



Issaquah Alps TRAILS CLUB

— EST. 1979 —

Dedicated to engaging the public to preserve, protect, and promote the land, wildlife, and trails of the Issaquah Alps, for future and present generations.

Newsletter of the Issaquah Alps Trails Club

THE ALPINER

March 2020

In response to the recommendations given by the CDC all upcoming hikes have been cancelled. The glass laying party for the Mosaic Project has also been postponed until further notice. Please check back in the upcoming weeks for more information regarding this event.

We are wishing everyone good health and some time to enjoy this beautiful spring weather. Please reach out to us with any questions through our [website](#) or [Facebook page](#).

If you are interested in getting involved with the IATC in more ways, please fill out our [volunteer form](#) and let us know what you are interested in.

IATC Announces New President

IATC Staff - March 26, 2020

We are excited to announce that David Dunphy is stepping up as our club President!



David Dunphy

David has been an Issaquah Alps Trails Club board member since 2016. When he joined, he unknowingly dropped the youngest member age by several decades. Growing up in Issaquah David has a deep love for the Issaquah Alps and Cascade Mountains. At Gonzaga University he studied Environmental Studies and Business Administration and found our current treasurer Sarah, who was his neighbor and study buddy.

David spent several years working for the National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS), REI, The Boys and Girls Outdoor Leadership Program leading youth on backpacking, climbing and sea kayaking trips. Currently David works at the Sammamish Community Y supporting teen leadership and outdoor education through a variety of programs. When not at work, which isn't very often because he lives at A YMCA Camp in Preston with his co-caretaker and partner Shawna, you might find him getting coffee with John to talk about IATC, playing in the mountains with his friends or volunteering with the local Search and Rescue team. David is passionate about helping the IATC engage the next generation of conservation leaders in our community.

Five Ways to Stay Connected with Nature at Home

Hannah Wheeler - March 24, 2020

On March 23rd, Governor Jay Inslee issued a ["Stay Home, Stay Healthy"](#) order to help stop the spread of COVID-19. Because we know that many of our members find solace outdoors we came up with a list of five ways to stay connected to nature and your outdoor community from home.

1. Check out some live wildlife camera feeds from the [Woodland Park Zoo](#), the [Seattle Aquarium](#), and [Seattle Audubon Society](#).
2. Read [this article from REI](#) with recommendations for outdoor themed reading, movies, and podcasts. Take a look at the rest of the [Co-Op Journal](#) for some great articles on everything from gear advice to stories of REI members (while we wait anxiously for REI to reopen).
3. Download the [Merlin App](#) for backyard bird ID. The app is supported by data from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, who are also running some live informational video lectures on their [Facebook page](#).
4. Celebrate the beginning of Spring with a walk around your own neighborhood, keeping an eye out for some [native plants in bloom](#).
5. Support your outdoor non-profits! The Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust is hosting their [annual breakfast fundraiser](#) online, so head over to their Facebook page and show your support!

We would like to thank all of our members for their continued support of the Issaquah Alps Trails Club. We hope that you found some of these links helpful and entertaining. Please continue to connect with us on our [Facebook page](#) and we will see you out on the trails again soon! You can stay updated on the situation as it evolves on the [City of Issaquah's Website](#).



Red Flowering Currant (*ribes sanguineum*) an early spring flowering plant to keep an eye out for.



Springtime view of the I-90 corridor

The Greenway Was Born 30 Years Ago - And Now Matures into a National Heritage Area

Tom Anderson - March 5, 2020

The 30th anniversary of the first Mountains to Sound Trek (1990) is coming up in July, and the Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust is planning an even grander trek than ever before. Ken Konigsmark took some time in our Public Lands Forum to reflect a bit on the history of the 1990 trek, and then turned it over to Jon Hoekstra, Executive Director of the MTSGT, to tell us about the upcoming trek, and the exciting designation of the Greenway as a National Heritage Area.

Here is a short video of that portion of the program: <https://youtu.be/QYz4muDESF4>



Jon Hoekstra presents the History of the MTSGT

King County to start forest restoration project in Cougar Mountain Park

Hannah Wheeler - March 17, 2020

King County Parks announced this week that they will be starting a forest restoration project in Cougar Mountain Park. This project entails " thinning small areas of red alder and then replanting the areas with a diverse mix of conifers." This is known as "gap treatment and will create much needed 2-5 acre gaps in the forest canopy, north and south of the Clay Pit Road. There will be approximately six separate gaps, for a total of 17 acres of gap in the Alder canopy. The new gaps in the canopy will allow light to reach the forest floor for the newly planted conifers and the downed trees, which will be left onsite, will provide nutrients to the soil.

Why is forest thinning important? According to King County, creating canopy gaps allows light to reach the forest floor, supporting the growth of new slow-growing conifer seedlings. While some conifer species are quite shade-tolerant and will survive underneath a large canopy, their growth will be slowed by the shade. By introducing conifer seedlings to the forest, foresters can shift a homogenous broadleaf forest to a mixed broadleaf-conifer forest and increasing forest biodiversity.

Many of the alders in Cougar Mountain Park are reaching an age where they will start to die off. In order to ensure the maintenance of a healthy forest in this area foresters are trying to support faster growth of long-living conifers through this thinning project. This project will begin later this March or early in April. Informational signs have been posted as trailheads, though thinning will take place away from trails and will not affect them. For more information visit:

<https://www.kingcounty.gov/services/parks-recreation/parks/parks-and-natural-lands/natural-lands/forest-stewardship.aspx>



"A New Forest" signs are placed at trailheads by King County Parks in Cougar Mountain Park and provide information on the Alder thinning project.

IATC Holds Board Retreat for Strategic Planning

IATC Staff - March 25, 2020

Last month the IATC Board of Directors and Executive Director gathered at the cozy log home of Anne Newcomb and John Sherwin at the base of Tiger Mountain for a strategic planning retreat. The board hired the well-regarded nonprofit consultant Susan Howlett to facilitate, and she will continue working with us toward the long-term goal of a strategic plan. Due to the change and growth the organization has experienced recently, the board takes seriously this planning and strategic preparation for the next chapter. Executive Director, Lindsay Frickle, said "I feel that it is our responsibility to IATC supporters to invest in what will make the most impact on our mission and the future of the Issaquah Alps. Capacity building and strategic planning is imperative at this critical point in our organization's history."



IATC President David Dunphy chats with Board Members Kirt Leonard and David Kappler

With Susan's guidance, the board focused on building programmatic, infrastructure, and sustainability goals for the near and long term. In service to our mission, to preserve, protect, and promote this Issaquah Alps for present and future generations, the board agreed on the following goals:



IATC Board members brainstorm goals for the organization with the guidance of consultant Susan Howlett

Programmatic:

Engage and equip the public to advocate for the Alps and address climate change, through education, outreach, experiences, and service.

Infrastructure:

Create/implement a plan and system to maximize the talents of the individuals who share our goals.

The goal for sustainability (fundraising) is still in progress, but the board agreed that we need to spend more time deconstructing the program and infrastructure goals to identify specific funding needs.

With equal importance, the board improved our committee structure and identified the need for non-board member volunteers to help serve on our very active committees. Where the IATC could use the most help is on our Advocacy, Communication, Public Engagement, and Philanthropy committees.

Board members are collaborating (via email and conference calls for now) in committees to break down big goals into achievable plans and projections for the future. We look forward to sharing more calls to action with IATC supporters in the near future!

IATC History- Chapter 31 (2011): Anniversary March Features

Doug Simpson - March 18, 2020

January - March: Park Closures

Washington State recreational opportunities were becoming more limited due to fund shortages. The Explore Washington Pass was being initiated, which was estimated to generate \$5.5 million in annual revenue, based on a \$10 day pass to a \$30 annual use permit. Locally, Squak Mountain State Park was expecting to dramatically reduce or eliminate services.

Club President Steve Williams outlined possibilities for future improvements in the Mountains to Sound Greenway. He cited 14 possibilities from a Greenway study, including more bus services, visited trail guides, volunteer hosts at trailheads and wildlife observation blinds.

The ongoing problem of increased bike usage on trails was discussed, with DNR's Sam Jarrett proposing stacked loops to provide increased biker opportunities. Yet IATC's Larry Hanson was dubious, calling offending bikers "ungovernable."

In his "Hiker's Corner" column, Joe Toynbee noted that in a six-month study, the club had 63 hikes, averaging nine hikers per outing with men making up just 32% of the hiking participants.

Ken Konigsmark reported on the City of Issaquah's 30-year plan for improving hiking and park use in Issaquah's central area. The result: "a green necklace of connected parks, trails and open spaces, creating a circular network to provide improved access."

Plans were underway for a 20th anniversary 9-day outing in July from Ellensburg to the Puget Sound waterfront. It will begin with three days of biking, then six days of hiking.

April - June: More Area Acquisitions

David Kappler assumed presidency of IATC at the club's annual meeting January 28. Officers Ken Konigsmark, Doug Simpson, Cornelia Remy and Kathleen Petty were re-elected, along with board members Richard Mann and Karen Tom. Steve Williams succeeded Joe Toynbee to remain on the board.

Two land acquisitions were announced. The Greenway filled in the noted missing link with acreage between High Point and Preston, a \$4.7 million project. And King County Parks finalized a 41-acre purchase of the Kissel-Gunn property on Cougar Mountain fronting Newport Way between exits 13 and 15 off Interstate 90.

Plans for stewardship of the recently acquired Park Point property on Tiger Mountain's west flank were underway, led by Interagency Coordinator Margaret MacLeod and Issaquah Open Space Steward Matt Mechler.

Hikes and trail work projects held steady in 2010, with 120 hikes averaging 9.5 hikers and trail workers putting in approximately 2000 hours. Scott Semans contributed about 1000 hours and Ed Vervoort

another 850 hours, for the majority of the work.

AmeriCorps, aided by members of the Washington Conservation Corps, had a crew of 21 volunteers, ages 18-24, that worked for weeks to "restore natural area, maintain parks and trails, and improve access to recreation," mostly on Squak and Tiger mountains.

Geologists affiliated with the State Department of Natural Resources conducted extensive research in the Issaquah Alps to clarify area faults and potential earthquake sites. They examined amber and fossils, focusing on Tiger Mountain's 15-mile Creek Trail.

July - September: Marches and Plantings

Details for July's 20th anniversary march, nine days from Ellensburg to Seattle, were spelled out. Fees ranging from \$35 to \$450 depending on participant's age and days of involvement were to be assessed. The first 26 miles of the 130-mile march will be on bikes.

President Dave Kappler reminisced about the original 1990 march and encouraged folks to volunteer for the event and/or other IATC activities.

Ralph Owen detailed IATC's involvement from the 1990 march to the club's sponsorship of two Grand Traverse 26-mile outings in 1989 and 1990. "The original march event," Owen wrote, "was an example of the IATC's method of putting people onto the trail to 'vote with their feet' for the public preservation and acquisition of habitat and passive recreation land." (Years later we can say that the strategy was very successful.)

In April, the City of Issaquah hosted a tree-planting event at Squak Valley Park South "to kick off the initial planting for the Ruth Kees Grove." The ten trees planted in Kees' name honored the first ten recipients of the Ruth Kees Environmental Award for a Sustainable Community. Four of the honorees were active IATC members: Harvey Manning, Dave Kappler, Ken Konigsmark and Bill Longwell.

October - December: Comments on the March

Konigsmark discussed details of the July march; some 75 trekkers participated in the beginning, ranging from 8 to 78 years old. They covered the John Wayne Trail and the re-opening of the 2.3 mile tunnel under Snoqualmie Pass. Over 100 Greenway supporters joined the hiking portion of the trek. A night in Issaquah included a hot shower and a celebratory dinner. Day 8 was the toughest, 18 miles up and over Squak Mountain and then Cougar Mountain to Newcastle Beach Park. The last day ended on the Seattle Waterfront Park, and, as he wrote, "We were friends, family even, who had endured and enjoyed a long, magical journey together."

Doug Simpson detailed he last day's ten-mile trek over bridges into Seattle and then down steep hills to the waterfront. "It was exciting to participate in the symbolic adventure that Issaquah Alps visionaries Jack Hornung and Harvey Manning dreamed of over twenty years ago."

At the July board meeting, club leaders officially determined that in the future the club would not print more editions of its existing trails guides. Looking ahead after supplies were gone, the books would be sold for \$5 for an electronic version and a \$10 CD edition. Additional guides being produced and online hike descriptions were causes for the policy change.

Are there cougars on Cougar Mountain? A six-year study by wildlife biologist Brian Kertson discovered and put GPS collars on 34 of the shy cougars that avoid humans. He noted that the combined Cougar/Squak/Tiger area "just isn't big enough to support more than two or three resident cougars." In five years, there were only 17 verified cougar sightings in his study area.

Fred Zeitler, in the first of a series, discussed his favorite hikes in the Issaquah Alps. They included Squak's Debbie's View, Cougar's Bear Ridge and Waterfalls Loop trails, Tiger's South Tiger Trail, the Twin Falls trail east of North Bend, and Malakwa Lake Trail off I-90's exit 45.

The only new hike leaders in 2011 were *Dori Ost* and *David Warner*.

The Apparatus

Club Founder

Harvey Manning

Executive Director

Lindsay Frickle (exec@issaquahalps.org)

President

David Dunphy (Governance Committee Chair)
(president@issaquahalps.org)

President-Elect

Anne Newcomb (Public Engagement Committee Chair)

Vice President of Advocacy

David Kappler (Advocacy Committee Chair)
(advocacy@issaquahalps.org)

Board of Directors

Tom Anderson

Denice Carnahan

Suzanne Kagen (Secretary)

Ken Konigsmark

Kirt Lenard

Elizabeth Lockwood

Cameron McCrea

Sarah Omiliak (Treasurer & Finance Committee Chair)

George Potter

Nate Smith (Philanthropy Committee Chair)

Ed Vervoort

Hannah Wheeler (Communications Committee Chair)

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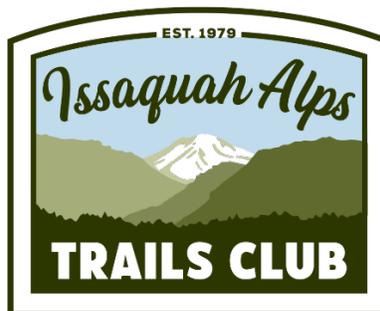
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