

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 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.



Right-of-way case

The state has emerged the victor in a prolonged court battle over the use of a portion of the "Historic Iditarod Trail" against two sisters living in California who inherited a family homestead and wanted to keep people off of it. Assistant attorney general Kent Sullivan said, " if the sisters complaint went unanswered, it would have made a 1,000 mile trail discontinuous, and that's the historic Iditarod Trail. It would have had a chunk missing out of the middle of it."

The plaintiffs Kelly Dickson and Donna Defuse sought to affirm their ownership of the two roads cutting across their property arguing the parcels they owned were free and clear of public rights-of-way. The property in question was homesteaded beginning in 1958. The plaintiffs' father, Benjamin Cowart, got his patent from the federal government in 1965. More acreage was bought over time. The 240 acre property is about 9 miles west of Knik. The land was split between the sisters, who left Alaska 30 years ago, when Cowart's wife died in 2007.

Anchorage Superior Court Judge Catherine Easter found by clear and convincing evidence that the public used the historic Iditarod Trail across the plaintiff's property for such a period of time and under such conditions as to prove that the right-of-way grant had been accepted. The trail, known as the Knik to Susitna Trail, was used from the 1950s. In 1967 Dick Mackey and Joe Redington Sr., helped clear the trail for the 1967 Iditarod Centennial Race. Mackey identified the location of the trail in court and testified that mushers traveled it in multiple races. That use continued until 1983 when Coward put up a no trespassing sign.

The other road in the case, known as Homestead Road built by Chuck Sarrara in 1958 was intended to be used by homesteaders in the area and the court found that the public has used the road ever since it was constructed and since 1984 over 100 sled dog races have been run across Homestead Road.

From the past...

"Iditarod Pioneer" July 8, 1916

ENJOYABLE CELEBRATION OF GLORIOUS FOURTH

Despite occasional showers, which interfered somewhat with carrying out of the program, and swarms of mosquitos and gnats which brought discomfort and irritation to the holiday crowds, the celebration of the Fourth of July at Flat was a splendid success, and throughout the day the creek city was crowed with visitors enjoying to



Trail marking

The Iditarod Trail through Seward has been marked with stencils of the Iditarod Historic Trail logo. The stencils were bought by the Seward Iditarod Trail Blazers and applied by the Seward Parks and Rec Department along the trail.

Statewide Outdoor Recreation Plan

The Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation is seeking public comments on the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, which is updated periodically to maintain statewide eligibility for federal Land and Water Conservation Fund grants. The revised draft plan is available at <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/scorp> and comments will be accepted through August 5, 2016. For more information, go to <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/grants/lwcf.htm>

the utmost the holiday fun.

The day began with promises of ideal weather conditions, but late in the afternoon showers drove the crowds to shelter. The program was carried out in its entirety however, and the closing sports events while viewed by the crowds mainly from distant shelter, were among the most interesting of the day. As in all public celebrations in this district, the crowds were somewhat slow in gathering for the exercises and it was fully 3 o'clock in the afternoon when the chairman of the day Dr. Moore, introduced A. M. Kilgore to make the oration of the occasion. A grandstand had been erected on the ball grounds, and this was completely occupied, while scores stood on the field to listen to the address.

Professor Kilgore took for the subject of his address "The Development of Democracy." The speaker, while not contending that our system of government was perfect, and while admitting that abuses of power still existed, maintained that the remedies were in the hands of the people themselves. His presentation was an eloquent effort, and at its conclusion he was roundly applauded.

George Mutchler, as chairman of the sports committee, then announced the commencement of that part of the exercises with the Ladies' Race, won by Miss. A. M. Floan.

The Boys' Race was won by R. J. Rivers, the Girls' Race by Charlotte Horvat. The Three-Legged Race was won by Jack Mutchler and George Kay. The Ladies' Egg Race was won by Mrs. R. Loire and the Ladies' Nail-driving contest was won by Mrs. R. D. Cater.

The winner of the horse race was George Mutchler, riding "Billy," beating "Goldie" ridden by Mead Maynard in two heats out of three.

Dave Mutchler won the mule race in two straight heats.

The team captained by Fred Dickson won the Tug-of-War.

A baseball game between teams representing Iditarod and the Yukon Gold Company was called at the end of the third inning on account of rain. The score at that time was 3 to 2 in favor of Iditarod.

Moose hall was comfortably filled in the evening at the concluding event of the day's festivities, the grand ball. The music was furnished by Messrs. Taylor, Lowie and Jacobs, and dancing was indulged in until a late hour. The hall was gorgeously decorated, and in combination with the many pretty costumes of the ladies presented a most attractive picture. The dance was generally voted to be one of the most enjoyable features of the celebration.

- The iTREC! summer institute will be held at the University of Alaska-Anchorage campus on August 1-5.