

First BLM-Alaska ARRA Project Completed

A Glennallen Field Office, Volunteer, and Fairbanks Troop 38 Eagle Scout Service Project



Fairbanks Boy Scout Troop 38 contacted BLM's Glennallen Field Office this summer, asking to volunteer for a project that would help one of their scouts fulfill his Eagle Scout requirements.

During a weekend in August and over Labor Day weekend, the troop traveled 200 miles to BLM's Paxson Lake campground. BLM-AK State Engineer Curt Fortenberry organized the scout involvement and procured the bridge kit. Scouts ages 11 to 17, with family members and chaperones, joined Glennallen Field Office recreation staff and other volunteers to tear down and replace the old footbridge, widen and gravel the adjoining foot trails, and improve access between two loops within the popular campground and across a creek ravine.

The footbridge replacement was part of BLM-Alaska's Alaska Trails Restoration and Rehabilitation projects funded under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA). The Paxson Lake footbridge replacement project is also the first ARRA project to be completed by BLM-Alaska.

The new foot bridge, the fifth fiberglass bridge installed by BLM-Alaska, was purchased with ARRA funds. The footbridge kits are lightweight and easier to transport into the field than steel or wood bridges. Fortenberry described the kits as easy to build, "like a big Tinkertoy set."



Before and After

The original Paxson Lake campground wooden bridge (above) was rickety and narrow. The boy scouts and staffers from the Glennallen Field Office and other volunteers replaced the bridge with a new fiberglass bridge (left).

The project helped Ross Brouillard (standing on the new bridge) complete his Eagle Scout requirements. (Photos by Marcia Butorac and Glennallen Field Office recreation staff)