The Tripod

October 2021

Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance, PO Box 2323, Seward AK 99664
http://www.Iditarod100.org IditarodHTA@gmail.com
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 2022 are due by the end of December. As usual members will be sent renewal forms in the U. S. Mail. Feel free to duplicate the renewal forms to recruit new members. This is also a good time to upgrade your membership level.

Every member is an important part of our mission to preserve, protect and promote the Iditarod National Historic Trail.

Annual meeting

The annual meeting of the Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance will be held December 14. Due to COVID it will be a virtual meeting using Zoom. Ballots for election of board members and proxies will be sent to all members. It is important to sign and send in your proxies, even though this is a virtual meeting a quorum is necessary for a legal meeting.

Cabin added to National Register of Historic Places

The keeper of the National Register of Historic Places on August 20, 2021, added the Alaska Road Commission Shelter Cabin (Fritz's Cabin) to the National Register of Historic Places. The cabin, located in the vicinity of Opher, provides direct evidence of association with the development of the Iditarod Trail and its associated sub trials. The historic cabin is a wayside stop outlined in the Iditarod trail multiple property documentation and provides shelter for travelers today who often refer to it as Don's Cabin.

Land Manager Forum

The annual Alaska Trails Land Manager Forum will be held on November 15. More details including agenda, speakers and whether it will be in-person or virtual will be forthcoming. The meeting brings land managers, trail groups, trail builders and trail enthusiasts together to highlight the many successes they have had and share what has worked and what has not. (You can view last years' agenda and some presentations at: https://www.alaskatrails.org/land-manager-forum. Send any questions or ideas for the forum to Steve Cleary (steve.cleary@alaska-trails.org).

Outdoor Recreation Confluence

The 6th Annual Outdoor Recreation Confluence will be an online virtual event held October 26 - 28. The theme this year is Recover and Rebound. Presentations will be short and succinct to maximize opportunities to hear participants views and answer their questions.

The three main issues to be discussed at the meeting will be: Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) revisions, funding opportunities for outdoor recreation, and active transportation infrastructure. Watch the Alaska Outdoor Alliance page for more info: https://www.alaskaoutdooralliance.org

New Head of Bureau of Land Management

The Senate voted to approve the nomination of Tracy Stone-Manning to head the Bureau of Land Management, making her the agency's first confirmed leader in five years. Stone-Manning is a Montana based environmentalist who worked on conservation policy at the National Wildlife Federation. She previously led Montana's Department of Environmental Quality, worked as an aide for Senator John Tester and served as chief of staff for Democratic governor Steve Bullock.

From the past...

"Iditarod Pioneer" September 6, 1914

McPHERSON'S SURVEY PARTY IN IDITAROD

Wearied from a summer's campaign in the wilderness of southern Alaska and the great Kuskokwim valley, a party of surveyors sent out by the Alaska engineering commission, which is surveying the proposed routes for the government railroads, arrived in Iditarod Thursday forenoon. The party is in charge of J. L. McPherson and consists, besides that gentleman of C. P. Dexter, G. G. Blake, K. T. Cheney, Mark Nichols, J. A. Danny, E. Perry, Robert Reed and Joseph Martindale.

The party, which left Knik on June 20, has completed a reconnaissance of the proposed government railroad route, from Knik, located on Cook inlet to McGrath, on the Kuskokwim river and hence to Iditarod. The route was one of those suggested by the Alaska railroad commission and the expedition was for the purpose of gaining information to lay before the President for his guidance in the selection of the routes of the government railroads provided for by the act passed last winter, which placed the authority to determine the routes to be followed and other details in the hands of the chief executive.

Mr. McPherson's orders were to make a reconnaissance of the country between Knik and Iditarod and this has been successfully accomplished. The work of the engineering commission is carried on under three heads: first, the reconnaissance, second, the preliminary survey and third, the survey proper. The reconnaissance is for the purpose of gaining general knowledge of the country to be traversed, with special reference to the location of such physical features as mountain ranges, passes through the same, rivers, and the general character of the country. The preliminary survey, which follows, goes more into detail, mapping definitely the route and obtaining data as to altitudes, grades and other details necessary for the information of the engineers. The final survey will locate definitely the route to be followed by the construction engineers.

The route followed by the party, in the reconnaissance just completed was from Knik to Susitna, hence proceeding thirty miles above Susitna to a crossing of the Kahltna* river, five miles from its mouth, crossing the Yentna river at the mouth of the Skwentna, up the Skwentna valley and Happy river valley, through Rainy pass and down to the South fork of the Kuskokwim river; hence up the north fork to Hartman river and Styx river, and up the latter to Ptarmigan valley. Recrossing the summit at the head of Happy river, at Houston pass (named by Mr. McPherson in honor of Congressman William C. Houston of Tennessee, chairman of the house committee on territories) crossing the old trail down Happy river and up the Moose river, following the headwaters of the Yentna, and recrossing the summit through Simpson pass. The party then proceeded down the Tahini,** to the south fork and down the south fork to Farewell mountain, across the Kuskokwim valley to McGrath, up the Takotna, and down Bonanza creek proceeding hence to Iditarod.

Mr. McPherson discovered a new pass in the Teccolli ***mountains of the Alaska range and called it Teccolli pass. It is situated south of Rainy pass. An area of 30 square miles was examined in this range with a view to locating all possible passes.

*now known as Kahiltna River **now known as Tatina River ***so called in 1898 by J. E. Spurr, US Geological Survey, "because fancied resemblance to the Aztec temples." For his work for the US Geological Survey in Alaska, Mt. Spurr was named for him.

