

Kluane Chilkat International Bike Relay

Haines Junction and Haines, Alaska

Started: 1993

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A bike relay, held in June, where teams race between Haines Junction and Haines, Alaska.



Community benefits: There are immediate economic benefits from all the participants and volunteers staying in both communities and spending money on hotels, restaurants and other goods. Longer term benefits arise out of visitors being exposed to the area for the first time with expectations many will return. Training for the race leads to an increase in physical fitness as cyclists are out on their bikes early in the spring. The race is a rallying point for people and has helped build bridges among participating communities.

Lessons learned: The main barrier in putting on the race is volunteer burnout but involving more people from Whitehorse has helped address this challenge. The risks inherent in a bike race have been reduced by a number of management approaches such as training of traffic marshalls, signing of waivers and the requirement of helmets. Starting small and building gradually has helped the organizers learn to manage the complexities of the event.

Future of the project: For now, the number of participants is capped at 1200. However, organizers feel there is the potential for more youth involvement in the future. The calibre of the participants has been steadily increasing but the goal is to keep the race fun and participatory.