

The Tripod

September 2019



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The Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance is an equal opportunity program provider and employer.

The 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.

Time to renew



Alliance membership dues for 2020 are now due. A renewal form is enclosed with this newsletter.

This is a good time to upgrade your membership level and to recruit a new member for the Alliance.

Every member is an important part of our mission to preserve, protect and promote the Iditarod National Historic Trail.

Chugach National Forest Land Management Plan

The Chugach National Forest has announced the release of the Chugach National Forest Land Management Plan, final environmental impact statement, draft record of decision and the Regional Forester’s list of species of conservation concern for the Chugach National Forest, rational for approval of the land management plan and selection of an alternative from the final environmental impact statement.

The publication of a legal notice in the Anchorage Daily News, announcing the release of the draft record of decision, land management plan, and final environmental impact statement, initiate a 60 day objection period and is the exclusive means for calculating the time to file an objection. The objection process gives stakeholders a chance to bring forward any unresolved concerns shared during formal comment periods or concerns related to information not yet available during those comment periods. Individuals or entities who submitted substantial formal comments related to the land management plan revision during the opportunities for public comment may file objections during the 60 day objection period prior to the approval of the final record of decision and Regional Foresters list of species of conservation concern.

The draft record of decision, final environmental impact statement, Land Management plan and the Regional Foresters list of species of concern are available as electronic copies for review at the project web page: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=40816>. To view these and related documents and for more information on the objection process, you can visit the Chugach National Forest website: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/goto/chugach/planrevision>.



From the past...

“Seward Daily Gateway” November 10, 1905

INLET MAILS TO GO OVER TRAIL

With the arrival of the Excelsior the overland mail schedule will go into effect to Sunrise and Hope. Anton Eide has the contract, but Fred Haefs will carry the mail. It will go twice a month, following the arrival of the Excelsior and the Santa Ana, about the 11th and 26th of each month until the end of March. Last winter the mail went only once a month.



Chief Clerk Eames has not been about so far to induce anyone to take the route to Tyoonok, by way of Knik. This was to have been a monthly mail, but the bids for carrying it were all so high that when Mr. Eames was here early in October, he was obligated to reject them, knowing that the department would disallow them.

It seems probable that residents of the north side of the Arm will have to get their mail at Sunrise and Hope by sending a carrier there as they have done heretofore. This is easy for those just a cross Cook Inlet, but points at a considerable distance such as Tyoonok, will get their mail semi-occasionally.

Frank Watson brought word from Sunrise last night that the Inlet steamers were going out of business for the winter. The Tyonic had just started back to Seldovia for the last time, and Capt. Blodgett had announced when he left that port that, the trip would her last. He was closing-up his estate in Seldovia, preparatory to going out for the winter.

Although there is no sign of ice in the Inlet yet, experience has taught the old timers that the estuaries are liable to freeze up in a night at any time after the first of November, sufficiently to hold a boat, and the owners will not take chances. On the other had the Inlet is sometimes open all winter.

State trail programs after state budget battle

Four state trail-related programs have survived the recent battle over the state budget. However, two of the programs were significantly affected. The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) and Snowmobile Trails Program (STP) now have one less person to administer them. In addition, the State Legislature required that RTP funds be split between the state parks division and local community organizations. (Gov. Mike Dunleavy’s administration had earlier tried to distribute RTP funds solely to state parks.) As a result, state employees are still working out how to administer the programs. Applications for them are not yet available. When all that is finalized, the Department of Natural Resources will issue an announcement to let people know they can again apply.

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) saw some budget wrangling but survived. The program, which is not solely for trails but considers them “high priority projects,” is available to local and regional governments. A call for applications for a new round of LCWF projects should be coming soon.

For more information on the RTP, LWCF, and the STP (also referred to as the Snowmobile Grant Program) see: <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/grants/index.htm>

Matching funds for the Pittman-Robertson program also survived. Like the LWCF, the Pittman Robertson program is not solely for trails, but it does pay for projects that increase hunter access. In an August interview with the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner (<http://tinyurl.com/y3dmh7qd>), Doug Vincent-Lang, commissioner of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, said “over the next few years, the department plans to use funds for projects including things like bolstering airstrips and restoring trails and parking lots.”

Trail protection project

Fifty years after the passage of the National Trails System Act, many critically important landscapes and resources of the National Trail System lack any permanent protection.

Thanks to a cooperative agreement with the Federal Highway Administration, the Partnership for the National Trails System, in collaboration with the Trust for Public Land, is developing an integrated geographic information system approach to identify and prioritize trail protection projects throughout the National Trails System.

The partnership will also identify, analyze and catalog model agreements and develop case studies of conservation easements and other techniques for protecting national trails. At the completion of the project this information will be organized into a draft *Handbook for National Trails Protection*.

The Partnership for the National Trails System and the Trust for Public Land are currently refining the methodology for the project, using two national scenic trails: Ice Age and North Country and two National Historic Trails: Santa Fe and Lewis and Clark.

