

Hello

To: the Planning Committee

June 11, 2021

From: Michael Mungoven, 34287 Bluegrass Street, Anchor Point

Re: Classification of 380 acres on the East side of Epperson Knob near Anchor Point. APN 17104022.

I went to the Anchor Point Chamber of Commerce on June 10 at 7 pm to take part in the AP advisory planning meeting regarding this issue. No one showed up so I can only conclude that the meeting was cancelled or rescheduled and I missed the notice.

I oppose classifying that acreage in parcel 17104022 as Agricultural. Recreational or Preservation would be a better classification.

My standing: My wife and I own 6 lots in Knob Hill subdivision adjacent to this land. I was part of the USDA-NRCS soils crew that mapped the Kenai Peninsula between 1995 and 2004 and I personally mapped areas close to this land. We ski, hike, and snowshoe on this ground and know it well.

My argument:

~32% of the soils on this land are classified as poorly drained or wetter.

~55% of this terrain is classified as steep or very steep.

Item #2 in the staff report about this classification says quite clearly "The subject parcel contains many areas of escarpment. The parcel is relatively steep with discharge slopes and riverine ecosystems that drain into anadromous water bodies (the Anchor River). There are few areas of relatively flat rolling terrain". Those are borough staff observations.

The conclusion of the staff report claims that the classification is compatible with surrounding land use. I disagree. The uses of this parcel and adjacent lands are recreational, including snow machining, hunting, hiking, skiing, and snowshoeing. Fences associated with agricultural uses are not compatible with any of these activities.

The soils of this area have high erosion potential and are subject to high compatibility. Most of this parcel that's not wet is really steep. The naturally high K value (a measure of erodibility) of these soils is multiplied by the long steep slopes found here. The fact that these slopes are a favorite of local backcountry skiers is indicative of their steep nature.

The area also contains important wildlife habitat. Wolves, bears, lynx, and moose use the area extensively. We have observed brown bear dens in some of the drainages. Salmon can be found in the stream flowing in the valley below. It is an important travel corridor for creatures from this interior valley to the lowlands around Anchor Point. The land sits above and adjacent to the Anchor River critical habitat area. As for accessibility, the downed timber from the mid 90's beetle kill is extensive and makes passage through the forested areas really hard. All in all, this plot is an important part of the Anchor River ecosystem that produces salmon and moose for local subsistence.

This area and the land to the west side of Epperson Knob are part of a current grazing lease. Over the years my wife and I and our neighbors have removed a lot of abandoned barbed wire from the slopes to the west of Epperson Knob. Barbed wire is dangerous to skiers and wildlife. People have been injured

due to running into downed barbed wire while skiing. Furthermore, the area of the current grazing lease along North Fork Road is littered with abandoned vehicles, trailers, and old junk piles. I can't imagine this is what the borough wants to see on agricultural lands.

Very little of this area is suitable for general agriculture (~7% in my view). Even less of this land is suitable for grazing than for general ag. We live on the old Epperson homestead where cattle raising was tried and failed. I encourage the planners to consider putting this land into a Recreation or Preservation classification. We strongly believe that the best use of this area is for subsistence and recreation for the common good of all Borough residents.

Michael Mungoven

June 11, 2021.