



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

February 2022

Lace up your boots and get involved with IATC by filling out our [volunteer form](#).

Act now! Add your voice to the Washington Trails Association's campaign in Olympia to [fund trail maintenance](#). Use their form to send a [message of support](#) to your elected representatives.

Upcoming Hikes and Events

[Saturday, March 6](#) - Native plant identification hike

[Saturday, March 12](#) - Green Issaquah: Invasive plant removal at Bernsten Park

[Saturday, March 19](#) - Hike to learn about invasive and potentially harmful plants

[Saturday, March 19](#) - Open space near the Issaquah Highlands (morning hike)

[Saturday, March 19](#) - Open space near the Issaquah Highlands (afternoon hike)

Weeds In The Woods

IATC Staff - February 28, 2022

Thanks to contributing author Skye Pelliccia, Education Specialist, King County Noxious Weed Control Program.

Noxious weeds and invasive plants. You've no doubt seen them on disturbed grounds, along roadways, and under power lines. In reality, they are all around us! In our gardens, parks, forests, and everywhere in-between. That's why it is no surprise that they've gotten into the Alps, and that fact has gotten our attention. Working with experts, IATC is organizing some upcoming hikes that will focus on these plants, and you are invited to join us to learn what you can do to help protect our forests.

Thanks in part to the "NOX WEED" line item on our property tax bills, we in King County are fortunate to have one of the most robust noxious weed control programs in the entire country. "Noxious" weeds are invasive plants that are legally recognized as a threat to people and nature. Some of these weeds are "regulated", which means property owners are required to control them on their property (controlling a weed means doing something to contain the current infestation and prevent its spread). The County's own staff are charged with controlling them often on public lands, and private lands where their help is needed. Other weeds are "non-regulated", meaning that they are listed for educational purposes and strongly recommended for control, but landowners are not required to do so.



English Holly

A popular ornamental plant, this "weed of concern" thrives in the Alps and is difficult to control. See [this blog](#) for more information.

We(ed) Care

The King County Noxious Weed Control Program (KCNWCP) is the best way to keep up with the latest weed updates and resources. This group of professionals offer assistance to the public in creating weed management plans and have an education specialist dedicated to free public education for individuals and groups on noxious weeds and why it's important to control them.



KCNWCP teaching in the field. Learn more [here](#).

So why IS it important to control them? Many of our invasive species in WA come from other locations where the specie's growth may be controlled by climate, pests, or other plant species. In their new home, these weeds have less competition and easily outcompete our native plants which in turn destroys native habitat and food sources for wildlife.

An example of this is English ivy. Originally planted in landscaping, this escaped garden plant carpets the ground and strangles trees. Infestations often start as small patches on the ground, but with time can grow high into the treetops and take over entire understories. Mature vines grow woody and tree-like. This added weight and all the ivy leaves act like sails in the wind, contributing to the downing of trees and shrubs of all ages. Its dominance prevents native plants from taking root and disrupts the natural forest cycle (forest succession). Humans introduced the plant, and thankfully, humans can remove it too. Controlling any invasive species takes time, but the efforts are always worthwhile.



See what's happening

Like this English Ivy and 160+ other invasive plants, learning to identify them is just the first step.

In The Alps

English ivy, holly, tansy ragwort, blackberries, scotch broom are all making their way into the Alps and are just some of 169 invasive plant species listed on the King County noxious weed list. While species vary in impacts and distribution, they all have the common thread of posing a threat to our natural environment. Another thing they have in common is that they were brought here by fellow humans either by accident or intentionally, and it is up to us whether we allow them to continue to overtake our natural landscape. Weeds did not ask to be brought here, rather they are just another byproduct of colonization. Learning about the weeds around you is the greatest first step you can take in being a steward of the beautiful place we call home.

Join us on a hike and learn what you can do. Visit our [events calendar](#)

We are in the process of planning hikes where an expert on the identification and removal of invasive plants will join us. The experts will help you identify these plants, teach about their impact to the natural environment and what could happen if nothing is done, talk about how to control them, and in some cases even demonstrate removal. Do you have problem weeds on your property? Bring a photo to the hike for our experts see and they will provide advice and resources based on your needs. The first hike is on the calendar for March 19th, and will be led by local noxious weed and invasive plant expert Janet Wall. Keep an eye on our events calendar as we work with KCNWCP to schedule more throughout the year.

Developers Winning, Threatening Bellevue's "City in a Park"

IATC Staff - February 28, 2022

Work began recently on a new housing development not far from the land targeted for preservation by Save Coal Creek. Is it a sign of things to come? We certainly hope not.

A press release from the Save Coal Creek committee, February 21, 2022

Developers winning, threatening Bellevue's 'City in a Park'

Bellevue, WA This past week, citizens of Bellevue let out a collective gasp as hundreds of mature trees that have lined Coal Creek Parkway for decades were felled to make room for yet another housing development.

Despite strong protests from tax paying citizens, developers seem to be the only voices heard by Bellevue's City Council these days, putting Bellevue's reputation as the country's "City in a Park" at risk. While the growing need for affordable housing must remain priority for our city, so must the ecological, cultural, and recreational areas that have made Bellevue such a desirable place to live.

Two recent developments demonstrate the lack of balance and foresight shown by the City of Bellevue as developers deftly move through the permitting process. The first, Isola's Park Pointe development on Lakemont Boulevard SE, would put 35 luxury homes directly in front of Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park, one of the area's most beloved hiking destinations and an oasis of critical wildlife habitat. Coincidentally, the City of Bellevue invested millions over the past 20 years to reverse the impacts of upstream development to revive Coal Creek. Spawning salmon have been returning to the creek, a significant ecological and cultural win for this beloved place. Despite this, and outcry via petition by over 4,000 voters in the area, there is no sign that the Department of Development Services will require the developer to undertake a full environmental study prior to approval.

The second, the Basel Townhome development abutting Coal Creek Parkway, succeeded despite significant outcry from the local community. Improbably situated on a bluff above Coal Creek, the development recently broke ground, unceremoniously felling a landscape of mature trees to the dismay of concerned citizens driving along the parkway. The uproar was loudly heard across social media platforms that connect Bellevue citizens. Ironically, the impacts of this development will further impact millions the city has invested in the Coal Creek park area.

Unfortunately, state law favoring developers makes it nearly impossible for taxpaying citizens, environmentalists and native American tribes to voice their opposition to development. RCW 64.40.020 is the provision that awards damages and attorney fees to developers when they can show that the government acts regarding their permit application were "arbitrary, capricious, unlawful, or exceed lawful authority." Because of this law, local governments are pressured to approve permits simply based on the threat of a lawsuit.

It's too late to halt the ecological impacts of the Basel home development. But the city still has the opportunity to do the right thing to protect Coal Creek from development intruding on its banks. Steve Williams, a long time Bellevue resident and former manager of King County's Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park states "We urge Isola and the city to work together to make sure the parcel

becomes public land. This outcome will ensure that the large investments the city has made in Coal Creek are not wasted. The voices of over 4,000 citizens deserve to be heard"

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Williams is a leader with Eastside Heritage Center and one of the editors of *The Coals of Newcastle: A Hundred Years of Hidden History*, published in fall 2020 in a revised and updated edition.

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Snoqualmie Tribe Acquires 12,000 Acres of Ancestral Forest Land

IATC Staff - February 28, 2022



Tolt River Reservoir (Photo credit City of Seattle)

The Snoqualmie Indian Tribe has reclaimed ownership to ancestral lands that are of enormous importance to its people. The Issaquah Alps Trails Club joins Forterra, King County, and others in celebrating this accomplishment of the Tribe, whose ancestral lands include the Issaquah Alps.

Read the Tribe's own words on the meaning of this development and their plans for the future [here](#).

Trails Update: Harvey Manning Park

Paul Winterstein - February 28, 2022

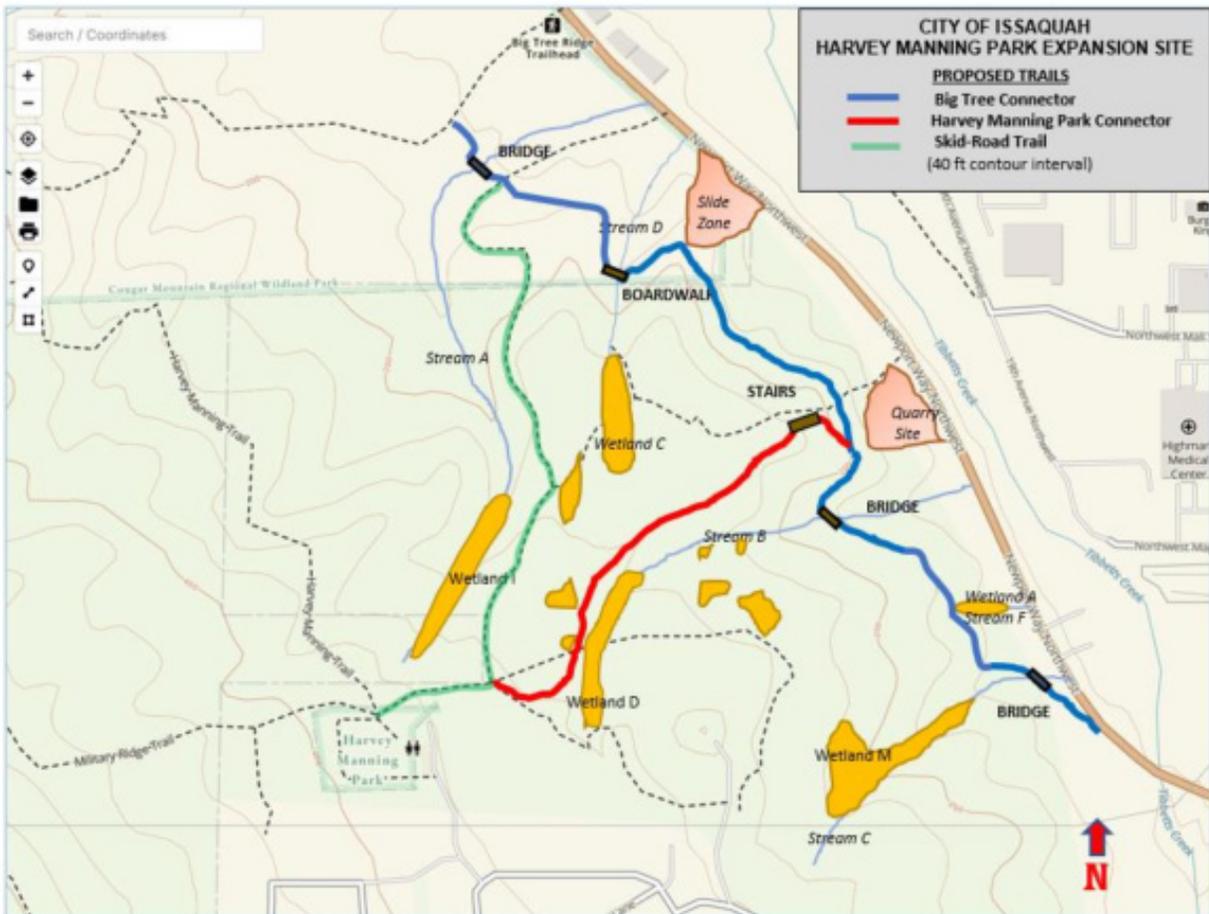
The legacy grows. With the completion of the acquisition by the City of Issaquah of the former Bergsma property, Harvey's original namesake park has been expanded by over 33 acres. The wilderness within has grown!



All New Trails

The expanded park will have a new trailhead on Newport Way and new trails that will connect to the larger trail system within the adjacent Cougar Mt. Regional Wildland Park and up to the Talus neighborhood. In 2021, the City hired the Mountains To Sound Greenway and Washington Trails Association to do initial trail planning, and included IATC and other partners in the process. The map below is the result of this preliminary work.

PROPOSED TRAILS



But First...

Before any trail building can start, a number of other steps must first be completed:

- The land is currently being searched for cultural resources. Should any be found, steps must be taken to protect them. This assessment could impact where trails or other ground disturbing work can be performed, such as the removal of invasive plants.
- Steep slopes, wetlands and streams and their buffers must be studied. This information will shape the trails and help finalize the design.
- A project plan to build the trails must be developed and the whole packet submitted for permitting. Only once the permit is in hand will the timing of the work be known.

Jennifer Fink, the City's Park Planner and Project Administrator has shared all this information with us, and more. In a recent email Jennifer says she anticipates starting "study/design work soon with a goal of achieving permitting and possibly construction towards the end of 2022." We like the sound of that.

About Those Invasive Plants

Like many other places within the Alps, Harvey's expanded park has its share of non-native, invasive plants, including English Ivy and English holly. According to Jennifer, the City will be looking to its [Green Issaquah partnership](#) to help with these invasives. IATC's own Anne Newcomb is a Green Issaquah trained forest steward and has been focusing her efforts on invasives removal at Bernsten Park alongside Issaquah Creek. Going forward, Anne's and IATC's plan is to direct our invasives control and restoration energies towards Harvey's expanded park via Green Issaquah. Joining Anne and IATC on these efforts will be the soonest and best way for people to get their hands dirty and be part of the community effort to transform Harvey's expanded park into a natural, native landscape that all trail users can enjoy and where humankind's impact respects the land.

But Wait, There's More

Another role that Harvey's expanded park could play is in the carbon credits market. This market is designed to reduce the greenhouse gasses in the atmosphere. It works by giving companies or any entity that wants to offset its carbon footprint the opportunity to pay a forest owner to preserve the carbon locked away in its trees and soil. That owner can use the money to protect the land and grow even more carbon holding capacity by planting trees or preserving even more land. The City has partnered with the nonprofit [City Forest Credits](#) to develop just such a program for Harvey's expanded park. Should the City's plan take root, then the additional sequestered carbon will be yet another way that Harvey's legacy will grow.

IATC strongly supports the City's plan for the newly expanded Harvey Manning Park and will work with them to see it become a reality. Watch this space for updates and opportunities to join IATC in helping Harvey's legacy grow.

The Apparatus

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