



ON THE PAPER TRAIL

NEWS FOR SITKA TRAIL WORKS MEMBERS

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Cross Trail - Construction Progress

After resolution of the ten-month process of Cross Trail Phase 6 contract development, a contract with the City & Borough of Sitka was finalized and signed at the end of November 2019. STW's Trail Foreman, Troy Bayne, began work the same month.

Construction of the 2.6-mile trail is now in its sixth month with several breaks due to snow or wind. Sitka has experienced an inordinate amount of rainfall December through February, topping 38.44 inches. The good thing about the rainy weather is that it helps us to evaluate and properly size drainage structures.



A March 2020 photo of a new portion of Cross Trail currently under construction near the Old Sitka boat launch parking lot.

Work is being completed from both the Granite Creek side with the Harbor Mountain connection and from the Old Sitka Boat Launch parking lot. So far three bridges have been completed and 3,682 feet of trail rocked. Additionally, approximately 400 feet have been pioneered or cleared and are ready for rock. The Granite Creek Road access point, through the back of the quarry, had to be upgraded for truck traffic and use as a staging area. The City donated raw rock that was crushed for the trail subbase for additional match.

Sitka Trail Works hopes to complete the Cross Trail project by the end of 2021. Thanks to the City of Sitka for their work to help get the project started and for \$50,000 in match from the Commercial Passenger Excise Tax. We also appreciate the Rasmuson Foundation and our members for contributing \$142,000 towards the project match. The total grant and match raised by STW for the Phase 6 project is over \$2.1 million.

*Show your support and love of Sitka's trails,
donate and become a member today!*

Scenes from Cross Trail Construction



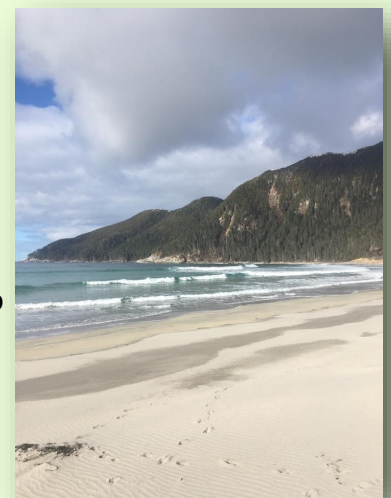
Above: Dump truck delivers rocks in Dec. 2019 **Right:** Trail crew member Tyler Case unloads wattles for storm water control

State Marine Park - Sea Lion Cove Trail Project

Sitka Trail Works applied for funding to repair the Sea Lion Cove Trail through the Recreation Trails Program for the third time. This year State Parks staff, the ORTAB volunteer board, and Federal Highways approved grant funds for the project. Trail Mix, Juneau's non-profit trail organization, planned to complete the work this summer but due to the Governor's COVID-19 health mandate requiring a two-week quarantine following travel, their Director opted to push the timeline back to 2021. The project status is now "pending" since we had to apply to Federal Highways for a grant extension.

The Sea Lion Cove Trail was last upgraded in 1998 and received additional maintenance in 2001. Since the last major upgrade occurred 20 years ago many of the wood structures are at the end of their functional life span. A recent hiker described the trail as "treacherous." Damage is occurring as a result of a high level of use and erosion from successive heavy rainfall storms over the last few years. Performing basic repairs will allow for safe use of the trail by average hikers as well as older small cruise ship or independent charter visitors.

Sea Lion Cove State Marine Park trail repair project will improve trail tread resulting in a safer trail surface. Grant funds will be used for labor, materials & supplies, remote camp, and marine transportation to this site 2.5 hours by boat from Sitka.



Support Sitka Trail Works

Join or renew your membership today!
All STW memberships are 100% tax deductible

Alaska Trails Initiative

Since 2018 STW's Director has been working with a coalition of trails organizations from around the state collaborating on the Alaska Trail Initiative, in an effort to spur decision-makers and leaders to invest more in the trails we love. People and communities across Alaska recognize that outdoor recreation supports health, contributes to a high quality of life and—perhaps most importantly— drives spending that supports business, creates jobs and generates tax revenue that pays for schools and other public services. Investing in outdoor infrastructure attracts employers, residents, retirees, and skilled workforce, ensuring those *(continued p 4)*

Summer 2020 - Event Highlights

Changes to Hike Calendar

Due to public health concerns surrounding the COVID-19 coronavirus, we are offering a condensed hike schedule, currently listed on page 4. We presently hope to begin events on June 6. However, in the event that we need to change or cancel some or all hikes, we will post notices on our website www.sitkatrailworks.org & elsewhere. Please stay tuned!

Kruzof Bike Trip

This August, we'll offer a mountain bike & hike trip on Kruzof Island. The bicycle portion will begin at Mud Bay & continue six miles to Iris Meadows. From Iris Meadows, participants will switch over to hiking 1.3 miles to Shelikof Bay. Guests will return along the same route at the end of the day. While the mountain bike portion is moderate in difficulty it is technical. The road has larger rocks than you might be used to from Cross Trail & some water diversion dips. We highly recommend getting your mountain bike professionally checked at Yellow Jersey before the event & that you carry a repair kit.



Board of Directors Member Changes

We recently said goodbye to Gio Villanueva, our long-time Board of Directors Secretary, who departed Sitka for new adventures. Dawn Johnson is taking over as Secretary and Doug Osborne joins the board in the interim until elections this fall.



Doug Osborne M.A. works as a Health Educator at SEARHC and is President of the Sitka Cycling Club. Since 2003 Doug has lived, worked, walked, and biked in Sitka. Before that he lived in Anchorage where he attended Alaska Pacific University. Originally from Illinois, Doug has a Bachelors Degree in Social Work and currently is a League of American Bicyclists League Certified Instructor. Current interests include preventing injuries promoting physical activity, and creating a transportation system that is healthy, equitable and sustainable.

Alaska Trails Initiative, continued

communities thrive economically and socially. More than one job in ten in Alaska is tied to tourism and outdoor recreation spending. Smart investments could further grow this dynamic sector; good planning can make sure we grow while maintaining the quality of our natural settings and communities.

Specific goals for the Alaska Trails Initiative and the investments identified in the Statewide Trails Investment Strategy include 1) build a stronger, more durable Alaska economy, particularly at this critical time when AK needs both near term jobs and investments to create lasting, diversified economic health; 2) attract and retain residents, businesses, retirees; 3) make it easier and more inviting to lead active, healthy lives; 4) help expand diversity in outdoor recreation users; 5) guide growth to help sustain what makes Alaska unique.

The complete document may be found at: <https://www.alaska-trails.org/alaska-trails-initiative>

SITKA TRAIL WORKS 2020 HIKES & EVENTS CALENDAR

| <i>Date</i> | <i>Hike Info (total distance)</i> | <i>Meeting Spot</i> | <i>Donations / Ticket</i> |
|-------------------------------|---|---|---|
| June 6 - SATURDAY | National Trails Day Volunteer Trail Maintenance | Trail TBA Time TBA | Volunteers & board members welcome! Additional info will be posted to sitkatrailworks.org |
| June 9-12 - TUE to FRI | Alaska Walk & Bike Virtual Conference 2020 | Agenda & Registration Information - Coming soon to: https://akwalkbikeconference.eventsmart.com/ | |
| June 13 - SATURDAY | Indian River Waterfall 9 miles Moderate difficulty | Indian River / Cross Trail Trailhead (by Indian River Rd. & Yaw Dr.) 9:00 AM | FREE Membership Donations Welcome |
| June 28 - SUNDAY | Mt. Edgecumbe Hike 14 miles Strenuous last mile to summit | Depart Crescent Harbor 7:00 AM Depart Fred's Creek 5:45 PM | \$110 (+ tax) - Purchase Online at sitkatrailworks.org Tickets Available May 28th! |
| July 11 - SATURDAY | Gavan Hill to Harbor Mtn. 6 miles Strenuous uphill climb | Sitka High Cross Trail Trailhead (by Performing Arts Center) 9:00 AM | FREE Membership Donations Welcome |
| July 26 - SUNDAY | Lake Eva 3.5 miles Moderate difficulty | Depart Crescent Harbor 10:00 AM Depart Hanus Bay 5:00 PM | \$110 (+ tax) - Purchase Online at sitkatrailworks.org Tickets Available May 28th! |
| August 2 - SUNDAY | Mt. Edgecumbe Hike 14 miles Strenuous last mile to summit | Depart Crescent Harbor 7:00 AM Depart Fred's Creek 5:45 PM | \$110 (+ tax) - Purchase Online at sitkatrailworks.org Tickets Available May 28th! |
| August 9 - SUNDAY | Mud Bay to Iris Meadows Bike + Hike to Shelikof 12 miles bike + 2.6 miles hike Moderate Difficulty Technical Bike & Easy to Moderate Hike | Depart Crescent Harbor 9:00 AM Depart Mud Bay 4:45 PM | \$110 (+ tax) - Purchase Online at sitkatrailworks.org Tickets Available May 28th! |
| August 15 - SATURDAY | Verstovia 5 miles Strenuous uphill climb | Verstovia Trailhead 9:00 AM | FREE Donations made during this hike will be split 50/50 with Waypoint for Veterans |
| August 22 - SATURDAY | Sitka Half Century - Bike Up to 50 miles bike ride | Additional Information - To be posted at: Sitka Cycling Club - https://sitkacycling.wordpress.com/ | |

Find hikes or become a member at: sitkatrailworks.org