

The Tripod



October 2020

Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance, PO Box 2323, Seward AK 99664
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The Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance is an equal opportunity program provider and employer.

The Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance promotes public awareness of the Iditarod Historic 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.



Dues due

A renewal form was included with the September newsletter. This is a good opportunity to renew in a higher membership category. This is also a good time to recruit new members.

Thanks to all those members who have renewed.

Board seats up for election

The following board seats are up for election this year: Seat I, Norton Sound, Seat J, At Large #4 and Seat K, At Large #5.

The nominating committee has recommended the current members in those seats be reelected:

Seat I-Stephanie Masters Johnson, Nome

Seat J-Jonathan Sewall, Seward

Seat K, Kirsten Bey, Nome

Topkok shelter cabin renovated



Photo by Tyler Johnson

A crew of volunteers with the backing of the Nome Kennel Club have the Topkok Cabin on the Iditarod Trail back in top shape and ready to shelter mushers and local travelers who find themselves caught in bad weather.

The Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance provided \$15,000 toward the cost of needed repairs and improvements to the Nome Kennel Club, which maintains the cabin. Ragchew Amateur Magic Ham Radio Club also donated \$5,000.

For the complete story see: www.nomenugget.net/news/nome-kennel-club-renovate-topkok-shelter-cabin

Alaska Trails Initiative

The Alaska Trails Initiative (ATI) continues to make great strides to raise the profile of trails across the state, highlighting their economic and health benefits and showing how they build our communities. In late August, ATI advocates from around the state met with Senators Murkowski and Sullivan to update them on the exciting projects outlined in the Trails Investment Strategy and to solicit their help in unclogging the many complex federal funding sources that Alaskan could take better advantage of.

Long trails like the Appalachian and Pacific Crest Trails have captured the attention of travelers for decades. With some of the most stunning wilderness in the world, Alaska is long overdue in creating a world class long trail of its own. Long trails engage visitors in everything from simple day hikes to multi-week, Alaska Trails and its partners are proposing such a route connecting Fairbanks and Seward. Many sections of the proposed trail already exist or are currently planned, and the route is almost entirely on public lands, enormously reducing the complexity and cost.

Check out the video Max Romey made about The Alaska Long Trail at <https://www.alaska-trails.org/the-alaska-long-trail>.



Alaska Outdoor Alliance's Confluence Summit to go virtual

"Confluence: Summit on the Outdoors," organized by the Alaska Outdoor Alliance (AOA), is an annual conference where Alaskans come together to discuss trends in outdoor recreation and to share ideas to expand the sector.



It is easier than ever to attend the 5th Annual Confluence Summit this year, which will be held October 27-29. In the interest of public health, it was decided to postpone meeting in person in Fairbanks until 2021. Registration opens mid-September to Zoom into Confluence from the comfort of wherever you are working. You can expect the same great quality of speakers, info sharing, and lively discussions, but in a pared down agenda to limit screen fatigue.

This year's theme is Re-Imagining Alaska's Outdoors. Senator Lisa Murkowski will help open the conference on October 27. Afterward, visions for the future of public land management, tourism, active transportation, and outdoor activities for healthier Alaskans will be discussed. On the last day, after an overview of national policy priorities from REI's Director of Government and Community Affairs, there will be an idea jam designed to develop strategies to strengthen and prioritize statewide policy and funding objectives. Draft details and speakers can be found on the AOA's Confluence page: www.alaskaoutdooralliance.org/confluence-ak

From the past...

"Seward Gateway" December 1, 1925

TRAIL CONDITIONS FROM NENANATO IDITAROD GOOD

The winter trail from Nenana to the Iditarod is in fine shape, considering the period of the winter season, stated Ross Kinney, Superintendent of the Alaska Road Commission activities in the McGrath and Iditarod regions. Mr. Kinney arrived in Seward last week and departed yesterday for the Juneau office of the Commission where he anticipated he would remain one week before continuing on to the states where he will spend the winter. Mr. Kinney has been transferred to the Nome district and may return to Seward in the early spring en route to the northern camp. He may await the sailing, out of Seattle, of the first steamer North and proceed directly to that new field.

Little trouble has been met with on the snow trail thus far, he said, in the mail carriers getting thru; with the exception of a few of the rivers still being lightly covered over with ice. The season in general has been very late and some rivers were still open when he came out. Little cold weather has visited the lower river and practically no zero weather whatsoever at the mouth of the Tocatna river. The Northern Commercial Company stretched a rope across the river to stop the slush ice, in an attempt to make a solid river crossing suitable for light modes of freight. The depth of snow on the trail varies from twelve to sixteen inches, he reported; with less snow on the Nenana end of the trail. Mr. Kinney "mushed" out from McGrath to Nenana and then came by train to Seward. He left McGrath November 13 and arrived in Seward November 25.

Referring back to trail conditions, Mr. Kinney said the longest distance between roadhouses on the trail, at the time he came out, was about 35 miles between Diamon's and Knight's. Last year there were two roadhouses in operation between these two named, but thus far they are both closed down. However, it is believed that the 19-Mile roadhouse will be opened soon as he heard some party was en route there. On other portions of the trail roadhouses are found at intervals up from eighteen to twenty-five miles. At mile 19, the Alaska Road Commission has a good cabin which all travelers are now using, to either stop in overnight or to cook a meal in.

Crow Pass Trail

Alaska Trails helped Chugach State Park with some work on the Crow Pass Trail in September. There are now two new bridges in the Park, one over Icicle Creek and the other over Thunder Creek. This project was partly funded by a Recreation Trails Program Grant.

"Paths are made by walking." Franz Kafka

