

# City of Mercer Island

## OPEN SPACE CONSERVANCY TRUST BOARD

Thursday · May 16 · 2019  
Regular Meeting Agenda

6:00 pm Call to Order & Roll Call

6:05 pm Minutes of March 21, 2019 Meeting

6:10 pm Public Appearances

6:15 pm Regular Business

- |                                |                           |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Restoration Work Plan       | Kim Frappier (15 min)     |
| 2. Summer Trail Work Plan      | Andrew Prince (15 min)    |
| 3. Off-leash dog update        | Paul West (10 min)        |
| 4. Work Plan/meeting changes   | Alaine Sommargren (5 min) |
| 5. Quadrant reports            | Trustees (10 min)         |
| 6. Next Meeting: July 18, 2019 | Chair (5 min)             |

7:15 pm Adjournment (estimated)

### BOARD MEMBERS

Rory Westberg, *Chair*  
Marie Bender, *Vice Chair*  
Thomas Hildebrandt, *Secretary*  
David Wisenteiner, *Council Liaison*  
Carol Lynn Berseth  
Craig Olson  
Geraldine Poor

### STAFF

Paul West, *Parks Planning Manager*  
Alaine Sommargren, *Interim Parks Operations Manager*  
Kim Frappier, *Natural Resources Specialist*  
Andrew Prince, *Trails and Urban Forestry Specialist*





# OPEN SPACE CONSERVANCY TRUST BOARD REGULAR MEETING MINUTES March 21, 2019

## Call To Order:

Chair Westberg called the meeting to order at 6:10 pm in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 9611 SE 36th Street, Mercer Island, WA 98040.

## Roll Call:

Chair Rory Westberg, Vice Chair Marie Bender, Secretary Thomas Hildebrandt, Trustee Geraldine Poor, and Trustee Craig Olson. Council Liaison David Wisenteiner and Trustee Carol Lynn Berseth was absent.

Staff present were Jessi Bon, Parks and Recreation Director, Paul West, Parks Planning Manager, Alaine Sommargren, Interim Parks Operations Manager, and Kim Frappier, Natural Resources Specialist.

## Minutes:

Trustee Poor motioned and Trustee Hildebrandt seconded to: Approve the September minutes. **Motion passed: 5-0.**

## Public Appearances:

There were no public appearances.

## Regular Business:

### (I) 2018 Annual Report and 2019 Work Plan

Natural Resources staff presented the 2018 Annual Report and 2019 Work Plan at the January meeting, but no vote was taken on their approval at that meeting. Staff requested that the Trust vote to approve these reports so that they can be presented to City Council on April 2nd.

#### Action Taken:

Trustee Olson moved and Trustee Poor seconded to approve the 2018 Annual Report and 2019 Work Plan. **Motion passed 5-0**

### (II) Deed restriction research update

Parks Planning Manager West presented an overview of the process to conduct deed research on City-owned open space properties and the work that has been done to date by Parks staff. He explained that it is a time-consuming process that takes a great deal of research. Parks Operations Manager Sommargren noted that the initial request to conduct this work was made to the Trust by Concerned Citizens of Mercer Island Parks (CCMIP) to better understand the protections in place for City-owned open space properties. Parks Director Bon added that this work is high priority, however, the Parks and Recreation Department does not have the capacity to complete the research in-house, nor the resources to pay for a title company. She also noted that the Parks and Recreation Department is embarking on the new Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Strategic Plan (PROS) that could include a request to seek resources for a consultant. Staff noted that there is no development scenario in any of the City's open spaces, so the need for the information is not urgent. Trustees and staff discussed that this information continues to be valuable and different options for completing the work, such as requesting funding to hire a highly skilled intern.

**Board direction:** The Trust board recognizes that this is an important project with limited resources. As a first step, Trustees directed Parks and Recreation department staff to create a prioritized list of open space properties so that we have an idea of where to spend resources (when they are available) to understand existing restrictions and covenants that protect those open space properties.

(III) Letterboxing program support

Parks Operations Manager Sommargren spoke with Grant Polhemus, who currently coordinates the letterboxing program, about how the Trust could participate in the letterboxing program, given that Leap for Green has been cancelled this year. Grant reported that he could use 2 - 3 people from the Trust to assist at the National Trails Day Event on Saturday, June 1<sup>st</sup>. Trustees Westberg, Poor, and Hildebrandt volunteered to set up and run a booth at the event from 10 am to noon. Grant also noted that Kim Borden and Elizabeth Cross-Nickel, the letterboxing coordinators, would appreciate assistance in letterboxing set-up for the season in Pioneer Park. Parks Operations Manager Sommargren will provide Trustees with additional information.

(IV) Staff changes in the Parks and Recreation Department

Parks Director Bon presented an update of staff changes to the Parks and Recreation Department. She explained that as a result of the levy failure, the majority of cuts fell on Parks and Recreation. Three full time positions were eliminated between Recreation and Community Center staff, which the department was able to do through attrition. She also outlined special events that were eliminated such as Summer Celebration, which the department hopes to restore through creative partnerships.

She outlined that there have been staff and departmental reorganizations. Paul West will now be the Parks Planning Manager, continuing to oversee planning work and major capital projects such as the Aubrey Davis Park Master Plan. The Natural Resources team has been joined with Parks Maintenance. Alaine Sommargren is overseeing the newly combined team as the Interim Parks Operations Manager. Parks Operations is working with fewer staff than the same time last year.

Trustees and staff discussed the changes to the L&I prevailing wage rate and the effect on restoration costs.

(V) Parks and Recreation Commission

Parks Director Bon provided an overview of the roles and responsibilities of the new Parks and Recreation Commission. She noted that the Commission would not replace the Open Space Conservancy Trust or the Arts Council. There will be a kick-off joint board meeting in September. The PROS plan will be the first primary project of the Commission.

Trustees expressed a desire to have members on the Commission who are concerned about conservation issues. Parks Operations Manager Sommargren will keep the Trust Board apprised of what is happening with the Parks and Recreation Commission.

(VI) Quadrant Reports

**NW Quadrant:** Trustee Berseth and Trustee Bender

Trustee Bender commended the Parks and Recreation staff on their great clean-up work after the storm.

**NE Quadrant:** Chair Westberg and Trustee Poor

Trustee Westberg noted that a large tree took out the trail tread along the Ravine Trail. He also noted an orange wheelbarrow that was tossed downslope below the Overlook Trail.

**SE Quadrant:** Trustee Hildebrandt and Trustee Olson

Trustee Hildebrandt noted that there was some Indian plum damage from the snowstorm across from the outer trail on the east side between 68<sup>th</sup> and 92<sup>nd</sup>. He also noted that there were four large Douglas firs and a large cottonwood that came down.

(VII) Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for May 16, 2019.

**Adjournment:** 7:20 pm

---

Rory Westberg, Chair

Attest:

---

Kim Frappier, Scribe





**CITY OF MERCER ISLAND  
OPEN SPACE CONSERVANCY TRUST BOARD  
STAFF REPORT**

**Action Item No. 1**

**May 16, 2018**

Description:	2019 Restoration Work Plan
Exhibits:	1. Restoration Maps

## **BACKGROUND**

City staff reports to the Trust board each year on planned forest restoration activities in Pioneer Park and Engstrom Open Space. Restoration activities are performed by professional contractors, volunteers, seasonal crew members, and Natural Resources staff. Restoration work is guided by the Pioneer Park Forest Health Plan and the 10-Year Update to the Open Space Vegetation Management Plan.

## **2019 RESTORATION WORK PLAN**

### **Contractor Work**

#### Pioneer Park

In 2019, professional contractor work is scheduled in all three quadrants and will largely focus on canopy retention, planting maintenance efforts, as well as long-term maintenance in older comprehensive removal sites (see maps in Exhibit 1).

- **Planting maintenance and watering** will be conducted during summer months in Pioneer Park NE (PP1004c) which was planted in fall of 2018. A second year of planting maintenance is also scheduled for PP1005 installed in 2017.
- In an effort to hold ground on acres already enrolled in restoration, contractors will revisit sites that have not had maintenance in several years. To this end, **invasive removal maintenance** is scheduled for 4.5 acres of Pioneer NE (PP0729) which last received maintenance in 2014 and 3.6 acres of the SE quadrant (PP1903). PP1903 represents two older comprehensive sites PP0726a and PP0421 which last received maintenance in 2014 and 2010 respectively.
- **Ivy ring creation** will continue in the NW Quadrant (PP1902), where ivy has grown increasingly robust in the past several years.
- Follow up **invasive tree treatment** is scheduled for 29.4 acres in all three quadrants (see summary table for breakdown by quadrant).

## Engstrom Open Space

Invasive removal maintenance is scheduled for 3.1 acres of EN1001a. This is the third year of maintenance after taking a rest year in 2018.

Area EN1001b, which accounts for 1.7 acres will have both ivy ring creation and planting maintenance. This area was first planted in 2012 and received two years of planting maintenance in 2013 and 2014.

## 2019 Contractor Work Summary

Site	Area ID	Project Area (acres)	Restoration Task
Pioneer Park NW	PP1901	4.7	Invasive tree treatment
Pioneer Park NW	PP1902	5.4	Invasive tree treatment
Pioneer Park NW	PP1902	5.4	Ivy rings
Pioneer Park NE	PP1004a	4.0	Invasive tree treatment
Pioneer Park NE	PP1004c	5.0	Planting maintenance
Pioneer Park NE	PP1004c	5.0	Watering
Pioneer Park NE	PP1005	5.5	Planting maintenance
Pioneer Park NE	PP0729	4.6	Invasive removal maintenance
Pioneer Park NE	PP1003a	3.4	Invasive tree treatment
Pioneer Park NE	PP1003b	9.1	Invasive tree treatment
Pioneer Park SE	PP1003c	2.9	Invasive tree treatment
Pioneer Park SE	PP1903	3.6	Invasive removal maintenance
Engstrom Open Space	EN1001a	3.2	3rd Year invasive removal
Engstrom Open Space	EN1001b	1.7	Ivy rings - manual removal
Engstrom Open Space	EN1001b	1.7	Planting maintenance

## Natural Resources Crew

During the 2019 field season, the Natural Resources crew will continue to monitor and treat noxious weed populations on all Trust properties. Noxious weed species slated for removal and/or treatment include spotted jewelweed (*Impatiens capensis*), yellow archangel (*Lamium galeobdolon*), and knotweed (*Polygonum* spp.).

The seasonal crew will conduct comprehensive weed removal along the northeast entrance of the NW Quadrant, as well as ivy ring creation along the north boundary of the NW quadrant, north of the NW Perimeter Trail in area PP0625. In addition, seasonal staff will conduct planting

maintenance in select areas of PP1002 in the SE quadrant – targeting saplings in canopy gaps where Himalayan blackberry is growing robustly and inhibiting tree survival and growth.

### **Volunteer Stewardship**

EarthCorps will continue to lead large group volunteer events this year, under contract with the City. There will be six public Saturday events as well as additional corporate and school groups. Due to budget constraints, the Natural Resources program decided to take a year off from hosting the Islander Middle School event, which is quite costly. These resources were redirected to increasing the number of weekend community events, which are more cost effective and reach a greater number of community members. As in past years, EarthCorps' work area is located along the perimeter of the NW Quadrant. The focus area of this year's work will be invasive removal north of the Fire Station Trail as well as a planting event in November.

In addition, the Natural Resources staff will provide support to Boy Scout Elliott Hendrickson, who is building a post and rail fence at the NW corner entrance of the NW quadrant. This will help Elliott fulfill his requirements to become an Eagle Scout. Members of Scout Troop 647 will join Elliott during the month of May to install the fence. The Natural Resources program has had limited success revegetating this corner due to soil compaction from dog and park user use. The goals of this project are to inhibit park user traffic through the area as well as delineate and beautify the NW entrance to the quadrant. Native plant installation by volunteers is anticipated in either the fall of 2019 or 2020, depending on soil recovery and conditions.

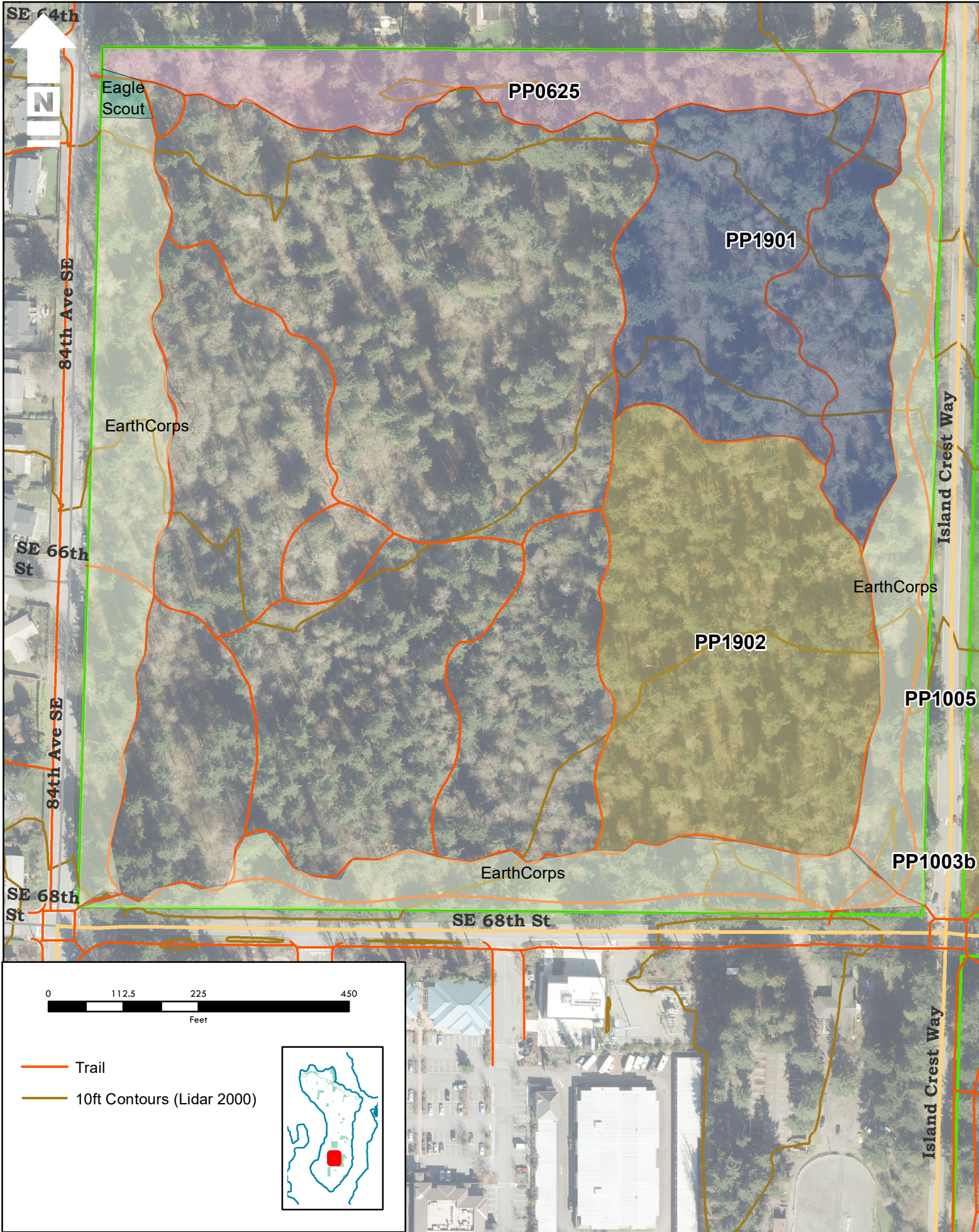
### **RECOMMENDATION**

---

*Approve the 2019 Restoration Work Plan.*

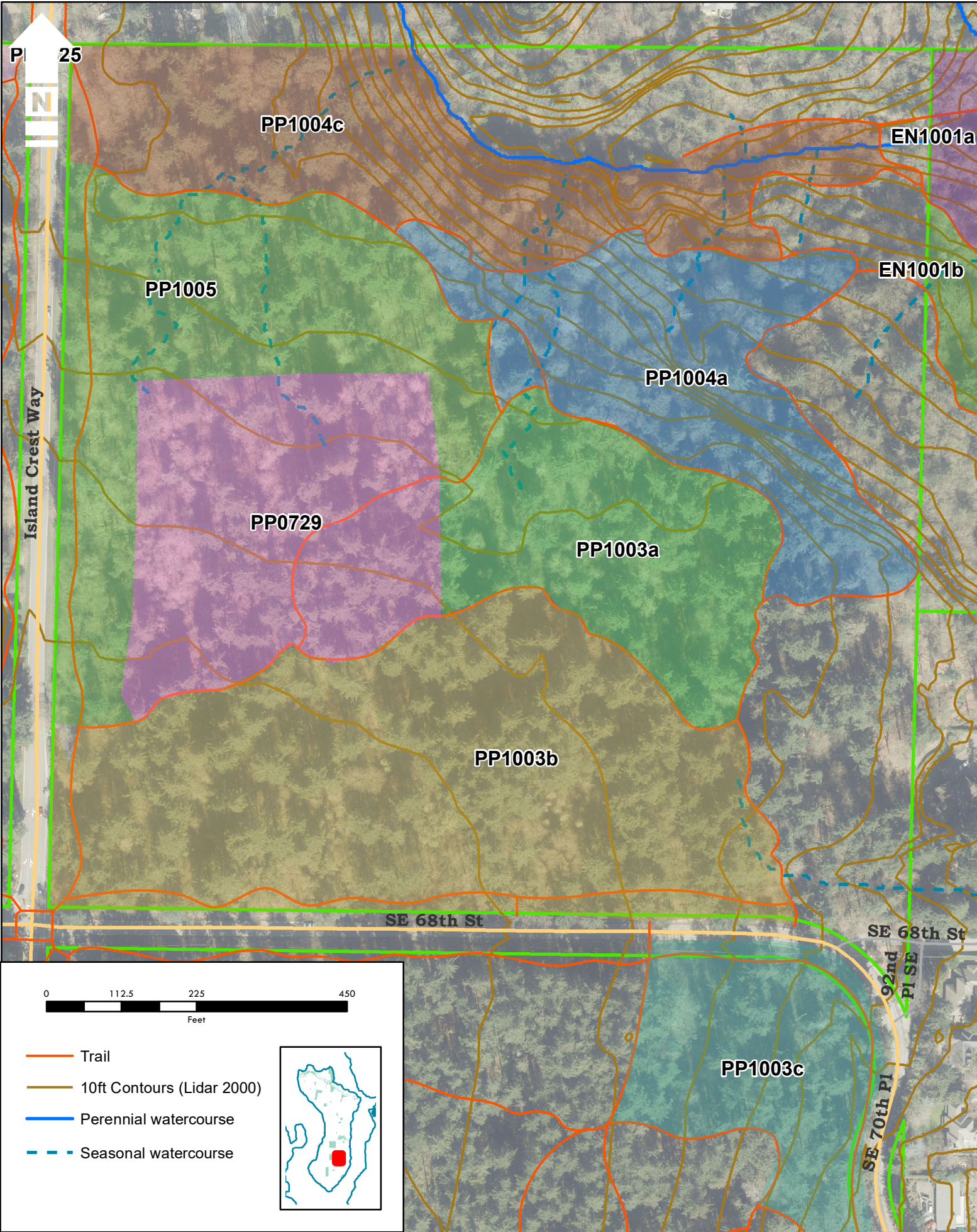


# Pioneer Park NW Restoration 2019



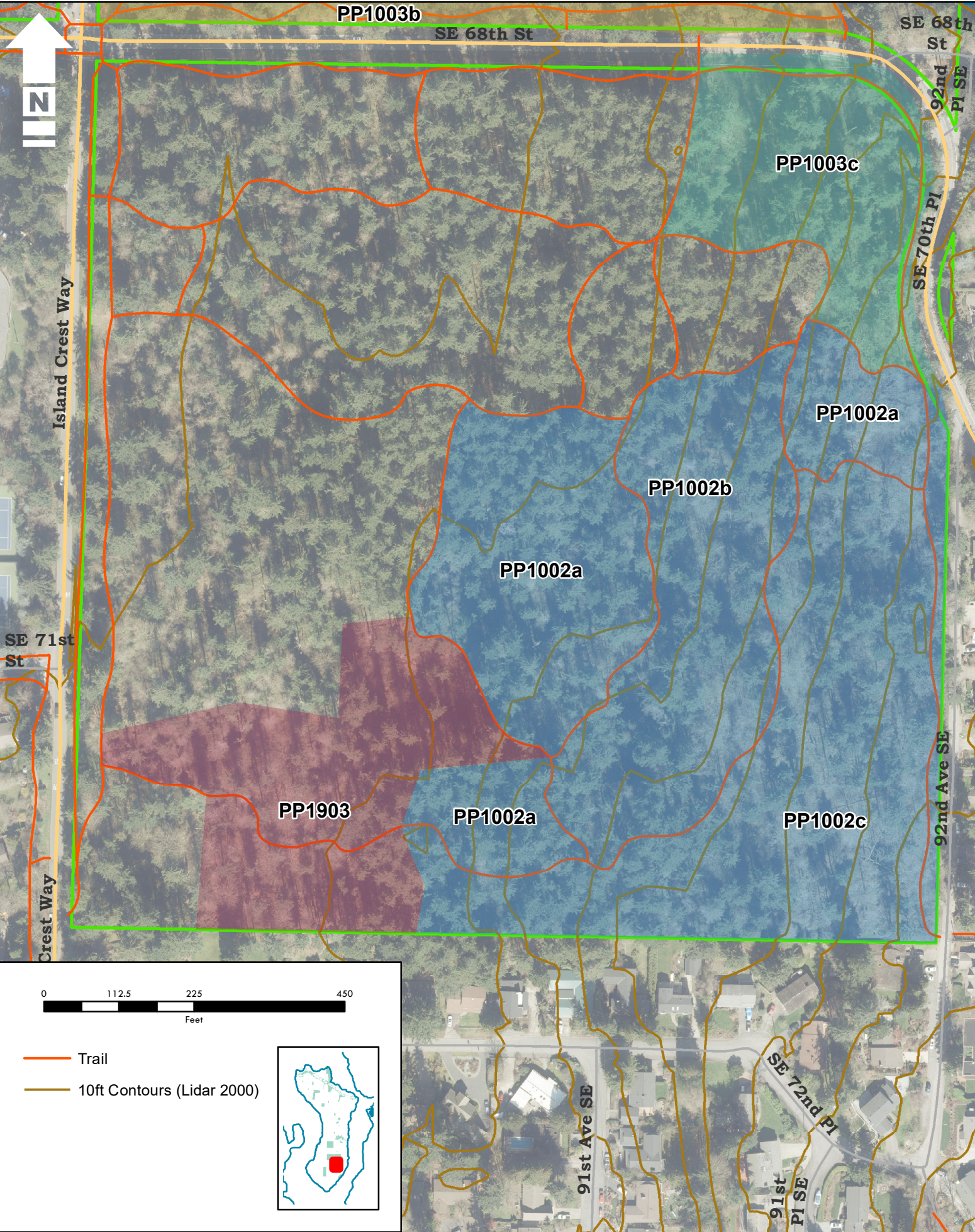


# Pioneer Park NE Restoration 2019



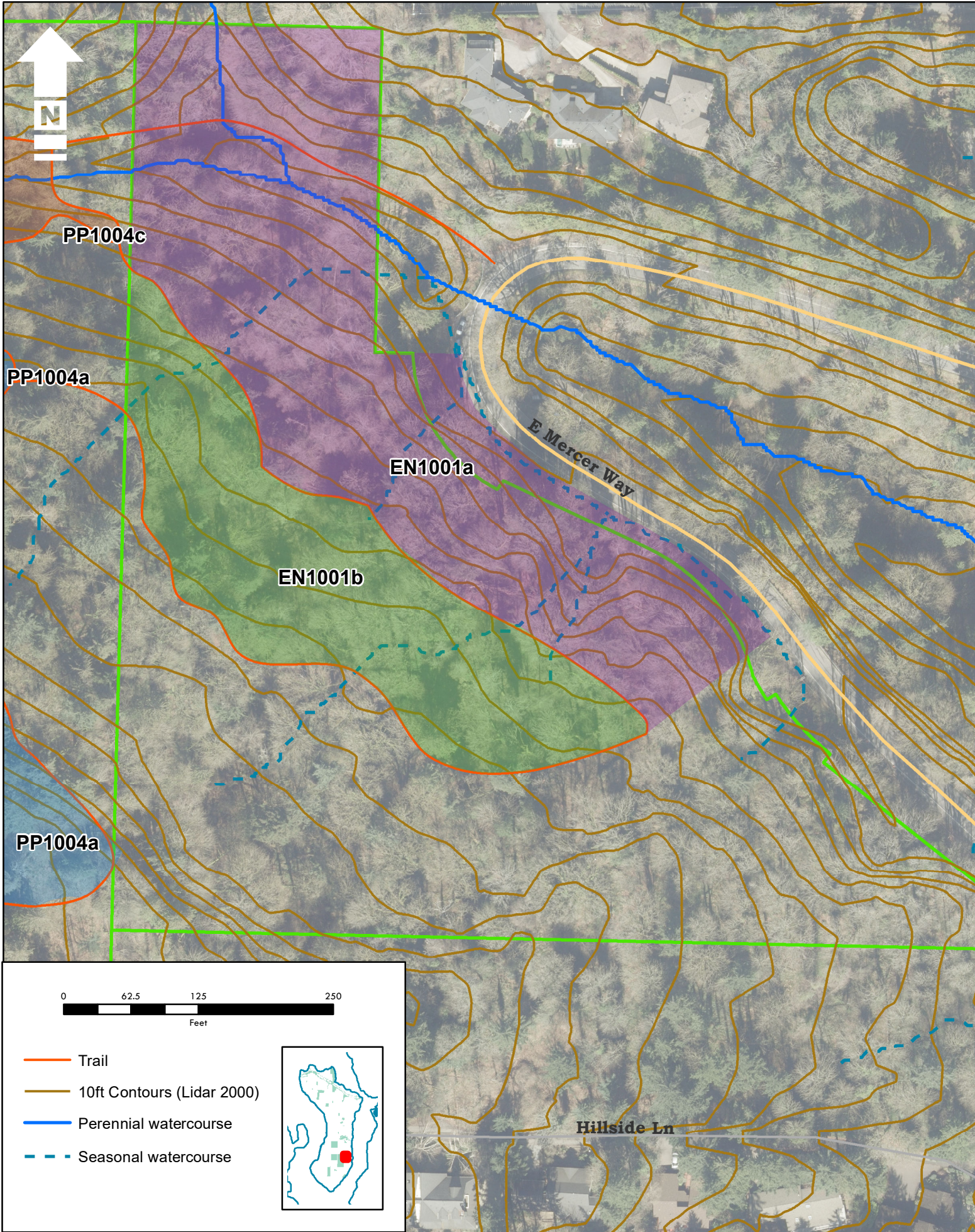


# Pioneer Park SE Restoration 2019





# Engstrom Open Space Restoration 2019







**CITY OF MERCER ISLAND  
OPEN SPACE CONSERVANCY TRUST BOARD  
STAFF REPORT**

**Action Item No. 2**

**May 16, 2019**

Description:	Summer 2019 Trails Work Plan
Exhibits:	1. Pioneer Park and Engstrom OS 2019 Trails Work

## **BACKGROUND**

City staff typically report to the Trust board on planned trail maintenance and construction activities on Trust properties each spring. During the summer, Parks and Recreation employs a summer crew that addresses Natural Resource projects throughout the parks system, including trail repairs and maintenance projects in Pioneer Park and Engstrom Open Space. All proposed items in this plan can feasibly be completed by December 2019.

## **PROCESS**

Trustees may choose to approve the work plan as proposed or modify.

## **SUMMARY**

All projects detailed in the 2018 Trails Work Plan, as well as other work, have been completed since the last trails report. Completed projects include:

- Extensive resurfacing of trail to repair mud puddles in the Northwest Quadrant Perimeter trails
- Construction of passive structures such as knicks, grade dips and water bars to move water off trails, with a focus on the Horse Trail in NW quadrant
- Filling dips and slumps on the Ravine Trail.

Trail projects that are coming up or have been completed in the 2019 season include:

- Repairs to the Ravine and Engstrom Loop trails
- Installation of a rail extension on the creek bridge
- Construction of water bars, trail widening, and general trail rehabilitation

Additionally, we hope to rehabilitate areas of the perimeter trail systems using a combination of regrading and adding more rock to resurface the trail, with the goal of shedding water off the surface.

---

## **RECOMMENDATION**

---

*Approve Pioneer Park and Engstrom OS 2019 Trails Work Plan.*



## Exhibit 1: Pioneer Park and Engstrom OS 2019 Trails Work Plan

---

### NORTHWEST QUADRANT

---

#### Completed in 2018:

Two volunteer events partnering with Mountains to Sound Greenway resurfaced sections of trail in the interior of the Woodpecker trail.



Natural Resources staff spent a week regrading and building new drainage structures on the Horse Trail in the NW quadrant.

Parks staff resurfaced the north and west perimeter trails in November 2018. Over 65 tons of crushed rock was spread, graded and compacted.

**Planned for 2019:** Trail resurfacing will be undertaken on the Fire Station trail in 2019, using similar techniques to those used on the north and west perimeter trails.





## NORTHEAST QUADRANT AND ENGSTROM OS

---

### Completed in 2018:

#### Ravine Trail

Soil movement on the Ravine Trail had caused an uneven surface to appear. Several yards of gravel were hauled in by Natural Resources staff to fill this and other low spots in the trail. Staff also made minor repairs to the retaining wall.



**Planned or completed in 2019:** The Ravine Trail continues to require maintenance. This year, Parks staff have already made numerous small improvements to this trail, including adding drainage features to move water off the trail, widening the trail, replacing rotten retaining structures, and patching holes with gravel or fill soil. Many of the retaining structures are decomposing and approaching the end of their useful life. This trail will continue to require significant maintenance in the coming years.

Trail widening and re-grading has also been completed on sections of the Bridge, Creek, and Engstrom Loop trails. The smaller foot bridge on the Bridge Trail had new trail tread built to ease the ramp up to it and eliminate tripping hazards.

## SOUTHEAST QUADRANT

---

**Completed in 2018:** Regular maintenance.

**Planned or completed for 2019:** Regular maintenance and cleaning of existing water bars.