

Huts Update

Alaska Mountain and Wilderness Huts Association



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We're on the
Web!

See us at:
alaskahuts.org

Alive and Well and as Determined as Ever!

Recent press on the fate of funding from Congress left some readers wondering if the Huts Association still had a pulse. Let it be known that the Huts Association has not wavered from its original mission and has never tied federal funding to the continued perseverance of the organization. Furthermore, there is a good chance the funds that disappeared for fire fighting in the Lower 48 in fiscal year 2003 will be replenished in fiscal year 2004. The Huts Association has been in communication with Washington, D.C. on a regular basis and is determined to chase down any possible avenue to restore lost funding and ensure continued support into the future. The Huts Association has also invested many hours into professionally educating the board and committee members on fundraising and is in the process of writing grant applications to fund specific portions of Huts Association activities.

Retreat Looks to the Future

The Huts Association held its 6th Annual Fall Retreat at the Tern Lake Inn near Moose Pass Oct. 3-5, 2003. This was a "work weekend" with much of the discussions concentrating on:

- ❖ alternative routes for the US Forest Service (USFS) to consider;
- ❖ funding strategies (now and in the future);
- ❖ expanding committee related tasks (Education, Outreach, Fundraising, Trails & Facilities, and Planning/Operations); and
- ❖ laying out a calendar for next year's activities.

It is always enjoyable and productive to spend time as a group outside of regular board meetings to discuss the momentum of the organization, get to know the board and volunteers on a personal level, and have a 'hut experience' together. Remember, anyone who would like to be more involved with the organization can participate at the level of a committee, board member, or other volunteer position.

As Always, Thanks!

Welcome! We are eternally grateful for all who have contributed time, money, and expertise to our efforts to establish a hut-to-hut system here in Alaska. We want you to know that your personal and financial investments in this organization are valued and put to the best possible use. Some special thanks are in order.

- ❖ Thank you to Ed Rasmuson for a generous grant to fund a market analysis required by the USFS.
- ❖ Thank you to Alaska Senator Ted Stevens and staff for working to support the future of huts in Alaska.
- ❖ Thank you to volunteers Bev Lewanski, Kevin Dalzell, and Dwayne Adams for fundraising efforts that have already produced results.
- ❖ Thank you to Ray Burger, Bev Lewanski, Matt Peterson, Tucker Spohr, Tim Burford, Jason Kent, Marion Vicary, Kevin Keeler, and board members who flagged trail and followed Jeff Shively's great maps.
- ❖ Thank you to Agnew::Beck Consulting, which is donating half of its fee for completing a business plan for the huts.
- ❖ Thank you to Color Creek Fiber Art for donating meeting space for board meetings for the past two years. Land Design North is now donating a larger space as our monthly meetings have grown in attendance – thanks!

Our Mission:

Include Alaska's back country in a world-wide tradition of places in which hikers and skiers can travel hut to hut, and provide warm comfortable huts in inspiring settings to foster camaraderie and promote wilderness education and stewardship.

**Alaska Mountain and
Wilderness Huts Association, Inc.
3039 Alder Circle
Anchorage, AK 99508**

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2004 Annual Public Meeting – January 21

Join us at the Kincaid Chalet for our Annual Public Meeting on Wednesday, January 21, from 6 to 9 pm. Last year there was music, food, and a slide show by Ron Polk about hut-based skiing in Europe and British Columbia. Each year we attempt to outdo the year before, so stay tuned for announcements about this event.

2004 Calendar of Events

Jan. 21

Annual Meeting
- Kincaid Chalet

April 22

Earth Day

May 15

Creek Cleanup

June 5

National Trails Day

Throughout

Huts Environmental
Assessment anticipated

For additional information about these events or additional items, check our website or contact Kevin Lynch at 243-1951.

**It's been a long haul.
Thank you for your
on-going support.**

There is still time to donate for a tax deduction in 2003.

Activities Last Summer Kept Us Busy

- ❖ Last spring the Huts Association once again participated in the Earth Day Celebration at Alaska Pacific University campus. We have been pleased to join the active groups at the event that share the common thread of appreciating the Earth and its gifts. The Huts Association is dedicated to incorporating Earth-friendly technologies such as solar energy and composting toilets, and educating backcountry users about "leave no trace" philosophies.
- ❖ Huts volunteers hiked the proposed Paradise Valley/Snow River route several times last summer to refine the trail in advance of a scheduled environmental assessment (EA) by the USFS. That EA was postponed by the USFS to first look at alternative routes, but the EA is expected to begin this winter. It is a spectacular route!
- ❖ In July the Huts Association Board met with high-ranking USFS decision makers. The essence of the meeting was that the USFS is amenable to a hut-to-hut system of cabins and trails on Forest Service land, and a timetable was set consisting of about eighteen months for evaluation of the proposed Paradise Valley/Snow River trail, and for decision making. If this route proves to be problematic, the USFS is willing to look at other options that might work. The Huts Association has been working to identify some alternate routes. At the moment, a proposed re-routing of the Resurrection River trail (not the Resurrection Pass trail) near Seward, is under consideration as the most likely alternative.

Thanks to all members and friends who put unpaid time into the organization last summer!

Moose Pass Public Meeting

In addition to the Annual Retreat at Tern Lake, the Huts Association met informally with the residents of Moose Pass in their town hall that same weekend. The purpose of the meeting was to field opinions and suggestions for the proposed Paradise Valley/Snow River route. The meeting was well attended by community members and some Seward residents. Valid questions arose having to do with route selection, maintenance of trails and huts, preservation of wilderness, and safety of users of the huts, to name a few. We would like to thank the people of Moose Pass for being involved and expressing their views. Local opinions are integral to a successful hut-to-hut system. Also, thanks to all the residents who helped make the meeting possible.