

STATE OF ALASKA



Executive Proclamation by *Sarah Palin, Governor*

WHEREAS, 2008 is the 100th anniversary of the start of government efforts to establish an overland winter route from Seward to Nome, known today as the Iditarod National Historic Trail. Today, the trail symbolizes Alaska's unique recreational opportunities and rich natural and cultural history.

WHEREAS, parts of the trail go back thousands of years to trade routes used by Alaska Natives. Today's Iditarod Trail began with an Alaska Road Commission scouting expedition in mid-winter 1908, followed in the winter of 1910-11 by trail marking crews working through temperatures of -50 degrees.

WHEREAS, the discovery of gold on Christmas Day 1908 in Iditarod country was the incentive for trail building efforts by the Alaska Road Commission. Within a year, thousands of gold-seekers hiked or mushed the trail to the Iditarod gold fields. Gold-carrying sled dog teams became a regular sight on the route. As a result of population increases from America's last great gold rush, in 1912 Congress elevated Alaska from a District to a Territory.

WHEREAS, in the 1920s, use of the trail decreased with the introduction of air travel and the completion of the Alaska Railroad. Local use continued in some areas. The 1925 diphtheria serum run to Nome used the western portion of the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race from Anchorage to Nome.

WHEREAS, in 1978, the National Trails Act designated the Iditarod as a National Historic Trail, significant as a scenic, recreational, and historic transportation route through Alaska. The system totals 2,400 miles of trails stretching from Seward on the Pacific Ocean to Nome on the Bering Sea. Primarily located on State of Alaska land, the trail system also crosses land owned by Native corporations, municipal governments, and federal lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Forest Service, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Sarah Palin, Governor of the State of Alaska, do hereby proclaim January 2008 - October 2012 as:

Iditarod Historic Trail Centennial

in Alaska, and urge all citizens to commemorate the trail's historical importance to Alaskans and its association with sled dog travel, gold mining, and designation of Alaska as a Territory.

Dated: January 29, 2008



A blue ink signature of Sarah Palin.

Sarah Palin, Governor
who has also authorized the
seal of the State of Alaska to
be affixed to this proclamation.