



# 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 present and future generations.

## *Newsletter of the Issaquah Alps Trails Club*

# THE ALPINER

June 2020

The Senate recently passed a [major public lands bill](#) that will address a maintenance backlog in our National Parks and provide permanent funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

As King County continues to move forward in phases towards reopening, the Issaquah Alps Trails Club is beginning to create a plan to resume our hikes and events. We appreciate your patience as we learn to navigate this "new normal." Please stay tuned for updates on [our website](#) and our [Facebook](#) page and reach out to us with questions in the meantime.

If you are interested in getting more involved with the IATC, please fill out our [volunteer form](#) and let us know how you'd like to help!

## Upcoming Hikes and Events

The Trails Club is proud to share this two-part webinar event, hosted by the City of Issaquah, to help identify a course of action for our community to address climate change. Please see more details and register [here](#).

### **Community Convening on Climate – Part I**

Presentation of climate data as well as past and current efforts in Issaquah and the region.

Date: Monday, July 20<sup>th</sup> Time: 11:30 – 1:00 pm

### **Community Convening on Climate – Part II**

Discussion to develop recommendations for addressing climate change.

Date: Thursday, July 30<sup>th</sup> Time: 11:30 – 1:30 pm

# IATC Advocates for Wildlife, Recreation, and Safety Considerations for SR-18

Hannah Wheeler - June 25, 2020

## Project Background

SR-18 is a mostly two-lane mountain highway that runs from I-90 all the way to I-5 through the Issaquah Alps and Maple Valley. It has been known for years as the "deadliest highway in Washington" due to the high number of accidents that take place on the road especially over Tiger Mountain where there is no median between opposing lanes of traffic. In 2017 design work began to make improvements on this highway including safety considerations and traffic alleviation with work set to begin in 2021.

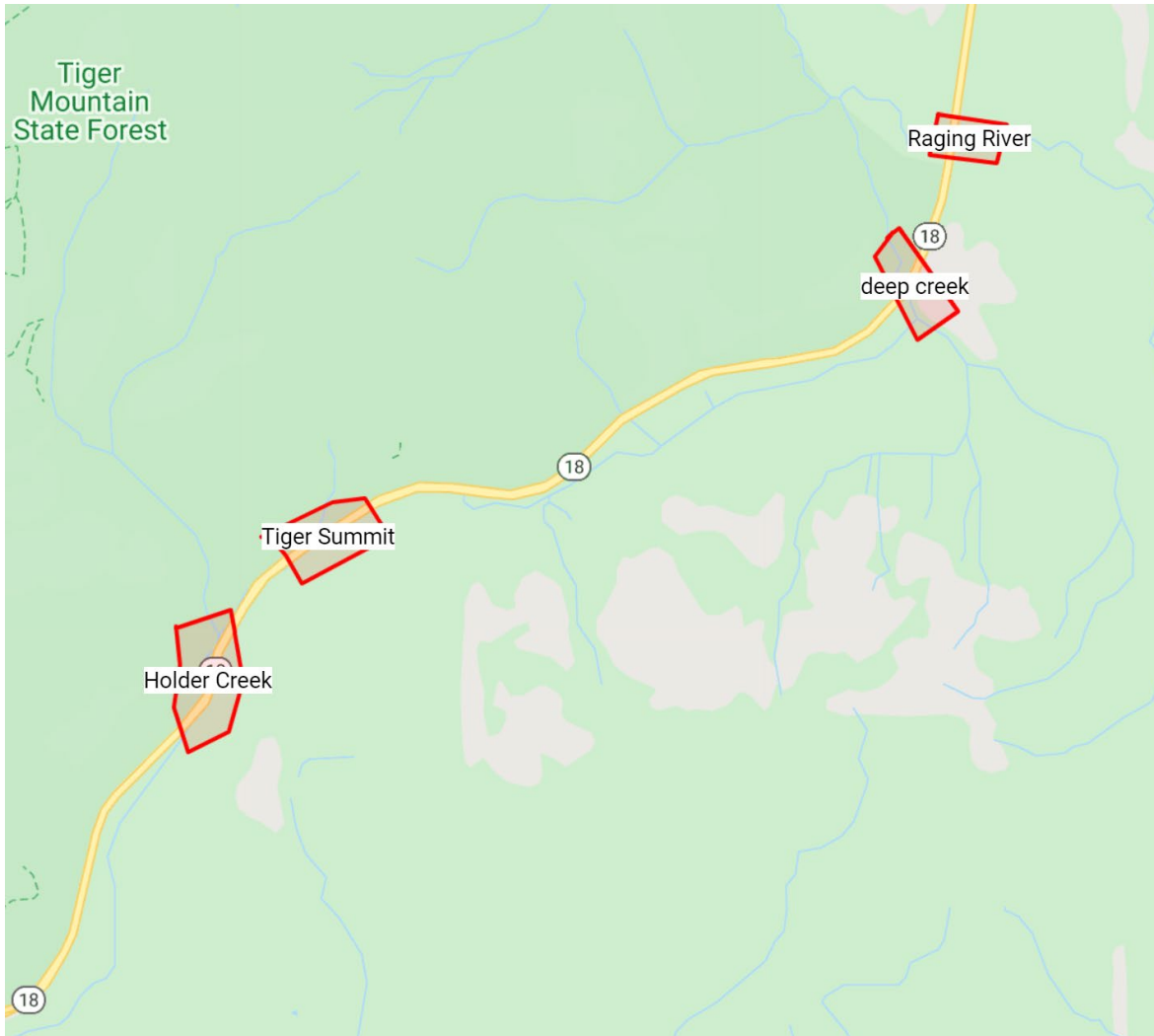
Key changes WSDOT are considering to address these concerns include widening the road to four lanes along a 1.5 miles stretch of the highway between I-90 and Issaquah Hobart Road. Additionally, they are redesigning the interchange between SR-18 and I-90 and considering safety measures at Tiger Mountain Summit which could include medians or a "diamond interchange" to ensure the safety of eastbound turns.



*Image of SR-18 between I-90 and Issaquah Hobart Road depicting the Phases in which improvements will be completed. Phase 1 will be a new interchange between SR-18 and I-90 and is set to begin construction in 2021 with a completion date of 2023. For more information on this interchange please visit WSDOT's website: <https://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/I90/SR18/ICImprove/default.htm>*

While the Issaquah Alps Trails Club fully supports the efforts of WSDOT to improve the safety of the road, there are some important environmental considerations that need to be taken into account. SR-18 passes between Tiger Mountain and Rattlesnake Mountain and runs by Taylor Mountain. These areas are currently home for wildlife including deer, elk, bobcat, cougars, and salmon. Cutting off access between these areas with a larger four lane highway would fragment this critical habitat, severing wildlife populations and increasing the chances of car accidents involving wildlife. Additionally, the area is a popular recreation spot for hiking, biking, and horseback riding. Ensuring safe access for recreation

along this highway would help alleviate crowding at other recreation destinations which can damage trails and habitat and promote the area as it develops.



*SR-18 crosses key habitat area for a multitude of wildlife including Salmon. Wildlife bridges or under crossings in these four key areas would create connected habitat and decrease road accidents with wildlife. These types of crossings for wildlife have been implemented at Snoqualmie Pass already, with great success.*

### Key Outcomes

Wildlife connectivity and recreational access should be part of engineering criteria and goals of the project overall. Including these things in the "engineering criteria" or of the project ensures that they will be taken into account during construction. This means the inclusion of four wildlife undercrossings similar to those found along I-90 at Snoqualmie Pass, added bike access along the road to connect Maple Valley to the Snoqualmie Region by means of green transportation, a "diamond interchange" at Tiger Summit, and intentional redevelopment of Tiger Summit to provide a better wilderness experience at that location.



## Milestones

Summer 2019: Washington State Representative Bill Ramos tours the area with key stakeholders

September 2019: Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust writes a letter of support for the project, kicking off the conservation community response

May 2020: Interviews with stakeholders begin in order to form a strategic plan for the highway in line with the priorities of many who will be impacted.

June 2020: Advisory Board meetings begin

## Call to Action

The Issaquah Alps Trails Club wants to ensure that as this project is done right. We are requesting help in generating support for the inclusion of wildlife connectivity, recreational access, and safety in the engineering guidelines for the project. To do this we need our members and partners to bring this issue up in their communities educate friends, family, and the public about the necessity of these criteria, and reach out to their local representatives. We have included a slide deck below which all are welcome to use to promote this campaign. Please reach out to us at [president@issaquahalps.org](mailto:president@issaquahalps.org) for more information.

See full project information and IATC's response [here](#)

For more information on the project please visit [WSDOT's website](#)

Read the letter sent by the Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust on the [SR-18 Project](#)



The IATC values diversity, inclusion, and equity for our community in the Issaquah Alps and everywhere. We stand in solidarity with our fellow nonprofit organizations whose work supports equity and justice for all.

We will continue to educate ourselves by listening to voices that are underrepresented. To educate yourself about the movement and support Black Lives Matter visit [blacklivesmatter.com](https://blacklivesmatter.com)

**Additional Resources:**

Anti-Racism Resources: [bit.ly/ANTIRACISMRESOURCES](https://bit.ly/ANTIRACISMRESOURCES)

Local Non-Profits/Organizations/Chapters:

Outdoor Afro: <https://outdoorafro.com/about/>

Latino Outdoors: <https://latinooutdoors.org/>

The Avarna Group: <https://theavarnagroup.com/resources/>

Got Green: <https://gotgreenseattle.org/>

# City to Form New Environmental Board

Lindsay Frickle - June 25, 2020



## Background:

The City of Issaquah utilizes volunteer boards and commissions to advise the mayor, council and administration on a wide range of matters. Previously, the River and Streams Board served as the primary advisory body on issues related to the environment. However, its scope, composition and responsibilities were narrowly defined to technical matters specific to the aquatic environment in Issaquah.

Issaquah is a community passionate and focused on environmental protection and preservation as demonstrated in the Citywide Strategic Plan and is reflected in its community vision, mission and guiding principles. In addition, the opportunities for local communities to address a range of environmental issues, from habitat and natural resource protection to sustainable development and climate change is growing and becoming increasingly important. In response, the City Administration is exploring the creation of a new board or commission dedicated to addressing a broad range of environmental issues.

On June 16th the City of Issaquah virtually hosted over 50 participants in a community brainstorming session to discuss the potential purpose and the desired outcomes of the new environmental board. Several IATC board members, staff, and volunteers participated in this meeting and will continue to provide a voice at the table.

There is a lot of opportunity for this board to help shape the policies, plans and regulations that guide the City's work and its impact on our climate, environment and future. Providing a sounding board on the environmental work will help support the City's Strategic Plan goal to ensure that our environmental resources are proactively enhanced, protected and stewarded. Board members, staff, and volunteers from the IATC plan to support and participate in the formation of this new board and ensure that our Issaquah Alps wild lands and trails are well represented.

## Next Steps:

A second community meeting to discuss a proposal will be held via WebEx (video conference or teleconference) on June 30th from 5:30 - 7:00pm. All interested parties are welcome to join the conversation. Please contact [sustainability@issaquahwa.gov](mailto:sustainability@issaquahwa.gov) to request a meeting invitation.

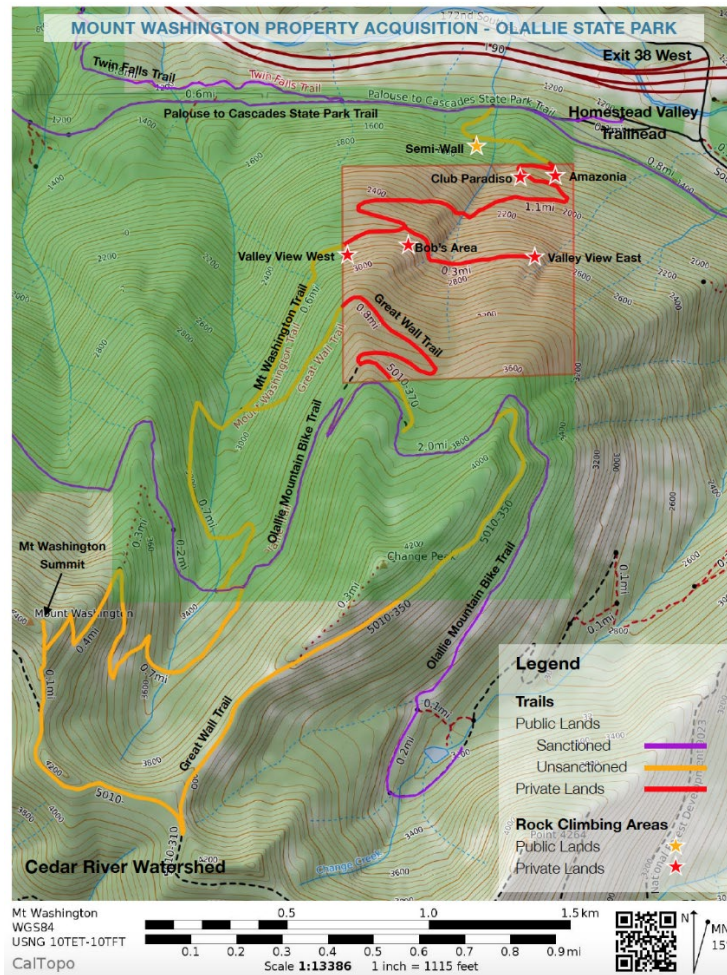
The City Council will then consider the creation of a new environmental board at an upcoming Council Study Session. Council action to sunset the River and Streams Board and form this new board will be held at a subsequent meeting.

# IATC Voices Support for State Parks Acquisition of Mt. Washington Trail Property

Hannah Wheeler - June 25, 2020

Many of you may be familiar with the popular [Mt. Washington Trail](#) located in Ollalie State Park. What you may not know is that a section of the trail is currently in private ownership (see map below). Washington State Parks has the opportunity to secure access to this trail permanently through the purchase of this last parcel of privately owned land. The land would become part of Ollalie State Park, and therefore publicly owned. Washington State Parks needs to secure grant funding in order to purchase this important piece of land.

To help make this happen, the Issaquah Alps Trails Club sent a letter of support (see letter below) to the grant evaluation committee, and we're asking members of our community to please consider doing the same. You can send your individual letter of support to Washington State Parks Planner Melinda Posner at [melinda.posner@parks.wa.gov](mailto:melinda.posner@parks.wa.gov). Please feel free to use the IATC letter below as an example, and thank you to those who will join us in advocating for public ownership of this property!



Section in red shows where the Mt. Washington Trail passes through public land. Purchase of this parcel by Washington State Parks would ensure public access through this section permanently. Map provided by Washington State Parks.



*Issaquah Alps*  
**TRAILS CLUB**  
— EST. 1979 —

June 18, 2020

Recreation and Conservation Office  
P.O. Box 40917  
Olympia, Washington 98504-0917  
Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) Grant Application #20-1433

Dear Evaluation Committee Members,

The Issaquah Alps Trails Club (IATC) would like to express our support of the Washington State Parks' acquisition of the Mt. Washington Trail property, an inholding in the Olallie State Park in the Mountains to Sound Greenway National Heritage Area. As our understanding of the recreation economy and ecology grow we need to continue to close the gaps in public land management. This parcel is an excellent opportunity to accomplish both of these goals.

In 1990 members of our organization helped lead a protest from Snoqualmie Pass to the shores of Seattle to bring awareness about the importance of the connectivity of wildplaces in our community. Since then the Mountain to Sound Greenway, local government, land managers, businesses and other non profits have been tirelessly working on realizing this vision. Please help keep the momentum by transferring this important trail and rock climbing area into public land management.

With this grant, Washington State Parks, along with The Trust for Public Land and the Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust will at long last secure permanent public access for the Mt. Washington Trail and the Mt. Washington Climbing Area for all Olallie State Park users. The project will ensure that this iconic landscape of forest, waterfalls and wildlife habitat is protected. This project is truly unique within the Mountains to Sound Greenway and will benefit hikers, rock climbers, and other visitors throughout the region.

Issaquah Alps Trail Club is pleased to support Washington State Parks' acquisition of the Olallie Thompson inholding. If we can be of assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

David Dunphy, President  
Issaquah Alps Trails Club

Lindsay Frickle, Executive Director  
Issaquah Alps Trails Club



# A Visit to a Lonely Rock on a Lonely Stretch of Trail

Tom Anderson - June 21, 2020

Whether you are a fan of glacial erratics or hiking in solitude, you might enjoy the middle stretch of the Tiger Mountain Trail. The TMT stretches 16 miles across the mountain, and almost smack in the middle is the glacial erratic boulder known as the "Lone Rock". A fairly modest, diminutive name compared to the "Fantastic Erratic" of Cougar Mountain fame. I wonder if rocks get jealous.

I don't know how the name came to be. It's an unfortunate choice since there are at least two other features known as "Lone Rock" in Washington state alone. One in Hood Canal, and one in Chelan County along the Columbia River. To better compete with the Fantastic Erratic, maybe we should re-dub it the "Stupendous Stone" or "Bodacious Boulder." Or, more modestly, align with the nearby Fifteenmile Creek and call it the "Fifteenmile Rock." But no one is asking for my opinion on that, anyway.



*The "Lone Rock" as seen from the Tiger Mountain Trail.*

To reach the rock, it's an 8 mile hike from the north end of the TMT at the High Point trailhead, or an 8 mile hike from the south end of the TMT at the Tiger Mountain Road trailhead. But here is a trick: bicycle the West Side Road to the Middle Tiger Mountain trailhead, and hike from there. Ascend the Middle Tiger trail to the intersection with the Hobart-Middle Tiger RR Grade and turn left. Here is the sign to watch for:



*Signpost at the start of the Hobart Middle Tiger RR trail, where it intersects the Middle Tiger Trail.*

Time has taken its toll, but old logging relics can still be seen along the old railroad grade. The most notable is a 2 inch steel cable used as an elevated "skyline" to skid logs out of the forest to a landing where they would be loaded on a railroad car. The cable is intact for at least a half mile, showing itself in several places along the trail. Watch for it.



Continue on the RR Grade for 1.6 miles and watch for a small "TMT 1/4" sign on the right. Take the turn and ascend (steeply) to the TMT. Turn left onto the TMT and continue for .7 miles to Custer's Bridge. From the bridge, it's about .5 miles to the Lone Rock, which you can't miss as it is right beside the trail.

Enjoy the rock in solitude (probably), and then return the way you came. Or, for a variation, return via the TMT all the way to the intersection with the Middle Tiger trail (instead of the Hobart-Middle Tiger RR Grade), and descend from there. It's about a half mile farther, and can be a bit brushy, but you get to enjoy more of the ambiance of the awesome TMT.

# IATC History-Chapter 34 (2014): More Trails Completed

Doug Simpson - June 20, 2020

## January - March: Multiple Trail Projects

More honors for Harvey Manning: an interpretive panel honoring Harvey Manning was installed on Cougar Mountain's "million dollar viewpoint." One entry on the panel states: "Put simply, the wildland park exists today only because of the vision of Harvey Manning and the efforts of citizen volunteers.

Trails were completed on Tiger Mountain's Park Pointe acreage, with the Washington Trails Association completing the work. Though bikers have access to some lower trails, upper trails are open only to hikers.

The East Lake Sammamish Trail had 2.2 miles added to its length from S.E. 43rd Way to NW Gilman Boulevard, leaving only the middle Sammamish link to be added for completion.

The club formally initiated Facebook and Twitter accounts as part of its modernizing efforts.

Passage of November's Issaquah park board bond will provide two million dollars for open space purchases, as well as expansion of Confluence Park and the city's "green necklace."

A new 500-foot boardwalk was completed in Lake Sammamish State Park as part of the park's revitalization project.

## April - June: Margaret Macleod Passes

In a busy night at its annual meeting in January, the IATC Board adjusted membership charges requesting from \$25 for a basic hiker, to \$50 for a project supporter, to \$75 for a sponsor, maintaining \$100 for "visionaries," and adding \$250 for "adventurers." Dave Kappler maintains the club presidency, but George Potter replaces Dick Amidei as treasurer. Rachel Hopkins was added to the board.

Great sorrow was reported by IATC members and community leaders by the passing of Margaret Macleod, who provided superior leadership and dedication in her twenty years as Interagency Trails Coordinator for King County, the City of Issaquah, State DNR and IATC. Over the years she secured tens of millions of dollars for open space acquisitions and trail maintenance projects. "Margaret was an amazing person and incredible contributor to the wonders of the Issaquah Alps," Ken Konigsmark wrote. She was 61.

Also passing was Milt Swanson. The 95-year old Swanson was invaluable as a Cougar Mountain and mining historian. He worked closely with Harvey Manning, IATC and the Newcastle Historical Society over the years.

Ralph Owen wrote an extensive essay about the Issaquah Alps, detailing the geography and geology of each of Tiger Mountain's 13 peaks.

## July - August: Squak Mountain Acreage Saved

The acquisition of 220 acres on southeast Squak Mountain saved the old camping lodge property from

development. Three hikes in the area were held on May 10th to celebrate and exhibit the acreage. In his column, IATC President Dave Kappler spoke at length on the virtues of the purchase: "headwaters of May Creek, great trees and habitat, cliffs, views, trailhead parking, trails now and in the future, location, location and location." King County and the Trust for Public Land were the financial backers.

Ralph Owen editorialized on naming a trail on Cougar Mountain for mountaineer Jim Whittaker rather than for Harvey Manning, the man most responsible for the Cougar park's acquisition.

At IATC's April board meeting, revisions were made to two of the club's by-laws, and Kirt Lenard was elected to a vacant seat on the board, filling the spot held by Allegra Atkinson.

Ed Vervoort wrote about the extensive bridge work on Tiger Mountain-below Fred's Corner, the West Tiger Railroad Grade, the TMT and the 15-Mile RR Grade Trail. In at least one case, a helicopter was needed to fly in 35-foot steel beams.

This year's scholarship winners were Skyline's Sydney Smith (\$1000), Skyline's Joey Nakao (\$500) and Liberty's Max Greenwald (\$250). Smith, with her 3.9 GPA, will be attending Claremont-Makenna College in California with a major in economics. Nakao (3.8) will enroll at Seattle University, and Greenwald (4.0) heads to Middlebury College in Vermont. Examples of their writing follow:

**Smith:** I have run hundreds of miles on these trails, and they have served all purposes for me. They have been my therapist, my entertainer, my escape, my gym, a place to grow friendships, and a place of incomparable self-reflection. The hours I have spent with my friends running the High School, the Bus, the Swamp, the Big-Tree and the Power Line ('suicide') trails are priceless. I know that without such serene trails in my backyard, I never would have fallen in love with running, and I would have missed out on life-long friendships with my fellow runners."

**Nakao:** "The Alps have practically become a second home, since I run on them up to four times a week. I don't go just for a run, but also to take advantage of every mile, taking in the unmatched beauty that the Alps offer. It truly is another world."

**Greenwald:** "What I like most about the Issaquah Alps trail system is the sheer number, variety, and superior quality of the different routes, which ensure both that the trails are accessible to anyone and that die-hard hikers such as myself will never get bored."

October - December: Greenway a Heritage Site?

Washington senators Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell and Congressman Dave Reichert introduced legislation to give the Mountains to Sound Greenway status as a National Heritage site. As such it would promote cooperation and economic development from Seattle Ellensburg.

President Kappler helped local high school students make up PE credits by intensive hiking on local trails, Squak Mountain this year.

Ken Konigsmark hosted an IATC picnic on his property atop Grand Ridge on July 27. The gathering, which had a nice turnout, was a revival of events from years past.

The Emerald Necklace is now 80% complete with an additional trail on the Sammamish Plateau. It will be 28 miles long upon completion.

The only new hike leader in 2014 was *Rachel Hopkins*.

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# The Apparatus

## Club Founder

Harvey Manning

## Executive Director

Lindsay Frickle ([exec@issaquahalps.org](mailto:exec@issaquahalps.org))

## President

David Dunphy (Governance Committee Chair)  
([president@issaquahalps.org](mailto:president@issaquahalps.org))

## President-Elect

Anne Newcomb (Public Engagement Committee Chair)

## Vice President of Advocacy

David Kappler (Advocacy Committee Chair)  
([advocacy@issaquahalps.org](mailto:advocacy@issaquahalps.org))

## Board of Directors

Tom Anderson

Denice Carnahan

Kaytlyn Gerbin

Suzanne Kagen (Secretary)

Ken Konigsmark

Kirt Lenard

Elizabeth Lockwood

Cameron McCrea

Sarah Omiliak (Treasurer & Finance Committee Chair)

George Potter

Nate Smith

Ed Vervoort

Hannah Wheeler (Communications Committee Chair)

## Issaquah Alps Trails Club

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