

ANNUAL REPORT

FISCAL YEAR 2019

IDITAROD HISTORIC TRAIL ALLIANCE

TRAIL

STORY

STEWARDSHIP

The Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance, a.k.a Iditarod National Historic Trail, Inc., collaborates with partners in the protection, improvement, repair and marking of the Iditarod National Historic Trail. The Alliance promotes public awareness of the Iditarod Trail, its gold rush history and Alaska Native heritage, through education programs and historical research. The Alliance develops partnerships that foster stewardship commitments and support from land owners, local communities, organizations and individuals.

With the INHT Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP) as a common guide, the Alliance works with the BLM, the federal trail administrator, and other state, federal, local and private land managers to promote the preservation, enjoyment, use and appreciation of the historic route of the Iditarod Trail. The CMP proposes management of the trail through partnerships. Throughout the year, the Alliance works to bring about the collaboration and partnerships that result in activities, projects and products that, working alone, we could not accomplish. This report covers fiscal year 2019 – October 1, 2018 to September 30, 2019.

TRAIL

- With an IHTA Trail Project grant, the Iditarod Trail Committee conducted winter trail work planned for 2019 but had to cancel the planned summer trail work due to wildfires. The Farewell to Salmon River INHT segment was cleared and brushed in January/February 2019. The Puntilla Lake to Rainy Pass INHT segment scheduled for July 2019 trail clearing and brushing work was cancelled due to wildfires in the area. The crew, materials, and equipment had been mobilized when an evacuation order was received and the crew had to leave the Rainy Pass area. The Rainy Pass work will be rescheduled for summer 2020.
- Below-average snowfall, a mid-Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race meltdown, and an absent icepack on Norton Sound were some of the abnormal winter conditions confronting users of the Trail in 2019. Trail conditions deferred trail signage project.
- McGrath Trail Blazers performed maintenance work on the Carlson Crossing Safety Cabin.
- Wildfires in summer of 2019 threatened Don's Cabin, Rainy Pass Lodge and other areas of the Trail. Fire crews protected Don's Cabin and Rainy Pass Lodge.

STORY

- Passport Stamps for the Iditarod National Historic Trail are in fourteen locations.
- Newsletter *TRIPOD* published and distributed to members monthly.
- DVD on the history of the Iditarod National Historic and booklet “Walter Goodwin – Trail Blazer”, edited by Thom Ely and Cherie Norton and “Frozen Trail” by Hannah Moderow are available for distribution and sale.
- Iditarod Trail to Every Classroom (iTREC!), the place-based service learning professional educator training program, is in its tenth year. The iTREC! program is administered through a collaborative effort between the Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance, the Bureau of Land Management, and U.S. Forest Service.
- In November 2018, a two-day iTREC! alumni workshop was held at the Begich-Boggs Visitor Center with fourteen iTREC! alumni attending.
- iTREC! – Iditarod Trail to Every Classroom’s ninth class of 14 teachers started the place-based service learning professional development program in July 2019.
- An iTREC! alumni teacher from Campbell STEM Elementary School in Anchorage received a national award, the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching. She credited iTREC! for giving her the skills and change in practice that made her a more effective teacher.
- The Alliance had regular postings about the INHT on social media venues throughout the year on its webpage, facebook page, and twitter account.
- The Alliance contracted with a graphic designer to begin work on an INHT children’s activity booklet. The Alliance is working with the Forest Service and BLM on the content for the booklet.
- In partnership with the Seward Trail Blazers and the Resurrection Bay Historical Society, showed the movie “Iditarod National Historic Trail – a History” weekly from May to September at the Seward Public Library, free to the public.
- Supported the Iditarod Sled Dog Race Ceremonial Start.
- The Alliance participated in the Iditarod Dog Sled Race Re-Start at Willow with INHT information and items for sale. The Alliance provided material on the history of the INHT to each of the checkpoint communities north of the Alaska Range during the Iditarod Dog Sled Race. Race volunteers, tourists following the race, and residents have access to the booklets and other material sent to each community. In Nome, the Alliance partnered with the Nome Kennel Club the final week of the Iditarod Race to provide information and merchandise on the Iditarod National Historic Trail. A series of blizzards in Nome interfered with some of the planned outreach.

STEWARDSHIP

- In McGrath, the Alliance Board member and the Toklat Museum worked together to provide INHT information during the Iditarod Dog Sled Race as the racers passed through the town.
- The IHTA's Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program planning grant for the Chugach National Forest to develop an INHT Southern Trek Stewardship Plan to increase local awareness, appreciation, and long-term stewardship of the trail, continued for a second year. The grant provided the facilitation and planning services of the RTCA staff. The project brought together the Chugach National Forest, land manager of the Southern Trek, and its trail partners, the IHTA, Kenai Mountains – Turnagain Arm National Heritage Area, Girdwood Trails Committee, the Seward Trail Blazers, Alaska Trails, and members of the Girdwood and Moose Pass communities. The Chugach National Forest organized three volunteer events – Rocky Creek, Winner Creek, Portage Pass – based on the 2018 model. Plans for volunteer events for the third year will start in early 2020. The draft Southern Trek Stewardship Plan will be out for review in early FY2020.
- To encourage collaboration, the Alliance held meetings with partners throughout the year. These include monthly teleconference meetings with Board members and agency partners; an annual work session and meeting with agencies, organizations, and members in November 2018; and a strategic planning meeting with Board of Directors and federal partners in May 2019. The Alliance and partners are working together to develop, interpret and protect the Iditarod National Historic Trail. The meetings encouraged collaboration in all aspects of management and interpretation of the INHT as directed by the Comprehensive Management Plan.



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