (907) 451-2214; jason.sakalaskas@alaska.gov



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT - ALASKA

January 31

COMMENT Attention! BLM seeks input for new Castner Glacier Recreation Area Management Plan Scoping period February 13 – March 14, virtual public meeting February 14.

The public can attend the 5:30pm February 14 virtual scoping meeting by pre-registering at the BLM National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Register project webpage here: <https://eplanning.blm.gov/eplanning-ui/project/2030733/510>

The public may also review all meeting materials and submit comment on the same project webpage by clicking on the green "participate now" link.

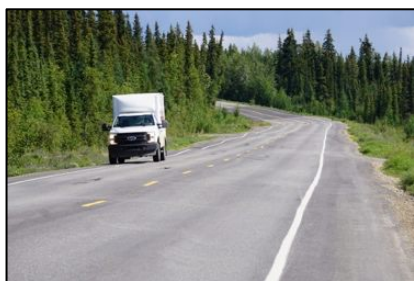
Photo of Castner Glacier: Cory Larson, BLM



FAIRBANKS CYCLE CLUB

February 16

Federal funding for transportation projects across Alaska is in danger because of mistakes made by the state Department of Transportation. We do not yet know how or if it will affect cycle-specific projects, such as bike/pedestrian paths. In any case, this is very concerning because cyclists, no matter their choice of transportation, are affected problems with road construction projects.



You can read a story in the Alaska Beacon about the issue here: <http://tinyurl.com/yk7ybh23>

There are also stories in the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner (<http://tinyurl.com/yckxajvk>) and the Anchorage Daily News (<http://tinyurl.com/mtvpvd29>). Blogger Dermot Cole also has a post on the subject: <http://tinyurl.com/5f6aw2et>.

INTERIORWIDE LINKS

- FNSB Winter Trails Challenge: <http://tinyurl.com/4en7rc5>
- Three Skiing Strikes and a Biking Home Run!: <http://tinyurl.com/2kpmxuth>

SLIGHTLY OFF TRAIL

- New director takes helm of borough parks and rec department (Fairbanks): <http://tinyurl.com/3k2w7b7v>
- Borough welcomes new Parks and Rec Director: <http://tinyurl.com/2hc2rj57>
- Standard Creek Road Goldstream Creek Bridge Closure Planned April 1: <http://tinyurl.com/y3mzktca>

STATEWIDE

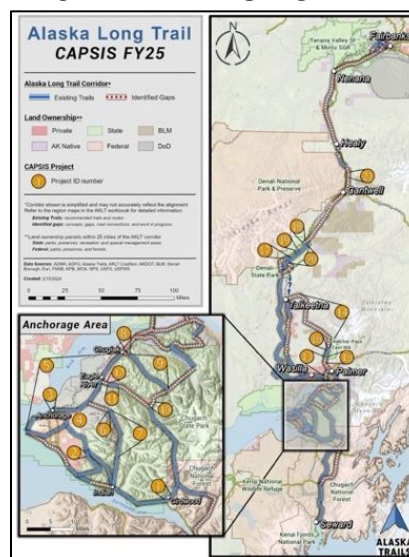
AK LONG TRAIL PROJECTS SUBMITTED TO STATE CAPITAL BUDGET

ADVOCATE For the fourth consecutive year now, Alaska Trails and partners are submitting Alaska Long Trail projects for inclusion in the state capital budget. This year, the packet comprises 21 trail projects that span the distance from Girdwood to Denali Borough. Partners include the Municipality of Anchorage, Chugach Mountain Bike Riders, Anchorage Park Foundation, the Anchorage Ski Club, Alaska State Parks, Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation, and the Denali Borough.

These trail projects will build new and improve existing trails, conduct planning studies to develop trail connections, improve trail access and parking, expand wayfinding, and highlight cultural heritage.

We need your help advocating for these projects by March 15! Guidance on how to write letters of support is available on our website: www.alaska-trails.org/state-budget-funding-for-aklt

- See this Alaska Beacon story about the submitted projects: <http://tinyurl.com/4e5w2dun>



TRAILS CONFERENCE TO BE HELD IN APRIL IN HYBRID FORMAT

ATTEND Please mark your calendar for our annual Statewide Trails Conference coming up soon!

The conference will be held April 10-12. We will have both in-person and virtual options this year, allowing us to bring in presenters from the east coast, Canada and across the state. The in-person version will be held at the BP Energy Center in Anchorage. More information on the conference, including how to access it virtually, is coming soon. It will be posted on our Trails Conference page: www.alaska-trails.org/trails-conference



Trails and outdoor recreation are a public health asset and an economic engine for the state and the trails conference seeks to raise the profile of trails and their importance to Alaska. We hope you can join us, and we welcome your ideas and feedback on how to make the most of this gathering. **Send your ideas and comments to:** office@alaska-trails.org

To view recorded sessions and presentation slides from past conferences see our archives at: www.alaska-trails.org/conference-archive-links.

SEEN RECENTLY ON STATEWIDE FACEBOOK PAGES

ALASKA STATE PARKS

February 13

COMMENT DPOR has posted the public notice for scoping for Commercial Use Permits until 4/12/2024.



The Alaska Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation (DPOR), is considering whether it should revise regulating the use of state park land and water. Specifically, DNR is considering revising regulations in order to provide outdoor recreation opportunities, enhance public safety, provide public clarity, and update existing regulations for Commercial Use Permits (CUPs) to determine what criteria shall be met for an applicant to be eligible for a CUP, and when a CUP shall be suspended, denied, or revoked for a period of time or indefinitely.

The link to the Public Notice is located here: <http://tinyurl.com/2kw87wvj>

 Bill Sherwonit, Denali State Park, Byers Lake Sunset

STATEWIDE LINKS

SLIGHTLY OFF-TRAIL

- New crowdsourced map for dog owners shares trapline locations in Alaska: <http://tinyurl.com/2efjya6v>
- After fatal collisions, Alaska dog groups push for safety gear: <http://tinyurl.com/5frz8mfu>
- 350 Miles in the Arctic Refuge and a Tour of the Sadlerochits: <http://tinyurl.com/4bhecpjc>
- OpenSkiMap (ski trails mapping software): <https://openskimap.org/>

NATIONWIDE / WORLDWIDE

2024 NORTH AMERICAN TRAIL SECTOR SURVEY NOW OPEN!

TAKE SURVEY If you manage, build, maintain, or plan trails, please take this important survey. The results of this survey will inform the trail community across North America about the current health of trails, trail systems, and trail organizations, identify pressure points and obstacles for growth, and arm advocates with the data they need to make the case for trails in their region.

Census Details:

- This survey is for professionals working or volunteering in the trail sector, it is not for trail users.
- Results of this survey will be tabulated and distributed to all respondents and made available on the American Trails and Trans Canada Trail websites.
- The survey will likely take about a half hour to complete.
- You can view a past report from the 2022 Canada Trail Sector Survey to get an idea of the types of information that we will be gathering for the first time in America as well.

Deadline: Please respond to this survey by 4:59 PM (ET) on March 31.

Thank you for participating in this important research. We look forward to sharing the results with the North American trails community.

Learn more here: <https://tctrail.ca/2024-north-american-trail-sector-survey/>

From American Trails

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 2024 Volunteer Vacations: <https://americanhiking.org/volunteer-vacation-trips/>
 - Alternative (to Spring) Break: <https://americanhiking.org/volunteer-vacations/alternative-break/>
- Conservation International VIP newsletter (Feb 2024): <http://tinyurl.com/2s3fp7ja>

FUNDING

- FOX Factory Trail Trust (**applications reviewed quarterly**): <https://trailtrust.com/>
- Yamaha Outdoor Access Initiative (OHVs, **quarterly deadlines**): <https://yamahaoai.com/>
- Community Change Grants, **deadline to apply is November 21**: <http://tinyurl.com/54mztbsv>

OTHER LINKS:

- 2024 Legacy Trail Program Awardees Announced: <http://tinyurl.com/2c8xaw5x>
- Why Trails Matter: Trails and Greenways Promote Health: <http://tinyurl.com/ydbawvch>
- Adaptive Recreation: Hiking and Biking for Mobility Device Users: <http://tinyurl.com/7ay2v6wf>

Interior Alaska 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 Alaska 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.