



NEWSLETTER

JAN
2025

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www.alaska-trails.org

ALASKA TRAILS NEWS AND NOTICES

WITH YOUR HELP WE SURPASSED OUR END-OF-YEAR DONATION GOAL



Thanks to generous donors, Alaska Trails surpassed our initial \$10,000 end-of-year donation goal and received the \$10,000 match by ConocoPhillips Alaska! ENSTAR Natural Gas and Alaska Alpine Adventures generously donated \$2,500 each as another match. Donations were doubled and we met our new goal of \$40,000 to build more trails in our great state, including the Alaska Long Trail! With your support, we raised a total of \$56,028.61 in December. Huge thanks to everyone who donated, and to our matching donors!

ICICLE BREWING HELPS TRAILS THROUGH '1% FOR THE PLANET'

We are excited to announce that Icicle Brewing Company has donated \$1,000 to Alaska Trails through its commitment to "1% for the Planet." Each year, businesses like Icicle Brewing Company give 1% of their annual sales directly to partner non-profits who are working on environmental projects for the health of our planet and future generations. We are grateful for their generosity.



Find out more about Icicle Brewing Company here: <https://iciclebrewing.com/>
Find out more about "1% for the Planet" here: <https://www.onepercentfortheplanet.org/>

TRAIL TALES BRINGS YOU MORE STORIES FROM THE TRAIL

ATTEND Our next Trail Tales will be held on Tuesday, January 21.



This edition of Trail Tales will benefit both Alaska Trails and the Chugach Park Fund. This storytelling series is sure to bring you lots of laughs, moments of contemplation, and a great time with good company. Trail Tales starts at 7 p.m. Doors open at 6: 30 p.m. **For more information and to purchase tickets visit:** www.alaska-trails.org/trail-tales

Alaska Trails runs the Trail Tales storytelling series as a fundraiser for itself while also partnering with a different community organization for each event. In the spirit of Arctic Entries, storytellers share seven-minute stories about their trail experiences, adventures, and life in general. Our 2025 Trail Tales events will be held at the Anchorage Museum and tickets cost \$20.

We've got more Trail Tales scheduled through April. Put them on your calendar! See the dates here: <https://www.alaska-trails.org/trail-tales>

ALASKA TRAILS BENEFITS FROM RACE ACROSS ALASKA CHALLENGE

PARTICIPATE The Virtual Race Across Alaska Winter Challenge registration is now OPEN, and Alaska Trails is grateful to once again be a non-profit beneficiary!

This race began December 21, and lasts for the three months of winter, challenging you to exercise through the dark winter months and run, bike, hike, cross-country ski or any other mode of exercise you'd like that collects miles.



Find out more and sign up here: <https://runsignup.com/Race/AK/Anchorage/AlaskaChallenge>

USE "PICK. CLICK. GIVE." TO DONATE TO ALASKA TRAILS

DONATE Giving back to the trails you love is easy! Help maintain, improve, and build new trails for you and your fellow Alaskans by choosing Alaska Trails for your annual Pick. Click. Give. Donations. When you file for your PFD, choose Alaska Trails to ensure the trails in our backyards are safe, sustainable, and fun for all and that we can complete the Alaska Long Trail, a world-class trail system connecting Seward to Fairbanks!



Giving through your PFD is a secure and easy way to make a donation. **When you file for your PFD online, you will be given the opportunity to select a non-profit to receive a portion of your PFD. If you do, please remember Alaska Trails.** If you use "Pick. Click. Give" you will be able to check a box that authorizes the state to send your name, contact information, and the amount you give when it sends

contributions to an organization. We want to acknowledge and recognize your generous support, and this is the only way we will know it's you making the gift. For more information on "Pick. Click. Give." visit:

www.pickclickgive.org/

Link to the Alaska Trails "PCG" page: www.pickclickgive.org/index.cfm/pfdorgs.info/Alaska-Trails

ALASKA TRAILS HIRING FOR SEASONAL TRAIL CREW POSITIONS

APPLY Alaska Trails is hiring professional trail crews planned for seasonal trail work in 2025. Trail crews will work in Chugach State Park, Chugach National Forest, and other areas in Southcentral Alaska.

Trail crew members and leaders will play a pivotal role in trail maintenance and construction projects. Duties include daily hiking in steep, rocky terrain, structure work, and using hand and power tools to maintain and construct sustainable trails.

More information for all the positions and application instructions at: <https://www.alaska-trails.org/jobs>



SEEN RECENTLY ON OUR FACEBOOK PAGE

Dec 11



We had a great time at Trail Tales last night with Wilderness Adventures for Kids Everywhere, Inc! We're grateful for our brave storytellers, prize donors, and everyone who attends Trail Tales to support us and our partner organizations.

Our 2025 Trail Tales events are on the calendar and tickets are on sale now! Visit the link in our bio or visit: <https://www.alaska-trails.org/trail-tales>

Dec 2

The Youth Employment in Parks (YEP) program is a great way for teens to get involved in city park and trail improvement projects while getting paid! Learn about this 10-week summer job program and its successes in this opinion piece written by our Trails Program Officer, Ben.



www.adn.com/opinions/2024/11/30/opinion-building-parks-and-futures-the-impact-of-yep/

STATEWIDE NEWS AND NOTICES

APPLICATIONS SOUGHT FOR WINTER TRAIL MARKING PROGRAM

Applications are now open for the Community Winter Trails Program.

This program is a federally funded, Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF)-administered program that provides funding and support to rural communities to mark public winter trails. The goal of the program is to facilitate connections between rural communities, public roads or highways, and public use areas through installation of high visibility trail markers. DOT&PF will maintain a public online inventory of rural winter trails that will be updated in collaboration with the communities participating in this program.



Find out more here: <https://dot.alaska.gov/nreg/wintertrails/>

SUPPORT STATE, NATIONAL TRAILS BY PURCHASING PARK PASSES

BUY A PASS Many of the great trails in Alaska and the rest of the United States are in state and national parks. Buying a pass helps support these agencies even if you never use the pass. Of course, if you do use the pass, then so much the better. That means you are out having fun!

- **Alaska State Parks annual pass:** Support state parks during a time of tight state budgets. 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: <https://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/passes>
- **National Park Service annual passes:** The park service offers general passes. 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: www.nps.gov/planyourvisit/passes.htm



JOIN POW, CHANGE YOUR DIET TO HELP SLOW CLIMATE CHANGE

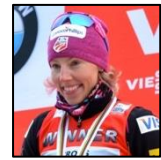
JOIN, ACT Climate change affects everyone, especially winter sports enthusiasts like snowmachiners, mushers, cross-country skiers, and fatbikers.

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.

Here is something you can do right now to help make a difference.

Join "Protect Our Winters"

"Protect Our Winters" is a group of outdoor people organized to "protect the places and lifestyles they love from climate change." Several Alaska athletes are part of the group, including biker Lael Wilcox and cross-country skiers Gus Schumacher and Kikkan Randall.



POW was founded in 2007 by pro snowboarder Jeremy Jones. Jones saw that many of the resorts he'd counted on for good snowboarding were closed more often due to lack of snow. He felt a need to act, but he couldn't find any organizations focused on mobilizing the snow sports community on climate. So, Protect Our Winters was born.

The group is made up of pro athletes, individuals, resorts, brand partners and other outdoor enthusiasts. It organizes for lobbying and other actions to help fight climate change.

You can help the group by donating and/or joining. If you join, you can sign up to be a volunteer: <https://protectourwinters.org/>



Photos: Top - Kikkan Randall by Fouganthin, bottom - Lael Wilcox from POW profile page

Take a personal action

Eat less commercial meat, especially beef. Unfortunately, commercial meat production is a big contributor to greenhouse gases. Forbes has an article about it: <https://tinyurl.com/yssz3uun>

On the bright side, wild meat is as natural as you can get. And trails are a great way to go hunting!

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.

GROUP ADVOCATES FOR RESPONSIBLE USE OF PUBLIC LANDS

JOIN Responsible Stewardship is a volunteer 501(C)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to fostering stewardship together for the betterment of our public lands, outdoor spaces and communities for everyone to enjoy responsibly. The group does this through examples and through "Education Through Action." **Find out more about the group here:** www.responsiblestewardship.org/



SEEN RECENTLY ON STATEWIDE FACEBOOK PAGES

BLM-WHITE MOUNTAINS NATIONAL RECREATION AREA

Dec 26

Attention all CWAT users: The minimum standards for soil freeze-up and average snow depths have been met.

For users who would like to check weekly conditions, please visit:

www.blm.gov/programs/energy-and-minerals/oil-and-gas/about/alaska/NPR-A/NPR-A-weekly-weather-and-tundra-travel-report

The Community Winter Access Trail (CWAT) reduces commodity shipping costs to Alaska Native villages in the North Slope Borough (NSB) by providing critical seasonal access for authorized vehicles and goods.

Photo of a frozen airstrip by BLM.



ALASKA OUTDOOR ALLIANCE

Dec 6

Funding alert: \$5M available to trail builders with shovel-ready projects! Denali Commission's \$5 Million match and gap funding assistance program for rural surface transportation projects is now posted and available. This opportunity seeks to provide funding to cover local match needs or address funding gaps, facilitating the completion of surface transportation projects, and supporting infrastructure development. Eligible projects must benefit the public in Alaska. Eligible applicants include municipal, borough, and tribal governments; federally recognized Indian Tribes; regional tribal non-profit organizations; and other non-profit organizations. Entities that do not have an active or pending award with the Denali Commission transportation program will be prioritized under this funding opportunity. Details at <https://grants.gov/search-results-detail/357320>



Note: Current Closing Date for Applications: Feb 28, 2025

STATEWIDE LINKS

- Biking on Long Trails (BOLT) Act passes Senate (thank Sen. Murkowski): <https://tinyurl.com/2r8x42tb>

SLIGHTLY OFF-TRAIL

- Outdoor rec contributed 4.6% to Alaska's economy in 2023, report says: <https://tinyurl.com/5n6h64pr>
- Outdoor Rec Trails Advisory Board meets Jan. 14-16 for RTP, LWCF: <http://notice.alaska.gov/217887>
- Camping in Canada's Tombstone Territorial Park, hiking Mt. Frank Rae: <https://tinyurl.com/mr22scve>

SOUTHCENTRAL NEWS AND NOTICES

MAT-SU FOUNDATION GRANT APPLICATIONS DUE IN JANUARY, JULY

APPLY Got a trail or park improvement project idea? Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation wants to help make it happen! Eligible applicants can apply for grants through Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation to help fund projects that expand or enhance the valley's trail network and parks!

For the first grant cycle, applications are due January 2, and the award notification is the week of February 25. For the second grant cycle, applications are due July 30, and the award notification is the week of September 22.



Contact info@matsutrails.org for any questions or to discuss your next project.

- Learn More About MSF Grants: <https://matsutrails.org/ourgrants/>
- MSF Grant Guidelines: <https://tinyurl.com/bdh7j692>

From the Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation

PETITION TO SUPPORT FISH CREEK TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS

SIGN PETITION The Anchorage Park Foundation had this notice in a recent email newsletter:



The Fish Creek Trail Connection provides a safe and accessible link between the Spenard, Midtown, and Turnagain neighborhoods to the Coastal Trail.

Residents have been pushing for this project since the 1997 Anchorage Areawide Trails Plan. Since then, Anchorage voters approved four municipal park bonds totaling \$500,000 in 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024.

Now, the trail connection is in peril, and there is worry about its completion.

Sign the Petition: <https://form.jotform.com/243036269036152>

SEEN RECENTLY ON SOUTHCENTRAL FACEBOOK PAGES

ANCHORAGE PARK FOUNDATION

Dec 20

We want to give a HUGE thank you to Assembly Members Daniel Volland and Anna Brawley for introducing a resolution reaffirming the City's commitment to build the Fish Creek Trail to the Ocean. On Tuesday, it UNANIMOUSLY passed! Thank you to all of the Assembly and Mayor LaFrance for your strong support.

If you haven't already, please sign the petition to support the trail.

<https://form.jotform.com/243036269036152>

Dec 20

As we celebrate the darkest time of the year, bring some light into your life by registering for the Race Across Alaska Winter Challenge! The challenge kicks off on Dec 21 and runs through March 20. Get motivated and get active this winter by choosing a distance goal that suits you. A portion of the proceeds will go to Anchorage Park Foundation, Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation, and Alaska Trails.



Register today! www.raawc.com/

Dec 18

A muddy trail 1700 feet long (about the size of the Empire State Building) at Arnold Muldoon Park will be overhauled by middle school students at STrEaM Academy and the teen crew of Youth Employment in Parks (YEP). The Anchorage Park Foundation made this project possible by collaborating with Friends of STrEaM. Students will get a hands-on lesson in the dynamics of trail building while improving a community space.



Help Anchorage Park Foundation continue to advocate and support projects like this one **by donating today.**

<https://anchorageparkfoundation.org/donate/>

Dec 9

Baxter Bog is a popular neighborhood destination, and the Anchorage Park Foundation is working with the Scenic Foothills Community Council to build, restore, and maintain trails on the Baxter Bog trail system. With oversight from an engineer, volunteers and Youth Employment in Parks (YEP) teens will work hard to make these trails resilient and sustainable for years of enjoyment.



Donating to the Anchorage Park Foundation can help ensure that projects like this one continue to be possible. **Donate today** and help support improvements to the Anchorage parks and trails we love.

<https://anchorageparkfoundation.org/donate/>

Dec 4



Anchorage Park Foundation is working with Alaska Trails to reroute the trail between the North Bivouac and Campbell Airstrip parking lots to prioritize trail users' safety and improve the trail's sustainability. New, clear wayfinding signs will replace confusing signage. Youth Employment in Parks (YEP) will be activated to make this project a reality and provide much-needed first-time employment opportunities to local teens.

Donations to the Anchorage Park Foundation make projects like this one possible. If you can, consider making a financial contribution to help the Anchorage Park Foundation continue to improve the parks and trails you love.

<https://anchorageparkfoundation.org/donate/>

MAT-SU TRAILS AND PARKS FOUNDATION

Dec 2

What an incredible year for the Mat-Su trail and park system! In 2024, your support enabled us to fund over \$450,000 in grants to nine different local organizations in the Mat-Su.



We are grateful for the accomplishments that together, we have made this year, and look forward to the opportunities ahead in 2025!

<https://mailchi.mp/matsutrails.org/thank-you2024>

FRIENDS OF KACHEMAK BAY STATE PARKS

Dec 7

Big Congratulations & a million thanks to these 2 amazing recipients of the Golden Pulaski award -



Volunteer(s) of the Year award ! For years Andy and Terri have been and continue to be invaluable steadfast reliable volunteers for Friends on so many levels. 🍻🏔️👍🌟

It takes a village to make a positive impact on trails and facilities in Kachemak Bay State Park and we like to Honor those that go above and beyond!

When you see them around town, please say thank you!

SOUTHCENTRAL LINKS

- Mat Su Trails and Parks Foundation December newsletter: <https://tinyurl.com/yj4ernhf>
- Notice of Decision - Public Access Easement - Willow Trail Committee: <http://notice.alaska.gov/217847>
- Anchorage's Fish Creek trail extension put on 'hold' (Anch Daily News): <https://tinyurl.com/462hxmm5>
- Unexplained halt of Fish Creek Trail Connection project prompts outrage: <https://tinyurl.com/5exya4x9>
- Opinion: Anchorage's Fish Creek Trail connection deserves our support: <https://tinyurl.com/3muewc2n>

SLIGHTLY OFF-TRAIL

- Winter Activities: Try Winter: <https://anchorageparkfoundation.org/2024/12/winter-activities-try-winter/>
- Alaska Huts Winter Newsletter: <https://tinyurl.com/y3ekkyw9>

INTERIORWIDE NEWS AND NOTICES

FAIRBANKS PARKS AND REC WINTER TRAILS CHALLENGE IS LIVE

The Fairbanks North Star Borough Parks and Recreation Department is again hosting its Winter Trails Challenge with a new award category.

The sign list was revealed in late December for this popular ongoing event, which is free and open to anyone. Registration is required to be eligible for prizes and awards. However, FNSB Parks and Recreation will be switching software systems on January 6 from MyRec to CivicRec. Registration for this challenge will only be accepted through CivicRec once it is launched on January 6. Also, as of press time, trail signs 5, 9, and 10 were reportedly not out yet but were expected to be installed by or shortly after December 30.

And for the first time there will be a Pawblazer Award for furry companions. More details to come.

The Fairbanks Trails Challenge is an all-ages, all-abilities, outdoor scavenger hunt designed to get you out with your friends and family to explore our wonderful local trails, both new and familiar. Each summer and winter season, Parks Department staff temporarily installs special signs in secret locations along a dozen or so local trails. While the signs are up, the public is invited to visit the trails and try and find the signs. Along the way hopefully you have a chance to learn new skills, see new places, and make positive memories.

Participants who find at least ten signs during the event can win prizes from local sponsors and the coveted Trailblazer Award. Participants under the age of 10 can find at least five signs to win the Junior Trailblazer Award.

- Facebook Event: <https://www.facebook.com/events/1071705541370332/1071705551370331/>

Selfie photo by Stan Justice from the Skarland & Pearl Creek Trail Users Facebook page



ADMA TRAIL WARNING: 2024-25 RACING SEASON STARTING

This is to notify users of the Alaska Dog Musher's (ADMA) Jeff Studdert Trail System that ADMA will be conducting sled dog races Sunday December 29, January 5, and perhaps January 12 and 19 depending on temperatures. Championship Races, including the 79th running of the Open North American Championship, will also be held on February 15 and 16 and March 7,8,9, and 14,15, and 16. Other races may be conducted on the trail system by other groups such as the Fairbanks Skijoring and Pulk Association and the Fairbanks Cycle Club.



ADMA races generally are held between 10 AM and 4 PM, but certain trail turns or access points may be blocked before or after that when the ADMA grooms and prepares the trail. The specific trails that will be utilized in the races can be found on the ADMA website (<https://alaskadogmushers.com/>) or Facebook page. A map of the Jeff Studdert Race Trail can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/bdruskeb>. (The trails are also on Trail Forks here:

www.trailforks.com/region/alaska-dog-mushers-trails-33292/.)

See more here: <https://tinyurl.com/49vwcm6a>

By Jeff Conn, ADMA Race Marshal; photo from ADMA website

SEEN RECENTLY ON INTERIOR FACEBOOK PAGES

FAIRBANKS TRAIL AND WATERWAY USERS

Dec 24

This is a good survey to complete just because you live in the greater Fairbanks area. For trails issues, there isn't a whole lot specific in the questions, but you do have an opportunity to add your own comments in a couple of places.

The survey takes about 10 minutes to complete and will be available through February 10, 2025.

>>Shared from Fairbanks Area Surface Transportation Planning

Dec 20

The Fairbanks North Star Borough's (FNSB) Community Planning Department has released THE survey of the decade! The FNSB is updating the 2005 Regional Comprehensive Plan (Comprehensive Plan) and they need EVERYONE'S input.

The Comprehensive Plan is a big-picture guide for our area for the next 20 years. This plan covers housing, parks, land use, economic development, and transportation. It is a guide for local policies, housing and business development, public investments, and other planning efforts.

What will you contribute to the shared vision of who we are and who we want to be as a community?

SURVEY LINK: <https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/481d51af05df41e398d8320abee8706c>

Dec 18

The Division of Forestry has started a fuel break project north of Haystack Mountain. This looks like it will affect the trail off Haystack Mountain that provides access to the White Mountains.

--Public access to winter trails in the area will remain open during the project. However, be aware of active heavy equipment operations.—

Read more here: <https://tinyurl.com/vampte3v>



Dec 2

If you have access to Eielson Air Force Base, they are having their own winter trails challenge on base!
<https://tinyurl.com/39z6386m>

Dec 2

Fairbanks Trails, Inc, is **soliciting donations**. You can follow the group on Facebook:
www.facebook.com/groups/2197150330677276/

Our mission is to work as a 501c3 non-profit corporation on all aspects of public trails in and around the Fairbanks area including maintenance, construction, education, safety, and advocacy. To donate send a check to Fairbanks Trail Inc, 1750 Reed Circle, Fairbanks AK 99709. Our EIN is 99-1705316--



FAIRBANKS TRAILS, INC.

Dec 28

I logged out and groomed both versions of Rabbit Run Ski Trail today. I also went over many of the Pearl Creek Park trails while I was there. Boy are those trails narrow and hard to groom. Almost took off a mirror. Fairbanks Trails Inc plans to have AmeriCorps interns next summer via the Student Conservation Association. Organizing brushing parties on Pearl Creek Park will be on their list. Last hurdle is getting FNSB to sign off. Will be on the agenda of the TAC - 6 pm Jan. 27 in assembly chambers.

INTERIORWIDE LINKS

- State, BLM reach agreement on Fortymile River trail dispute (News-Miner): <https://tinyurl.com/3ybz9hsr>
- White Mountains National Recreation Area blog posts:
 - A Trip Full of Little Treats: <https://tinyurl.com/5a78azzt>
 - Cabin Trips – Like Life – Are Not Stress Free, But Are Worth It: <https://tinyurl.com/4d5w7jvz>

SOUTHEAST NEWS AND NOTICES

SEEN RECENTLY ON SOUTHEAST FACEBOOK PAGES

TRAIL MIX, INC.

Dec 20

Have you applied to be part of our 2025 crew? 🤔 🌲 We're hiring all trail enthusiasts, carpentry nerds, building block fanatics, dirt lords, tool whizzes, and tree aficionados! 🛠️

If you are a fellow human mammal who needs fresh air to breathe, wooded paths to trot around on, and other woodland mammals to keep you company, then join us on trail and help us build and maintain our local trail system! 🏠 🚧 🛠️ 🧑

Apply: <https://trailmixinc.org/employment/>



Dec 6

Thank you so much to everyone who came out to support our work at our annual auction! We wouldn't be able to do the work we do without each of you!



We want to extend a special thank you to our incredible team of volunteers who were hard at work all night long helping things run smoothly.

If you left before checking out and think you have an item still with us, please don't hesitate to reach out! We still have several unclaimed items in the shop. 🛎

These photos were taken by @reinvent_kaylee, @sean_griffin, and @thatonefluffyguy!

Thanks again and we'll see you for more auction festivities next year! 🤗 Until then, happy trails!!

SITKA TRAIL WORKS, INC.

Dec 27

Sitka Trail Works: A Year In Review

In 2024 we got more Sitkans outside than ever before through programming, trail construction, and maintenance. These are just a few moments we want to celebrate with you.



BUILD

In 2024, we've been planning and seeking funding for project priorities in the updated Sitka Trail Plan. Among those is the development of a marine trail network, destinations and paddling routes that take advantage of the extraordinary coastline of Sitka Sound.

MAINTAIN

We hosted the 2nd Annual Trail Master Summit and expanded our volunteer program to equip Sitkans with the skills to care for local trails. Our 130+ volunteers completed over 1500 hours of service on local public lands from Herring Cove to Lake Eva. They have hauled and distributed almost 100,000 pounds of gravel and moved over 7000 pounds of lumber in addition to addressing drainage and blowdown across Sitka's trails.

PROMOTE

We hosted 6 weeks of summer camps with incredible partners and served over 100 youth. We also offered after school programming during the year with the Sitka Native Education Program, at Pacific High, and at Blatchley with Youth Advocates of Sitka, and more! We brought dozens of community members to Sea Lion Cove and Mt. Edgumbe and had many more hikes with you all on island.



2024 was a great year for building community outdoors and we couldn't be more grateful. All our work is made possible because of the Sitka community. If you'd like to support our work in the coming year, head to the link in our bio to donate. Here's to a 2025 full of more time spent outdoors with our neighbors!

Dec 12

We are very excited to formally launch Sitka Trail Works merchandise!* Other than the logo tees, these designs were created by our summer Youth Program Coordinator, Maria Sakowski. These designs are drawn from experiences on the trails this summer and we hope they inspire you to take to the trails as well. Be sure to scroll through the shirt options of color and style. Get one for yourself or buy one as a gift for a friend or loved one, and don't forget to show us how you wear your swag by tagging us!



Purchase yours here: <https://www.bonfire.com/store/sitkatrails/>

*As a small organization, we are relying on Bonfire to print and sell our tees, so orders are all batch printed to reduce costs.

Dec 10

New signs are up marking the trail to Medvejie Lake from the hatchery! If you've ever been hesitant to explore this beautiful trail due to uncertainty, be sure to check it out, as marked by the new signs! See ya out there.

SOUTHEAST LINKS

- Some popular Juneau trails could soon be open to guided tours: <https://tinyurl.com/y2dz9a2v>
- Trail Mix (Juneau) December newsletter: <https://tinyurl.com/cyz47aps>
- Sitka Trail Works End of the Year Update: <https://tinyurl.com/f6z5dd3s>

SLIGHTLY OFF-TRAIL

- Hiking Twin Ridge – Petersburg (Starling Birch): www.youtube.com/watch?v=HzcHDAsz4Gg
- Climbing Annahootz Mountain - Sitka (Starling Birch): <https://tinyurl.com/bdfncfj9>
- Judge denies State's bid to take control of Juneau's Mendenhall Lake: <https://tinyurl.com/2kdh5zva>

NATIONWIDE NEWS AND NOTICES

EXPLORE ACT PASSES AND WILL BECOME LAW

SEND THANKS Today, after nearly a decade of work from the outdoor community, the EXPLORE Act passed through Congress and is on its way to the President's desk to become law!

The EXPLORE Act, a bipartisan recreation policy package, takes important steps to expand and improve outdoor recreation opportunities. The highlights include the Biking on Long Distance Trails Act

(BOLT) to identify and create more long-distance bike trails, the Protecting America's Rock Climbing Act (PARC) to safeguard Wilderness climbing, the Simplifying Outdoor Access for Recreation Act (SOAR) that will improve recreational permitting for outfitters and guides, and permanent direction for the Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership and FICOR.

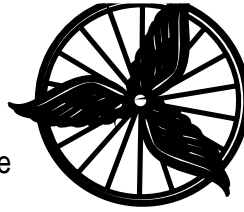
Read more here: <https://tinyurl.com/ma8vy2fw> (includes red to thank lawmakers).

From Outdoor Alliance blog

NEW TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES FUNDING COMING YOUR WAY

Thanks to Representative Rick Larsen (D-WA), the Ranking Democrat on the House Transportation & Infrastructure (T&I) Committee, your state is getting more Transportation Alternatives funds!

Yesterday, Congress passed the Water Resources Development Act. Attached to that bill, Congress included a fix to the surface transportation bill that will result in \$180 million dollars flowing to the Transportation Alternatives program (TAP) for fiscal year 2025, and potentially the same additional dollars over the next two years.



**THE LEAGUE
OF AMERICAN BICYCLISTS**
since 1880

The funding comes from transferring a portion of the unused balance of the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act loan program to the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program, under which 10 percent goes to Transportation Alternatives.

Read more here: <https://tinyurl.com/52ub5ej4>

From League of American Bicyclists blog post

TRAILS CAPACITY GRANT CALL FOR PROPOSALS NOW OPEN

APPLY American Trails and Bronco Wild Fund are pleased to continue the Trails Capacity Grant Program in 2025. This program is targeted for projects on all federal public lands, as well as state, local, and private lands accessible to the public. Project applicants may include nonprofit organizations, businesses, or agencies at the state or local level. American Trails is administering this grant program, and is soliciting proposals for funding, with awards between \$2K and \$10K per project.

Deadline is January 31, 2025, by 11:59 PM Pacific Time.

Special Focus for 2025: American Trails and Bronco Wild Fund aim to direct this year's funding towards initiatives that enhance the following areas:



- Opportunities for multi-use trails, particularly those that cater to both motorized and nonmotorized activities.
- Enhancements that establish crucial links to expand trail networks or broaden the scope of current trail systems.

Submit your project proposal here: www.americantrails.org/the-trails-capacity-program

From American Trails email

INTERNATIONAL TRAILS SUMMIT SET FOR APRIL 2025 IN WISCONSIN

ATTEND American Trails (AT) and the Professional TrailBuilders Association (PTBA) will host the 2025 International Trails Summit in Madison, Wisconsin April 15-17, 2025. The combined, high-impact event convened a diverse trail and outdoor community to learn, build relationships, and find solutions to the challenges of developing and elevating outdoor recreation opportunities for all.

Every two years American Trails and PTBA sponsor the International Trails Summit (formerly Symposium) to bring together trail and greenway advocates, managers, planners, and users, as well as tourism and business interests.

The Summit is the largest gathering of all trail interests—professionals, managers, and users who believe their combined voices are the best way to strengthen trails for everyone.

Learn more and register: www.trails-summit.org/



'300 MILES AND MELTING' VIDEO HIGHLIGHTS CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change is our planet's number one threat. And one of its biggest targets is being overlooked: New England. While major ski resorts maintain an image with overwhelming snowmaking, the backcountry of this region paints a real picture of what's going on. Follow skier and activist, Torey Lee Brooks, as she attempts to ski—and learn from—the entire Catamount Trail in Vermont amidst a turbulent winter. (24-minute video): www.youtube.com/watch?v=SDWeKa-VKEQ

From Trail Tracks, American Trails newsletter

AMERICAN TRAILS LOOKING FOR 500 NEW MEMBERS

JOIN American Trails is looking for more members to help keep some of its services free. See the message below.

We urgently need 500 new members to keep our vital trail programs free and accessible. Will you help?

Recent cuts by federal agencies have resulted in reduced funding for partner agreements nationwide. As a consequence of these reductions, American Trails has found that we can no longer depend on these agreements to offer our programs at no cost to the entire trails community.

You can help to sustain the programs that countless individuals, organizations, agencies, and communities rely on. It is essential that we develop a new framework. This is where your involvement becomes crucial.

What Your Membership Supports:

- Your membership ensures that these services remain available to you and 121,000 other trail enthusiasts.
- Free weekly webinars for the trails community, reaching over 121,000 people.
- Coordinate collaboration for a free Trail Core Competency Framework and workforce website.
- Established the Trail Fund for community trail resources.
- Trail Community Business Directory with 4,000+ businesses nationwide.
- Host the largest meeting of trail professionals at the International Trails Summit.



We need your support to reach 500 new members and keep our trails thriving. Will you join us?

Become a member today: https://americantrails.org/join?blm_aid=41528

REGISTRATION NOW OPEN FOR HIKE THE HILL 2025

ADVOCATE Celebrating its 28th year, Hike the Hill® is a joint effort between American Hiking Society and Partnership for the National Trails System to bring together the trails community to advance shared trail



priorities with congressional and federal agency leaders including: trails funding, public lands management and conservation, equitable access, and other top priority issues that sustain trails and improve access to public lands.

In 2025 the trails community faces a sense of urgency unlike any seen in recent years as a new administration and Congress look to reshape the federal government and funding. It is paramount that the trails community's voice is heard by attending in-person or if unable to come to DC to meet locally with district staff to form or strengthen key relationships and demonstrate the importance and value of trails.

Join trail partners from across the nation for virtual issue briefings (Week of February 10), in-person group meetings (Feb. 23-27), and a Trails Celebration (February 24) to advocate for legislation, learn about new policy developments, and meet with federal partners, elected officials and their staff.

To register: <https://americanhiking.org/civicrm/event/register/?id=307&reset=1>

From American Hiking Society email

NATIONWIDE / INTERNATIONAL LINKS

WEBINARS, MEETINGS, CONFERENCES, TRAINING, ETC.

- American Trails calendar (trail webinars workshops, etc): www.americantrails.org/training/calendar

TRAILS-RELATED NEWSLETTERS

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

VOLUNTEER

- Am. Hiking Society's 2025 Volunteer Vacations: <https://americanhiking.org/volunteer-vacation-trips/>
- Conservation Volunteers VIP (Winter Solstice): <https://tinyurl.com/mpcn372f>

FUNDING

- FOX Factory Trail Trust (**applications reviewed quarterly**): <https://trailtrust.com/>
- Yamaha Outdoor Access Initiative (OHVs, **quarterly deadlines**): <https://yamahaoai.com/>
- National Forest Foundation awards (**ddIn Feb 7, Round 1 MAP applications**): <http://tinyurl.com/px7y6ke>
- National Park Service's Cost Share Program (**ddIn Jan 10**): www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/ccsp/
- Polaris T.R.A.I.L.S. grants (**ATV trail projects; due March 1**): <https://tinyurl.com/y49dxbhe>
- Clif Family Foundation grants (**for groups; ddline March 1**): <https://tinyurl.com/5bku286n>

OTHER LINKS:

- Impacts of Climate Change on Outdoor Recreation: Outlook to 2060: <https://tinyurl.com/4f2tp2c3>
- New Data Shows Outdoor Recreation is a \$1.2 Trillion Economic Engine: <https://tinyurl.com/2fnb56xr>
- Climate Change in National Parks: www.americantrails.org/resources/climate-change-in-national-parks
- The Backcountry Game (Kickstarter project): <https://tinyurl.com/ydz93smr>

The Alaska Trails board meets via teleconference the first Monday of every other month from 5:15-7:15pm. If you want to hear more about Alaska trail topics, share trail information, or propose a trail project, join us. Members and the public are welcome. Call for more information and meeting details [907-334-8049](tel:907-334-8049).

A copy of this newsletter will also be posted to our website. Newsletters come out at the beginning of each month. Deadline for articles is seven days before the first of the month. Send stories to Editor Eric Troyer at fbxtrails@gmail.com