

Appeal of Dangerous Dog Declaration

Issued September 4, 2024, for incident date August 31, 2024

Case: A24-004387

Case appealed by dog owner:

Darius Zoroufy

3601 93<sup>rd</sup> Ave SE

Mercer Island, WA 98040

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**Appeal of Dangerous Dog Declaration**

The purpose of this appeal is to present documentation and evidence refuting the dangerous dog declaration noted above. This declaration inaccurately describes the dog as “dangerous” and incorrectly concludes that the incident occurred “without provocation.”

Please note that Socky was euthanized on September 12, 2024, in compliance with this “dangerous dog declaration”.

The dog referred to in this appeal is a tan, 7-year-old male mixed breed Catahoula named Socrates, affectionately known as “Socky” (see Figure 1).

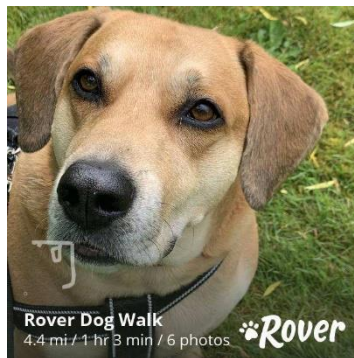


Figure 1 – Socrates (Socky)

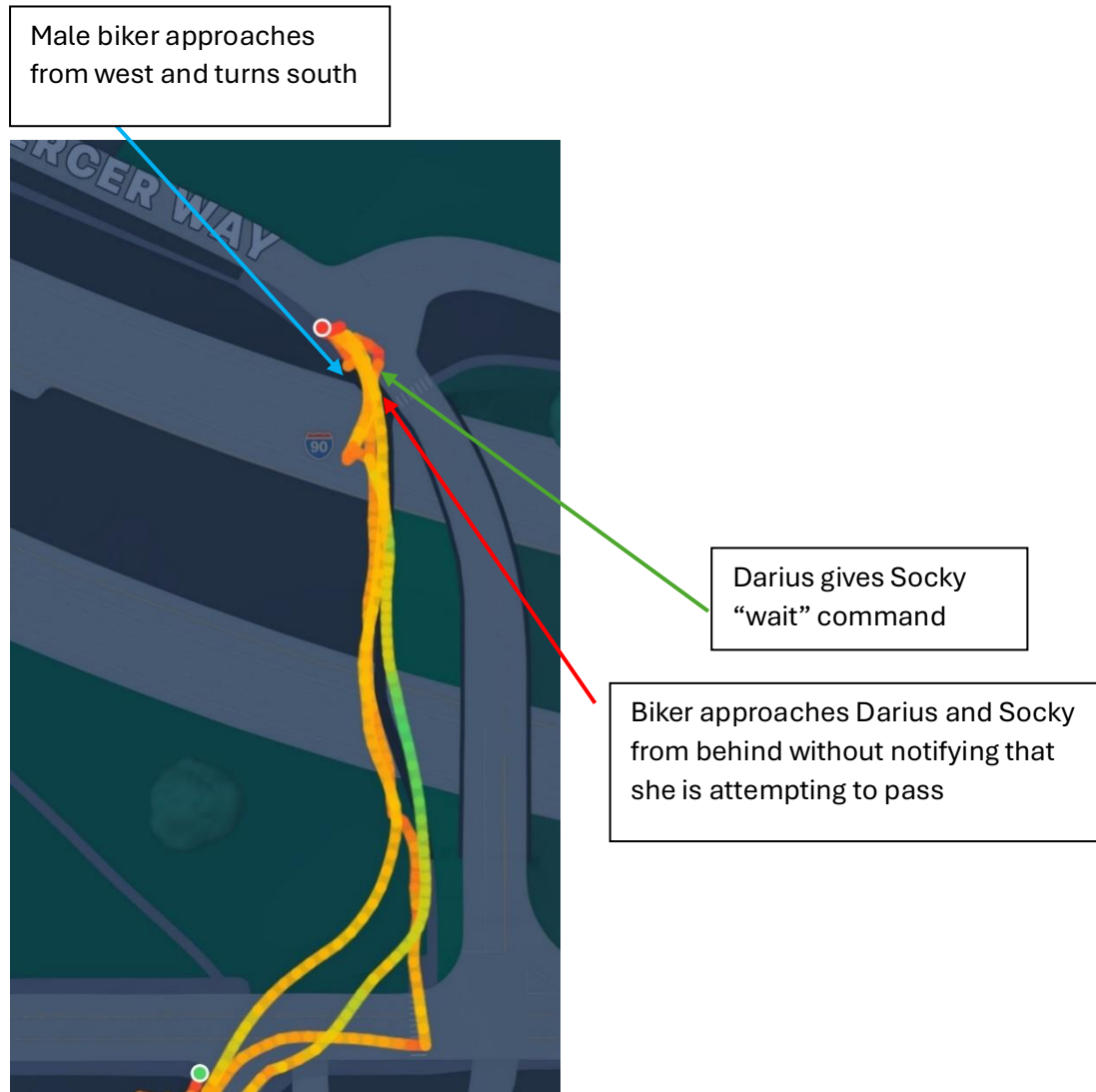
**Background:**

I have walked Socky on the multi-user trails near my home every day for years, encountering many bikers, joggers, and dog walkers. We have always maintained safe and courteous interactions with others. Prior to the morning of August 31, I had walked Socky on these trails 38 times in August 2024 alone, hundreds of times in 2024, and thousands of times since adopting him. (See Figure 3 below for representative records of walks this summer. See Figure 7 for maps of the incident location.)

**Incident Details:**

On the morning in question, I left home at 8:37 AM, crossed SE 36th Street, and walked north on the multi-user trail. I led Socky on the right side of the trail and approached the intersection of SE 35th Street and North Mercer Way. When I saw an oncoming male biker approaching from the west, I gave Socky the “wait” command, and we stood behind a temporary detour sign (see photographs). This biker turned south and began to pass me on my left, keeping to his right. (see Figure 2)

Figure 2: GPS records from August 31



(Please note: multiple tracks were recorded, because I returned home after confirming that the woman was okay and brought back first aid supplies.)

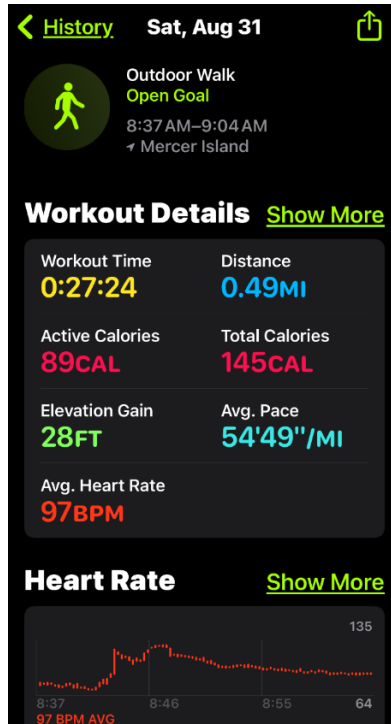
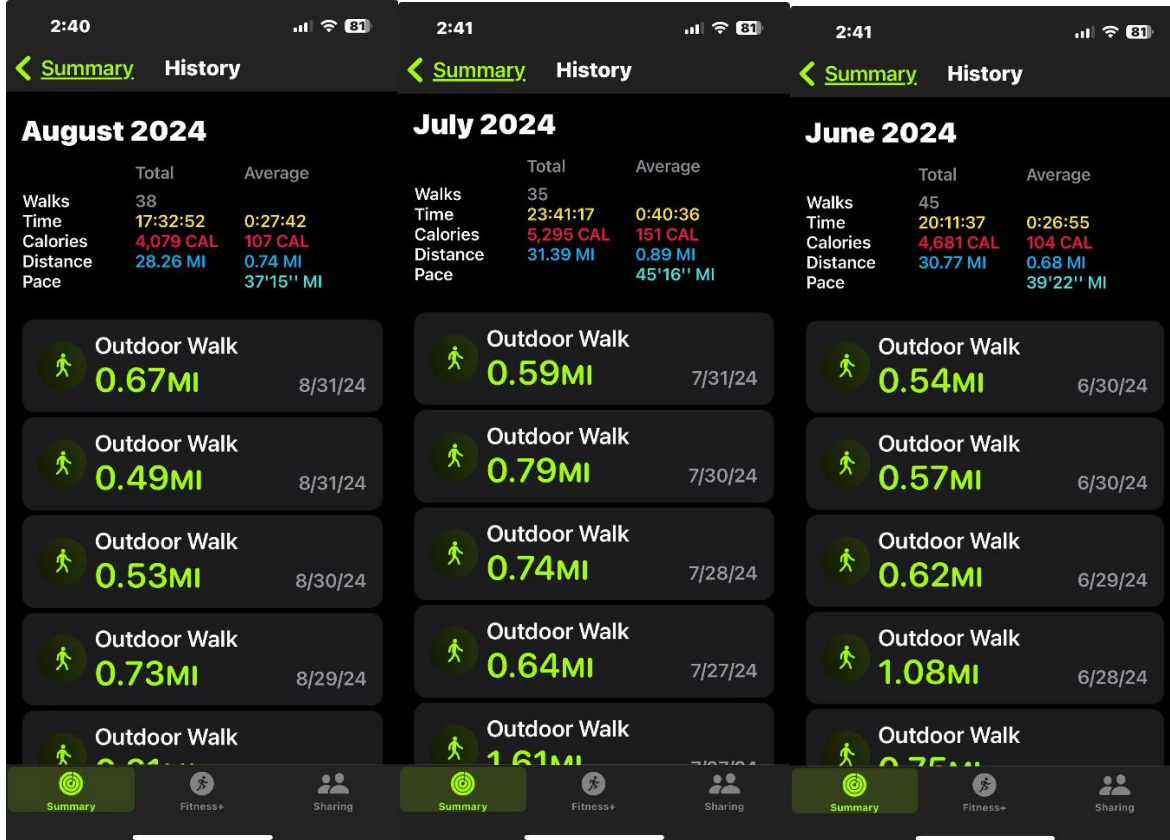


Figure 3: Dog walking history for June, July, and August 2024



As I waited for the oncoming biker to pass, I felt something brush me from behind on my left side. Without announcing herself verbally, with a bell, or any other method, a woman on a bicycle darted from behind me and into the gap between the oncoming male bicycle rider and where my dog and I were standing behind the “Detour” sign. (Figures 4, 5, and 6)

Figures 4, 5, and 6: Photographs from incident location

Larger X = Darius

Smaller x = Socky

Larger Arrow = oncoming biker

Smaller Arrow = biker approaching from behind (without notifying)

Figure 4



Figure 5

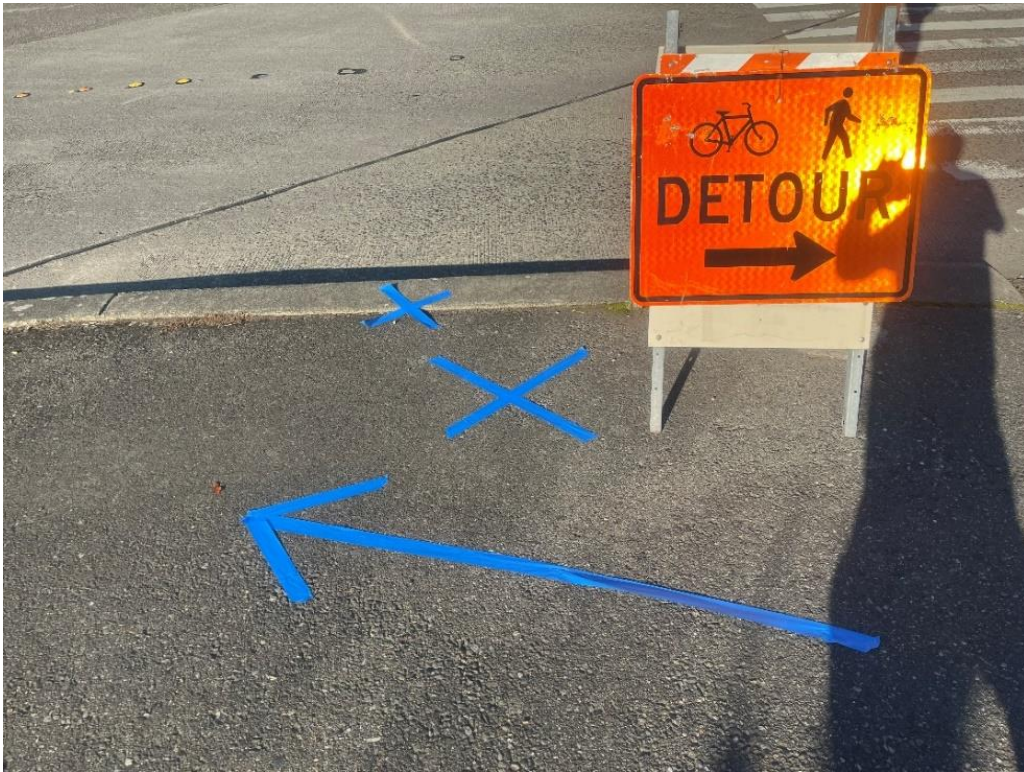
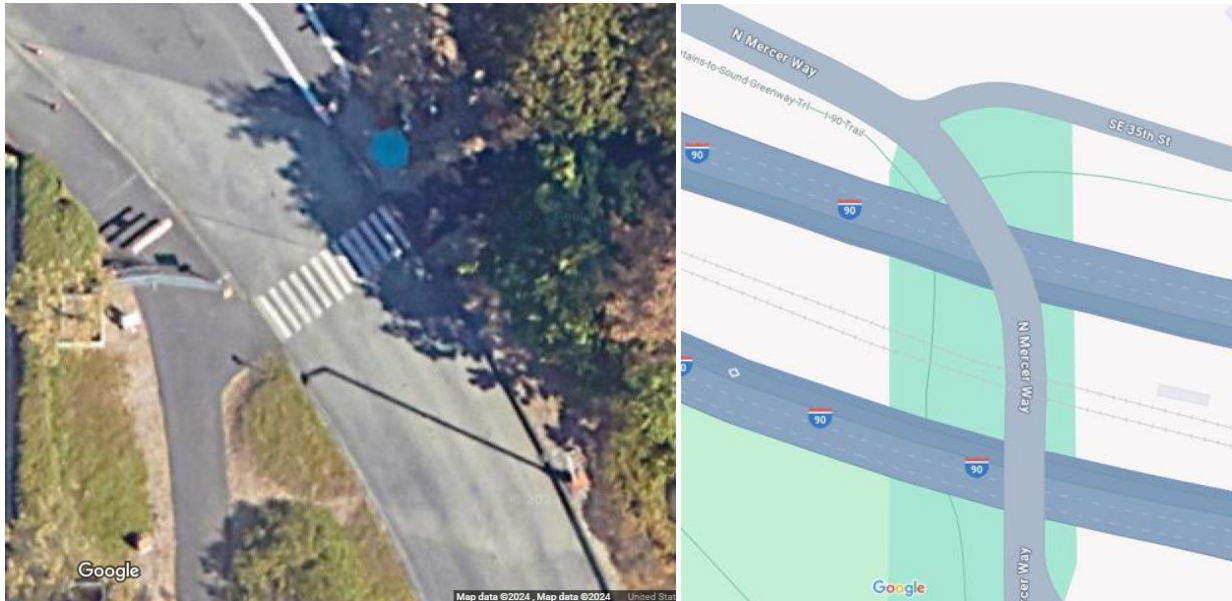


Figure 6



Figure 7: Maps



The female bike rider approached us from behind and could see that we were faced away from her and would not have known she was there. She passed close enough for me to feel her or the air from her passing. My dog was kept close to me with his leash attached to his harness, but she passed less than 2 feet from where we were standing.

Startled by her sudden approach, Socky must have sensed both the biker approaching abruptly from behind and my startled response and reached out to protect me.

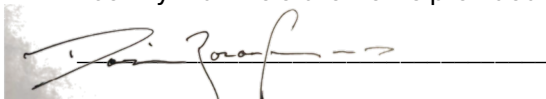
**Key Points:**

1. **Provocation:** The individual approached me and Socky from behind without alerting us to her presence, startling both of us. This provocation led to the incident.
2. **Safety Record:** Socky and I have a long history of safe and courteous interactions on the trails, as evidenced by our extensive walking records.
3. **Responsibility:** We immediately took responsibility by paying the fine, asking our insurance company to contact the woman to cover her expenses, and euthanizing Socky.

**Conclusion:**

This event likely would not have happened if the woman riding her bike had alerted me to her presence and had not attempted to dart between me and the oncoming biker. I respectfully request that the dangerous dog declaration be reconsidered and removed in light of this evidence.

I certify that the statements provided are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

  
Darius Zoroufy

September 19, 2024

Date