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Iditarod Trail Committee  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

March 10, 2020

**Jessie Royer wins Alaska Air Transit Spirit of Iditarod Award**

**Anchorage, Alaska** – Veteran Iditarod XLVIII competitor Jessie Royer (bib #31), of Fairbanks, Alaska, was the first musher to reach the McGrath checkpoint at 8:56 p.m. today with 14 dogs in harness, winning the Alaska Air Transit Spirit of Iditarod Award.

Alaska Air Transit flight employee Nate Dusenberry presented Royer with handmade prizes created by McGrath residents. Royer received one pair of tall musher's mitts crafted from beaver and black moose hide adorned with Athabascan beadwork on smoked moose skin, designed and hand-stitched by Loretta Maillelle. Royer also received a musher's hat made from a beaver caught in the upper Kuskokwim. Rosalie Egrass designed and hand-stitched the hat from the beaver, which was harvested by her husband Gary.

Alaska Air Transit is returning for its second year as a sponsor for the Iditarod, offering 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 Tatilek. The entire staff at Alaska Air Transit wishes every musher and sled dog team a safe journey.

The Spirit of Iditarod Award will be re-presented to Royer during the awards banquet in Nome on Sunday, March 22.

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