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**Iditarod Trail Committee**  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

March 5, 2019

**Nicolas Petit wins Alaska Air Transit Spirit of Iditarod Award**

**Anchorage, Alaska** – Veteran Iditarod XLVII competitor Nicolas Petit (bib #20), of Girdwood, Alaska, was the first musher to reach the McGrath checkpoint at 3:17 p.m. today with 14 dogs in harness, winning the inaugural Alaska Air Transit Spirit of Iditarod Award.

Alaska Air Transit Flight Operations Manager Marshall Carter and Jennifer Vanderpool of Hotel McGrath presented Petit with the handmade prizes created by McGrath residents. Petit received a pair of beaver mitts made by Loretta Maillelle, as well as a musher hat made by Rosalie Egrass.

Alaska Air Transit is a new sponsor to the Iditarod for 2019, offering crucial flight support to the communities of the upper Kuskokwim region and Prince William Sound from Anchorage. The communities include upper Kuskokwim's Nikolai, McGrath, Takotna, Tatalina, as well as the Nixon Fork mine, and the Prince William Sound communities of Chenega and Tatitlek.

"We feel fortunate to have a place at this table, to share in the circle of positive energy and the sense of community and caring that the Iditarod brings. The Iditarod reminds us of the spirit of friendly competition, and above all, compassion for each other and for these amazing athletes, the dogs," said Josie Breeding Owen of Alaska Air Transit's Anchorage office.

The Spirit of Iditarod Award will be re-presented to Petit during the awards banquet in Nome on Sunday, March 17, 2019.

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