



The Tripod

Fall 2026

The Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance (Alliance) promotes awareness of the Iditarod National Historic 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, volunteerism and support.

JOIN THE ALLIANCE!

Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance is seeking Board members. We have elections or vacancies for the following seats: representing Norton Sound region, representing the Kenai region, representing Yukon region, and two At-Large seats.

To **nominate a candidate or express your interest**, please email iditarodhta@gmail.com by October 12, 2027.

Ballots will be mailed to all current members in November.

RENEW NOW

Your Alliance membership ends in December. Renewing now provides important support to our mission!



Renew now through our online store:

https://www.iditarod100.org/store/c4/IHTA_Membership.html

SUBMIT YOUR NOMINATIONS!

Do you know someone who deserves to be acknowledged for their contribution to the Iditarod National Historic Trail? Nominate them for the **Golden Tripod Stewardship Award**! This award was specially created by the Alliance to recognize and thank an individual, organization or entity which has significantly contributed to stewardship of the INHT.

Nominations for the 2027 award are open now at <https://tinyurl.com/trailaward>



Baseball in the Tundra

For America's 250th birthday, Alaska is showcasing its unique baseball history. To participate, in 2026 The Tripod is featuring the baseball rivalry between two gold rush towns, as told in the Iditarod Pioneer, Iditarod's local newspaper that ran 1910-1919.

July 29, 1911 FLAT YEARNs FOR PLENTY SATISFY

"Following the walloping handed out by the Iditarod team last Sunday, Flat city is thirsting for revenge and will proceed to jump on the necks of Iditaroders tomorrow afternoon, if they don't dance the life out of them tonight. They complained last week that the walk tired them when they came in last Sunday, but if that Flat bunch gets a chance at our team tonight you might just as well kiss your bet goodbye—they will look like a bunch of ambulance candidates tomorrow.

"But as we were saying, that game Sunday was a pippin. The Flat team came in dressed up like the Red Sox and they looked like a glorious Italian sunset. They pranced out on the diamond and [proceeded] gracefully enough to take a beating while the sidelines roared and fielders did light some somersaults over [tussocks], or poked holes in the atmosphere with great vim and eclat. The final score was somewhere between 13 and 15 to 5, —nobody seems to remember just which, but it was generally acknowledged that Flat was the loser. Teddy Heacock Umpired the slaughter and he had to keep his eyes peeled, for sometimes there were as many as 8 fielders after a ball and three of them falling down at the same time.

"This was not the fault of the players, however, but the fault of the grounds, and it contributed to the entire enjoyment of the occasion. There were some cranks there who demanded fastball, but they were told that the grounds wouldn't permit it, and were requested to beat it while the wind was with them. It was fun the crowd wanted and fun they got.

"Tonight, everyone will dance at Flat to the success of the ball club. Our team will be there and tomorrow they will try to beat Flat again. If they don't, we hope they will at least give everyone a good time as Flat gave this city." ♦

This entire article can be viewed online, along with the Iditarod Pioneer newspaper archive, at:
<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn95060032/>

Unalakleet Volunteers Haul Cabin Materials

In March, BLM staff were scheduled to tow lumber by snow machine out to Tripod Flats Cabin, an emergency shelter along the Iditarod Trail. Minus 40 temps, plus windchill, made the trip impossible. BLM still hoped to do the maintenance later that year, but the lumber was stuck in Unalakleet. Without the winter trail, the only way to get materials to the cabin would be via costly helicopter. Then, **volunteers stepped up and hauled the materials** to the cabin on a rainy day in mid-April. The Alliance covered equipment costs and fuel. The crew reported that when they made the trip, the river was starting to break up, so it was truly the last chance of the season. ♦

Spotted Along the Trail

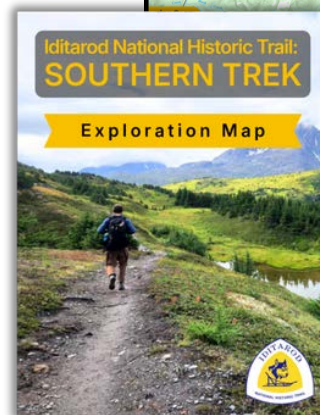


This summer, volunteers created and installed this heavy duty sign (*left*). It marks a lesser-known trailhead for INHT (*photo, below*). Do you know where this sign is located?

(Answer, p. 3)



Southern Trek map detail



GOT YOUR MAP?

Be sure to pick up your free map showcasing all the new and planned trail work for the INHT **Southern Trek trails**, Girdwood to Seward. Copies are available at several locations from Anchorage through Seward. It can also be ordered through the [IHTA webstore](https://www.iditarod100.org/support-us.html) for a \$3.00 shipping fee. While supplies last!

Iditarod 'Trail Breakers' Clear Extreme Trees

Thank you to the crew of six volunteers who spent nearly two weeks on the ground in February preparing the trail in advance of the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race. Three of those days were spent clearing eight miles of tree blow-down in the Farewell Lake area between the checkpoints of Rohn and Nikolai. Recent wildfires in the Farewell area have left trees extra vulnerable to storm damage. **Removing the stacked and tangled trees opened the trail** for all trail users.

Iditarod Trail Committee managed the project. The Alliance funded trail maintenance supplies, travel and fuel costs. Volunteers used their personal snowmachines for the 12-day hitch. ♦

WILL YOU HELP US CLEAR THE TRAIL?

Every dollar makes a difference. Here are **two ways you can support** Iditarod National Historic Trail:

- ♦ Donate online at www.iditarod100.org/support-us.html
- ♦ Give to our long-term fund at Alaska Community Foundation at <https://tinyurl.com/IHTAfund>

Your donations directly support the Alliance. We help volunteers pay for gas in their snowmachines and sharp blades on their chainsaws. Our volunteers are awesome, and YOUR support helps make it possible!

TRAILS NATIONWIDE

The Partnership for the National Trails System (PNTS) has a **new website!**

<https://pnts.org/>

PNTS works with trail organizations and partners nationwide to use our collective voice to advocate for the preservation of our National Trails System and to advance National Trails System priorities. Iditarod National Historic Trail is one of their featured partner trails.

THANKS REI!

REI Co-op is donating **one million dollars** to America's national trails this year - and some of those dollars have come to Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance! We were proud to represent Iditarod National Historic Trail at REI's Anchorage store in September for National Public Lands Day.

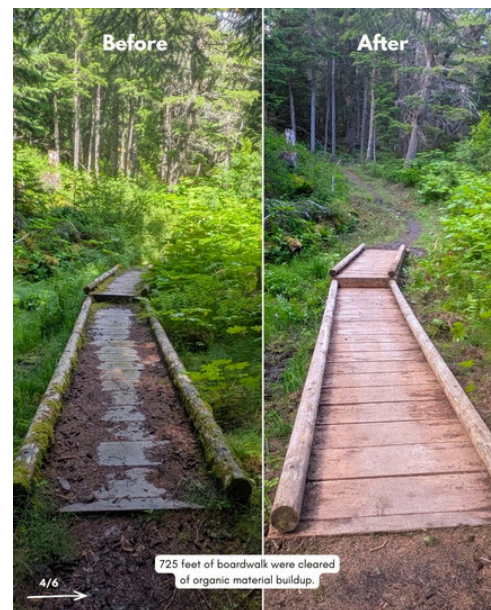
Maintaining Rainforest Trails

This summer, Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance helped sponsor **trail improvements** on approximately 10 miles of Iditarod National Historic Trail between Seward and Moose Pass. This region of the trail traverses a *temperate coastal rainforest* ecosystem. Upwards of 70 inches of rainfall per year means brush grows fast and wet trail and flooding are common.

A professional trail crew from Alaska Trails cleared brush, roots, and debris from the Meridian Lake trail. Volunteer work days, also organized by Alaska Trails, assisted the effort. Crews improved drainage by clearing culverts and trailside ditches of accumulated debris. They also removed leaf litter from 725 feet of boardwalk, lengthening the lifespan of these trail assets. *(Two sets of before and after photos, top right; Alaska Trails.)*

Seward Iditarod Trail Blazers volunteers patched up soft trail sections and deep, water-filled potholes with gravel, logs, & erosion control mesh. Water damage is an ongoing concern on the low section of trail between Nash Road and Bear Lake. More work is needed. *(Before and after photos, above lower; Seward Iditarod Trail Blazers.)*

The partially-repaired trail between Nash Road and Bear Lake is popular for ATVs. It's locally known as Tiehacker Trail, a nod to the history of railroad workers who fabricated rail ties from trees during the construction of the Alaska Central Railway in the early 1900's. As the Iditarod Trail was initially a winter trail, it was used when frozen and thus did not provide the same challenges to mushers as it does to summer recreators (and trail maintenance volunteers!) today. ♦



OLD TRAIL, NEW SIGNS

Spotted Along the Trail: The newest sign on the Iditarod Trail can be found on Nash Road in Seward, just after Sawmill Creek at MP 2.0. This section of trail, which follows the valley floor, is popular with ATVs. Thanks to the volunteers at Seward Trail Blazers for designing, making and installing this sign! *(photo, "Spotted" p. 2)*

COMING UP:

The Alliance is hosting a 2-day workshop in November for trail supporters, managers, and users to discuss what work is needed next for the Iditarod Trail.

To learn more, attend, or propose a project, please email iditarodhta@gmail.com

The Tripod is released quarterly. Look for Alliance news updates, upcoming events and meetings, and more on our Facebook page and via email. To be added to our email contact list, please send a request to iditarodHTA@gmail.com

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A 501(c)(3) non-profit organization
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