

## Proposed Trail Names for Glen Canyon Park

Provided below are the proposed names for three trails in Glen Canyon (see attached map) and one regional trail. For each proposed name a brief description of the trail, excerpts from the public nominations and the reason that the committee selected the names are provided.

**Islais Creek Trail:** This trail extends from the Glen Park Recreation Center to Portola Avenue and Turquoise Way. It is proposed as the southern leg of the Creeks to Peaks Trail. The southern-most portion of this trail will be accessible once renovated.

### Public Nominations

- “Since the trail follows Islais Creek naming the trail after the significant natural resource that visitors can see from the trail helps people learn the name of the creek, remember that there are creeks in San Francisco, and have a connection to the name and the place they are. A trail named Islais Creek helps visitors build a sense of place connection. People are drawn to creeks and knowing the creek by name engenders a closeness and wanting to take care of "their creek" building environmental stewardship as well. The name Islais Creek teaches children that creeks are individual and special. Just like people, different creeks have different names.”
- “Seems natural to name the trail after the creek that runs by it. Not very original but a good name none the less.”
- “Easy to remember, is descriptive of where the trail goes, and the watershed significance of the canyon.”

### The Trail Naming Committee supports this name because:

- The creek is main feature of western-most trail and a defining natural feature in Glen Canyon
- The name is descriptive of what a visitor would see along this trail
- ‘Islais’ is a Native American word for the Islay cherry (*Prunus ilicifolia*), a native coastal California plant
- It integrates well with the proposed regional trail – “Creeks to Peaks”

**Gum Tree Girls Trail:** This trail extends from the Glen Park Recreation Center to the rock outcrop in the middle of the park. A portion overlays Alms Road and is designed to be an accessible trail. The trail passes by grasslands, stands of eucalyptus, the creek and over the boardwalk.

### Public Nominations

- “My sister, Kristen Arkush, and I propose that Glen Canyon Park Trail #2 be named the “Gum Tree Girls Trail” in honor of our late mother Geraldine (Geri) Arkush, as well as Zoanne Nordstrom and Joan Seiwald. Together in the 1960s, this trio of neighborhood

activists rallied Glen Park residents to successfully oppose a four-lane freeway/expressway that was planned to pass through the southwestern part of Glen Park Playground and the western part of the Canyon. They formed a Save the Park Committee, devoted to protecting the park for future generations, and organized a meeting at Glen Park School on November 9, 1965, to protest the freeway plan. Approximately 400 people attended, most of whom were pro-park and anti-freeway. At some point, I do believe that Geri, Zoe, and Joan appeared before the San Francisco Board of Supervisors and/or the City Planning Commission to voice their opposition to the proposed roadway. In 1967, after several years of disputes and protests, the City finally conceded, and the “high capacity roadway” was abandoned. The neighborhood mom activists were dismissively dubbed “The Gum Tree Girls” by pro-freeway City Engineer Clifford Geertz. Gum tree is a common name for the blue gum eucalyptus, the trees forming a park windbreak that would’ve been at risk under the City’s freeway viaduct plans. Owing to the large number of eucalyptus trees still standing in Glen Park Canyon, this certainly would be a wonderful name for one of the Park’s trails.

I was about five years old at the time, and recall joining several of the neighborhood kids (including Zoe’s sons Thomas and Marcus) in removing surveyor’s flags from eucalyptus trees along O’Shaughnessy Blvd. These trees already had been marked for removal before the freeway had been formally approved, so a few of The Gum Tree Girls encouraged us to engage in some small-scale civil disobedience, and we swung into action in order to delay this ill-conceived project any way that we could. Our mother grew up in Glen Park (on the corner of Surrey and Chenery), and later she and our father, Walter, purchased a home on Chenery that was just five lots away from the Park entrance. My sister, brother Craig, and I grew up there and Kristen and I still own that house. Geri Arkush loved the Glen Park community and canyon, worked at St. John’s Elementary School for many years, and walked in or around the canyon countless times. We encourage the San Francisco Recreation and P ark Department to officially name one of the Glen Canyon Park trails the “Gum Tree Girls Trail” in recognition of these three women who effectively fought to maintain the integrity and beauty of this amazing urban oasis.”

- “It occurred to my wife and me that it might be appropriate to name one of the trails after the Gum Tree Girls. Maybe the creekside trail could be the Gum Tree Trail, since it does pass by a lot of eucalypts.”

**The Trail Naming Committee supports this name because:**

- The name is a testament to grassroots activism and how a small group of people can make a big difference

- The name is a nod to San Francisco’s conservation values
- It turns a pejorative term (girls) into a positive one
- Glen Canyon Park would not be there if it weren’t for the Gum Tree Girls
- The story has been lost in history and provides an opportunity for people to question and want to learn more - teaching moment
- ‘Gum Tree’ refers to eucalyptus trees that dominate the southwestern portion of the canyon
- Public interested in historical references

**Coyote Crag:** This trail leads from the Sussex steps through the eastern grassland and above, through and around rock outcrops.

**Public Nominations**

- “The highlights of this trail include the beautiful chert formations and fantastic views. If you are in the park early in the morning or at dusk you might be lucky enough to spot a Coyote. Even if you don’t see one, you are likely to be serenaded by their lively yips. Keep your dogs close!”
- “The crags are incredible along this path and you never know when you may be being watched by our frequent friends, the coyotes.”

**The Trail Naming Committee supports this name because:**

- Many coyotes can be seen on this trail and in this park
- Crag (or rocky outcrops) are prominent landscape features along this trail
- Glen Canyon is one of the best places in the city to see these rock outcrops up close
- Seven separate name nominations had the word ‘coyote’ in it
- The public is enamored with coyotes
- The public was interested in names that reflect natural features
- ‘Coyote Crag Trail’ lets visitors know they will see rock crags and at the very least, coyote habitat such as coyote brush and other coastal scrub plants.

**Creeks to Peaks:** Although not part of the official naming contest, the Trail Naming Committee was in favor of officially naming the regional trail that extends from Glen Canyon Recreation Center to the Twin Peaks overlook the “Creeks to Peaks” Trail. Not unlike other regional trails in California (e. g., the Pacific Crest Trail, Bay Area Ridge Trail), the Creeks to Peaks name would overlay the local trail names at Twin Peaks and Glen Canyon.