

The Tripod

May 2021



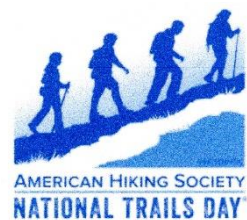
Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance, PO Box 2323, Seward AK 99664
<http://www.iditarod100.org> IditarodHTA@gmail.com
The Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance is an equal opportunity program provider and employer.

Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance promotes awareness of the Iditarod Trail and its gold rush and Alaska Native heritage by encouraging education programs and historical research, assisting in the protection, improvement, maintenance and marking of the Trail and developing partnerships that foster stewardship, commitments and support.

National Trails Day® on June 5, 2021

National Trails Day®, sponsored by the American Hiking Society, is an opportunity to celebrate and promote trail systems around the nation. The Society understands organizing safe events in 2021 can be challenging and not possible in some areas. It has added the ability to register virtual events for National Trails Day® if an in-person event cannot be held this year.

As COVID guidelines vary across the country, the Society asks all National Trails Day® events to abide by guidelines outlined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as well as state and local governments.



Alaska Statewide Trails Conference 2021

While the COVID-19 pandemic prevented the 2021 Alaska Statewide Trails Conference from happening in person, Alaska Trails seized the opportunity to stage a successful virtual conference. By hosting a series of webinars from Wednesday, April 14, through Friday, April 16, Alaska Trails brought a wide variety of trail topics to a state-wide audience. Senator Lisa Murkowski gave the keynote address. National presenters included two representatives from Leave No Trace as well as two from the National Digital Trails Project, an innovative mapping project that will greatly benefit Alaska trail builders and planners. Other sessions focused on the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) 2022-27, COVID Conservation Corps, the maintenance funding gap for land managers, trail funding in general, the health benefits of trails, the effects the COVID had on trail use, volunteer successes and project updates.



The recorded video presentations as well as the power points to go with them can be found at the conference website: <https://www.alaska-trails.org/trails-conference>.

Senator Murkowski to introduce two trail bills

Senator Lisa Murkowski announced at the Alaska Trails Statewide Conference that she is going to introduce two trail bills in the U. S. Senate.

Senator Murkowski's first bill will designate the Alaska section of the Chilkoot Trail as a National Historic Trail. The Chilkoot Trail is a 33-mile hiking trail connecting Dyea, Alaska to Lake Bennett, British Columbia. It was a Tlingit trade route prior to the gold rush. Senator Murkowski said, "This designation is long-overdue and will pay homage to those who traveled this trade route during the Klondike Gold Rush. I am excited at the prospects of adding one of my personal favorite backpacking trails, connecting two communities and countries to the list of historic trails."

Senator Murkowski's second bill will require a feasibility study to be conducted on whether to designate the Alaska Long Trail, a proposed 500-mile route connecting Seward and Fairbanks, as a National Scenic Trail. This



would make the project eligible for additional funding opportunities.

Alaska Long Trail

The recent general obligation bond package proposed by Gov. Dunleavy included \$13.2 million to be put toward connecting the existing segments of the Long Trail. However, the bond idea is likely to be scratched over concerns about whether that action is necessary given Alaska’s \$1.02 billion share of Congress’s recent passage of the \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan.

The Alaska Trails Initiative (ATI) is now asking the legislature to add the project to the capital budget.

From the past...

“Seward Weekly Gateway” October 23, 1909

IDITAROD GOLDFIELDS MAY RIVAL KLONDIKE

Seward, the Gateway to the Iditarod!

This should be the battle cry of residents of Seward from now on. From reports which bear the stamp of reliability, the Iditarod has prospects of becoming another Klondike. Letters from well-known miners now in that section paint a lurid picture of the camp’s future. Al Chamberlin of Seward has received a letter from an old partner which gives the new camp a good name as a perspective goldfield. J. A. Stuart, the Fairbanks mining man now in Seward, has a partner there who is optimistic regarding the country. G. E. Cross, a miner who reached Seward from Seattle on the Yucatan, was in Innoko last spring, having wintered there and met a party of three from Otter creek, a tributary of the Iditarod, who had located claims from which good prospects were taken. At that time but little work had been done.

J. J. Willis, well known in Seward, who came up on the Yucatan says that there will be a regular Klondike stampede into that region from the outside.

The Iditarod is a tributary of the Innoko, and its source is near the headwaters of the Kuskokwim.

Seward is the logical entrepot from the outside to this new El Dorado. The Gateway has made careful inquiries

concerning the distance from the coast towns. From Seward to Iditarod River is less than 400 miles. By way of Fairbanks it exceeds 1100 miles.

Does Seward want the travel through this town? If the rush comes this way, it will mean thousands upon thousands of dollars in trade to local businessmen.

It was planned to take up this matter at the meeting called for last night, but lack of attendance dampened the ardor of those who proposed an active effort to divert the travel this way. There is yet time to get busy and advertise the advantages of going via Seward. It may cost the businessmen a few dollars each to do this, but on the surface it

appears to be planting seed in fruitful soil. The Gateway stands ready to assist in all possible ways a vigorous campaign for diverting travel through Seward, which a glance at the map suggests is the most practical place of entry.

Shall we get in and hustle for this business or shall we set idly by and permit the stampede, through ignorance of the shortest way, to go by the old route?

Action must be taken at once! Get busy!

