

The Tripod

October 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. Sorry a renewal form was not enclosed with the September newsletter. A renewal form will be sent to you shortly.

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.

ITREC!

The fall workshop for the Iditarod Trail to Every Classroom teachers will be held in Seward on November 1-3.

Annual meeting

The annual meeting of the Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance will be held in Anchorage on December 4-5.

State Trails Program ends

The Alaska State Trails Program has been shut down as a result of staffing cuts proposed by Gov. Mike Dunleavy and accepted by the state legislature. Certain aspects of the program will continue, such as administration of the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) and the Snowmobile Trails Program, but those programs will be substantially changed. For example, the types of projects being accepted for the RTP are severely limited. The program was cut because the program manager position was cut, according to Wendy Sailors, development specialist with the state Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation.

The program manager position, formerly held by Darcy Harris, was downgraded to a grant administrator position. The other grant administrator position, held by Steve Neel, was cut. When Harris quit to take a position with the Municipality of Anchorage, Neel took Harris' old position.

One big loss to the program is that there is now no one who can approve Environmental Review Checklists, basically a mini-Environmental Impact Statement, required under the National Environmental Policy Act. That is one of the big reasons that RTP projects will be limited.

Another visible change due to the end of the program is that there is no longer any Alaska State Trails Program webpage.

From the Past...

"Fairbanks Daily News-Miner" December 2, 1909

GOING TO IDITAROD WITH A HERD OF REINDEER

With 13 reindeer Joseph de Rosier a Councilite, will mush into the Iditarod country this winter, practicing economy in travel, which his residence in Council, where the government has a large reindeer herd, has shown him to be the most practicable in the country.



De Rosier is taking an immense mining round house and saloon outfit to the new diggings, shipping his goods from Nome on a small boat to Unalaklik.

The deer will be used to haul freight from Unalaklik into the Iditarod and the arrangements in favor of them as draft in this particular instance are very striking.

First of all, there is practically no expense for the keep of the reindeer, as they will forage for themselves, eating moss which seems to have been provided by nature for them. Second the animals are large and strong as compared to dogs and they can get bigger loads for the destination more rapidly than the canines.

Third De Rosier will never be without means of subsistence, the animals furnishing in emergencies fresh meat in plenty and fourth the sale of the animals in the new diggings will add a large item to the pocket of the owner.

De Rosier will butcher the animals when he arrives at his destination with the freight and will sell the meat to the miners, who beyond any doubt will welcome the advent of such a delicacy. In butchering the animals after they have taken his freight through, De Rosier may transgress a rule of gratitude, but the uses of the reindeer in this country both for purpose of food and travel pardons it in all men's eyes.

The reindeer will await De Rosier at Unalaklik where they have been taken by Eskimo drivers in the employ of the musher with the economic idea. De Rosier is in Nome at the present time and expects to leave here with his goods as soon as possible and will begin transferring them with the deer when there is sufficient fall of snow to make it possible.

Historic trails course

In what may be a first-of-its-kind effort, the National Park Service's National Trails Intermountain Region staff and the University of New Mexico history department partnered to present, last fall, a semester-long National Historic Trails course for 18 undergraduate students, with majors ranging from history, geography and anthropology to criminology, geology and film.

The 16-week course was designed to provide students with a grounding in the historiography of the American West, featuring readings and class discussion about history, cultural identities, economics and politics.

After the introductory class sessions, students plunged into the wide-ranging reading list, often selecting and debating articles based on their own specific interests. The academic focus was balanced by visits from the Park Service staff who offered real world perspectives on trail history, interpretation, presentation and other issues in trail administration.

The second half of the course emphasized the practical research and interpretive skills needed by public historians. Given New Mexico's location, where the Santa Fe, Old Spanish and El Camino Real deTierra Adentro National Historic Trails and Route 66 have significant mileage, most students chose to focus their work on a New Mexico-based trail.

All the students reported a highly positive experience with the course and welcomed the new perspective on American history available through the lens of our national historic trails. One student said, "It broadened my perspective on public history and how important it is to bring history to the public eye." Another student said, "It is a very different way of thinking about history from what you are taught in other classes."

The course will be given again in the 2019-2020 school year in the history department, after which the course will move to another university department, furthering the interdisciplinary goals of the course.

Walking boosts immune system

Want to keep away colds and the flu? Walking is a tonic for boosting your immune system. According to a study at Appalachian State University of North Carolina, a brisk walk for about 30 to 45 minutes a day can increase the number of immune system cells in your body. Dr. David Nieman of the University, who conducted the research, has studied the effects of exercise, diet, weight, gender and education levels on people's health at the University. In his findings he said that "regular aerobic exercise, five or more days a week, for 20 minutes a day, rises above all other lifestyle factors in lowering sick days during the winter and fall cold and flu seasons."

