

# The Tripod



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



### The Trail for all Seasons

The Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance promotes public awareness of the Iditarod Trail and its gold rush and AlaskaNative 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.



### Membership renewal

There are still a few members who have not renewed their membership in the Alliance. Don't delay, send in your renewal now.

Thanks to all those members who have renewed.

Make a New Year's resolution to recruit a new member in 2017 or give a membership as a gift for someone on your Christmas list.

### Annual meeting

The annual meeting of the Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance was held in Anchorage, November 30-December 1. Board members elected were: Seat E, Cook Inlet/Susitna region, Judy Bitter, Seat F, Kuskokwim Region, Mike Tierney, Seat G, At-large #2, Dan Seavey, Seat H, At-large #3, Lesli Schick. Officers elected for 2017 were:

President-Judy Bittner, Anchorage, Vice-President, Jonathan Sewall, Seward, Secretary, Erin McLarnon, Anchorage, Treasurer, Jules Mead, Wasilla.

Our president, Judy Bittner (at right) reported on the accomplishments and activities of the Alliance in 2016:

The Alliance purchased trail signs and wayfinding marking for Trail segments between Ophir and Ruby and between Kaltag and Unalakleet.

An article, by Judy Bittner, on safety cabins along the Iditarod Trail was published in the summer 2016 issue of "Pathways," a publication of the Partnership for the National Trails System.

The Alliance's website was updated and includes products for sale. The Facebook page is active and provides postings of interest on historic trails.

The Alliance had a booth at the Fat Bike Expo in Anchorage in February 2016.

The Alliance attended the Willow Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race Start and provided information on the Iditarod National Historic Trail and had Alliance items for sale.

Booklets on the history of the Iditarod Trail were provided at community checkpoints during the Iditarod Sled Dog Race.



## From the past...

"Alaska Evening Post" Seward AK,  
December 30, 1916

### ON TO IDITAROD WITH UNCLE SAM'S RAILROAD

Iditarod operators, who represent heavy investments in the interior section of Alaska along the rivers flowing into the lower Yukon, are taking an active interest in the proposed line of the government's system of railroads in Alaska, which will extend from the Seward-Fairbanks line into western Alaska.

New discoveries in the Iditarod and Innoko districts assure the importance of this immense area lying north of the mountains and west of Mt. McKinley.

Freight rates to the Iditarod at present are \$100 per ton.

Operators like J. E. Riley and others who have dredges or large hydraulic plants pay immense sums each year to the transportation companies.

Ordinary ground cannot be worked because it will not pay the expense of operating.

Tolstoi lay undiscovered for seven years because the prospectors found only 10-cent pans on bedrock and it did not look like "pay" in the face of the high cost of supplies.

From a practical mining standpoint thousands of miles of creeks along the rivers of this section have never been scratched and the real mineral worth of the county northwest of Seward is still unknown.

A railroad is needed to supply cheaper fuel and cheaper supplies.

It is the contention of Iditaroders that work could be started at an early date on the line to the lower Yukon and better results obtained and more progress made than to wait until the Fairbanks line is completed.

National Park passport stamps for the Iditarod Trail are now available in Anchorage, Seward, Wasilla, Girdwood, Portage Glacier, Knik, McGrath and Nome.

Iditarod Trail to Every Classroom (iTREC!): in 2016: the sixth class of teachers finished their year-long training in May and the seventh class of 16 teachers has completed two of three workshops. In seven years iTREC! has trained 96 teachers who are now effectively reaching over 7,000 K-12 students in 10 rural and urban communities along the trail.

The Alliance and its iTREC! partners, the Bureau of Land Management and Forest Service presented information on the program at the 2016 Alaska Trails Conference.

Several schools with iTREC! teachers in the Anchorage school district are partnering with the Anchorage Parks Foundation's "Schools on Trails" initiative including Nunaka Valley, Sand Lake and Girdwood.

Alliance board members participated in National Environmental Protection Act public meetings and the National Historic Preservation Act section 106 consultation meetings for two projects affecting the Iditarod National Historic Trail, the Donlin Gold and Grant Lake Hydro projects.

Alliance president Judy Bittner attended the Partnership for the National Trails System agency meetings and the American Hiking Society's "Hike the Hill" advocacy meetings in Washington D. C. in February 2016. She had meetings with the Alaska Congressional delegation, U. S. Forest Service, National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service and the Bureau of Land Management.

## Wada statue dedication on Japanese TV

TheNHK (Japan Broadcasting Corporation) story on the Jujiro Wada statue dedication on September 23 in Seward has been broadcast worldwide. You can see the English language version on the NHK internet site: [nhkworld/newsroomtoyko](http://nhkworld/newsroomtoyko), click on calendar, then on November and scroll down to November 17 and click on the picture of Wada.

## New Forest Service Act

President Obama signed the National Forest System Trails Stewardship Act on November 28.

Chief among the measures included in the law is the requirement that the U. S. Forest Service develop a strategy that would increase the role of partners and volunteers in trail maintenance.

Additionally the law requires the U. S. Forest Service to identify 9 to 15 priority landscapes for increased trail maintenance using volunteers where appropriate.