

## Newcastle-Cougar Trails & Projects

The **Newcastle-Cougar Trail Map** shows major trails in and around Newcastle and Cougar Mountain, and identifies current and potential projects along those trails. It also highlights the growing possibilities for regional trail walks using mass transit. From the transit center in Renton (**TCR**) planned for 2024, walkers can follow the May Creek Greenway (when complete) into Cougar Mountain Park and return via the Coal Creek Trail, doing a **grand loop**, or do a **grand traverse** to the transit center in Issaquah (**TCI**). For more about Newcastle projects see [Ongoing Projects](#).

**1. Regional Trails.** The **Eastrail** (red) is a regional multi-use trail in the Eastside Rail Corridor. In 2022 a 2.5-mile stretch (paved, 20 feet wide) opened from Bellevue to Renton. Access (**A** on the map) for cyclists and pedestrians is provided at 118th Avenue SE and Coal Creek Parkway. From there the trail continues south past Bellevue's Newcastle Beach Park (just south of **A**) to Renton's Kennydale Beach Park and Gene Coulon Memorial Beach Park.

The **Mountains-to-Sound Greenway** is a 100-mile long corridor along I-90, from the Seattle Waterfront to Ellensburg, with a network of hiking and biking trails, including the **trail route** shown in dark green on the map. This route includes Bellevue's **Coal Creek Trail** (yellow), running from the I-405 interchange (**A**) to Cougar Mountain Park at the Red Town Trailhead (**C**). The trail route from **A** to **C** and beyond is a series of wooded hiking trails, soft-surfaced, some with steps and footbridges.

**Newcastle Beach Park** makes an excellent trailhead for the Eastrail and the Coal Creek Trail, with ample parking near the trail, restrooms, a picnic shelter, and a playground. To reach the Coal Creek Trail, walk the short distance to the Eastrail, follow it north to the next access, and follow the sidewalk under I-405 to the current trailhead on 119th Ave SE. To help, Bellevue could extend the trail to the park and mark it with trail signs.

**2. Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park.** Local citizens have launched three campaigns to preserve open space areas adjacent to Cougar Mountain Park, all supported by Newcastle Trails (NT) and the [Issaquah Alps Trails Club](#) (IATC). **Save Cougar Mountain** has succeeded: the Bergsma property (near **TCI**) has been saved from development and used to expand the park. [Save Coal Creek](#) asks Bellevue to save the historic Milt Swanson property (**C**) to preserve a green wildlife corridor around the Coal Creek Trail at the Red Town Trailhead. [Save DeLeo Wall](#) led a successful effort to delay the planned logging of a forest parcel (**D**) in Newcastle, with Newcastle, Renton, and King County joining forces; but the County's efforts to buy the parcel are stalled (unwilling seller). IATC is NT's sister organization, older, bigger, and hugely effective: check their website, join, and support their campaigns.

**3. Newcastle Trails.** The Newcastle-Cougar map shows only a few of Newcastle's trails. Newcastle's main west-to-east trails are the **CrossTown Trail** (yellow) running SE from Newport Hills past Lake Boren into Cougar Mountain Park and the **May Creek Trail** (yellow) running east from Lake Washington in Renton to Coal Creek Parkway. The **May Creek Greenway** includes the May Creek Trail and parts of other nature trails. The **80th Street & Sylvan Trail** route (black) can be walked on public land almost to the Crosstown Trail.

Three **north-to-south routes** end at the May Creek Trail. Along with the Windtree Steps (near **F**), these routes provide the main entrances to May Creek Park. The **Waterline Trail** (blue) and the sidewalks of **Coal Creek Parkway** (orange) both run south from the Coal Creek Trail near the Red Cedar Trailhead. The **Horse Trail** (brown) runs south to the park entrance (**E**), where the last trail section is being constructed as part of a new development, the May Creek Park Assemblage.

**4. Central Newcastle and Lake Boren Park.** Coal Creek Parkway provides a sidewalk route past Newcastle Commons (**NC**) to Newcastle's Downtown (**ND**), two population centers with apartments, restaurants, and other businesses. It continues past Lake Boren and Lake Boren Park, which wraps around the south end of the lake. Here the Lake Boren Boardwalk (**B**) is planned. When completed in late 2022, it will carry the CrossTown Trail around the south end of the lake, connecting the main park to its undeveloped eastern half. Here we can build a trail along the east lakeshore, running north from the boardwalk and ascending to the Esplanade. This will complete the long-planned Lake Boren Trail around the lake.

**5. May Creek Greenway and Footbridge.** The Greenway is complete except for Renton's May Creek Trail. By 2024, when the I-405 interchange and transit center (**TCR**) are finished, Renton plans to extend the trail under the freeway to Jones Avenue NE. The trail will be incomplete (dashed line) from there to the proposed May Creek Footbridge (**F**) until needed property is acquired – and the bridge won't be built without a trail on the Renton side. But there are other possibilities for Renton by 2024: use parts of Jones Avenue and NE 31st Street (as temporary links) to complete the May Creek Trail; extend the existing Honey Creek Trail or the proposed Pacific Railroad Trail to the bridge site. Newcastle Trails proposes that Newcastle, Renton and King County reactivate their earlier partnership for this trail-bridge project. It would open a greatly expanded park and trail system to a large and growing population.