



2014 Alaska News



Visitors enjoy walking along Pullen Creek in Skagway, Alaska.
Photo: Taiya Inlet Watershed Council

2013 Nationwide Partnership Success

1,357 Miles of Trail Developed

736 Miles of River Conserved

20,270 Acres of Open Space and
Parkland Protected

ABOUT US

The Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance program is the community assistance arm of the National Park Service. Program staff provide technical assistance to community groups, nonprofits, Native organizations, and local, state, and federal government agencies working to protect natural areas and water resources and enhance close-to-home outdoor recreation opportunities. We help communities plan, organize partnerships, and achieve on-the-ground success on projects communities initiate.

Recent Success

Skagway's Pullen Creek StreamWalk

Skagway, Alaska is considered the gateway to the Gold Rush of 1898 and home to the northern unit of Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park. As a major cruise stop, the number of pedestrians walking between the waterfront and historic district can exceed 10,000 a day during summer months.

In 2009, the Municipality of Skagway Borough (Municipality), Taiya Inlet Watershed Council (TIWC), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Klondike Gold Rush decided to work together to create the Pullen Creek StreamWalk, a 0.6-mile walking path with interpretive signs tying together historical and natural history points between the waterfront and the Skagway Historic District. In 2011, the TIWC applied for NPS Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance program support with the trail project. A conceptual plan for the trail was completed by Corvus Design in the fall of 2012.

In winter 2013, the NPS Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance program and community partners explored jointly applying for a new Federal Lands Access Program grant. The Municipality agreed to take on trail maintenance responsibility and Klondike Gold Rush provided matching funds. In spring 2013, the project was awarded nearly \$1.9 million dollars to complete planning, design, and construction of the entire trail.

Klondike Gold Rush Superintendent, Mike Tranel, said, "The NPS Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance program was instrumental in the community's preparations to obtain the Access Program funding."

Current Projects

1. Delta Junction Community Trails

Project Partners: City of Delta Junction, Delta Greely School District, Alaska State Parks, Deltana Fair Board, the Salcha/Big Delta Soil and Water Conservation District

Location: Delta Junction

NPS Contacts: Lisa Holzapfel, Heather Rice

Project Goal

Develop a community-wide trail system and trail organization to encourage healthy lifestyles, tourism, and enhanced public safety while protecting public access to trails, land, and water.

“We all want to thank the NPS Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance program for your fabulous help with our kick-off event and beyond! We are so lucky.”

- Mindy Eggleston, Delta Junction Trails Association



Partners in Delta Junction, Alaska, smile as they start the planning process for a community-wide trail system. Photo: NPS

NPS Role

Help project partners develop their organization, analyze issues and opportunities, engage partners and stakeholders, inventory community resources, identify funding sources, and conduct community outreach.

Project Goal

Engage Effie Kokrine Charter School students in park planning, trail development, watershed education, and conservation, botany, and related landscape restoration projects.

NPS Role

Guide partners through the planning process, including community outreach, development of an action plan, site analysis, and creation of concept drawings.

2. Fairbanks Peirce Park

Project Partners: Effie Kokrine Early College Charter School, Fairbanks North Star Borough Parks and Recreation Department, NPS, Tanana Valley Watershed Association, Project One Tree

Location: Fairbanks

NPS Contacts: Lisa Holzapfel, Heather Rice



Planning area for Peirce Park project in Fairbanks, Alaska, showing existing trails as yellow lines. Map: Fairbanks North Star Borough and the NPS

Current Projects cont.

3. Homer Kachemak Bay Water Trail

Project Partners: Homer and Seldovia Cities and Chambers of Commerce, Alaska State Parks, NOAA Kasitsna Bay Lab, Homer Wilderness Leadership, Cook Inlet Keeper, Alaska Trails, Homer Soil and Water Conservation District, Kachemak Bay Research Reserve
Location: Homer
NPS Contacts: Lisa Holzapfel, Heather Rice

Project Goal

Develop a water trail from Homer, to the head of Kachemak Bay, south to Seldovia, reflecting the vision: "Adventure Beyond the End of the Road - a 125-mile water trail that inspires exploration, understanding, and stewardship for the natural treasure that is Kachemak Bay."

NPS Role

Help partners implement their vision and create a strategic plan for the trail, identify funding sources, expand the network of partners, conduct community outreach, and help evaluate potential water trail sites.

4. Homer Poopdeck Platt Park

Project Partners: Kachemak Heritage Land Trust, Homer Soil and Water Conservation District, City of Homer, South Peninsula Behavioral Services, Cook Inlet Regional Corporation, West Homer Elementary School
Location: Homer
NPS Contacts: Lisa Holzapfel, Heather Rice

Project Goal

Develop the Heritage Land Trust property in Homer to benefit the public through trails and open space.

NPS Role

Assist in planning and implementing a community-supported strategy to develop and manage land trust property as public park/open space.



A beautiful view from the Kachemak Heritage Land Trust Poopdeck Platt property in Homer, Alaska. Photo: Marie McCarty

5. Wrangell Trails Link and Extension

Project Partners: City and Borough of Wrangell, Wrangell Public Schools
Location: Wrangell
NPS Contacts: Lisa Holzapfel, Heather Rice

Project Goal

Create trail links between residential areas, open space, and parks to provide physical access from residential to educational and historical areas of town.

NPS Role

Assist in developing a community engagement process and initial trail route evaluations, and provide sustainable trail design training.

6. Youth and Community Engagement with Alaska National Parks

Project Partners: Alaska Geographic, Denali National Park and Preserve
Location: Statewide
NPS Contacts: Lisa Holzapfel, Heather Rice

Project Goal

Engage in the exploration of a strategy to create a model of successful youth and community engagement programs.

NPS Role

Facilitate an exploratory process and strategic planning, define project vision and goals, identify and analyze issues and opportunities, assess and engage partners and stakeholders, and develop a strategy to move forward.



Inventorying trails in the community of Wrangell, Alaska. Photo: NPS

We're Here For You!

Do you have an outdoor recreation or conservation idea for your community? Just ask; we can help! We can walk you through the project step by step. We count on the drive, commitment, and enthusiasm of community members to carry out the project.

Contact us to find out more:

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Communities Can Grow... From A Seed Of An Idea

The premise is simple. Like-minded citizens bring their ideas to an NPS professional who provides guidance to make community-led projects happen.



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PROJECTS AND PARTNERS 2014

