



## A Time of Change



Lynn Wibbenmeyer (in center of photo wearing a black coat with a blue collar) posing with a group of Alaska State Parks people who demonstrate just how much our team has changed over the last few years. Only three of the people in this photo will still be working for Alaska State Parks next month.

Personnel turnover is on a roll this year and it has our heads spinning! This summer, two members of the Alaska State Parks team, on whom we have grown accustomed to relying, left to pursue other dreams and adventures. Soon two more will be following their lead.



**Lynn Wibbenmeyer** was hired in 2000 to assist Kathryn Reid (Young) and worked mainly on the volunteer program and website. When Kathryn moved to a job with the Division of Mining, Land & Water in 2003, Lynn's position was re-assigned to the Publication Specialist series. She continued to serve as the division's webmaster as well as the Volunteer Coordinator whose efforts directly involved over 700 annual volunteers within Parks and Outdoor Recreation until this past May. Her contributions to the division of Parks have been a great benefit and, undeniably, she will be missed here. We hope she is thoroughly enjoying this next chapter.



**Denise Winter** Office Assistant II, retired in June 2014, after 30 years of State service. She worked for the Division of Forestry for about 15 years before coming to the Office of History and Archaeology in March 2000. She served as the primary administrative staff for OHA's 20 employees and she kept the office running smoothly, even in the hectic summer field season. She retired in June and we already miss her, but we're reasonably certain she's having too much fun to spend time wishing she was here.



**Janine Dorsey**, Historian I, with the Office of History and Archeology's Navigability and Trails Research Unit joined the Office of History and Archaeology in March 2009. She has a Ph.D. in history from the University of New Mexico. Her historical research, including reports on the Eek River and the Arolic River, documented the use of state waters for travel, trade, and commerce. The research is an important component of the State's assertion of ownership of navigable inland, submerged lands as allowed by the Statehood Act. This is her last month with us and, in August, she will be moving on to new challenges and hopefully a lot of fun. We wish her the best in the years to come.



**Linda Byrd** was hired in November 2007 to assist in the Administration & Grants Office after working 31 years for AT&T. Most recently, she has been responsible for the financial and administrative support functions essential to the operation of the Administration & Grants Office as an Administrative Assistant II. She will be retiring at the end of this month. Linda is quick, thorough, and efficient and Alaska State Parks benefited from her excellent work ethic, integrity, and dedication. It was a pleasure working with Linda. We wish her all the best and we thank her for her years of service with the State of Alaska.

## Fixing Up Mineral Creek Trail

Kenai/Prince William Sound Area recently finished relocating and upgrading Mineral Creek Trail in Valdez. The previous trail was an old cat trail that historically provided access from the road system to Port Valdez. It's one of the few public access points along the beach in Valdez, but over the years, Valdez's lush vegetation began to choke out the trail and the creek washed it out in places.

In winter, locals use the trail for snowshoeing. They also escape the snow by using this trail to find bare ground during low tide. The improved trail is 0.6 miles long, six feet wide, and provides a nice easy walk to access the saltwater beach for birding and beachcombing.

District ranger Jack Ransom, Valdez ranger Travis Russell, ACC Carrie Mercier, and superintendent Jack Blackwell all participated in making this project happen with the help of staff from the Valdez Parks & Recreation Department. Northern Area also helped by loaning their Yanmar tracked dump truck, which was a huge help in completing the project. Thanks Northern!

The project was funded by a grant from the US Forest Service.



The trail under construction



Ranger Travis Russell on the Yanmar



Ranger Jack Ransom operating the skid steer loader



The event drew an impressive number of volunteers.

## Volunteer Appreciation Picnic

Ranger Jacqui Erion thanked her volunteers at the Kenai/Prince William Sound volunteer appreciation picnic in June. This summer, forty-six people are volunteering their time with Alaska State Parks on the Kenai Peninsula. They fill positions that range from grounds keeper at the state park office, to campground host, and volunteer trail crew member. Thanks to all the volunteers for their hard work!

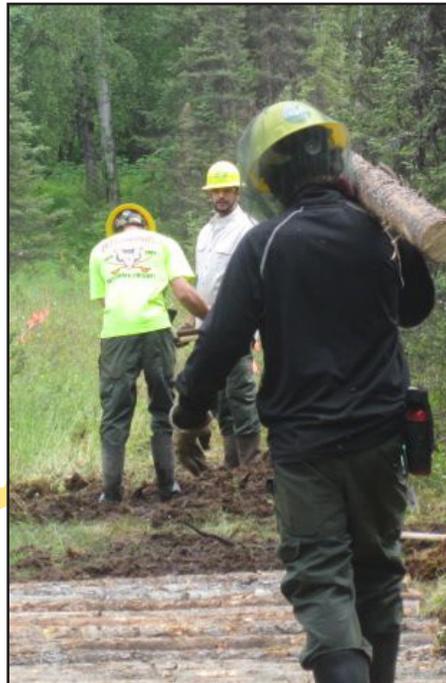


## Chicken Lake Cross Park Trail Construction

Progress on the Chicken Lake Cross Park Trail in Nancy Lake State Recreation Area is continuing this season with a flurry. Under the direction of our awesome trail crew leader, Carter Forney, approximately 600 black spruce logs were harvested, trimmed, and transported by ATV to the trail site where they were installed as supporting corduroy.



Spruce pole corduroy ready for geogrid



NLO trail crew hauling and installing



NLO Trail Crew left to right Carter Forney, Dimetri Stefolopous, Devin Vikdal, Peter Hoffman

## Clearing K'esugi Ridge Trail

After recruiting, hiring, and training the four-person trail crew for Denali State Park, the crew was deployed into the field to work on K'esugi Ridge Trail. They set up spike camp in the Skinny Lake region. Then, under the direction of Natural Resource Technician Justin Dipaola-Allen, the crew brushed approximately 4,000 feet of trail corridor and cleared K'esugi Ridge access trails of winter deadfall.



Spike Camp near Skinny Lake on K'esugi Ridge



K'esugi Ridge Trail corridor before brushing operations



K'esugi Ridge Trail corridor after brushing operations. A brushed-out trail improves visibility and the quality of the hike and lessens the chance of an unexpected bear encounter.

## Northern News

- June and July are shaping up to be the wettest ever here in Interior Alaska. The Chena, Salcha, and Chatanika rivers are all overflowing their banks. The monsoon season has caused flooding at Olnes Pond, Chena River State Recreation Area, and Salcha River State Recreation Site. Last year, the Northern Area dealt with fires; this year it's flooding.
- Upper Chatanika SRS reopened in late June, following the relocation of the road and four campsites. The building contractor is awaiting arrival of picnic tables and firepits to finish the project.
- A contract has been awarded to Timberline Excavation Inc. for installing park amenities such as bear-resistant trash cans, a picnic shelter foundation, entrance signs, highway standard signs, orientation kiosks, and water well pump systems at Lower Chatanika SRA. Work will begin in August and should be completed by the end of September.
- Park Specialist Brian Charlton has been busy this month adding a deck and finishing the interior of the public-use cabin at Granite Tors Campground. His crew is also working on the Chena River PUC.
- Northern maintenance workers Doug and Marty are getting plenty of equipment time on their surplus DOT end dump and loader. They moved hundreds of yards of material to area roads to fix washouts and supply material for trail-building projects. They also figured out how to use the end dump's belly blade to smooth potholes.



The Rosehip Nature Trail lost two of its three bridges during recent flooding in Chena River SRA, giving a new meaning to the term "water trail."



So far, this access road at MP 28 Chena Hot Springs road washed out three times this summer.



Volunteer Caleb Schmidt poses with a sign showing folks where a wedding at Upper Chatanika SRS was taking place. Unfortunately, guests almost needed scuba gear and a boat to attend.



Seventeen Dynamic Adventures volunteers from the United Kingdom helped work on the Granite Tors Trail in Chena River SRA. These ambitious workers carried in planking and supplies to rebuild Rock Creek Bridge. Our parks crew enjoyed listening to the ladies' British accents; they felt like they did a time warp back to 1776.

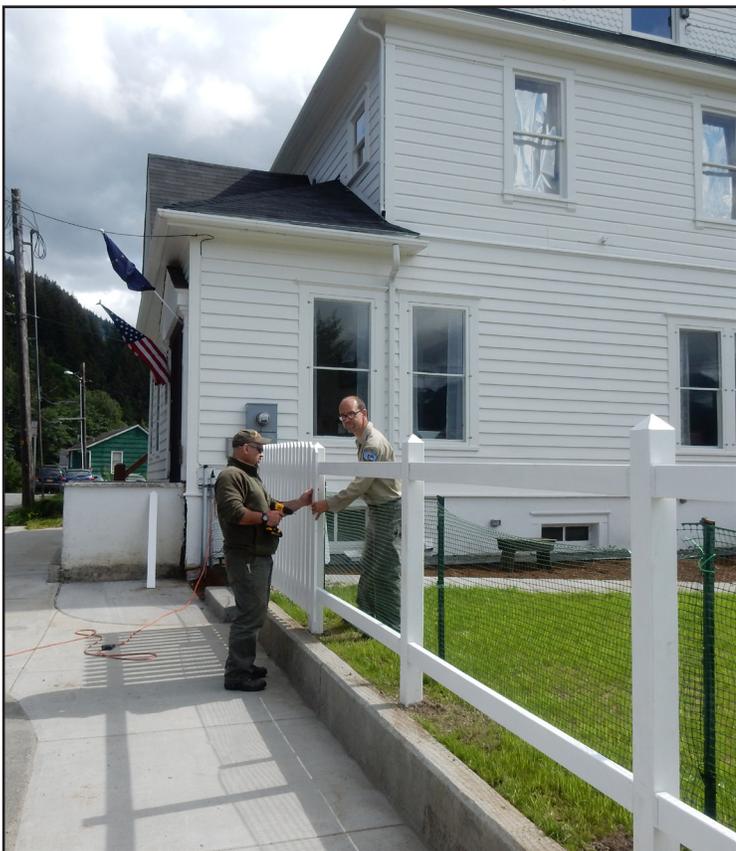
## Park Improvements



Northern Area crew leader Jared Conrad loads the gravel hauler with a brand new tractor. This latest piece of trail equipment sure beats a shovel. It was purchased with Recreational Trails Grant money. The crew is filling blowouts and mud holes along Stiles Creek Trail in Chena River SRA. ★



Trail crew workers harden Stiles Creek Trail in Chena River SRA.



After a 15-year absence, the picket fence has returned to the House of Wickersham in Juneau. Now we will see how the local bears react to this brand new fence.



Proud trail crew atop the newly constructed riprap retaining wall on Eklutna Lakeside Trail

