

2020 Statewide Trails Conference Keynote and Breakout Details



THURSDAY KEYNOTE SESSION:

Title: Interactive Story Maps For Trails

Date/Time: Thursday, April 23rd, 9:15 – 9:45 AM

Presenter: Cameron Sanders

Description: Trails, photos, maps and stories all come together in this innovative format. **More details soon**



Breakout Sessions – Thursday, April 23rd, 10:00 AM – 11:15 AM

TRACK: TRAIL DESIGN / LAYOUT

Title: Sustainable Trails 101

Presenter: Jon Underwood – *Owner, Happy Trails - Fairbanks*

Description: This is a condensed version of the introductory course on sustainable trail building from Alaska Trails. Come and see what it takes to make the great trails that you have been using all these years. This class will emphasize sustainable design elements, trail planning, and management concepts for all trail enthusiasts.

TRACK: ADVOCACY and FUNDING

Title: Grant Funding Sources for Trails

Presenters: Katie Sechrist – *State of Alaska ADF&G, Pittman / Robertson*

Miles Brookes – *FHWA*

Ricky Gease – *Alaska State Parks Director*

Wes Hoskins – *Executive Director – Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation*

Description: As state coffers continue to shrink, funding sources for trails are even more important. Knowing where dollars can come from is important. Panelists will discuss various government and private grant programs that have funded trails and could provide funding for future projects. Grant programs to be discussed include: the Recreational Trail Program, the Pittman-Robertson Fund, Mat-Su Trails and Parks Foundation and the Kenai Mountain Turnagain Arm Heritage Area.

TRACK: PARTNERSHIPS

Title: USFS - National Crosscut and Chainsaw Program

Presenters: Pete Duncan – *National Saw Program Manager, SPTAG Chair*

Austin O'Brien – *Alaska Region Saw Program Manager*

Description: The new Forest Service saw policy directs the use of chainsaws and crosscut saws on National Forest System lands. Forest Service employees, volunteers, partners, and other cooperators can now access consistent training, evaluation, and certification. A highlight of the new policy enables volunteer, partner, and cooperator groups to train, evaluate, and certify their members. The Forest Service National Saw Program and the National Saw Technical Advisory Group (SPTAG) leads implementation of the new policy.



Joint Session – Thursday, April 23rd, 11:30-12:15

The Trails Conference will be joining forces with the Rocky Mountain State Parks Executive Conference (RMSPEC), which is being hosted in Anchorage by Alaska State Parks. This session will introduce the two conferences and give a brief description of the joint presentations that will encompass the next breakout sessions, which will be interactive discussions including presentations from participants from both conferences.

Breakout Sessions (with RMSPEC) – Thursday, April 23rd, 12:45 PM – 2:00PM

TRACK: TRAIL DESIGN / LAYOUT

Title: Mountain Biking – Construction and Marketing
Presenter: Maeve Nevins-Lavtar – *Municipality of Anchorage*
Jon Underwood – *Owner, Happy Trails - Fairbanks*

Description: Mountain biking is taking off in many areas of the country. Residents and tourists are reaping the benefits of these new trails. Presenters will highlight recent projects and ideas that are working to connect trails, trail users and to get the word out about mountain biking trails in Alaska.

TRACK: CONSTRUCTION / OPERATIONS / MAINTENANCE

Title: Volunteers – How best to use them on Trails
Presenters: Kristen Mrozowski – *Trails Technician - Alaska Trails*

Description: Join Alaska Trails staff as they share their experiences organizing meaningful volunteer opportunities. Discussion will include what goes into the partnership before volunteers ever show up, how to align expectations for success, recruiting volunteers and keeping them coming back. This session is intended for anyone involved with volunteer projects, whether you're an agency partner, fundraiser or one of the volunteers on the ground. Come share your ideas.

TRACK: ADVOCACY and FUNDING

Title: Outdoor Recreation and its Economic Benefits
Presenters: Lee Hart – *Alaska Outdoor Alliance*
Chris Beck – *Board Member Alaska Trails*

Description: The Alaska Trails Initiative and the Alaska Outdoor Alliance are both working to highlight and enhance the economic engine that trails represent for Alaska. Other states and other countries are outpacing



Alaska's effort to be a trail destination. Join the discussion and bring your ideas on how best to change that.

TRACK: PARTNERSHIPS

Title: [Trail Solutions - Partnerships](#)

Presenters: [Annie DuBois](#) – *City of Anchorage, Youth Employment in Parks Program Coordinator*
[Brad Muir](#) – *City of Anchorage,*
[Meredith Gutierrez](#) – *Anchorage Park Foundation, Youth Engagement Coordinator*

Description: The **Youth Employment in Parks** (YEP) program is entering its 14th year. This innovative collaboration between the Anchorage Park Foundation and the City of Anchorage involves many partners. YEP is a ten-week summer program that hires Anchorage teens ages 16-19 years old to work on park improvement projects. Teens learn valuable natural resource management job skills and engage in relevant education/recreation opportunities to increase their civic engagement, environmental awareness, and leadership skills. YEP provides a meaningful first-time job opportunity while creating future stewards of public lands.

TRACK: TECHNICAL SKILLS

Title: [Rigging for Trails](#)

Presenters: [Blaine Smith](#) – *Trails Specialist*

Description: A brief introduction and overview of rigging and Griphoist training for trail workers. This breakout will give an overview of mechanical advantage, familiarizing attendees with Griphoists and other rigging equipment, and what it takes to set up different rigging systems for trail work.

[Breakout Sessions – Thursday, April 23rd, 2:30 PM – 3:15PM](#)

TRACK: TRAIL DESIGN AND LAYOUT

Title: [Healing Trails - Labyrinths](#)

Presenters: [Maeve Nevins-Lavtar](#) – *Senior Park Planner, City of Anchorage*



Description: COMING SOON

TRACK: CONSTRUCTION / OPERATIONS / MAINTENANCE

Title: AK HUTS

Presenters:

Description: Alaska Mountain and Wilderness Huts Association is a system of linked backcountry huts offering diverse wilderness experiences and educational opportunities to the general public. Outfitted with mattresses, a fully outfitted kitchen, firewood, and propane for cooking, guests only need to bring food, a sleeping bag, and warm clothes. AK Huts hope is to use these experiences to educate visitors on the natural world and inspire the next generation of land stewards.

TRACK: ADVOCACY and FUNDING

Title: [The Business of Trails](#)

Presenters: [Lee Hart](#) – *Founder, Alaska Outdoor Alliance*

Description: Trails and their users generate substantial economic benefits from tourism, events, healthcare savings and community development. For more than 20 years, states, cities, and national organizations across America have been documenting the economic impacts of trails. While similar studies in Alaska are scarce, governments, grant makers and voters are increasingly expecting such information to help set priorities and allocate resources. As demands increase for shrinking pools of funding, how well will your organization compete? Learn what other trail advocates are doing to prove that investing in trails makes good cents.

TRACK: PARTNERSHIPS

Title: [Leave No Trace: Hotspot Training Coming to AK in 2020](#)

Presenters: [Kevin Keeler](#) – *BLM Alaska*

Description: The Leave No Trace Hot Spot program is designed to help educate people on how to reduce impacts on nature while enjoying our nation's shared outdoor places. This is the first time it has come to Alaska. The training will take place - July 20-27, 2020 on Crow Pass, a 24 mile section of the Iditarod National Historic Trail system that passes through Chugach State Park, Chugach National Forest and the Eagle River



Nature Center. The Crow Pass section is within a one-hour drive of half of the population of the state of Alaska and is one of the most popular overnight, long-distance hikes in Alaska. High use and inexperienced use has led to a variety of impacts including litter, human waste and natural resource damage being channelized into the narrow valley.

Joint Session – Thursday, April 23rd, 3:30 PM – 5:00 PM

Title: TRAIL PROJECT ROUNDTABLE

Presenters: Jared Zimmerman –
Joe Meehan – *State of Alaska, Refuge Manager*
Jon Underwood – *Owner, Happy Trails*
Gabe Travis –
Alan McClain –
Kristen Mrozowski – *Moderator – Alaska Trails, Trails Technician*

Description: This joint session will highlight and showcase trail projects from a variety of land managers across the state. Trail builders and managers will share projects that they've recently taken on and discuss the successes and challenges that come along with them. This is also a great opportunity to connect the people who manage trails to the places where the trails you enjoy are, as you'll get an idea of operations for different areas across the state.

SOCIAL HOUR – Thursday, April 23rd, 5:30 PM – 8:00 PM

Please join conference attendees for some FUN times at the
Anchorage Brewing Company
Have a free beer on Alaska Trails and continue the conversation
And enjoy a special edition of **TRAIL TALES**



KEYNOTE SESSION – Friday, April 24th, 9:00 AM – 9:30 AM

Title: Congressional Update from Senator Murkowski's Office

Presenter: TBD

Description: COMING SOON

Breakout Sessions – Friday, April 24th, 9:45 AM – 10:45 AM

TRACK: TRAIL DESIGN and LAYOUT

Title: Wet Crossings in the Age of Extreme Weather

Presenter: Gabe Travis– *Co-owner, Interior Trails*

Description: "100-year floods" have become more frequent events and extreme weather creates soggy situations on trails across the state. We'll discuss a range of options for crossing wet ground, with a couple recent projects as case studies.

TRACK: CONSTRUCTION / OPERATIONS / MAINTENANCE

Title: Emergency Backcountry Response

Presenters: Paul Fussey– *Search and Rescue Coordinator - Alaska State Troopers, Dept. of Public Safety*

Description: The Alaska State Troopers conduct over 450 search and rescue operations across Alaska every



year. How can you avoid being one of these numbers? Join Alaska’s Search and Rescue Coordinator as he discusses how to safely travel on trails all across Alaska. From trip plans, to gearing up, find out how you can prepare you and your friends to get where you are going safely and return safely. Learn what happens when you do need rescue and the coordinated effort involved with Search and Rescue.

TRACK: ALASKA TRAILS INITIATIVE (ATI)

Title: Trails Investment Strategy: Ambitious Goals, Accomplishments So Far, Next Steps

Presenters: [Wes Hoskins](#) (*Mat Su Park & Trail Foundation*)
[Lynne Brandon](#) (*Sitka Trail Works*)
[Erik Boraas & Chris Beck](#) (*Board Members Alaska Trails*)
[Diana Rhoades](#) (*Anchorage Park Foundation*)

[Bonnie Quill](#) - Mat Su CVB

Description: Alaska has underinvested in trails for decades. Working with our core team and other partners we’ve produced an ambitious first draft “Trails Investment Strategy”. In this session we’ll open up the major recommendations of that document for discussion. We want to hear what you like, what you question, and what are the most practical strategies to dramatically expand political support and funding for “more and better trails” in Alaska. (Draft to be available at Alaska Trails website in mid April.)

TRACK: ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

Title: [Connect Anchorage – and what it can mean for other AK communities](#)

Presenters: [Karol Fink](#) – *State of Alaska*
[Diana Rhodes](#) – *Anchorage Park Foundation*

Description: Presenters will highlight the health benefits of trails and detail a new project from the Anchorage Park Foundation to promote trails. Come share your community trail ideas.

[Breakout Sessions – Friday, April 24th, 11:00 AM – 12:00 pm](#)

TRACK: TRAIL DESIGN / LAYOUT

Title: Sustainable Design Limits



Presenter: Mike Shields – Trail Consultant

Description: Topics covered in this session include: Discussion of where, when, and why some elements of “Sustainable Trail Design” may not work as they’re supposed to, or be constrained by other trail needs. Can such failures be anticipated before layout and construction, and are there ways to compensate for the absence of a given design element? Are there any effective corrective actions available when such failures occur after construction?

TRACK: CONSTRUCTION / OPERATIONS / MAINTENANCE

Title: Climate Change Impacts on Trails

Presenters: TBD

Description: COMING SOON

TRACK: TRAILS IINITIATIVE

Title: Statewide Trails Policies – Need for new and improved statewide solutions

Presenters: Kirk Hoessle – Alaska Wildland Adventures

Representative – USFS

Alison Arians –DNR, Division of Forestry

Ricky Gease – Alaska DNR, Director Division of Parks & Outdoor Recreation

Chris Beck - Moderator – Alaska Trails Board

Description: More commercial guides on public trails? New partnerships between timber management and trails? Strategies to clear up the backlog of trail reservations applications on state general use lands? Better ways to fund trail construction and maintenance? This panel will review progress to improve trail policies that apply statewide (as opposed to projects). Come and share your ideas about critical policy issues and strategies for progress.

TRACK: ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

Title: Non-Motorized Transportation Plan Update



Presenters: Joni Wilm - *Senior Transportation Planner, AMATS*

Description: The Non-motorized Plan (NMP) provides the vision for a non-motorized network within the Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions (AMATS) area that when implemented, will help residents travel more safely and efficiently throughout the AMATS planning area without the need of a motor vehicle in all seasons. The NMP merges bicycle, pedestrian and shared use pathways planning efforts. By addressing these topics together, a more comprehensive framework and vision for active transportation in the AMATS Planning area is developed.

Breakout Sessions – Friday, April 24th, 1:00 PM – 2:15 PM

TRACK: TRAIL DESIGN / LAYOUT

Title: How to Break Rock

Presenter: Mike Shields – *Trail Consultant*

Description: A quick overview of rock mechanics (formation, types, density, strength and hardness, uniformity, dis-continuities, weathering and pre-fracturing) whether as a boulder or bedrock; what kind of breakage do you want (wall slabs vs gravel); the various means of obtaining that breakage (hammers, jackhammers, rock drills, non-explosive “busters”, high explosives, expansive cements, and wedge-and-feathers); and how does rock react to those means.. If you’ve ever hammered on a “boulder” for 20 minutes to no effect, this class will explain why that happens.

TRACK: CONSTRUCTION / OPERATIONS / MAINTENANCE

Title: User Satisfaction & the Perception of Sustainability

Presenters: TBD

Description: Many local trails are in poor condition, but have high intensity use patterns and loaded public opinion factors. We'll talk about lessons learned on various projects and how to balance resource protection with users' needs, as well as the need for public education.

TRACK: TRAILS IINITIATIVE



Title: Trail Towns – Connections to Community Economic Health & Quality of Life

Presenters: Lia Slemons – *KMTA National Heritage Area*
Mandy Hawes – *Alyeska Resort*
Amanda Moser – *Anchorage Downtown Partnership*

Description: “Trail towns” is the name given to a growing national movement where communities work collaboratively to guide and benefit from trails passing within and through their towns. Initial work is underway with communities between Seward and Anchorage to help these communities explore options to take more advantage of existing and planned trail expansions. This session will share work in progress on the Trails Towns process, and opportunities and outcomes of the Trail Towns approach.

TRACK: ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

Title: Bike Promotion at UAA and Beyond
Presenters: TBD

Description: COMING SOON

Full Conference Session Friday 2:30-4:30

Title: ATI Project Recommendations: **Seward-Fairbanks Adventure Corridor & SE Alaska**

Presenters: Tim Charnon/*Iditarod* – Chugach National Forest
Mark Spano – *Chugach State Park/CSP Advisory Board*
Diana Rhoades - *Anchorage Park Foundation*
Lynne Brandon – *Sitka Trails Works*

Description: The heart of the Trail Investment Strategy is a set of proposed investments in trail projects that can make a real difference – in our economy, our quality of life. These priorities were developed working with teams in different areas of Alaska. Representatives of these teams will open discussions about the specific improvements proposed, the benefits they’ll bring and reach conclusions on how we can best work together to get them funded and built.



KEYNOTE SESSION – Saturday, April 25th, 9:15 AM – 9:45 AM

Title: Why Trails Matter?

Presenter: TBD

Description: COMING SOON

Breakout Sessions – Saturday April 25th, 9:45 AM – 10:45 AM

TRACK: MOUNTAIN BIKES

Title: A Plan for Mountain Bike Trails in Alaska

Presenters: TBD

Description: Coming Soon

