ON THE PAPER TRAIL

SITKA TRAIL WORKS



Letter from the Director

Inside the Season

Sitka Trail Works invested more hours into trail maintenance this year than ever before. Leveraging community contributions, we've been able to establish new partnerships with the US Forest Service and significantly expanded our team's capacity—tackling larger, more complex projects both here in Sitka and across the region. Locally, we prioritized improvements to Kaasda Héen (Indian River) because that trail received the most votes at last year's Annual Meeting. The crew spent over a month there improving boardwalk, gravel tread, steps and a bridge, all funded by local donations. The Cross Trail, Verstovia, Gavan, Sealion Cove, Beaver Lake, and Mount Edgecumbe also saw dedicated improvements, making sure you can get to your favorite places carefree. Taking on paid work elsewhere in the Tongass increased the size of our team and our readiness to tackle bigger challenges at home. We're still searching for ways to sustainably fund maintenance of local trails, so we continue to appreciate all your generous support!



Chip in for Trails

Support Sitka's trails and youth—become a sustaining member today!

Save the date

You're Invited!

Join us for our Annual Meeting
5:30 PM
Thursday, October 22nd
Stevenson Hall



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Projects

Volunteers Respond

Our trail network relies on people showing up. Alongside a generous AARP grant, volunteers gathered on the coastal and forest trail to clear brush, increase drainage, and improve accessibility for trail users.

The effort culminated with the dedication of a new bench in honor of former Sitka Trail Works crew lead, Meichen Plumhoff. If you haven't been out to Mosquito Cove recently, you can find her bench at the midpoint of the trail, overlooking the cove.

Projects like these embody Sitka Trail Works: making our public lands safer, more accessible, and welcoming to everyone in our community. A huge thank you to AARP and to our volunteers who continue to show up!





Access Improved on Kruzof

We're thrilled to announce that long-anticipated improvements to Kruzof Island trails are complete! Sitka Trail Works secured funding from the ADF&G Hunter Access Program and hired local contractor Island Enterprises to clear thick brush, fix drainage, and repair bridges along the trails to Iris Meadows, North Beach, and Twin Lakes.

Acting as a project and grant manager allows us to tackle big infrastructure projects like this alongside our regular crew work. Next time you're out hiking or riding from Mud Bay, you'll notice the route is far more open, with better views and fewer branches to dodge. Thank you to everyone who made this team effort possible!



People

Reflections from the Trail



After a long season of hard work, from digging in the estuary muck at Sea Lion Cove to hauling supplies up Gavan Hill to repair stairs for the Alpine Run, the summer trail crew has officially wrapped up. But the physical labor on the trail is not the whole story of the season; the crew shared memories in the field.

For Max, day one at Mosquito Cove was a soggy initiation, getting a bar stuck almost immediately and realizing just how big the trees are here compared to Colorado. Along Kaasda Héen, Laura had to build a bridge around decomposing salmon, a classic "Type Two Fun." Meanwhile, a long day of chainsaw milling tested Bryce when his initial excitement wore off, a lengthy session that Cory claims left his shirt smelling like sawdust weeks later. And up in Yakutat, Jerry toughed out a surprising combination of heavy rain and thick swarms of mosquitoes while brushing his heart out. A huge thanks to the crew for their grit and hard work, keeping trails safe and accessible to all!

Gunalchéesh to Yeidikook'áa

We want to extend our gratitude to Yeidikook'áa Brady-Howard for her three years of service as a volunteer board member of Sitka Trail Works.

During her tenure, she provided cultural training to our board and supported the development of a new organizational strategy to recognize sovereignty and support stewardship in Lingít Aaní. She will be missed, but we know she's dedicated to even greater causes, like leading a small national government.

Interested in making an impact? Join our team!





Community Events

Diving into the Muskeg



Sitka Trail Works' Youth Program intends to break down barriers to the outdoors, spark a love for community stewardship, and cultivate Sitka's next generation of environmental caretakers.
Our youngest trail stewards embraced the Tongass rainforest's favorite element at Muddy Buddies Camp! Partnering with Sitka Spruce Tips 4-H and Youth Advocates of Sitka, ages 5–15 explored trail work, muskeg ecology, and built outdoor confidence through hands-on play.
By grounding youth in outdoor play early, we help them build a lasting sense of belonging on our public lands, incentivising them to join our volunteers, crew, or community as they grow in this environment.

Scan to Volunteer!

Sign up for the monthly Trailblazer Bulletin to stay in the loop on upcoming volunteer events!

Thank You for the Support

Allen Marine

Shee Atiká

SITKA SOUND CRUISE TERMINAL

Hiking with Your Support

We wrapped up this hike season with immense gratitude for our incredible volunteer leaders and partners. By teaming up with subject matter experts who volunteered their time, including local botanists, energy healers, and cultural specialists, we brought deep, place-based learning to the trails. Turnout has more than doubled since 2024, with nearly 180 of you stepping out to join us this year.
We also expanded our off-island lineup this season with 5 opportunities to explore Kruzof Island. Thanks to Allen Marine's dedication to the local community and outdoor recreation, we were able to raise nearly $25K from tickets and additional donations.
We're already thinking about next year and want to hear from you! What themes, trails, or experts should we bring in next summer? Drop us a line or visit sitkatrailworks.org/events and let us know your thoughts.

