

## Issaquah Alps Trails Club

*"The Apparatus"*

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## ALPINER

October ☿ November ☿ December 1992

## Public Acquisition of Squak Mountain—Now or Never

by Gus Nelson

For many years the IATC has been actively pursuing and supporting the creation and protection, via public open space acquisition, of a wildlife and recreation corridor across the Issaquah Alps. Fortunately much progress has been made—mainly due to the approval in 1989 by King County voters of an open space bond issue to provide for a system of county-wide open space corridors. Since that time significant additional public lands have been acquired on Squak Mountain. As the accompanying map shows, Section 9 on Squak Mountain represents a critical missing link to the corridor between Cougar Mountain to the west and Tiger Mountain State Forest to the east. The Washington Department of Natural Resources is in the process of reconveying its ownership in Sections 10 and 16 to the State Parks and Recreation Commission. When Section 9 is added to the current State Park, public ownership will represent 40%, or approximately 2200 acres, of Squak Mountain. The public acquisition of Section 9 is **extremely** important to maintaining the *wilderness character* of Squak Mountain State Park. The remainder of this article will summarize the recent events surrounding the public acquisition of Section 9 and the work that remains to be done in order to secure this acquisition. But first, a bit of history on Squak...

Squak Mountain, in the center of what is known as the

"Issaquah Alps", encompasses an area of 5600 acres within and south of the City of Issaquah. The area considered as Squak Mountain totals 8.75 square miles and is equivalent to 4.0 miles north-south and 2.2 miles east-west. Approximately 19 percent of this area is within City limits which has brought development to the north side of the mountain. At the center and top of the mountain is Squak Mountain State Park (SMSP) which is a wilderness park consisting of 590 acres (representing 10.5 percent of the mountain) including the central peak at an elevation of 2050 feet.

Unfortunately very little is known today about the detailed history on Squak Mountain. We do know that the name "Squak" applied permanently to the mountain south of town while many other name changes occurred through the years. The town of Issaquah had previous names such as Gilman and Squak; Issaquah Creek was once called Squak Creek; Tiger Mountain was called Mount Issaquah; Cougar Mountain was called Newcastle Hills; Lake Sammamish was once called Squak Lake. But Squak Mountain was always called Squak Mountain.

In the early 1860's coal was discovered on the northern slopes of the mountain and brought mining activity to Section 33 close to the downtown area. Coal mining operations were also conducted on the west slopes of the mountain near

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KING COUNTY  
LIBRARY SYSTEM

# Squak Mountain Under Assault!

by Ken Konigsmark

Those familiar with Squak Mountain know it as a wild, beautiful, and safe haven into which one can escape the modern world and the mobs which frequent many of the other trails in the Issaquah Alps. Unnamed and uncharted trails, some brush-covered and really no more than deer trails, cross-cross the mountain and offer many hours of exploratory wanderings. One can find solitude here; a hiker's domain... or so it was.

While there have always been occasional problems with illegally trespassing ORV's and mountain bikes on Squak, this spring and summer have seen a steadily increasing onslaught by these users. In fact, it has now reached a level where, on a daily basis, one is more likely than not to experience trespassers on the State Park trails which by law are dedicated to "Foot traffic Only". The corresponding trail damage has been severe in some cases. Since just this spring, from obscene clear-cutting above Sunset Gravel, to the illegal gouging of a new 4-wheeler trail onto State Park lands (including the cutting of many trees), to the promotion of Squak by local mountain bike clubs as new turf for carousing—Squak Mountain is under assault. The threat that these intrusions represent to the trails, to hikers, and to the quality of the "wilderness experience" that is meant to exist within Squak Mountain State Park is very real, and cannot go unchallenged. First though, some background.

The lands of Squak are owned primarily by King County, various private companies and individuals, and most importantly Washington State Parks. Squak Mountain State Park, which encompasses most of the upper slopes of the mountain,

was donated by the Bullitt family on the condition that the park remain forever closed to all uses other than pedestrian hiking—i.e. no motorized vehicles, no bicycles, no horses. Thanks in large part to Gus Nelson's efforts, it is highly likely that the State Park holdings will approximately double in size with the expected near-term public acquisition of Section 9 (see article in this issue by Gus Nelson).

Within the current park holdings, highly visible signs are posted at all access points which clearly state "Foot Traffic Only", and at the most accessible entry points further signage clearly spells out in detail the restrictions against all other uses besides hiking. Despite these clearly posted laws, there is an irresponsible, uncaring segment of the population which willfully chooses to violate these regulations, primarily because there is little fear of being penalized. That needs to change.

Protection and enforcement of laws within the State Park are the responsibility of the Lake Sammamish State Park office, which readily admits that they lack the resources to do much if anything to protect and improve Squak Mountain. Attempts by Gus Nelson and myself to prod State Parks into action have been met with an unresponsive cold shoulder. Members of the IATC need to aggressively push the Lake Sammamish State Park Office, the State Parks Regional Office, and the State Parks Commission as well as King County and the City of Issaquah to take a much more active role in protecting Squak Mountain. Abandoning it to "laissez-faire" system of management, as is currently the case, will only lead to continuing and worsening abuse and deterioration, and

dangerous user conflicts. **Please write, call, lobby, and promote the protection of Squak Mountain with all these agencies!**

What else can be done? I encourage all hikers to personally join the battle as I have done. When on the trails, I place as many logs, rocks and other natural barriers as I can find across the pathways in such a way as to inhibit or impede illegal wheeled trespassers, while still allowing easy step-over by hikers. My hope is to make it as unenjoyable and difficult as I can for cyclists who, after all, are illegally trespassing on OUR (i.e. hikers') hiking-only trails. I have made it a point to verbally challenge every such group that I meet, reminding them that they are unlawfully trespassing on clearly marked trails and asking them to turn around and leave. Many times I get a barrage of obscenities and intimidating threats in response. Yet maybe over time, if enough hikers do assert themselves in this way, the message might sink in that trespassers are not allowed nor welcome on OUR trails. In short, it is up to each of us to help uphold the laws which were put in place to protect out public lands and OUR trails. Please join me in doing so.

Lastly, I intend to continue to pressure the proper authorities to protect Squak Mountain. I would appreciate hearing from any of you who experience improper or illegal activities on these trails. I will keep a log of such events in order to document the level of abuse that is occurring. Please call me with any such reports at 392-3099.

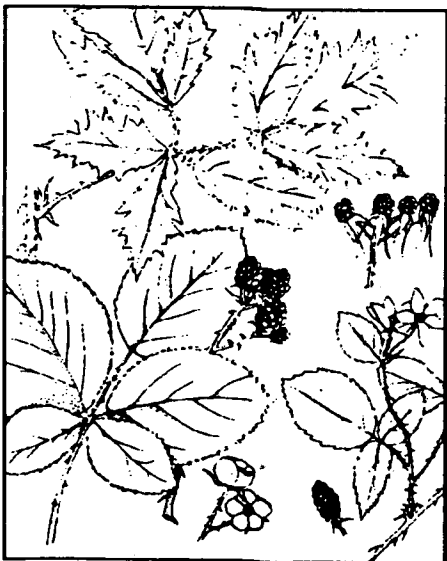
# Brambling in the Alps

by Fred Weinmann

*"It's a nice way to live,  
Just taking what Nature is  
willing to give..."*

*-Robert Frost-*

Twentieth century philosopher Ronald Jager says "Picking wild berries is the sweetest and best of our vagrant summer pleasures." For those who agree, we have ample opportunity to engage in such distraction during our Issaquah Alps ramblings. This can be practiced as trilside foraging without breaking stride, a behavior epitomized by such experienced hike leaders as Ralph Owen and Bill Longwell or we can launch a full scale assault with buce, brushbeater and armor. This article commemorates the foraging season just past which proved to be one of the most productive in recent years. 1992 will be remembered as a good vintage!



As often as not our target species are the wild berries belonging to the genus *Rubus*, the rose family (Rosaceae) and commonly referred to as the brambles. Six species are encountered on virtually every substantial hike in the Issaquah Alps. Three of the six are blackberries

which means the core is removed when the berry is picked and three are raspberries where the core of the berry remains attached to the stem. Four are vines, two are shrubs, five have spines and one is spineless, all are edible but some more palatable than others.

## Dewberry

(aka trailing blackberry, douglas blackberry, blood sweat and tears, or scientifically as *Rubus ursinus*)

Dewberry is our only common native blackberry and represents the epitome of northwest edible berries. Their taste is superb in any condition (i.e. straight from the vine, in bricke, as jam, in pies, in torts or as topping for ice cream, french toast or pancakes. Berries ripen in late June and July.

The spines are hooked but relatively short and not particularly stiff. Dense patches can be fairly easily traversed although overzealous bushwacking can cause considerable redlining on exposed skin. Vines grow across trails at levels perfect for tripping nonchalant hikers.

Although the flowers all appear superficially similar, some plants produce only male and some female flowers. Foraging for berries among male brambles is fruitless! Hybrids with dewberry have resulted in several horticultural berries such as loganberry, marionberry and boysenberry. Highly productive areas are guarded by northwesterners as family secrets.

## Himalaya Blackberry/Evergreen Blackberry

(*Rubus discolor*/*Rubus laciniatus*)

Abundant berry production by himalaya and evergreen blackberries partially atones for inherent viciousness and tendency to

appropriate all vacant real estate. Both have been introduced to the northwest for commercial berry production.

Berries are large, tasty, seedy, and prolific—(perhaps the only berries in our area where sufficient quantities can be gathered for wine production. Bring your machete and wear armor! Subtle differences in flavor exist between these two seedy characters. I prefer the himalayan berry but others claim the evergreen to be sweeter. Some native northwesterners reject them entirely due to seediness and lack of succulence compared to the native dewberry described above. Berries ripen late July though September. Invasiveness, non-native status and lethality of spines are emotional liabilities.

The corpulent bespined stems are easily recognized in all seasons. Evergreen spines are stiff, hooked and vicious; they can strike bushwhackers from up to a foot away; tear clothes and induce bleeding; essentially impenetrable when in dense stands. Himalayan blackberry spines are only slightly less lethal. As characterized by Harvey Manning, these are the true hellberries of the Alps.

And the raspberries...

## Salmonberry

(*Rubus spectabilis*)

Many find the light orangish berries delectable but I consider their bland taste to be inferior to most other northwest berries. Worthy of an occasional nip along the trail but mass harvest is best left for the birds and bears. In addition to sustenance for intrepid hikers, salmonberries have been consumed over the ages by North west Native Americans.

(continued on page 11)

## October 1992

### Hikes and Events

**Saturday October 3**

*Salmon Days*

**Sunday October 4**

Rattlesnake Mtn Summit via  
Ledge

4C 8:30 a.m.

George Jackman 643-0731 or  
221-3925

*Salmon Days*

**Tuesday October 6**

Little Si

2C 9:30 a.m.

Al Blalock 746-4155

**Saturday October 10**

Tour of Grand Ridge

2B 9:00 a.m.

Bill McFerren 391-3359

Beyond the Alps—Guye Peak  
Steep, rough, hiking boots re-  
quired

3C 8:30 a.m.

Warren Jones 888-0262

**Sunday October 11**

Bear Ridge to Erratic

1B 9:30 a.m.

Ann Leber 746-3291

Tiger Mtn. Leader's Choice

3C 8:00 a.m.

Will Thompson 488-8592

**Wednesday October 14**

Lake Hills Greenbelt Toddler/  
Family Hike

1A 10:00 a.m.

Peggy Barchi 432-5446

**Saturday October 17**

Tiger Mtn. Trail Work Party—  
joint project with DNR and  
VOW

3C 8:30 a.m.

Joe Toynbee 723-6716

## OCTOBER 1992

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Tiger Mtn. Leader's Choice

3C 8:30 a.m.

Trudy Ecob 232-2933

**Sunday October 18**

Cougar: Licorice Fern to DeLeo  
Wall via new trail access

2A 10:30 a.m.

John Johnson 633-3805

Round Lake, Wetland and High  
School Trail

1B 11:00 a.m.

Kate Gross 329-2412

**Thursday October 22**

Preston Toddler/Family Hike

1A 10:00 a.m.

Peggy Barchi 432-5446

**Friday October 23**

Lake Desire

2B 9:30 a.m.

Betty Culbert 432-7387

**Saturday October 24**

Little Mt. Si

2B 12:30 p.m.

Bob Gross 392-0539

Middle Tiger Trail Maintenance  
Cruise

*See Alpiners article.*

3C 8:30 a.m.

Will Thompson 488-8592

**Sunday October 25**

Cougar Mtn. North Village  
Exploration

Some off trail.

2C 10:00 a.m.

Ralph Owen 746-1070

Big Trees and Caves

2B 9:30 a.m.

Leonard Eisenberg 392-4034

**Monday October 26**

*Board Meeting*

7:30 p.m. Issaquah Community  
Hall (next to Fire Station)

**Tuesday October 27**

TMT Traverse

4D 8:00 a.m.

Joann Howe

**Wednesday October 28**

Tiger Mtn. Leader's Choice

3C 8:30 a.m.

Will Thompson 488-8592

**Thursday October 29**

Lake Tradition Plateau

2A 9:30 a.m.

Al Blalock 746-4155

**Saturday October 31**

Squak Mtn. to Collapsed

Bridge—lunch at Talus Caves

3B 9:30 a.m.

Ann Leber 746-3291

## November 1992 Hikes and Events

**Sunday November 1**  
Snoqualmie Falls from Lake Alice Rd.

2B 10:00 a.m.

Peggy Owen 747-1070

**Saturday November 7**

Hobart/Middle Tiger RR Grade and TMT "Trail Cruise"

*See Alpiner article*

3B 9:00 a.m.

Tom Palm 783-6005

Cougar Mtn. Nike Missile Base

2B 9:00 a.m.

Bill McFerren 391-3359

**Sunday November 8**

Upper Preston to the Lake Alice Trail

2A 12:30 p.m.

Kate Gross 329-2412

Lake Tradition and Tiger Caves

2B 12:30 p.m.

Cliff Cooper 932-3124

**Tuesday November 10**

Tiger Mtn. Leader's Choice

3C 8:30 a.m.

Will Thompson 488-8592

**Wednesday November 11**

Cougar Mountain Wilderness

3C 9:30 a.m.

Mary Cadigan 641-4046

**Saturday November 14**

Dwight's Way to Preston Junction

Trail Maintenance Cruise

*See Alpiner article*

3C 9:00 a.m.

Will Thompson 488-8592

Cougar: Licorice Fern to

Longview Peak

2A 10:30 a.m.

John Johnson 633-3805

**Sunday November 15**

Cougar Mtn N to S Traverse

3C 9:00 a.m.

Ralph Owen 746-1070

## NOVEMBER 1992

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29	30					

Lake Tradition Plateau

2B 1:00 p.m.

Bob Gross 392-0539

**Tuesday November 17**

South Tiger Loop

3C 9:00 a.m.

Joann Howe

**Wednesday November 18**

Wildside Trail Toddler/Family

Hike

1A 10:00 a.m.

Peggy Barchi 432-5446

**Saturday November 21**

West Tiger Railroad Grade: Trail Cruise

*See Alpiner article.*

3C 8:30 a.m.

Joe Toynbee 723-6716

Little Si

2B 9:30 a.m.

Leonard Eisenberg 392-4034

**Sunday November 22**

Cougar Mountain Coal Creek

Falls and Far Country

2A 9:30 a.m.

Kate Gross 329-2412

Twin Falls State Park/Children's

Hike

1B 10 a.m.

Dawn & Lynda Mollick 392-

9390

**Monday November 23**

*Board Meeting*

7:30 p.m. Issaquah Community Hall (next to Fire Station)

**Tuesday November 24**

Lake Alice—Snoqualmie Falls

2B 9:30 a.m.

Al Blalock 746-4155

**Friday November 27**

Tiger Mtn. Leader's Choice

3C 9:00 a.m.

Will Thompson 488-8592

**Saturday November 28**

Winter Botanizing—route

weather dependent

2B 10:00 a.m.

Fred and Ann Weinmann 392-9230

## December 1992

### Hikes and Events

#### Thursday December 3

Anti-Aircraft Peak Toddler/  
Family Hike

1A 10:00 a.m.

Peggy Barchi 432-5446

#### Saturday December 5

Squak Mtn.—Bullitt Mansion  
2B 9:00 a.m.

Bill McFerren 391-3359

#### Sunday December 6

Tradition Plateau Trail—Big  
Tree—Adventure Trail

2B 1:00 p.m.

Mary Cadigan 641-4046

#### Tuesday December 8

Tiger Mountain—decorate tree  
with bird food;

annual cookie sharing, bring  
dozen goodies and recipes

3C 9:00 a.m.

Joann Howe

#### Wednesday December 9

Tiger Mtn. Leader's Choice

3C 9:00 a.m.

Will Thompson 488-8592

#### Saturday December 12

Squak Mtn. West Side Loop

3C 9:00 a.m.

Ralph Owen 746-1070

Lake Tradition

2B 12:30 p.m.

Ann Leber 746-3291

#### Sunday December 13

Twin Falls

2B 9:30 a.m.

Al Blalock 746-4155

#### Saturday December 19

Tiger Mtn. Leader's Choice

3C 8:30 a.m.

Trudy Ecob 232-2933

## DECEMBER 1992

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

One View to Mid-TMT Trail  
Maintenance Cruise

*See Alpiner article.*

3C 9:30 a.m.

Will Thompson 488-8592

#### Saturday December 26

Twin Falls

1B 12:30 p.m.

Bob Gross 392-0539

#### Monday December 28

*Board Meeting*

7:30 p.m. Issaquah Community

Hall (next to Fire Station)

#### Thursday December 31

Tiger Mtn. Leader's Choice

3C 9:30 a.m.

Will Thompson 488-8592

# Hike Information

## HIKE LEADERS

The hike leaders are volunteers who have donated their time to lead people who want to hike and explore the trails in the Issaquah Alps and other nearby foothills (Cascades) in King County. Hikes are scheduled and led year-round regardless of weather. *Minimum attendance is 3, including the leader.*

Trails in the Issaquah Alps may be good or bad, easy or hard, muddy or dusty, brushy or clear, steep or flat, easy or hard—or all of the above. Some are not much more than animal trails. As *volunteers*, neither the hike leaders, the Trails Club or club directors are in any way responsible or liable for hiker's comfort, transportation, property, safety, or general wellbeing while traveling to and from the trailhead or while hiking or working any trail.

The club's sole purpose is to show hikers where the trails are and to lead the way. The public, other clubs, youth groups, church groups and others are welcome and wholeheartedly invited to join with the hike leader and others who want to hike these trails. Children under 13 should be accompanied by an adult. *Please, no pets on these hikes.*

## HIKE CLASSIFICATIONS

Each hike has a number and letter designation after it (e.g., 2C). Numbers indicate the hiking time and letters indicate the degree of difficulty.

### Hiking Time

- Class 1: 2 hours
- Class 2: 4 hours
- Class 3: 6 hours
- Class 4: 8 hours

These are *approximate* hiking times, not including travel time to and from the trailhead (20 to 70 minutes, depending on the hike) and meal times (lunch will add another 20-70 minutes, depending on the mood of the group). The times are based on an assumption of a two mile per hour pace, with a half hour added for each 1000 feet in elevation gain. Trail conditions, weather, and unexpected hazards can extend the hiking time.

## Degree of Difficulty

- A: little or no elevation gain, up to 500 feet, no difficulties for average walker
- B: some climbing: up to 1200 feet, or some other difficulty
- C: more climbing: up to 2500 feet, or some other difficulty
- D: much climbing: over 2500 feet elevation gain

This is an *estimated* degree of difficulty. Most trails in the Issaquah Alps are not up to the high standards of state and national parks. Issaquah Trails can be very steep in parts or muddy and brushy. Hikers may gain 1000 feet in just one mile of a five-mile, 1500-foot elevation gain hike. Sometimes there are trees to climb over or nettles and berry bushes to beat through. *Short* doesn't automatically mean easy and *long* doesn't automatically mean tough.

## HIKE DESCRIPTION MODIFIERS

### Exploration

The leader shows trails and points of interest along the way. The trails to be hiked or points visited depend on the weather and the group's interests.

### Leader's Choice

The leader had not decided where to hike before publication of the hike schedule.

### Trail Party

Trail maintenance work party.

### Variation

The leader may detour, take short cuts and loops, explore or otherwise deviate from the main trail to make the hike more interesting.

### Exploratory Bushwhack

The leader goes cross country off the main trail system to explore animal trails, canyons, old logging roads, or old railroad grades. Expect to go through brush, over logs, tiptoe through wildflowers and/or mud and have a good time hiking where others seldom tread.

### Youth Hike

For children ages six to 12. Parents must come along.

## Toddler's Walk

For parents with very small children or infants.

## MEETING PLACE

Trails Club hikes meet in the parking lot just south of Issaquah City Hall. To get there, take Exit 17 (Issaquah-Front Street) off Interstate 90 and turn south into downtown Issaquah. Go one mile or so down Front Street, past the light at Sunset to S.E. Andrews. Turn left into the KC Foods complex. Go one block to parking area between First Avenue and Rainier Blvd. Park south of Andrews Street.

## CLOTHING

Dress for the Pacific Northwest outdoors—expect rain, snow, sunshine, fog and everything in between. Bring extra clothing, rain gear, food, drink, matches, flashlight and first aid supplies. Wear comfortable hiking boots or hiking shoes.

## TRAIL MAINTENANCE

Volunteers organize and schedule trail maintenance parties periodically as listed in the hike schedule. These work parties meet at the same place as the regular hikes (see "Meeting Place" above). The Club is well supplied with heavy trail maintenance tools, but workers may also bring their own loppers, weed whackers and other tools. Trail work parties last at least four hours. *Trail maintenance is vital to the Club's work and an integral part of the DNR management plan for Tiger Mountain.* Work parties must limit their activity to those trails listed by DNR as scheduled for maintenance—**no construction of new trails is allowed.** Work parties are a great way to meet people! Individuals and groups are also encouraged to adopt a trail, or section of trail, and be responsible for maintaining it.

# Club News Briefs...

## Grand Ridge Update

*by Bill*

Club members have been attending public meetings of King County Open Space Citizens Oversight Committee. At issue is the Southern Terminus and route of the East Lake Sammamish to Redmond trail: A 10-12 mile (up to 150 feet wide) stretch of multi-use corridor provided for by the 1989 Open Space bond issue. Two southern trailheads are being considered. One would come up from Lake Sammamish State Park on an old railroad grade near Laughing Jacobs creek. The other would start at the Highpoint I-90 exit. The IATC supports any and all trails proposed, but only one trailhead will be chosen due to budget constraints. The FOOT (Friends of Open Trails) organization supports the Highpoint Trailhead and has done a great job in presenting their case. This choice ties in well with the trails of Tiger Mountain and Tradition Lake as well as the Mountains to Sound Greenway concept. Once the route is chosen, our next challenge will be to lobby for separation of trail usage. A trail where hikers can explore in a safe and enjoyable environment would be the goal. Stay tuned for more information.

## Trail Cruises Launched

*by Joe Toynbee*

This Fall the Club is starting a new category of hikes called Trail Cruises. Most of the trails have been built that are going to be built in the Issaquah Alps—what is needed in the future is ongoing trail maintenance.

Trail cruises will be primarily hikes with some maintenance done as time and energy permit. Each

participant in a trail cruise is asked to bring a tool: hand clipper, lopper, small saw, grub hoe, etc. Trail problems too great or lengthy for the group to handle will be reported by the hike leader.

Please look for Trail Cruises and consider going on some. They will be a great way to help the cause of trails as well as go on a good hike.

## Greenway Hikes A Success!

*by Joe Toynbee*

In July the Issaquah Alps Trails Club conducted an I-90 Greenway Hike series. The six hike stages, done on three consecutive weekends, covered the distance from Snoqualmie Pass to Puget Sound except for three short intervals. We demonstrated once again, just as we did on the Mountains to Sounds March in July of 1990 that it is possible to walk this route on a series of roads and trails without being run over by 18-wheel trucks!

Total signup for the six hikes was about 100, with many people

doing several stages. Three stalwart individuals did all six hikes: B.J. Kirkendall, Mary Slattery, and Dave Ziegler. Our hearty congratulations to them!

The Mountains to Sound Trust will be continuing the effort to establish and improve the Greenway route. Your support of their efforts is needed. The Trust can be reached at:

506 Second Ave., Suite 1510  
Seattle WA 98104  
tel: 206-587-2447



# Lucille McDonald, 1898-1992

by Ralph Owen

The IATC lost a friend with the passing of Lucille McDonald at age 93 on June 23. Mrs. McDonald, who was a noted journalist, author and local historian, was the co-author, with her son Richard McDonald, of the "Coals of Newcastle: A Hundred Years of Hidden History". This lively history of the once-thriving coal mining area on Cougar Mountain, published by the IATC, received the award of the 1989 Local History Project of the Year by the Association of King County Historical Organizations.

Mrs. McDonald was a pioneer woman journalist who worked on newspapers from Alaska to South America. She landed her first job for the Eugene Daily Guard at the age of 17 while attending the University of Oregon. During her three decades of newspaper work at the Seattle Times and Journal American, one of her specialties was covering the lives of the early residents and communities of the state and

the East Side. When many of us began to wonder about the strange holes and remains on Cougar Mountain, we gained our first clues of their origins by reading of the coal mining community of Newcastle in many of her 450 East Side history columns which were published in the Journal American from 1977 to 1987.

During World War II Mrs. McDonald began a second career writing books. She wrote more than 10 books and co-authored 13 others on Washington state history and children's fiction. Among other titles covering the history of the East Side, including Newcastle and Issaquah, are "The Lake Washington Story", "Bellevue: Its First 100 Years", and "Squak Slough, 1870-1920". McDonald was noted for her insistence on reporting only the facts, with much of her writing based on first-person interviews. Over her long career she won numerous national and local awards for her historical writing and journalism.

## Issaquah, "The Trailhead City"

by Bill McFerren

Problems have surfaced recently with the City of Issaquah's Wildlife and Recreational Trails Plan. After a review by the City administrators, the Plan has been weakened in regards to plan enforcement, wildlife and environmental protection, trails standards, protection of public access, land acquisition, and protection of the Tradition Lake Plateau and of the wilderness character of

Squak Mountain. In response to IATC protests, the City Council has formed an ad-hoc committee consisting of City Council members John Ardussi, Harris Atkins, and David Kappler to work out a plan that will be acceptable to the Club. Club members Roger Delmar, Jack Hornung, and Bill McFerren have been called upon to testify before the Committee. More details will follow in upcoming Alpiners.

## To the Editor:

The Snoqualmie Valley Trails Club is no longer submitting our schedule to be published in the Alpiners.

We are now three years old and are successful in establishing a sizable membership on our own.

The SVTC wishes to thank IATC for their past support and assistance and for publishing our schedule in the past. We also owe Harvey Manning a debt of gratitude for his suggestion that we form a club of our own for our area.

We do hope that all IATC members will continue to hike with us. We invite those of you who do not have SVTC memberships to join and enjoy the trails of Snoqualmie Valley with us.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

*Snoqualmie Valley Trails Club*



# Wagonwheels to Issaquah

by Pamela Wallenstein

*"Each spring, as long as I can remember, an old gentleman by the name of Josiah Merritt came into the Valley to pick up his horses that he had left in the pasture with some of the farmers. We called him Uncle Si. He had long white hair and beard, and didn't look like Ezra Meeker. He would round up his horses and head for North Bend where he spent the entire summer prospecting on Mount Si—named for him. He always maintained that it was a mountain of copper just waiting to be taken out. If it was, the mountain still holds its wealth close to its bosom. I have never heard of any great wealth coming out of there."*

Bessie Wilson Craine,  
*Squak Valley: A Tale of Ol  
Issaquah*

Returning to Issaquah across the floating bridge and down a four-lane highway from Seattle is fast and routine. Yet years ago, it wasn't this way at all. *Squak Valley: A Tale of Old Issaquah* by Bessie Wilson Craine (published by the Issaquah Historical Society) has helped me imagine what travel to Issaquah used to be like during the late 1800's.

Settlement of Squak Valley began about 1860 and Bessie's family arrived in the valley in 1885 when she was about three years old. Bessie grew up in Issaquah and has written about her girlhood experiences there.

Getting to Squak Valley from Renton took almost all day. Bessie writes: "After leaving Renton, the roads were rugged. They were put through by the early settlers, following the line of least resistance, with nothing to work with except their horses and hand tools. In the low marshy places they had put in puncheon roads.... They were made by felling small trees, cutting them in lengths the width of the road and

placing them side by side. Sometimes they would take the time to cut boughs to put over them. At best it didn't make for good wheeling. When it rained they would fairly float. It was worth one's life to get the horses across without their slipping through and breaking a leg. In places the mud was hub deep and the horses' bellies. On the clay hills that were steep and slippery most wagons had a wheel block dragging behind a back wheel. They couldn't trust the brakes on these hills. If a horse should fall and flounder, the wagon would settle back against the block until the horse could get on its feet. Otherwise there is no telling where the whole outfit might land—perhaps at the bottom of some cliff."

The stage line ran over New Castle Hill to Lake Washington, and most supplies were brought to Squak Valley and sent to Seattle by this route. The route continued beyond Squak Valley to Fall City, Snoqualmie, and North Bend.

The road from North Bend to Snoqualmie Pass was ever rougher and often required trail work to get over or around fallen trees. This was the route that eastern Washington cattlemen used to bring their long-horn steers to market in Seattle. They would pass through Issaquah in great herds with "horns that measured five and six feet from tip to tip."

Gypsies also used this route to reach Seattle on their yearly travels from Snoqualmie Pass to the Puget Sound and points south. They were "bedecked in bright, gay garb" and they would camp in Issaquah to let their horses rest, graze in the meadows and recover from the long trip over the Pass. The gypsies would stay about a week and tell fortunes in exchange for farm goods.

An alternative route for getting goods to Seattle was by "crossing Lake Sammamish, poling through Squak Slough and across Lake Washington." This was the route originally chosen to transport hop poles to San Francisco. These poles were used to make barrels and were cut from the hazel bush that grew around Issaquah. Indian labor was typically used for cutting the poles as there were several permanent Indian camps along the Lake.

Issaquah was eventually connected to Seattle by a railroad that ran through the valley. This, along with the automobile, changed Squak Valley for good. Bessie writes that John Goode closed his livery stable in town and opened the first gas station at Goode's corner. Farmers started to use machines for farm work instead of horses. She writes of cars "whizzing through the country as fast as twenty-five miles per hour". As transportation changed, Squak Valley changed too—it was no longer difficult to get to Issaquah.

## Brambling... (cont.)

The cerise colored flowers bloom as early as February with ripe berries May through July. The astringent bark has been used for medicinal purposes to alleviate discomfort caused by over indulgence in salmon.

Salmonberry has prickles rather than spines. They occur densely or sparsely on the stems but are much less fearsome than most of the blackberries. This is due to their relative lack of stiffness, fairly small size, and absence of curved hooks. Bushwacking through dense salmonberry is feasible with hat on and head down.

### Thimbleberry



(*Rubus parviflorus*)

Thimbleberries have been described as deliciously tart by some, flavorless by others. A colleague of mine finds them to be one of the most delicious of northwest native berries. To me the bright red berries are insipid, lacking in sweetness and substance thus being more sensuous to look at than to eat. Stems and branches are unarmed.

Thimbleberries were undoubtedly consumed by Native Americans and the large leaves made useful basket liners or food wrappers. It is helpful to remember that

thimbleberry and salmonberry are the two common shrublike rather than viny members of the bramble bunch.

### Blackcap

(*Rubus leucodermis*)

Blackcap, although rarely abundant, has the delicious taste of a sweet black raspberry. It is well worth a little extra foraging effort. 1992 was a banner year for blackcap production. They make fine cobbler, syrup and jam. The black raspberries provide pleasurable cuisine to all the people of the Puget Sound country. Their single drawback is the softness of the berries which ripen in late June and July.

The spines are sharp, stiff and hooked. They have great capacity for grasping and holding but are shorter and less lethal than the monster hellberries described above. Even so they can cause considerable pain and discomfort.

In summary, palatability in priority order is: dewberry, blackcap, himalaya blackberry, evergreen blackberry, thimbleberry, salmonberry. Spinal rating beginning with the most vicious is: evergreen blackberry, himalayan blackberry, blackcap, dewberry, salmonberry, thimbleberry.

Happy foraging!

## Volunteers for Outdoor Washington (VOW)

Volunteers for Outdoor Washington is constructing a new trail on the former right-of-way of the Great Northern Railway over Stevens Pass. The first four miles of the Iron Goat Trail, an interpretive hiking trail that will eventually be 10 miles long, is scheduled for completion in the fall of 1993. VOW has worked with the U.S. Forest Service and other concerned groups to plan the trail and is now in the midst of construction. If interested in participating in the trail construction, please call VOW at (206) 545-4868 for information and sign-up.

# An Update on the West Tiger Mountain Natural Resource Conservation Area

**Dept of Natural Resources Corner** — *Issues of importance from your staff at the Tiger Mountain State Forest by Jennifer Powers and David Wortman, Environmental Planners, Department of Natural Resources*

As you may already be aware, 2,100 acres on West Tiger Mountain has been proposed as a Natural Resource Conservation Area by the Department of Natural Resources. The intent of a Natural Resource Conservation Area is to provide protection for outstanding and/or unique ecological features while still providing opportunities for environmental education and low-impact recreational use. Balancing these objectives will be the task.

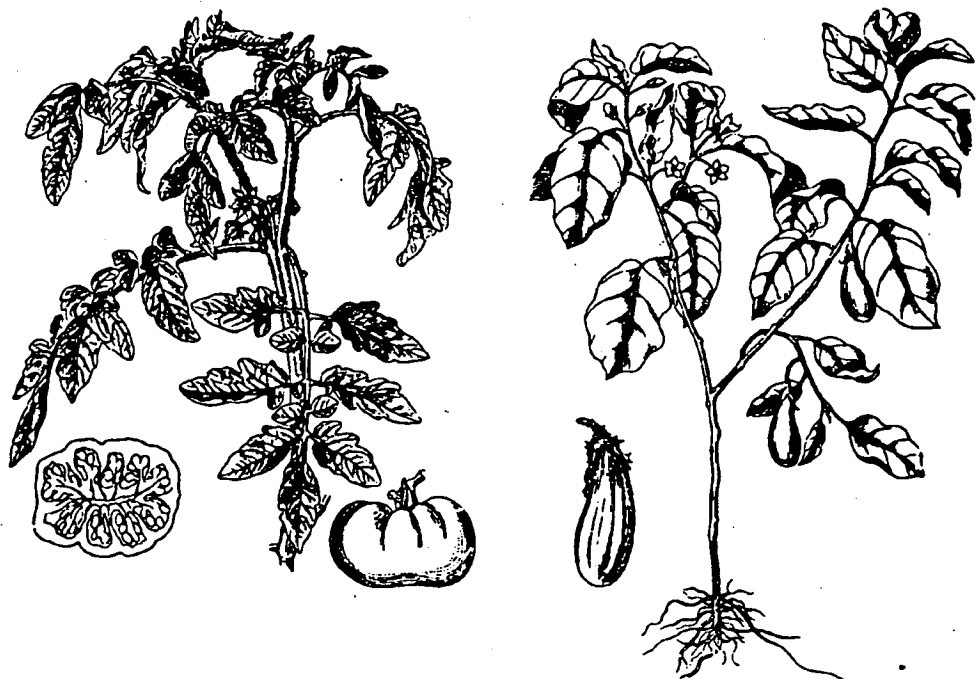
To build on the role of the Tiger Mountain State Forest as an educational laboratory, a partnership has been established with the University of Washington. David Wortman and Jennifer Powers have been hired by the Department of Natural Resources to develop a management plan for the West Tiger Natural Resource Conservation Area. They are currently graduate students at the College of Forest Resources at the University. They are working out of the North Bend office this summer exploring the

forest. They are focusing on the Talus Caves, Round and Tradition Lakes, Yahar Wall, Many Creek Valley, Poo Poo Point, and the summits of West Tiger Mountain. The information gathered will be used to develop the plan. This information includes human history of the area, plant and wildlife communities, geology and soils, unique features, wetland and aquatic communities, and natural history such as fire history, insect invasions, and major natural disturbances.

Under the Natural Resource Conservation Area guidelines, they will also be looking for environmental education opportunities in the area which may include interpretive trails, as well as looking at possibilities for a volunteer network for restoration purposes, ecological monitoring, and to assist in enforcement. They are being assisted in their efforts by the Tiger Mountain Advisory Committee.

The information gathered will be used in teaching a class on conservation area planning sponsored by Gordon Bradley, a State Forest Advisory Committee member. The class will explore various management options to provide the Department of Natural Resources with management alternatives. Following the class' work, a draft management document should be available by March 1993, with the final product due in June. As David and Jennifer are developing a plan for the West Tiger Mountain Area, they will also be working on a conservation plan for the Mt. Si Natural Resources Conservation Area.

During the process, public open houses will be held to share information and ideas. The first meeting is scheduled for early October at the Issaquah Middle School. Look for articles in the Issaquah Press. If you have any comments or questions before then, please feel free to call David or Jennifer at (206) 825-1631.



## A Fitting Habitat

by Peggy Church

The Northwest Horticultural Society awarded me with first prize (category: Landscaping with Native Plants) for 1991. The contest was co-sponsored by Seattle Home and Garden magazine and Wells Medina Nursery.

The property is a small city lot in a development section on the east Sammamish plateau. The initial condition consisted of land scraped to the subsoil with three second-growth cedars left freshly scarred by bulldozers. This common scene is one of devastation.

I wished to recreate the pre-development state. To direct me and my selected landscape designers, I contacted people and institutions along with conservation resources in order to become educated and focused. Among the most influential, I number the State of Washington Department of Wildlife (Urban Sanctuary Program), Arboretum Foundation Native Plant study group, the Issaquah Alps Trails Club, and the Center for Urban Horticulture. Through the Alps Club, I became acquainted with native vegetation on hikes and wildflower walks and I got to know other individuals with similar interests in conservation.

The goal was refined to the following specifics: develop a canopy of native trees and an understory of native shrubs to provide ground cover and water for wildlife.

Drainage was handled with a system of dry stream beds. Water supply was provided by two ponds connected to a stream bed with a recirculating pump. There was no soil amendment. Today natural debris is left to form a forest duff. Irrigation is entirely underground and is computerized. No water is lost through sprinklers.

## In Pursuit of Amiable Science — Western Hemlock

By Fred Weinmann

Five species of trees (Douglas fir, western red cedar, western hemlock, big leaf maple, and red alder) will be seen along nearly every trail in the Issaquah Alps. My favorite is the western hemlock (*Tsuga heterophylla*), the official state tree of Washington.

There are good reasons why western hemlock is the most frequently seen sapling in the alps forest understory. Unlike Douglas fir and most other evergreen species, germination and seedling growth is tolerant to the shady conditions on the forest floor. As a result western hemlock will be the long term ecological winner in the absence of forest fires, avalanches, hurricanes, clearcutting and other disturbances. Even though not so huge or long lived as Douglas fir or red cedar, at 240 feet tall, 8 feet in diameter and up to 500 years old, they can become majestically large and ancient

by human terms. In the category of mosts among its forest peers western hemlock is the most prolific seed producer, and in dense stands can product more wood per acre than any other northwest species.

A combination of distinctive cone and needle characteristics minimizes confusion in identifying western hemlock. The needles are the shortest of any alps evergreen. Even more distinctive is the uneven length of the needles largely in two planes but a few projecting upward from the top surface of the twig (its scientific name "heterophylla" means varied leaves). The closest look alike needles belong to western yew but yew needles are slightly darker green, of even length and clearly in two planes. If you are still uncertain about identification stand back and look for a drooping tip (I prefer the term lopping leader) at the apex of the tree.

Hemlock is a ubiquitous understory evergreen and frequent habitat of nurse stumps and nurse logs. Cones, although less than an inch long, are produced in such numbers to carpet the forest floor. Each cone harbors 30-40 seeds.

Many uses have been made of hemlock by northwest tribes (the tannin laden bark for tanning skins of mixed with salmon eggs to add yellow tones to dyes; the pitch as stickum for facial cosmetics or to prevent chapping. Inner bark, although seemingly more slimy than palatable, provided emergency rations either raw or steamed; and of course in modern times Hemlock is sold as dimension lumber labeled "white wood" or "hem-fir". Presumably the name hemlock derives from a superficial resemblance to the poisonous parsley infamous in the death of Socrates.

### A Fitting Habitat (cont.)

I follow the stringent collection guidelines of the Washington Native Plant Society for my plant acquisitions. I keep a computerized plant list and a botanical library. All plants are labeled. Qualified non-profit groups are permitted to see the garden for study purposes.

In September 1991 the Department of Wildlife Sanctuary Program used 'before and after' slides of my garden in their highly educational Public Lecture Series. These slides are available on request to schools, garden clubs, native plant groups and conservation organizations.

*Peggy's award winning garden will be featured in Sunset Magazine.*  
-Ed.

## Now or Never... (cont.)

SR-900 in Sections 32 and 5 with a spur line running north up the east side of Tibbetts Valley (through current Tibbetts Valley Park) and turning east to connect with the main railroad line in downtown Issaquah.

Some logging was done very early on the mountain by bullteams on the lower slopes, and used mainly for local purposes. The main logging came in the 1920's but the timber quantity and accessibility did not justify a major railroad operation. Logging was done by little narrow-gauge chain-drive Reo trucks, and many of these narrow grade "roads" are used today as hiking trails. Fortunately, logging at that time was scattered and some areas of virgin forest remain to be enjoyed today. During the late 1920's there was a major producing tie mill (prominently visible from downtown City Hall) north of the central peak in Section 4 to support the high demand for railroad ties at that time. Piles of sawdust can still be found in the area of the mill. In 1916 there was a logging camp on the east side of the highway (SR-900) near the Sunset Quarry. Gypo logging came to the mountain during the 1930's—brought on by hard economic times.

During the mid to late 1940's Stimson Bullitt put the land pieces together himself by buying small parcels of land piece by piece to create what is known today as Section 4. Radio towers were on the central peak as they are today within 50 acres of property owned by King County.

The greatest event in the history of Squak Mountain was the gift in 1972 by the Bullitt children (Ashley Ann Bullitt, Scott Bullitt, and Jill Hamilton Bullitt) to the State of Washington of all of their ownership within Section 4. This property is now known as Squak Mountain State Park and was

granted to the State for purposes of "establishing a wilderness public park, the wilderness character of which shall include the absence of any vehicular use, whether powered or not, the absence of horses, the absence of any roads other than footpaths, and the absence of any man-made structures."

In March of this year, the Trust for Public Land (TPL) reached an interim agreement with the Grand Ridge Partnership (aka Ken Behring) to suspend a major new housing development in Section 9, adjacent to Squak Mountain State Park. As part of this agreement TPL purchased 17 of the (east side) lots that were proposed for development and obtained an option to buy the remaining 14 lots on the west side by the end of 1993. *If these 31 lots—comprising a total of 640 acres—were sold to 31 different owners, public acquisition of this open space would become next to impossible.* TPL, a national land conservation organization with regional headquarters in Seattle, has been working with state and local officials to avert the development in Section 9 until funds become available to secure public ownership. The Trust does not own conservation lands on a permanent basis; however they buy and hold key recreational and open space land until public agencies can step in to acquire and manage them.

At its June 1992 meeting the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission adopted its 1993-1995 biennium capital budget and 10-year plan, including the Commission's acquisition priorities. *The Commission listed Section 9 as their #1 priority for Phase 1 (of 2) at \$1.8 million.* These funds (available in July '93) would be used to buy the current TPL ownership of 17 lots, or 55% of the entire section. The State Parks Commission also listed Squak Mountain as second priority at \$250,000 for initial development of trailheads, signage,

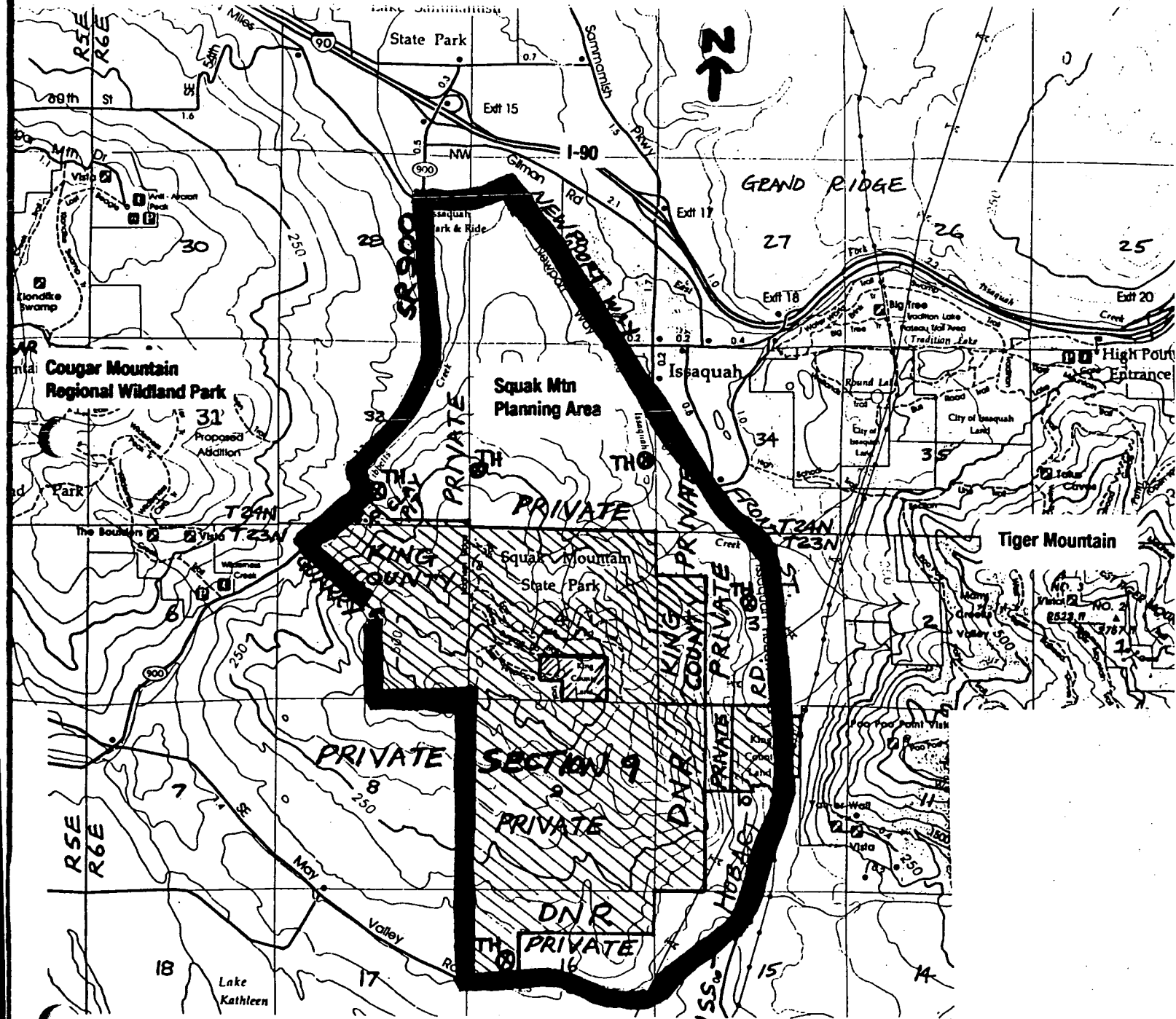
and trail development/improvement. State Parks is considering a major trailhead on the south side—in Section 16 just north of SE May Valley Road.

The Commission listed Section 9 Phase 2 acquisition as #14 priority at \$1.8 million. These funds would be used to acquire the TPL option property of 14 lots, or the remaining 45% of the section. *Being #14 puts this acquisition very much in danger of being postponed to the next biennium of 1995-1997.* However if the Legislature in 1993 provides sufficient total funds for outdoor recreation, then Phase 2 acquisition could be increased in priority and funds be made available from the unallocated account during the '93-'95 biennium. This is why the #1 ranking given for Phase I is so important.

My appreciation and thanks are given to the many Club members who sent letters to the Commission in support of Section 9. These letters were important and extremely helpful, and I believe played a key role, in obtaining #1 priority ranking for Squak. I want to particularly acknowledge Jack Hornung, Tom Wood and Sarah Young for their attendance and testimony at the Commissions' meetings in Walla Walla and Bremerton.

*The Section 9 battle is not over. Many hurdles remain. Next the project priorities go to the Governor's office and ultimately to the 1993 State Legislature for appropriations.* The IATC (as well as the public in general) must continue their support of Section 9. We must not relax our efforts—it is now or never for public ownership of Section 9—the full section is necessary; half ownership will not protect the Squak Mountain State Park. Your help is crucial and very necessary. Many letters of support must be sent to the Governor and our State representatives. This should be done *after the November election* when we know who the new

key players are, but before the 1993 Legislature meets in January—timing of letters will be very critical. An action alert will be sent out in November asking for your help and giving you specific information on who to contact to express your support for the public acquisition of Section 9.





# Membership Application Issaquah Alps Trails Club P.O. Box 351, Issaquah, WA 98027

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

- Annual Regular Dues .....\$10
- Annual Contributing Dues .....\$20
- Lifetime Membership .....
- Limited Income.....

♦ All memberships cover the entire family

♦ A regular annual family membership This covers the cost of printing and mailing of the club's newsletter, Alpiner and a part of the club's overhead expenses.

♦ Contributing memberships at \$20 or more cover the rest of the club's overhead expenses. This allows us some financial leeway in planning events, publishing trail guides and keeping trail maintenance tool supply fit and available.

♦ Lifetime memberships at \$100 give us the opportunity to be creative and visionary, to venture forth on projects otherwise beyond our means and capabilities.

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## Issaquah Alps Mail Order Service

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♦ *Guide to Trails of Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park, Coal Creek Park, May Creek Park* By Harvey Manning and Ralph Owen. 1990 updated edition. This new edition brings you all the old favorites plus new favorites—new trails on the west side connecting to Renton and May Creek plus *all new maps!* \$8.50 (includes map, tax and shipping)

♦ *Guide to Trails of Tiger Mountain* By Bill Longwell. 1989 updated edition. New trails: the new Plateau Trail (adding Swamp and Wetlands Trails), the new Bootleg Trail, the new Preston Trail. Plus encounters with animals. \$8.50 (includes map, tax and shipping)

♦ *Bedrock and Bootsoles—An Introduction to the Geology of Issaquah Alps* By Marvin Pistrang. A rough but simple chronology of the geology of the area from the early Eocene period to modern times. \$3.50 (includes tax and shipping)

♦ *Coals of Newcastle: A Hundred Years of Hidden History* By Richard K. McDonald and Lucille McDonald. A detailed history of the once-thriving coal mining area on Mt. Rainier Mountain, now hidden from all but hikers. More than 100 photos, four maps and Tim O'Brian's account of the incredible Seattle and Walla Walla Railroad. \$11.50 (includes tax and shipping)

♦ *Gar Mt. map* \$1.75 (includes tax and shipping)

♦ *Gar Mt. map* \$1.75 (includes tax and shipping)

♦ *Introduction Lake map and Grand Ridge map* \$1.00 (includes tax and shipping)

♦ *Shirt: "Issaquah Alps Trails Club"* Specify size (S, M, L, XL) color (blue or white) and sleeve length. Short sleeve: \$11, long sleeve: \$15.00.

♦ *Shirt: "Mountains to Sound March"* Specify size (S, M, L, XL). \$11.00. All shirts are blue and short-sleeved.

♦ *Poster: Mountains to Sound March.* Full-color poster showing the dramatic sweep of Interstate 90 as it winds out of the Cascades into Seattle. \$12.50.

Issaquah Alps Trails Club  
P.O. Box 351  
Issaquah, WA 98027

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