



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

December 2022

News – Events – Hikes

2022 Annual Campaign

From Save Coal Creek and land conservation, to trails and hikes, to forest health and land restoration. The generosity of our supporters makes this possible.

Please make a generous donation for all we do for our beloved Issaquah Alps.

Thank you!

Twenty-One Feet of Signatures to Save Coal Creek

Paul Winterstein - December 10, 2022

IATC co-founder and VP of Advocacy David Kappler, [Save Coal Creek](#) Steering Committee Chair Sally Lawrence, and a host of other supporters clad in their white Save Coal Creek (SCC) t-shirts showed up at the Bellevue City Council meeting on December 5th and brought the full impact of the almost 4,900 [petition](#) signatures with them. The power of the people was palpable.



*Barb Williams, Peter Marshall, Steve Williams and 4,871 petition signers showed up at the Council meeting.
Photo by David Lai.*

During the public comments portion of the meeting as Sally, dressed in business attire, moved forward to take the microphone, SCC supporters unfurled a 21-foot printout of the 4,871 petition signatures in the back of Council chambers.

The commotion clearly caught the attention of Council.

"Twenty-two hundred and fourteen folks are from Bellevue zip codes", Sally explained. "Twenty-two hundred and eighteen are from cities to the south and east that are within 10 miles" of the SCC location, she continued, and "four hundred and thirty-nine were from Seattle zip codes". This location

information highlights the strong regional concern there is for the land, the wildlife, and the history of the Issaquah Alps. The Bellevue City Council "can be the leaders that we need", extolled Sally, "to reach out to County and State government and bring together a proposal (to buy the land)".

Speaking next, David, sporting a dark sweater with the tail of his shirt hanging out, highlighted some costly impacts of the proposed 35-unit development that the City of Bellevue cannot afford to overlook. Drawing upon his 18 years of experience as an Issaquah City Councilmember, where safety and efficiency were paramount, David pointed out to the Councilmembers how residents of the proposed development would face 1,850 feet of walking or riding on the narrow shoulders of the very busy Lakemont Blvd. before they would get to the safety of the closest city sidewalk. The City of Bellevue would bear the likely costs in the millions to close this unsafe gap. Bringing water and sewer services to the site will also be very costly and disruptive. "You have to tear up the road for 1,820 feet to get water to the site. 2,480 (feet) to get sewer to the site. It's just not an appropriate place to develop" he concluded.

View David's hand-crafted map of locations and lengths of the costly, disruptive, and overlooked safety and infrastructure needs of the Isola development, further evidence that this is not an appropriate place to develop. [Click here.](#)

It's almost game time

Is the SCC message getting through? Is all the time and effort going into trying to save this land making a difference? If the actions of four Bellevue City Councilmembers who approached Sally and David after the meeting to express their interest in our efforts is any indication, then yes, we're getting somewhere.

Bellevue's Development Services department is expected to finalize their permit proposal for the Isola development in early 2023. The public hearings on their recommendations are scheduled for early March. Sally and the SCC Steering Committee and IATC are gearing up for the big push to get Bellevue, elected and community leaders, and Isola to change course and preserve this land.

Get involved

Join the long and growing list of supporters by signing the [Save Coal Creek petition](#) and keep an eye open in the coming weeks for new ways to join this fight to save this critical land from development.

Snake To Lake: A Run Through The Alps

Kyle McCrohan - November 29, 2022

Last December, two friends and I hiked up to the top of West Tiger #3. It was a dazzling day with bright sun and fresh dusting of snow above 2,000 feet. Our plan was to jog back to my home at the base of Cougar Mountain through the trails of Tiger, Squak, and Cougar. We chatted with another hiker about our route and he told us about a group of friends that once ran "Snake to Lake" from Rattlesnake Lake to Lake Washington through the trails of the Issaquah Alps. While the clever name was the main point that caught our attention, the route also appealed to us. "Next October", we joked to each other. For the next 10 months, we would joke that every run was just training for "Snake to Lake".



Sunrise from Rattlesnake Ledge: Blake Slattengren, Sean Richardson, Daniel Briggs, Ryan Nguyen, Brigitte Takeuchi, Kelsey Takeuchi, Chris Chamberlain, and Kyle McCrohan

I grew up in Brier, near the north end of Lake Washington. Although I became an avid hiker and runner in my college and post college years, I spent almost no time in the Issaquah Alps. If I had to drive 40 minutes through traffic to get to Issaquah, I figured that I might as well keep going to the bigger mountains of the Cascades. But in August of last year, I moved into a townhouse beneath the north side of Cougar Mountain, just a few minutes from the Big Tree Trailhead. Since then, I have become intimately familiar with the trails in our wonderful backyard. They are a place to de-stress after a long day. They are a place to stay fit and train. They are a place to meet others and develop a community. For a metropolitan area of millions of people, the Issaquah Alps are the closest real wilderness. They may not be the biggest hills, but they provide an incredible value to the people who recreate here.

On the day of Snake to Lake, I met nine friends in Issaquah and we carpooled to the Rattlesnake Ledge Trailhead. Kelly Jiang, a Board member of the Issaquah Alps Trail Club, volunteered to meet us during our run at road crossings with snacks and water. I am used to doing remote mountain runs, but the

convenience of aid stations was enjoyable since it meant we did not need to carry much while we ran and we had tasty food the entire day. We started off towards the Ledge at first light on a brisk fall day.

We tagged the true summit of Rattlesnake Mountain, the highest point in the entire Issaquah Alps. Interestingly, this would be the only summit we would bag all day. The trail network in the Issaquah Alps is vast, leaving so many opportunities to create new routes. We could have done a dozen different versions of "Snake to Lake", but we chose to just do the most direct route over Rattlesnake, Tiger, Squak, and Cougar mountains. And it was still 41 miles! I am already scheming a more summit-focused route - "The 14 Summits of Issaquah".

At the "Squiger" (Squak/Tiger) aid station, we had covered a full marathon distance already. A few of the participants decided to call it quits, while we also took on a new addition to bring fresh energy over the finishing sections. While remote mountain adventures fill me with a sense of awe and wilderness, runs like these are all about friendship and fun. The Issaquah Alps is a place that forms communities, whether it is my little community of friends or the greater Issaquah Alps Trail Club.



Crossing Squak Mtn.: Kyle, Daniel, Blake, Sean, and Logan Heine

As we descended from Cougar Mountain into the Coal Creek Natural Area, my legs were feeling tired. The fall colors were beautiful and I tried to just focus on the joy of spending this time out with friends. At the west end of Coal Creek, I realized that I had a chance to finish in under 10 hours. I pushed it a little on the Eastrail Trail and into the parking lot of Newport Beach Park. But the run does not simply end at the park - you have to jump in the water! I ran into the shallow water, shoes on and all, and dunked myself. 9:59:55! Just barely under 10 hours.

In total, our run was 41 miles and 8,500 feet of gain, with nearly the entire run on trails and lands protected by the Issaquah Alps Trail Club. While it was by no means the most epic run of my season, it felt special because of the meaning these hills have taken in my life. Snake to Lake felt like a celebration of both friends and the Issaquah Alps. Our big backyard is very special, and I feel incredibly grateful for it.

Events



Trail Work Parties on Tiger and Cougar Mtns.

Join others from the IATC community and WTA to maintain and build new trails on Tiger and Cougar Mtns. throughout and December and January.



Restoration Work Party

Saturday, Dec. 17 from 9:00 AM – Noon

Join Issaquah Alps Trails Club and Green Issaquah in restoring Berntsen Park. We will be enjoying some time outdoors while removing blackberry bushes and ivy to protect existing native plants, trees and Salmon in the Issaquah Creek!





Trail Exploration: Better Connections Between NE Cougar and NW Squak Mtns.

Saturday, Dec. 17 from 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Join this exploration party—sometimes on trails, sometimes off—to scout possible trail connections between northeast Cougar and northwest Squak Mtns.



Park Pointe / Lake Tradition Plateau Hike - Pets Welcome

Sunday, December 18 from Noon – 2:00 PM

Come explore the lesser used trails of Park Pointe and the west end of the Lake Tradition Plateau. Want to bring your pet? Grab the leash and poop bags and join us!



New Years Eve Hike to Debbie's View on Squak Mtn.

Saturday, Dec. 31 from 3:00 – 6:00 PM

Wrap-up the year in hiking by taking in the last sunrays of 2022 from Debbie's View on Squak Mtn.



The Apparatus

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