



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

May 2023

News – Events – Hikes



GiveBIG Benefiting Save Coal Creek

IATC Staff - May 1, 2023



We are almost 1/3 of the way to our \$10,000 challenge from our matching donor to unlock an extra \$10,000 donation!

For more information and to donate, click [here](#) by May 3!

IATC Board President Anne Newcomb receives Community Environmental Award

Nicole Assumpcao - May 1, 2023

This month, the City of Issaquah honored three residents for their outstanding environmental contributions in a small ceremony before the city council meeting on April 17, 2023. IATC's own Board President Anne Newcomb received a Community Environmental Award for her ongoing efforts in restoration and advocacy that span beyond her leadership and commitment to IATC.



Board President Anne Newcomb receiving her award from Mayor Pauly. Photo by Tom Anderson.

Anne has a deep personal commitment to mitigating climate change and creating tangible impact on the land of the Issaquah Alps, and is spearheading IATC's restoration events throughout the Issaquah Alps. Additionally, Anne recently coordinated IATC's contingency to meet with our elected officials (state senator and state representatives) in Olympia for Trust Land Transfer, a program that would allow DNR to put more trust land into conservation status. She has also been a Forest Steward for spaces around Issaquah and has served on the Issaquah Environmental Board since its inception in 2020. We are so proud to have Anne on our team and congratulate her for this achievement!



Robin Kelley, the Executive Director of [FISH \(Friends of the Issaquah Salmon Hatchery\)](#), was awarded the Dan and Ruth Kees Award for a Sustainable Environment, while Jon Smith received a Community Environmental Award for organizing 15+ monthly trash cleanups in the community. More information on the honorees can be found [here](#).



IATC members Nicole Assumpcao and Kelly Jiang join the commemoration. Photo by Tom Anderson.

Run Up For Air: Tiger Mountain

Mark Griffith - May 1, 2023

Run Up For Air (aka RUFA) started a new series in the PNW on Tiger Mountain this past March 11th, 2023. RUFA was started in Utah on Grandeur Peak, a popular route for hikers and climbers. In winter, as you climb Grandeur, you ascend into clean air at the summit as inversion traps smog in the valley. Jared Campbell, a legendary ultra runner, started Run Up For Air in 2012 as a mountain endurance event designed to draw attention to the air quality issues in Salt Lake City.



Runners at the start line. Photo by Mark Griffith.

RUFA came to the PNW through the efforts of Scott Sowle and his race company, Mountain Running Races. Scott grew up on the border of Indiana and Michigan and after high school moved to Utah for skiing. Scott was always active, earning the nickname "Scooter." He worked at ski resorts in the winter and would climb and cycle in the warmer months. He lived in Salt Lake City when Jared was starting RUFA and had spent time himself running and skiing Grandeur.



Race director Scott Sowle. Photo by Mark Griffith

Scott struggled with addiction off and on during his time in Salt Lake. In 2015 he came to the PNW because he needed a change in his life. As part of his recovery, Scott would ride the bus out to Issaquah city center and run in the Issaquah Alps. Running taught him discipline, how to quiet his mind and listen to what was within him. The mountains and Seattle's Union Gospel Mission helped Scott start a new life; and running became part of his path out of addiction. Scott loves the running community and wanted to give back, so he started the *Mountain Running Races* and *The Vert Running Series* to extend running to others, put smiles on faces and introduce people to new places.



In 2022 Scott reached out to Jared Campbell about starting a RUFA chapter in the PNW. Jared wanted to expand the RUFA Salt Lake event into a Run Up For Air series, so RUFA Tiger Mountain was born in its inaugural year in 2023. While the PNW doesn't lack for clean air, in the past 30 years the incidence of large forest fires in Washington has doubled and in the last 5 years we have had prolonged incidents of smoke. Climate change has resulted in snow melting earlier in the spring, leading to drier forests and undergrowth that contributes to wildfires that can ignite more easily, burn hotter and spread faster. RUFA Tiger Mountain draws attention to the importance of actively working on air quality solutions and the underlying causes that degrade air quality. This year the event proceeds went to [Protect our Winters](#)



The run started at 6:15 am behind Issaquah High School and had a [9 mile loop](#) that began in the lowlands of the green ferns and transitioned to blowing snow on the top of Tiger. The event offered a 3, 6, and 12 hour endurance challenge where participants attempted as many laps as they could complete.



Remi Delille and Corrine Malcolm both took first in three fast loops for the 6-hour event. Sean Robinson and Sara Bea Myre both took top honors for our 12-hour event. The 3-hour participants were led by Emily Huebne and Alexander Luchini, who had the fastest loop time of the day with 1:37:21.



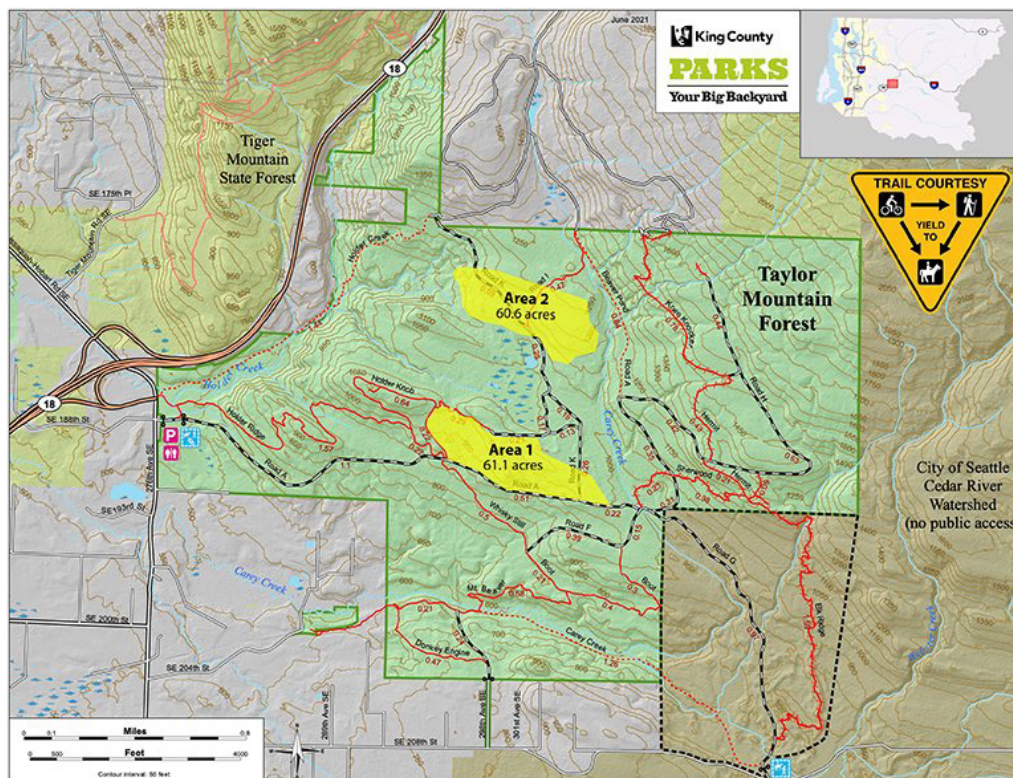
Next year's RUFA - Tiger Mountain is scheduled for March 9th, 2024. Mark your calendars, and come out to volunteer, run, or hike! All are welcome.

Taylor Mountain: A roadmap for forest stewardship

IATC Staff - May 1, 2023

Taylor Mountain: Then and Now

[Taylor Mountain](#), often overshadowed by its popular Tiger and Cougar Mountain cousins, occupies 1,822 acres south of I-90 and east of SR-18. While it is less traveled than its Issaquah neighbors, Taylor Mountain still boasts views of Mt. Rainier and shelters black bears, cougars, and coho salmon.



Map of Taylor Mountain. [Source](#).

Taylor Mountain is a lovely recreational destination, but it has undergone dramatic historical changes. Based on historical land surveys from the University of Washington, Taylor Mountain's pre-European settlement tree composition was 80% conifer. Following extensive settlement and logging, that ratio had shifted to 80% hardwood, including maple, cottonwood, and alder. While these species are native to the Pacific Northwest, they are maladapted to climate change in comparison with the hardier and longer-lived conifers.

To address this imbalance, King County Parks held a public information session on April 11 (video [here](#)) to discuss its past actions and future plans and projections. In consultation with various partners, including the Issaquah Alps Trail Club, King County outlined its extensive forest stewardship plans across Taylor Mountain.

Forestry Priorities

The King County Department of Natural Resources outlined the forestry challenges and opportunities it faces on Taylor Mountain. Most importantly, the forest diverges from its historical composition due to decades of extensive clearcutting. Taylor Mountain has shifted in size, species diversity, species composition, ability to sequester carbon, and wildlife corridor layout. In its current iteration, Taylor Mountain is neither climate resilient, nor historically authentic, and is therefore a prime candidate for sustainable forestry.



Photo by Alexandra Machetanz

Taylor Mountain is also a working forest. This means that DNR has an additional objective of procuring sustainable timber harvests. With all these objectives in mind, DNR plans to remove nearly 100 acres of hardwood alder, cottonwood, and maple across two plots of land, measuring approximately 40 and 60 acres respectively. It will then replant, shifting the species composition to majority long-lived, climate-resistant, native conifers.

As discussed, the pre-European settlement composition of Taylor Mountain was 80% conifer. DNR plans to treat only 50% of Taylor Mountain over the next years, eventually restoring the makeup to around 60-65%. While it intends to remove 90% of the hardwoods, it will retain the biggest and longest-living maple and cottonwood.

Day-to-Day Impact

There will be temporary trail closures on Taylor Mountain as the two land plots transition for 1-3 years while DNR completes its logging and replanting efforts. In tandem with DNR's restoration efforts, the County will also deliver six additional trail bridges, update existing trails, add a picnic and horse hitching station, and add an ADA accessible trail, all with the goal of improving user experience. Throughout this process, the County will work with IATC on the updated trail plan for Taylor Mountain.



Photo by Alexandra Machetanz

Frequent Taylor Mountain hikers, bikers, riders, and runners can check-out planned trail updates [here](#). As discussed, forest restoration projects are important to maintaining healthy forests and restoring historical composition. King County has recently initiated similar projects on Cougar Mountain. Learn more about the Cougar gap treatment [here](#).

Written for The Alpiner by Alexandra Machetanz

Arbor Day at Berntsen Park

Nicole Assumpcao - May 1, 2023

"Whereas the City of Issaquah celebrates Arbor Day year-around with many events to enhance and expand our tree canopy... I, Mary Lou Pauly, Mayor of the City of Issaquah, do hereby proclaim that Issaquah celebrates Arbor Day, and carries that spirit through our activities, policies, and priorities all year long."



Mayor Mary Lou Pauly delivers her Arbor Day proclamation. Photo by Nicole Assumpcao.

Such was the address delivered by Mayor Mary Lou Pauly to open IATC's Arbor Day restoration event at Berntsen Park. As a designated Tree City USA for the past thirty years, Issaquah has long prided itself on the prevalence and variety of its forest friends. One need only look up in Issaquah to see how much trees mean to the town - according to recent LIDAR data, we are home to approximately 220,000 trees, a number that (much to Mayor Pauly's delight) far exceeds its ~40,000 residents.



Group photo featuring volunteers. Photo by Matt Mechler.

Berntsen park was once a homestead, and as such the majority of the native vegetation was wiped out for lawn and pasture, then overtaken by invasive blackberry bushes. Significant restoration efforts have been underway for many years now. Moving forward, the task is to continue repopulating the stream-side park with native plants so the local wildlife - including the stream's salmon - can continue to thrive as they have for so many years.



Dan Hintz offering some planting tips. Photo by Nicole Assumpcao

A small group of volunteers came together on the gray Thursday morning under the guidance of fearless leaders Anne Newcomb (IATC), Dan Hintz (City of Issaquah) and Matt Mechler (City of Issaquah) to aid in the continued reforestation of Berntsen park. After opening comments from the mayor and our guides, we got to work. Close to 100 trees and shrubs and starts were positioned strategically around the park like a belated easter-egg hunt, waiting for intrepid volunteers to find them and nestle them into their new homes. Among the plants were Oregon ash, elderberries, some small starts of conifers such as Douglas fir, a few maples, and assorted other native shrubs. Many of the park's existing trees that now tower over us started in similar restoration efforts years ago, planted by hands just like ours. To look at these small wisps of starts and imagine the habitats and sustenance they will provide for years to come is an incredible exercise in patience and a deep experience of hope.



Volunteers planting. Photo by Nicole Assumpcao.

Volunteers were comprised of everyone from high schoolers to retirees, and included one neighbor who joked that he appreciated everyone coming together to work on his front yard. That is the beauty of Issaquah's plentiful green spaces - they become part of our own homes, and a beautiful space to share and come together in local community.



Volunteer debate the best direction to face their plant - and give her a name. Photo by Nicole Assumpcao.

This was my first time doing restoration work, and I look forward to being able to see the fruits of my labor for years to come. If you'd like to join in the fun, future restoration days are posted on our [events page](#). The next restoration day at Berntsen Park will be on June 3rd; [click here](#) to sign up.

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, in 1872 J. Sterling Morton proposed to the Nebraska Board of Agriculture that a special day will be set aside for the planting of trees; and

WHEREAS, this holiday, called Arbor Day, was first observed with the planting of more than a million trees in Nebraska; and

WHEREAS, the anniversary of the holiday and Arbor Day is now observed throughout the nation and the world; and

WHEREAS, trees produce life-giving oxygen, provide habitat for wildlife, beautify our City, increase property values, and enhance economic vitality; and

WHEREAS, trees, wherever they are planted, are a source of joy and spiritual renewal; and

WHEREAS, the City of Issaquah is an active Tree City USA designee for thirty years; and

WHEREAS, the City of Issaquah celebrates Arbor Day year-around with many events to enhance and expand our tree canopy; and

WHEREAS, the City of Issaquah is celebrating its annual Arbor Day on Thursday, April 20th, 2023.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Mary Lou Pauly, Mayor of the City of Issaquah, do hereby proclaim that Issaquah celebrates

ARBOR DAY

and carries that spirit through our activities, policies and priorities all year long. I urge all citizens to celebrate and support efforts to protect our trees and woodlands. Further, I urge all citizens to plant trees to create a healthier community and promote the well-being of future generations.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and seal of the City of Issaquah this 3rd day of April 2023.



Mary Lou Pauly, Mayor

Arbor Day proclamation by Mayor Mary Lou Pauly

Events



Partner Event: Walk N Wag

Sunday, May 7 from 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Dogs, friends of dogs and spectators are invited to the seventh annual Walk 'n Wag at Lake Sammamish State Park, presented by Alpine Hospital and benefiting FLSSP.



Partner Event: 2023 Tiger Claw Ascent

Friday & Saturday, May 12 & 13 from 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM
IATC Booth: Saturday, May 13 from 12:00 PM – 5:00 PM

Tiger Claw is a unique challenge consisting of three of the most difficult ascents of Tiger Mountain's West peaks. Come support this great event alongside fellow IATC members as they take on the Tiger Claw as participants and volunteers.



Restoration of High School Trail

Saturday, May 13 from 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Join IATC and Green Issaquah as we continue our restoration of the High School Trail, a well-loved section of Tiger Mountain.



Partner Event: Habitat Restoration at Park Pointe

Saturday, May 13 from 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

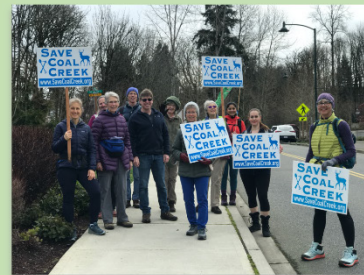
Join MTSGT in a Habitat Restoration at Park Pointe, a 102-acre natural area located between Issaquah High School and Tiger Mountain.



Upstream Downstream Fundraiser to Save Coal Creek

Sunday, May 21 from 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM
Newport Yacht Club

Gather with fellow supporters for live music and light refreshments to learn more about the final phase of the Save Coal Creek initiative. *Minimum suggested donation \$100.*



Restoration of Berntsen Park

Saturday, June 3 from 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Grab your gloves and join IATC along with Green Issaquah in our continuing efforts to restore Berntsen Park to its natural state of native plants and no invasives along Issaquah Creek.





Native Plant Identification Hike on the Lake Tradition Plateau

Tuesday, May 2 from 5:00 PM – 8:00 PM

Join David Kappler on a hike through the Lake Tradition Plateau, where we will learn about the identification and special traits of native flowering plants and ferns.



Native Plant Identification Hike to De Leo Wall – Afternoon Hike

Saturday, May 6 from 2:00 PM – 5:00 PM

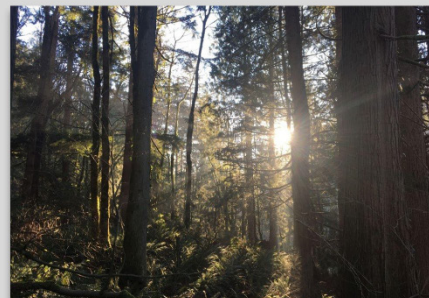
Join native plant steward Franja Bryant on the afternoon hike to De Leo Wall and along the way learn to identify native plants.



Native Tree Identification Hike on the Lake Tradition Plateau

Monday, May 8 from 5:00 PM – 8:00 PM

Join David Kappler on a hike along the western edge of Lake Tradition Plateau, where we will learn about the identification and special traits of native trees and shrubs.



Teddy Bear Hike – Swamp Trail

Saturday, May 13 from 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

This family-friendly hike along the Swamp Trail is meant for the young at heart. Starting at High Point Trailhead, kids will hear the story of Zoey and the Swamp Monster while exploring the beautiful forest and wetlands of Tiger Mountain.



Forest Health Hike – E. Sunset Way

Sunday, May 14 from 10:00 AM – 12:30 PM

Join the IATC and Dan Hintz from City of Issaquah for a morning of plant identification and forest ecology education.



Hike – Weeds in the Woods

Saturday, May 20 from 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM

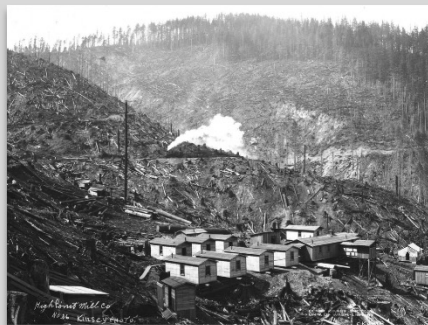
Join Janet Wall, a local advocate for healthy lands and an expert on noxious weeds and invasive plants, for a hike to learn about non-native and potentially harmful plants in the Issaquah Alps.



High Point Logging History Hike

Saturday, June 3 from 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Join us for this popular hike to learn about the history of the High Point Mill on West Tiger Mountain.



The Apparatus

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Anne Newcomb (president@issaquahalps.org)

Vice President

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Vice President of Advocacy

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