



# 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

Take the opportunity this holiday weekend to explore your parks, trails, and open spaces. [Join the Issaquah Alps Trails Club and REI to Opt Outside](#) this Friday.

The Federal Infrastructure bill passed this month- [learn what that means for our trails](#) from our friends at the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy.

If you want to get involved with the IATC please fill out our [volunteer form](#) and let us know what you are interested in.

### Upcoming Hikes and Events

[Forest Carbon Hike](#)- Thursday, December 2nd at Harvey Manning Park

[A walk with a Purpose](#)- Issaquah Community Cleanup-Saturday, December 4<sup>th</sup>

[Local Carbon Sequestration Hike](#)- Sunday, December 5th at Confluence Park

[Local Carbon Sequestration Hike](#)- Sunday, December 12th at Confluence Park

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# Keep Coal Creek Wild- Your Support is Needed!

Hannah Wheeler - November 5, 2021



**Save Coal Creek** is a group of residents of Bellevue and neighboring communities, Issaquah Alps hikers and trailrunners, local history buffs and nature lovers who want to see the former Milt Swanson property turned into a public park. The property on Lakemont Boulevard SE, Bellevue, is now owned by a developer who has proposed 35 single-family homes on the 12 acres of open space, pasture and horse barn, and native forest.

What would we lose, if this development happens? The property, surrounded on three sides by Bellevue's Coal Creek Natural Area, supports a vital wildlife corridor between the Bellevue park and King County's Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park. That corridor would be fragmented. Milt Swanson's red barn, horse pasture, and remnants of coal mining history would be gone forever. *Sixty-five* (yes, 65) mature trees would be removed, and that lovely open space next to Lakemont Boulevard would cease to be. Bellevue has invested heavily in managing sediment and improving habitat in Coal Creek, the watershed with the most promise of all Bellevue's streams for restoring salmon. Should this investment be risked by yet another development?

More than 3,500 people have signed the IATC online petition to stop the development. You can help by adding your signature and by writing a letter of comment to city of Bellevue planner Reilly Pittman: [rpittman@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:rpittman@bellevuewa.gov). **See sample letter below.**

**Your donation is needed!** We've hired an attorney to help us persuade Bellevue's planning department (Department of Development Services) that the proposed development needs a full Environmental Impact Statement. This thorough analysis would evaluate impacts to traffic, aesthetic views, noise levels, wildlife, pedestrian and hiker uses, historic resources and other aspects of the environment.

Please donate to the **Save Coal Creek** fund\*\* [HERE](#) Or make out a check to the Issaquah Alps Trails Club with "SAVE COAL CREEK" in the memo.

This fund will be used to help cover research, attorney fees, and technical fees that arise as our efforts continue.

\*\*Funds not used within 5 years will be rolled into the Issaquah Alps Trails Club [Opportunity fund](#).



*Hatchery Coho salmon released in Coal Creek November 2021*



*Horse barn and outbuilding of the late Milt Swanson*

Sample Comment Letter:

**To: Reilly Pittman, Acting Environmental Planning Manager**

**Permit Application Nos. 16-143970-LK; 16-145946-LO; 19-121109-LK**

Dear Mr. Pittman,

My name is \_\_\_\_\_. My family and I live at ( \_\_\_\_\_ street, city, county). I'm writing today because I am very concerned about the proposed **Isola development for the property next to the Coal Creek Natural Area in Bellevue.**

(list your concerns about the development; list the values of this property that, if it were added to the adjacent natural area, would benefit the public and wildlife.)

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# Takeaways from Forest Health Watch

Hannah Wheeler - November 19, 2021



[The Forest Health Watch](#) program was created to try and determine which factors are most important in tree dieback. "We really want to know which environmental factors are the driving factor in dieback." Everything from increased heat to precipitation levels, to soil type could be involved.

Forest Health Watch takes advantage of the [iNaturalist app](#), on which citizen scientists can take photos of cedar dieback, pair it with a GPS coordinate and answer a few more specific questions about the tree. With this information, scientists can compare patterns of redcedar dieback to climate data, soil data, or precipitation data to better understand the factors involved in the dieback, identify sites where trees are particularly vulnerable, and make predictions about where to source cedar tree seeds from in the future based on climate predictions.

To engage more of the Issaquah Community in the Forest Health Watch program, the Issaquah Alps Trails Club invited Joey Hulbert to give [a virtual presentation](#) and subsequent hike. A group of about 15 local residents joined Joey on Tradition Plateau to learn more about the iNaturalist app and how to identify Cedar trees that are potentially suffering from dieback.

Some key points about collecting data as a citizen scientist:

- Data on both healthy and unhealthy trees is useful to researchers- Even if you don't come across any cedar dieback on your hikes, you can still help out! Researchers need data comparing the differences in the surroundings of healthy and unhealthy trees to truly understand what's happening.
- You don't need to capture every tree- Capturing two to three trees on a hike is plenty! You can even go back and visit trees you've already captured every once in a while to update the data.

- It's easy to get involved- All you need to start is some photos of the tree, its leaves, bark, and cones if possible, and a GPS point. You can even take pictures while you're hiking and upload the points to your computer later if using mobile apps isn't for you!

On the 3-mile hike we spotted both healthy and unhealthy cedars, sometimes right next to each other, highlighting the lack of understanding we currently have about why dieback happens. If you'd like to become a citizen scientist, you can learn more at [Forest Health Watch](#) today.

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## Giving Tuesday is November 30th!

Hannah Wheeler - November 22, 2021

# GI ING TUESDAY

We're grateful for all the support we get from our community in our mission to preserve, protect, and promote the Issaquah Alps. Throughout 2021, thanks to your support, we've restarted our guided hiking program, hosted virtual community education events, maintained the cleanliness of some of our most popular trails, and continued to work with civic leaders and land managers to preserve our public lands.



This Giving Tuesday, join us in celebrating the Issaquah Alps and receive a trails club tee!

Issaquah Alps Trails Club tees make great holiday gifts! **Donate a minimum of \$20 for your free tee, or donate \$40 for two on November 30th!** Gifts of any amount are much appreciated!

To receive your tee: **email [contact@issaquahalps.org](mailto:contact@issaquahalps.org) with your size and style choice** after making your donation.



Your donation will go straight to our advocacy, programming, and community education work here in the Issaquah Alps. All funds raised will help citizen activists organize, mobilize, and influence on a broader and deeper level than ever before.

We're grateful for the accessibility of our beautiful public lands, but there's still more to do. Give back to the trails, parks, and open spaces we use every day on this annual day of giving.

# Issaquah Alps Trails Club Photo Contest!

Hannah Wheeler - November 8, 2021



To kick off the holiday season, we're seeking to highlight the beauty of the Issaquah Alps with images that promote our mission to engage the public to preserve, protect, and promote the land, wildlife, and trails of the Issaquah Alps for present and future generations.

**Contest Rules:** Now through December 7th- Send your images to [contact@issaquahalps.org](mailto:contact@issaquahalps.org) or tag us on social media using the hashtag #IssaquahAlpsPhotoContest

Winner will be announced December 10th- The winning photo will be displayed on our website and social media pages, and the photographer will receive an Issaquah Alps T-Shirt!



All Issaquah Alps images are welcome. We want you to capture what you love about our public lands whether that's the trails, plants, wildlife, scenery, or something else.



We're looking forward to seeing all of your amazing photos!

[Instagram](#)

[Facebook](#)

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# The Apparatus

## Club Founder

Harvey Manning

## Interim Executive Director

Hannah Wheeler ([exec@issaquahalps.org](mailto:exec@issaquahalps.org))

## President

David Dunphy (Governance Committee Chair)  
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## President-Elect

Anne Newcomb (Public Engagement Committee Chair)

## Vice President of Advocacy

David Kappler (Advocacy Committee Chair)  
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## Communications and Community Engagement Manager

Hannah Wheeler ([communications@issaquahalps.org](mailto:communications@issaquahalps.org))

## Board of Directors

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