

SNOW, TRAIL AND ACTIVITY REPORT - Wednesday, December 23, 2009

Hi snow and recreation lovers, this is Debra with the North America Outdoor Institute bringing you another edition of the Q99.7 Snow Trail and Activity Report. Remember to let us know about any trail information or activities the public should be aware of so we can share it here.

Well folks, all the new snow we received this past week, combined with mild temperatures, make getting outside during Christmas break a perfect past time.

North on the Glenn Highway snow levels came up considerably from Lake Louise to Majestic Valley. All the lodges in this area report good trail conditions. The Lake Louise snowmobile club said they have about 9" of snow. But only the trail through Cameron Cove has been groomed.

Sheep Mountain and Eureka now have a 24" base and report great classic and skate skiing conditions. Just use caution around large dips, Roller Coaster and Squirrel. The 18-mile snowmobile and dog-mushing trails between the lodges are in beautiful condition. Riders please help keep it that way by NOT spinning your tracks on the groomed trail.

Also be sure to watch for overflow on start-up lakes and near streams. And respect the winter trail markers. These are a lifeline and require a lot of effort and expense to install.

Hatcher Pass reports about 15" of light, dry powder fell last week that settled quickly. However wind gusts over 40 mph have kept the ridges thin and the entire area remains closed to snowmobiling. Forecasts are calling for warmer temperatures and high wind gusts, so it doesn't look like things will be improving anytime soon. However, all the ski trails are in and set so you can enjoy alpine skiing, Nordic touring and sledding. Just be sure to practice good backcountry protocols by carrying safety equipment, watching for avalanche activity and crossing exposed slopes one at a time. And remember you need a state parking pass to park your vehicle here.

North on the Parks Highway towards Trapper Creek conditions continue to be great for riding, skiing and mushing. Around Willow and Nancy Lake enough snow fell in the past week to protect vegetation and make it possible for rangers to open this area to snowmachines. You'll also need either a camping, one day or season state parking pass displayed in your vehicle.

The trails around Wasilla and Palmer including Matanuska Park and Crevasse Moraine report good skiing conditions. You can find updated trail information online at matsugov.us under quick links.

You'll also find great alpine lift skiing at Alyeska Ski Resort in Girdwood and Hilltop Ski Area in Anchorage. Hilltop is offering extended hours Christmas day so come on up and enjoy night skiing until 9 p.m. You can get current snow reports and trail conditions by visiting their websites.

All of us at the North America Outdoor Institute remind you to carry safety equipment and get informed about safe riding and winter travel. Find out more at besnowsmart.org. From our family to yours, have a wonderful Christmas and enjoy safe adventures as you get outdoors and explore Alaska.