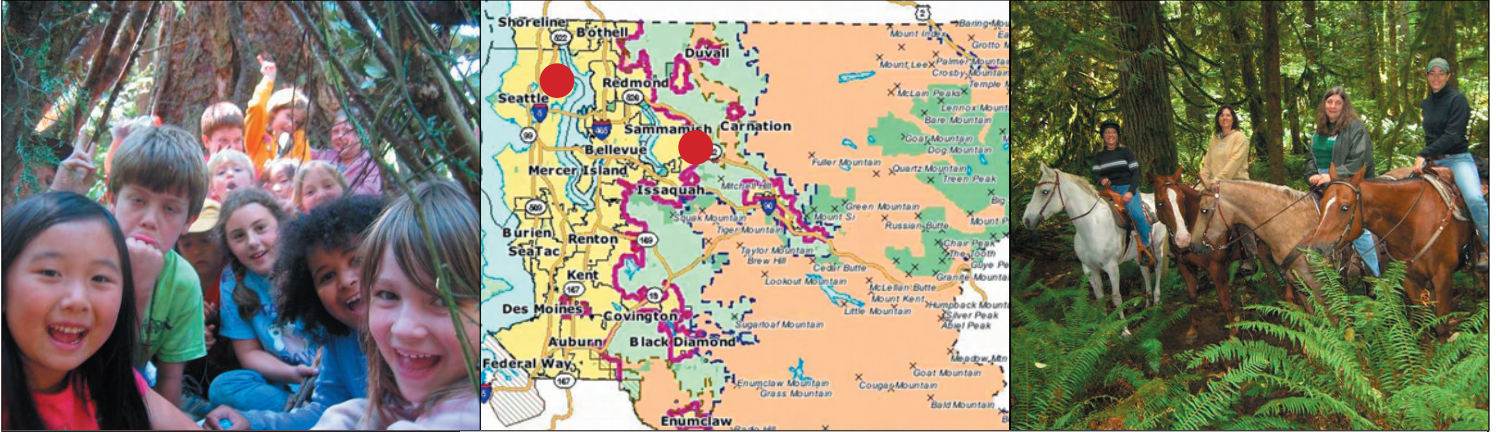


# URBAN RURAL CONNECTIONS – A WHOLE KING COUNTY



## Eco-Adventure at Soaring Eagle Park

### Terra Forma Day Education, Greenlake

What a thrill for a child, or anyone for that matter, to uncover the secrets behind one of our oldest legends, Sasquatch or Bigfoot. Well that is what a local non-profit, Terra-Forma Education, set out to do last summer. Experienced and dedicated naturalist/educators guided a group of children between the ages of 6 and 10 through a journey in search of answers, during The Secret of Sasquatch summer day camp adventure.

The journey began at Lake Sammamish State Park in Issaquah and would take this group of young explorers all over King County. First, they had to gather information about Sasquatch, so they went to the Museum of Mysteries in Seattle. Then they searched for evidence of areas that could have been a home to Sasquatch in the past. This took the team to Marymoor Park and Redmond Watershed Park, each a little further away, but still in the city. Based on the information that they had gathered the group concluded that to find Sasquatch they would have to go farther away from the city.

The expedition consulted their maps in search of large open spaces that included a water source, outside the city, but not too far to travel. That's when they found it, Soaring Eagle Park, the perfect place to spend the day trying to live like a Sasquatch. What better way to try to find Bigfoot than to try to be like Bigfoot. The team felt as if they were really in the "wild" that day. They worked together to build shelter, gather berries and medicinal plants, and see how hard it is to try to build fire without matches. Some of the kids were sure that they heard and/or saw Sasquatch that day. One thing is for sure, they had an experience that every child should have. They lived out an adventure, connected with nature and developed a sense of stewardship for the planet that supports them, all not too far from their own backyard!

### Soaring Eagle Regional Park, King County

The 600-acre Soaring Eagle Regional Park is a forest oasis on the edge of suburbia providing hiking, mountain biking and horseback riding on over 12 miles of trails that meander through sword ferns, vine maple and salmonberry underneath stands of mature Douglas fir and red alder.

Soaring Eagle sits above Patterson Creek on the edge of the Sammamish Plateau along the western flank of the Snoqualmie River Valley. It provides habitat and sanctuary for black bear, bobcat, black tail deer, and over 40 species of birds, including the bald eagle. In the north end, two large wetlands drain into Patterson Creek which provides spawning habitat for Coho salmon and cutthroat trout.

Soaring Eagle is 35 minutes from downtown Seattle and very close for over 40,000 Sammamish Plateau residents who use it on a daily basis to ride, hike, and bike over its rolling trails. All of the trails are used regularly by members of the Sammamish Saddle Club and the Backcountry Bicycle Trails Club. Mountain bikers come from all over King County to ride "the beav", an old nickname for the historic network of single track bike trails. Many local residents can walk to the park from their homes and it is quite common to see families with baby strollers along the 10-foot wide pipeline trail. Soaring Eagle is also becoming a site for organized trail runs and is now a regular host site for the 5 and 10 mile Northwest Trail Run Series. King County Sheriff K-9 Unit and Eastside Search and Rescue, Scout clubs and schools regularly use the park. King County Parks works with volunteers from local community groups as well as corporations like Microsoft to maintain and improve the trails. The MTS Greenway constructed a brand new section of trail with help from a local developer. Boy Scouts have contributed multiple projects including signs, kiosks and new trail routes. The Friends of Soaring Eagle Park work to preserve the forests and trails of Soaring Eagle.

