



# OPEN SPACE CONSERVANCY TRUST REGULAR HYBRID MEETING

Thursday, April 16, 2026 at 5:00 PM

## BOARD MEMBERS

**Chair:** Hillary Ethe  
**Vice Chair:** Carol Lynn Berseth  
**Secretary:** Marie Bender  
**Board Members:** Geraldine Poor, Thomas Hildebrandt,  
Andrew Rosenthal and Lisa Anderl

## LOCATION & CONTACT

Mercer Island Community & Event Center and Zoom  
8236 SE 24<sup>th</sup> Street | Mercer Island, WA 98040  
Phone: 206.275.7600 | [www.mercerisland.gov](http://www.mercerisland.gov)

*We strive to create an inclusive and accessible experience. Those requiring accommodation for meetings should notify the Staff Liaison's Office 3 days prior to the meeting at 206.275.7874 or by emailing [sam.harb@mercerisland.gov](mailto:sam.harb@mercerisland.gov)*

The virtual meeting will be broadcast live on Zoom and recorded and saved on the City's [YouTube Channel](#)

Individuals wishing to speak live during Appearances (public comment period) must register their request with staff at **206.275.7861** or [email](#) before 4 PM on the day of the Commission meeting. Each speaker will be allowed three (3) minutes to speak.

Join the meeting at 5:00 PM (Appearances will start sometime after 5:00 PM) by:

- 1) **Telephone:** Call 253.215.8782 and enter Webinar ID **879 6474 1572** and Password **644328**.
- 2) **Zoom:** Click [this link](#) (Webinar ID **879 6474 1572** and Password **644328**.)
- 3) **In person at 5:00 PM:** Mercer Island Community & Event Center - 8236 SE 24<sup>th</sup> Street, Mercer Island

## CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL – 5:00 PM

## PUBLIC APPEARANCES

## REGULAR BUSINESS

1. **Open Space Conservancy Trust February 12, 2026 Meeting Minutes**  
**Recommended Action:** Approve minutes
2. **Community Engagement Plan for E-Bike Regulations in Parks & Open Spaces**  
**Recommended Action:** Receive Report
3. **2026 Restoration and Trails Work Plan**  
**Recommended Action:** Approve the 2026 Restoration and Trails Work Plan
4. **Off Leash Dog Update**  
**Recommended Action:** Discussion only

## OTHER BUSINESS

5. [Department Update](#)
6. [Quadrant](#) Reports
7. Topics for Future Discussion
8. [Next](#) Scheduled Meeting – July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2026

## ADJOURNMENT



## OPEN SPACE CONSERVANCY TRUST SPECIAL HYBRID MEETING MINUTES February 12, 2025

### CALL TO ORDER

The Open Space Conservancy Trust meeting was called to order by Chair Ethe at 5:03pm.

### ROLL CALL

Chair Hillary Ethe, Vice Chair Carol Lynn Berseth, and Trustees Geraldine Poor, Thomas Hildebrandt, and Council Member Lisa Anderl were present.

Parks Operations Manager Sam Harb, Natural Resources Program Manager Lizzy Stone, and Recreation Specialist Raven Gillis were present.

### APPEARANCES

No public appearances

### REGULAR BUSINESS

#### 1. Approval of Minutes

Minutes from October 16, 2025, Regular Hybrid Meeting, November 12, 2025, Special Hybrid Joint PRC/OSCT Meeting, and January 8, 2026, Special Hybrid Joint PRC/OSCT Meeting were presented.

It was moved by Hildebrandt; seconded by Berseth to:

**Approve the minutes from October 16, 2025, Regular Hybrid Meeting, November 12, 2025, Special Hybrid Joint PRC/OSCT Meeting, and as amended January 8, 2026, Special Hybrid Joint PRC/OSCT Meeting**

Passed: 3 – 0 – 2

#### 2. 2026 Annual Report to Council and 2026 Work Plan

Natural Resources Manager Lizzy Stone and Parks Operations Manager Sam Harb presented. Trustees asked questions and provided input.

It was moved by Hildebrandt; seconded by Anderl to:

**Approve the 2025 Annual Report and 2026 work plan.**

Passed: 5 – 0

### OTHER BUSINESS

#### 3. Department Report

Parks Operations Manager Sam Harb presented. Trustees received the report.

#### **4. Quadrant Reports**

Northwest quadrant – Berseth reported that it feels much safer now with the added gravel, handrails, and new steps. The improvements are very noticeable.

Northeast quadrant – Poor reported that it has been a pleasure to get outside. With less rain lately, the trails haven't been too muddy. She also noted that a low area, where a puddle had been stretching across the entire trail, has been addressed. Ethe reported that they found everything looking great and praised the stewards managing the ivy, especially along the perimeter trail near 68th. They also noted that the decommissioned social trail by the donation bench is doing very well.

Southeast quadrant – Hildebrandt reported that he hasn't been in the Southeast Quad, but when visiting Northwest quad recently he noted that there was a snag which fell on the North Trail from high winds that was cleared away promptly.

#### **5. Topics for future discussion**

There were no recommendations for future discussion.

#### **6. Next Meeting**

The next meeting is a Regular Meeting on April 16, 2026 at 5pm.

**ADJOURNMENT at 5:49 PM**



# OPEN SPACE CONSERVANCY TRUST STAFF REPORT

Item 2  
April 16, 2026  
Regular Business

## AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION

<b>TITLE:</b>	Community Engagement Plan for E-Bike Regulations in Parks & Open Spaces	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only <input type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution
<b>RECOMMENDED ACTION:</b>	Receive report. No action necessary.	

<b>STAFF:</b>	Amelia Tjaden, Management Analyst Ryan Daly, Recreation Manager Sam Harb, Parks Operation Manager
<b>COUNCIL LIAISON:</b>	Lisa Anderl
<b>EXHIBITS:</b>	1. E-Bike Regulations Community Engagement Plan

## SUMMARY

The purpose of this agenda item is to provide an overview of the community engagement plan for developing e-bike regulations in parks and open spaces.

- Mercer Island has seen an increase in usage of e-bikes, electric scooters (e-scooters), and electric motorcycles/electric dirt bikes (e-motorcycles/e-dirt bikes) over the past two years.
- In November 2025, staff conducted a study session with the Parks & Recreation Commission (PRC) and the Open Space Conservancy Trust (OSCT) to discuss regulations for e-bikes and e-scooters in parks and open spaces on the Island ([PRC 25-17](#)). The PRC and OSCT met again in January 2026 requested more information be provided and that staff engage the community more broadly on potential regulations.
- As such, the City will conduct a comprehensive outreach campaign to engage the community on the development of e-bike regulations. The purpose of this agenda item is to share the community engagement plan for developing e-bike regulations.
- The community engagement plan will include online and in-person engagement opportunities, posts on social media and in the MI Weekly, as well as, engagement through other City-distributed newsletters.

Staff will return in Fall 2026 to present findings from the community engagement efforts and restart the development of e-bike regulations in parks and open spaces.

## BACKGROUND

Mercer Island has seen an increase in usage of electric bikes (e-bikes), electric scooters (e-scooters), and electric motorcycles/electric dirt bikes (e-motorcycles/e-dirt bikes) over the past two years. In May 2025, the City Council amended the 2025-2026 Work Plan to include the development of an ordinance regulating the operation of e-bikes and e-motorcycles on the Island ([AB 6688](#)). The following actions have been taken thus far:

- In September 2025, the Mercer Island City Council adopted Ordinance No. 25C-24 establishing regulations for e-motorcycles ([AB 6772](#)).
- In November 2025, staff conducted a study session with the PRC and the OSCT to discuss regulations for e-bikes and e-scooters in parks and open spaces on the Island ([PRC 25-17](#)).

In January 2026, staff conducted a study session with the PRC and the OSCT to discuss a proposed policy for e-bike regulations in parks and open spaces. As a result of this meeting, the PRC and the OSCT requested more information be provided and that staff engage the community more broadly on potential regulations.

## DISCUSSION

The City will conduct a comprehensive outreach campaign to engage the community on the development of e-bike regulations. The purpose of this agenda item is to share the community engagement plan for developing e-bike regulations.

Exhibit 1 provides an overview of the Community Engagement Plan. In short, the plan includes:

- Let's Talk page with information about the development of e-bike regulations.
- An online survey to collect data on the community's use of the City's park and trail system, the operation of e-bikes, and perceptions of proposed regulations. The questions will largely follow the 2022 statewide survey on [E-Bike Use on DNR- and WDFW-Managed Lands](#).
- In person engagement opportunities at ~5 events, dependent on Commissioner and staff availability.
- Promotion on social media, the MI Weekly, and other City-distributed newsletters.

## NEXT STEPS

Following this presentation, staff will create materials for the community engagement campaign. Staff will engage with a subcommittee from the Parks & Recreation Commission to finalize the survey questions. Staff anticipate that the Let's Talk page and survey will go live at the end of April. Staff will then broadcast this information on City social media pages, in the MI Weekly, and in other City-distributed newsletters. Finally, staff, Trustees, and Commissioners will attend in-person events through the spring and summer to engage directly with community members.

Staff will return in Fall 2026 to present findings from the community engagement efforts and restart the development of e-bike regulations in parks and open spaces.

## EXHIBIT 1

### E-Bike Regulations Community Engagement Plan

#### **Let’s Talk Page**

The City will create a Let’s Talk page to share information about the development of e-bike regulations. The Let’s Talk page will contain a general project overview, a timeline, and opportunities for engagement. The page will be updated as the project progresses.

#### **Survey**

Using the Let’s Talk platform, the City will conduct a survey to collect data on the community’s use of the City’s parks, athletic fields, and trail system, the operation of e-bikes, and perceptions of proposed regulations. The questions will follow the 2022 statewide survey on [E-Bike Use on DNR- and WDFW-Managed Lands](#). The survey will go live in early April and be open through the end of August.

#### **In-Person Engagement**

PRC Commissioners and City staff will attend various events to engage directly with the Mercer Island community. Staff anticipate attendance at ~5 events to conduct community engagement, dependent on Commissioner availability. The City will have engagement activities, like sticky dot boards and chalk board questions, at these events to collect input and start conversations. The events will also have materials directing community members to take the online survey and to follow the engagement on the Let’s Talk page.

#### Event Calendar

Date	Day	Event
5/15/2026	Friday	Bike to Work Day (Park & Ride)
7/11/2026	Saturday	Summer Celebration
8/4/2026	Tuesday	National Night Out
TBD	Sunday	Farmer’s Market
TBD	Thursday	Mostly Music in the Park

#### **Project Promotion**

The development of e-bike regulations will be promoted on social media, the MI Weekly, and other City-distributed newsletters. Boards will be placed at key park locations informing community members of the project and directing them to project materials.



# OPEN SPACE CONSERVANCY TRUST STAFF REPORT

Item 3  
April 16, 2026  
Regular Business

## AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION

<b>TITLE:</b>	2026 Restoration and Trails Work Plan	<input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only
<b>RECOMMENDED ACTION:</b>	Approve the 2026 Restoration and Trails Work Plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution

<b>STAFF:</b>	Lizzy Stone, Natural Resources Program Manager	
<b>COUNCIL LIAISON:</b>	Lisa Anderl	
<b>EXHIBITS:</b>	1. Ex 1: 2026 Restoration and Trails Work Plan Maps	

## SUMMARY

The City’s Natural Resources staff developed an annual restoration and trails work plan for Pioneer Park and Engstrom Open Space. The City intends to work with professional contractors, seasonal Natural Resources staff, full-time Parks staff, and volunteers to carry out this restoration and trails work in 2026. The proposed restoration work plan will again exceed the benchmarks set out by the 2022 Parks Levy funding, continuing towards the goal of carrying out at least three years of comprehensive weed removal across all of Trust properties before the end of the Parks levy in 2038. The proposed trails work plan focuses on maintaining and improving the current trail system in the parks, with an emphasis on water management, accessibility, and safety.

## BACKGROUND

City staff reports to the Trust board each year on planned forest restoration activities and trail work in Pioneer Park and Engstrom Open Space. Work in the park is performed by professional contractors, volunteers, seasonal crew members, and Parks staff. This work is guided by the Pioneer Park Forest Health Plan, the 10-Year Update to the Open Space Vegetation Management Plan, and goals associated with 2022 Parks Levy funding.

## DISCUSSION

### 2026 RESTORATION WORK PLAN

#### Professional Contractors

In 2026, professional contractor work is scheduled in Pioneer Park NE, Pioneer Park SE and Pioneer Park NW. Contractor work will include years 1-3 of comprehensive weed removal, ivy rings, weedy tree treatment, maintenance and watering the previous year’s plantings, and installation of new plants. Restoration will begin in the spring and continue through the end of the year.

- **Year 1 comprehensive weed removal** is planned on 8.7 acres of Pioneer Park NE. The specifications for this work include ground ivy and herbaceous weed removal, ivy rings, and weedy tree treatment. The acreages planned for 2026 exceed the goal of 6.5 total new (year 1) acres set out in the 2022 Parks Levy.
- **Year 2 comprehensive weed removal** is planned on 5.5 acres of Pioneer Park NE. This work is year two of a three-year comprehensive weed removal cycle.
- **Year 3 comprehensive weed removal** is planned on 13 acres: 7.6 acres of Pioneer Park NE and 5.4 acres of Pioneer Park SE. This is the final consecutive year of comprehensive weed removal, after which these areas will be transitioned into a 4-year maintenance cycle.
- **Weedy tree treatment** is planned on 4.7 acres of Pioneer Park NW.
- **Ivy rings** are planned on 2.5 acres of Pioneer Park NW in order to keep trees in this area healthy and free of weeds until we are able to enroll the area in the 3-year comprehensive weed removal cycle.
- **Planting maintenance and watering** is planned for approximately 500 trees and shrubs that were installed in Pioneer Park NE in 2025.
- **Planting and mulching** Roughly 400 plants will be installed by volunteers into newly cleared forested areas.

CONTRACTOR WORK PLAN SUMMARY

Site	Project Area (acres)	Restoration Task
Pioneer Park NE	500 plants	Planting maintenance and watering
Pioneer Park NE	8.7	Year 1 Comprehensive
Pioneer Park NE	5.5	Year 2 Comprehensive
Pioneer Park NE	7.6	Year 3 Comprehensive
Pioneer Park NW	2.5	Ivy Rings
Pioneer Park NW	4.7	Weedy Tree Treatment
Pioneer Park SE	5.4	Year 3 Comprehensive

Restoration Task	Acreage
Year 1 Comprehensive Weed Removal	8.7
Year 2 Comprehensive Weed Removal	5.5
Year 3 Comprehensive Weed Removal	13
Ivy Rings	2.5
Weedy Tree Treatment	4.7

### Natural Resources Crew

During the 2026 field season, the Natural Resources crew will continue to monitor and manage noxious weed populations on all Trust properties. Noxious weed species slated for monitoring, removal and/or treatment include spotted jewelweed (*Impatiens capensis*), knotweed (*Polygonum* spp.), and yellow archangel (*Lamium galeobdolon*) in the SE quadrant. Yellow archangel (*Lamium galeobdolon*) will also be treated along private property boundaries within the NW quadrant. In 2024 and 2025, additional efforts were made to work with bordering neighbors to teach about yellow archangel and develop a plan for effective management, which will continue in 2026 where the weed persists. Shiny geranium (*Geranium lucidum*) infestations identified in 2020 will continue to be monitored, though they seem to have responded well to treatment and can be managed with manual methods.

The seasonal crew will continue restoration of the west border of Pioneer Park NW along 84<sup>th</sup> Ave SE, which includes planting maintenance and blackberry removal along the forest edge. The crew will water and maintain plants installed in fall and winter of 2024 and 2025 by previous seasonal crews, volunteers, and Washington Conservation Corps crews. The crew will also support volunteer events by cutting back blackberry, removing ivy from technically difficult areas, watering new plantings, and providing supplies for events.

The Natural Resources Crew will also be available to respond to restoration related issues and tasks as they arise throughout the field season.

### Volunteer Stewardship

The Natural Resources team's volunteer coordinator will continue to hold regular volunteer events in Pioneer Park in 2026. There are currently six trained forest stewards focused on work in Pioneer Park. These volunteers will expand areas of year 1 comprehensive weed removal in Pioneer Park SE and NW, maintain previous work areas, and install trees and shrubs in newly cleared areas of the park.

### **2026 TRAILS WORK PLAN**

In January and February of 2026, staff evaluated the condition of trails throughout Pioneer Park and Engstrom Open Space to create a draft work plan to address issues that impact the use and sustainability of the trails.

The City's Natural Resources team has hired three seasonal staff to help with trail repairs and maintenance projects. Contracted and in-house seasonal crews will work on the following trail projects on Trust property in 2026:

#### All Trails:

- Re-gravel muddy areas and potholes.
- Redirect water off of trails to improve drainage.
- Strategically prune beaked hazelnut and other shrubs to keep trail corridor clear.
- Manage root intrusions.
- Brush vegetation back from trails.
- Blow leaves off of trails.
- Other issues as they arise.

#### Engstrom Open Space

- Repair and potentially extend floating board walk through perched wetland.

- Replace slat fencing that was damaged by a fallen tree.

Pioneer Park NE

- Replace 6 rotten stair treads.
- Re-build rotten log retaining walls.
- Replace rotten timber in trail turnpikes. Back fill turnpikes with gravel to improve walking surface.
- Add non-skid surfaces to NE quadrant boardwalk.

Pioneer Park NW

- Address muddy sections by adding drain dips.

Pioneer Park SE

- Clear water bars to improve drainage.

See Exhibit 1 for maps of these restoration and trails work plans.

## **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

Approve 2026 Restoration and Trails Work Plan.



# Pioneer Park & Engstrom Open Space

## Trails and Restoration Work Plan 2026

Open Space Conservancy Trust  
City of Mercer Island



# Overview of restoration approach

- Comprehensive weed removal includes:
  - removal of ivy from around trees (ivy rings)
  - invasive tree removal and treatment
  - ground ivy and herbaceous weed removal.
- Three (3) years of comprehensive weed removal, then
- Maintenance every 4-5 years after
- Planting trees and shrubs in understory and canopy gaps
  - Replacing aging canopy
  - Aiding forest regeneration



Item 3.

Photo by Abhinav Sunil.

# Summary of 2025 Restoration and Trails Work

- Year 1 Removal in 5.8 acres.
- Year 2 Removal in 13 acres.
- Year 3 Removal in 10.5 acres.
- Weed Removal Maintenance 8.8 acres.
- Planting maintenance & watering of previous year's plants.
- Continue with mulching and planting grass strips along Island Crest Way.
- Graveled, brushed, cleared trails.
- Hosted 21 volunteer events and 13 educational events including 328 volunteers for 644 hours.



Item 3.

Photo by Taylor Comodo.

# 2026 Restoration and Trails Work Plan



- Year 1 Removal in 8.7 acres.
- Year 2 Removal in 5.5 acres.
- Year 3 Removal in 13 acres.
- Ivy Rings on 2.5 acres.
- Weedy Tree Treatment on 4.7 acres.
- Planting maintenance & watering of previous year's plants.
- Volunteer weed removal and planting.
- Gravel, brush, clear trails.
- Maintain trail culverts and water flow infrastructure.
- Replace rotten stairs, retaining walls, and turnpike infrastructure.

# Pioneer Park NW- 2026

## CONTRACTOR WORK

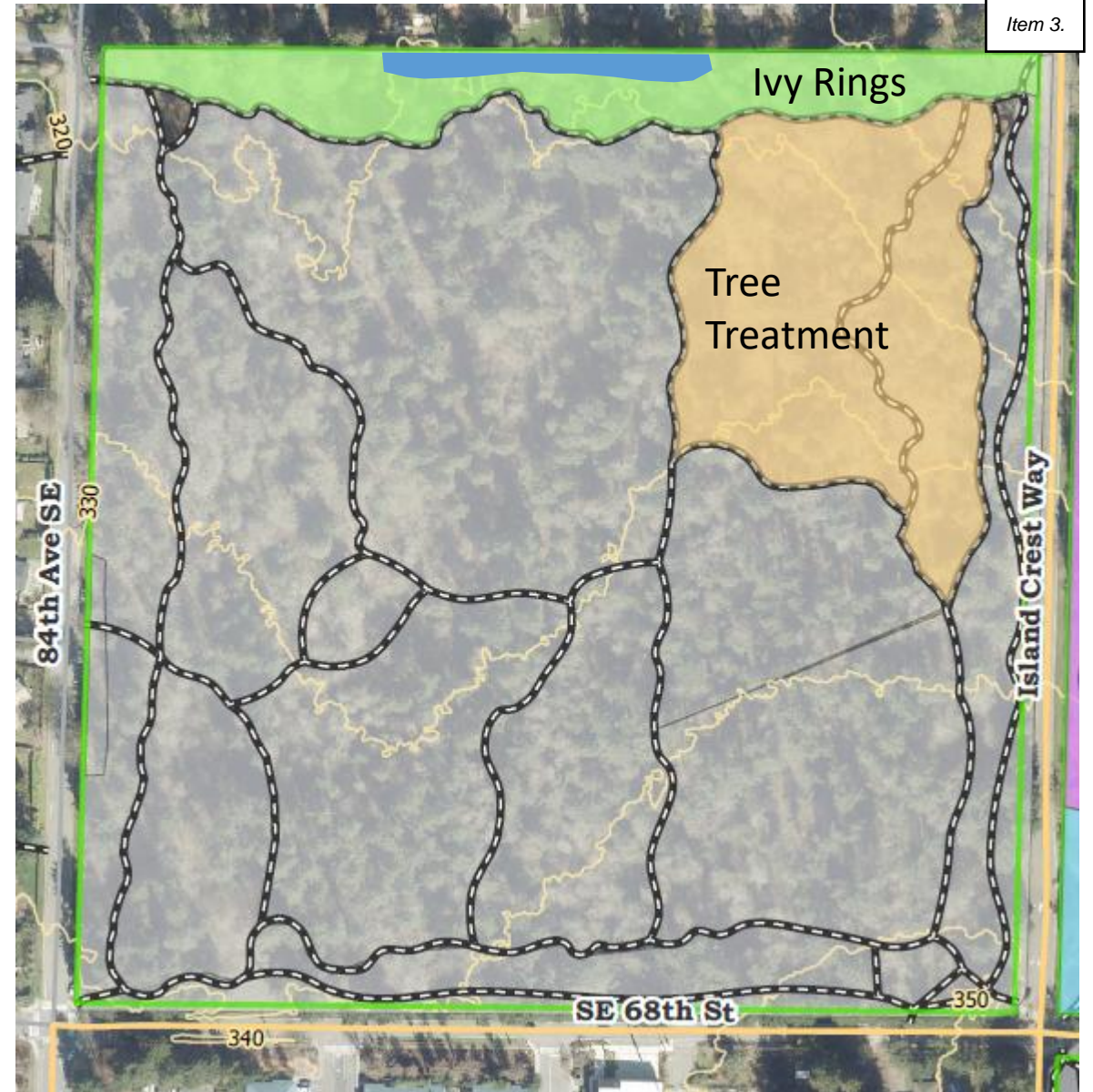
- Ivy rings on 2.5 acres (green).
- Weedy tree treatment on 4.7 acres (yellow).

## NATURAL RESOURCES CREW

- Yellow archangel monitoring and management (blue).
- Continued maintenance of 84<sup>th</sup> Ave planting strip.

## VOLUNTEERS

- Ivy and blackberry removal.



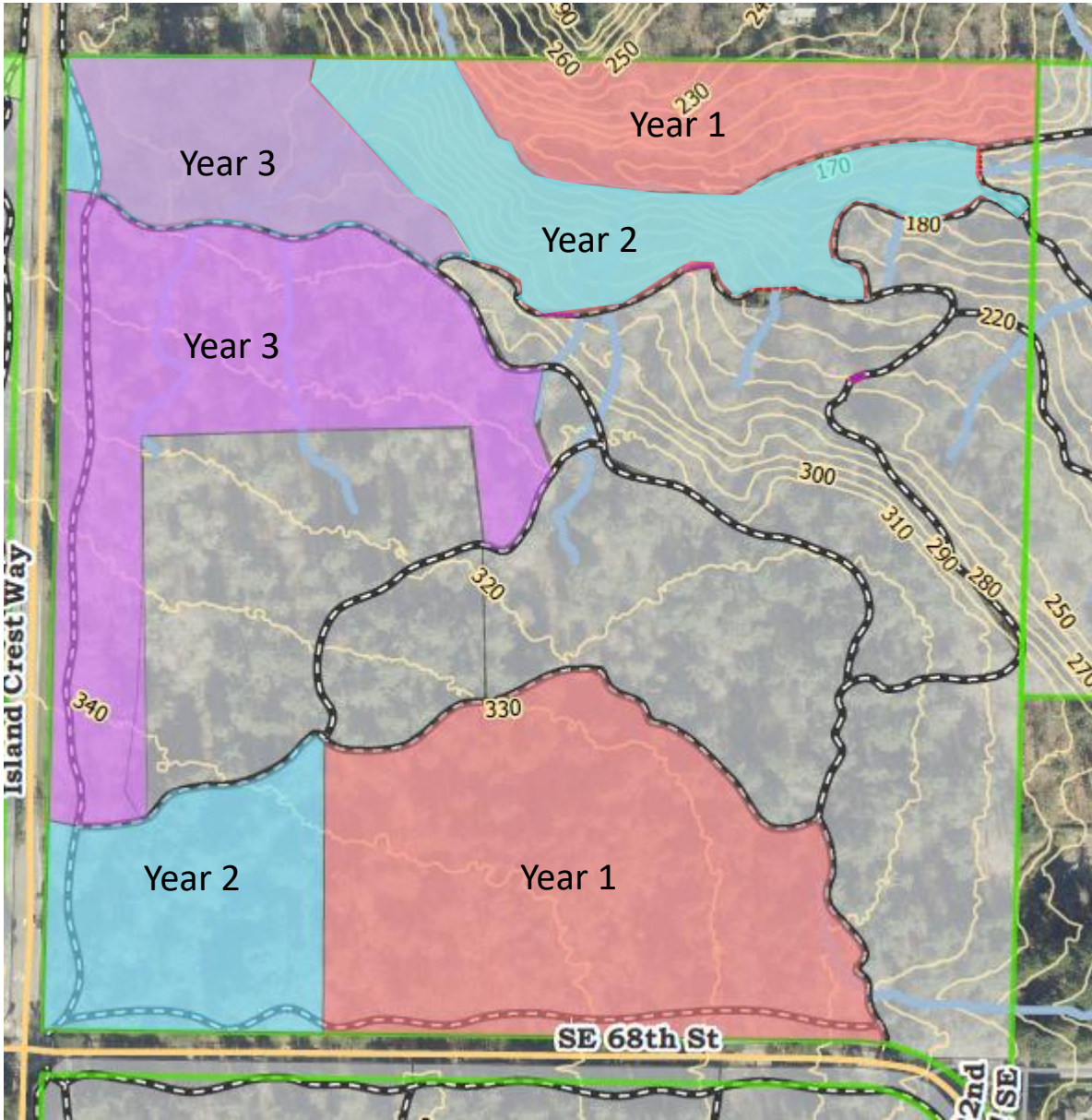
# Pioneer Park NE- 2026

## CONTRACTOR WORK

- Year 1 weed removal on 8.7 acres (red).
- Year 2 weed removal on 5.5 acres (blue).
- Year 3 weed removal on 7.6 acres (purple).
- Planting maintenance and watering along west perimeter.

## NATURAL RESOURCES CREW

- Noxious weed monitoring throughout park.



# Pioneer Park SE- 2026

## CONTRACTOR WORK

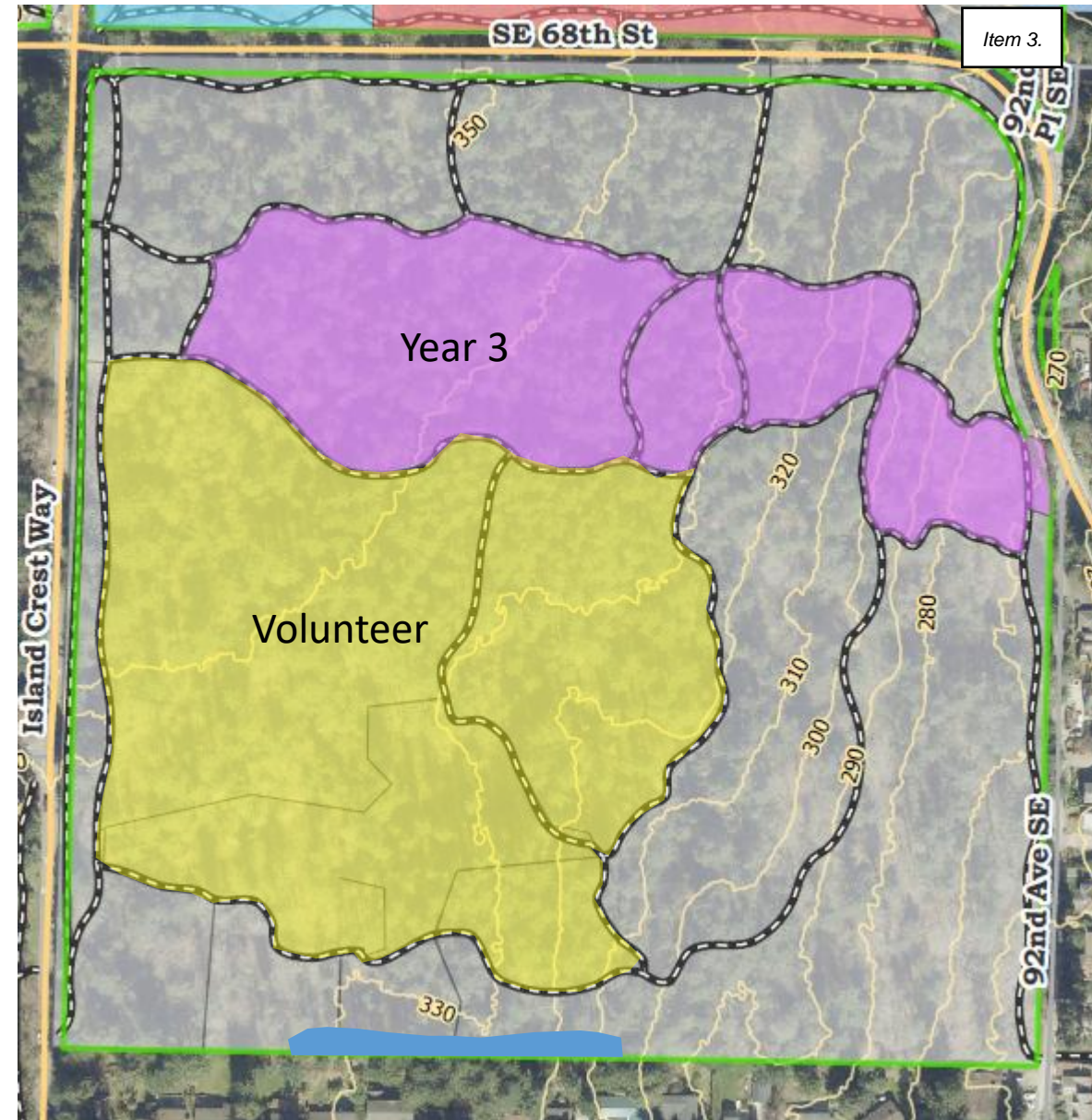
- Year 3 weed removal on 5.4 acres (purple).

## NATURAL RESOURCES CREW

- Noxious weed monitoring throughout park.
- Archangel monitoring and management (blue)
- Planting Maintenance and watering along perimeter.

## VOLUNTEER STEWARDSHIP

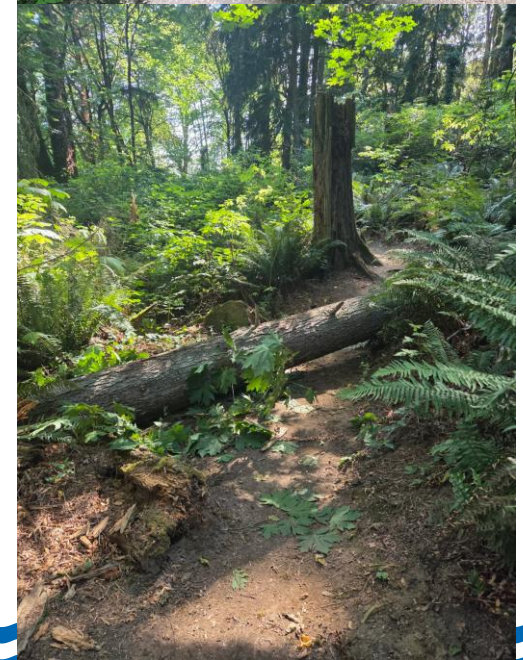
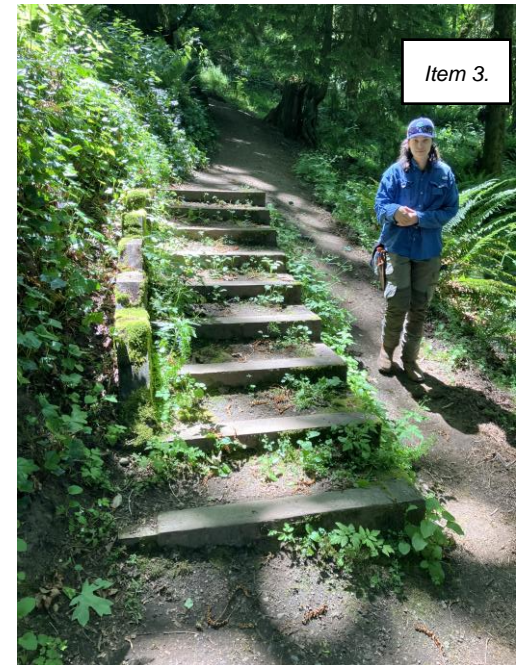
- Initial weed removal and ivy rings (yellow)



# Trails 2026 Work Plan

## All Trails:

- Brush trails
- Blow leaves
- Remove fallen logs or branches, as needed



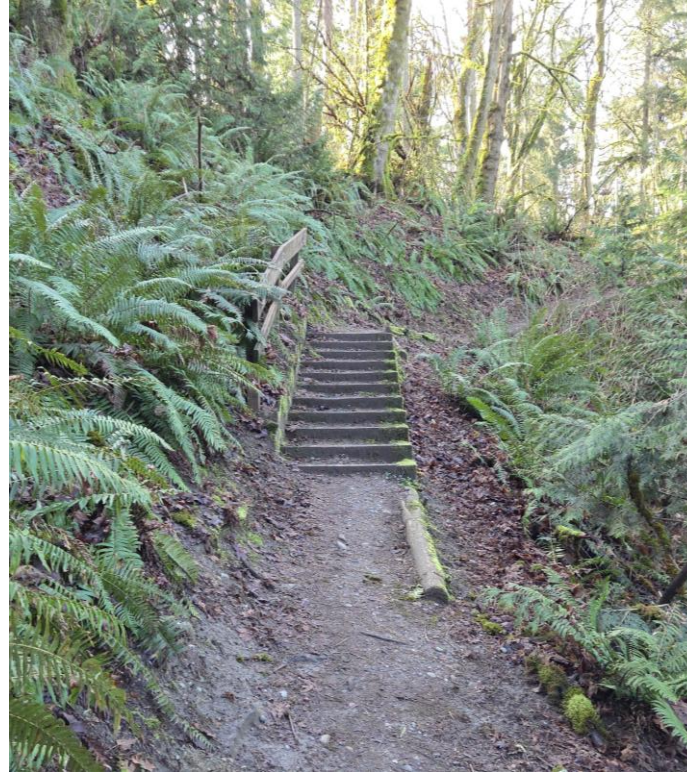
# Engstrom Open Space

- Repair and consider extending floating board walk
- Replace broken slat fencing



# Pioneer Park NE

- Replace 6 rotten stair treads
- Re-build log retaining wall
- Replace rotten turnpikes and back fill with gravel
- Add non-skid surfacing to boardwalk



# Pioneer Park SE and NW

## Pioneer Park SE

- Clear water bars
- Continue patching muddy sections

## Pioneer Park NW

- Address drainage issues by building drain dips into the trail





# OPEN SPACE CONSERVANCY TRUST STAFF REPORT

Item 4  
April 16, 2026  
Regular Business

## AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION

<b>TITLE:</b>	Off Leash Dog Update	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only <input type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution
<b>RECOMMENDED ACTION:</b>	Discussion Only	

<b>STAFF:</b>	Sam Harb, Parks Operations Manager
<b>COUNCIL LIAISON:</b>	Lisa Anderl
<b>EXHIBITS:</b>	N/A

## SUMMARY

Leash policy education efforts continued in 2025 with distribution of educational brochures “The Dog Owner’s Guide to Mercer Island Parks”, which provides park users with information about voice/signal control and the location of off-leash versus on-leash parks. In 2025, Mercer Island Police Department received the following reports in Pioneer Park: two complaints about off-leash dogs, one found dog, one dog hit and injured by an e-bike, and one report of a dog bite to another dog.

## RECOMMENDATION

This is a recurring topic included in the annual report to Council and work plan. It is an opportunity for the Trust and staff to discuss any observations or feedback from the community.