

Iditarod Trail Committee
2100 South Knik-Goose Bay Road • Wasilla, Alaska 99654
907.376.5155 • www.iditarod.com



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 19, 2026

Iditarod Veteran Deke Naaktgeboren withdraws from 2026 Iditarod

Wasilla, Alaska - Veteran Iditarod musher Deke Naaktgeboren has announced his decision to withdraw from the 2026 Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race® in the best interest of his team. After thoughtful consideration and prioritizing the health and well-being of his dogs, Naaktgeboren determined that stepping back this year is the responsible choice.

The Iditarod Trail Committee respects Deke's commitment to his team and the care he consistently shows for his dogs. Decisions like this reflect the deep responsibility that comes with competing on the Iditarod Trail.

We wish Deke and his team the very best and look forward to seeing them back on the trail in the future.

###

Media contact:

Shannon Noonan
Iditarod Trail Committee
shannon.noonan@iditarod.com