

R2022-024

April 15, 2020

Kenai Peninsula Borough Planning  
144 North Binkley Street  
Soldotna, Alaska 99669

**RESPONSE TO PROPOSAL TO RECLASSIFY LAND ON OHLSON MTN ROAD TO  
RECREATIONAL**

I want to apologize for the time it has taken to respond to your letter; I was suffering the effects of COVID.

I, Sharon Strutz Norton, notified as an adjoining property owner, strongly oppose the adjoining land to mine on Ohlson Mountain Road, being reclassified as recreational. While I do support all types of recreation.

I do not oppose expanding the shallow roadside pull-out or turn-out parking which already exists alongside the same side of Ohlson Mtn Road to support the rare use of skiers; and I may not oppose expansion and recreation classification on the other side of the existing parking area which has few to no trees or foliage [the side to the right of the existing area when facing it from Ohlson Mtn Road]; should soil, water, and erosion, other environmental studies, and DOT conduct studies, propose and monitor strict guidelines, and support the endeavor. Other landowners nor I, living on Ohlson Mtn Road have seen the proposed joint Snomads and Kachemak Ski Tow parking lot construction plan so we can provide informed comment - at least the landowners with whom I have met.

Expansion of the existing parking towards my property/hay field, which is lower in topography: has strong potential to cause flooding, affect grain production, livestock, water quality, and contribute to other damage. Removal of trees and other foliage would accelerate wind damage and increase snow levels further damaging my property; and the loss would affect natural wildlife. Certainly, my property studied by and prepped with the assistance of USDA/NRCS/Soil and Water and has a well, septic, utilities existing on site would be harmed.

**Prior to any thoughts of reclassification:**

- Just heard on the radio yesterday that the Snomad parking area out East Road has 6-8 inches of mud/water, and they were suggesting that recreationalists find alternative parking. That parking lot had not been constructed to the level Ohlson Mountain landowners, recreationalists, and taxpayers should expect. \*Did you go look for yourself?
- Soil, water, and erosion studies need to be done on the current excavated Ohlson Mtn site and extend on both sides of the existing parking area to support current and future proposals.
- USDA/NRCS/Soil & Water needs to investigate and needs to provide input related to potential damage to adjoining land; as well to any land expansion.
- Wildlife and Ornithologists need study the proposal and submit opinions.
- Will these two nonprofits hire a professional construction company experienced with parking lots? Will State and Borough officials monitor the plans, progress, and ongoing maintenance, and how does that look?
- How will destruction of current trees, brush, and foliage effect land erosion and drainage as well as wildlife.
- Are French drains, drainage ditches, culverts, and retaining walls proposed?
- **Number and annual use by Kachemak Tow skiers needing additional parking is at best 1 Sunday a week between 1100 and 1600. At most 24 days a total of 76 hours annually, 24 days out of 365.**
  - **Hardly a reason to reclassify land. More timely and appropriate and less destructive to the environment would be expanding uphill the existing roadside parking three hundred feet which would provide all necessary parking, ease of snow removal; accommodating the need of Kachemak Ski Tow skiers/families and other year-round recreationalists, while keeping parking off the road, addressing safety concerns brought to your attention.**
- Number and annual current and anticipated parking lot use by snowmachines? I live across the street, and have spoken to other residents, the excavated parking lot has seen little use - mostly at hunting season - never has it been even near current capacity which disproves the need.

- How will reclassification affect others already having enjoyed, for decades, access to the trailhead? Is the borough willing to maintain year-round public access and use?
- KPB and landowners need to be aware if and how the proposal will affect land value which would affect borough taxes.
- Certainly, all nonprofit donors contributing to either the Snowmad or Kachemak Ski Tow endeavors would want to know the same information. Being aware that their contributions are used to meet a real need, used to construct a professionally designed and constructed parking area, which would be monitored and maintained year-round; used by all types of recreationalists and local landowners. That would in no way damage the environment or effect the safety of residents.

**Ohlson Mountain dirt road can ill support additional traffic -**

- Current and potential landowners suffer the year-round damage recreational traffic adds to the road.
- Studies need be done by the State of Alaska
- Does DOT have identified funds in the current and proposed State Operating Budget to address Ohlson Mtn Road upgrade?
- Does the State DOT have the funds to properly prepare, grade, and pave Ohlson Mtn Road including drains where current water causes ruts and potholes? Additional traffic would wreak havoc?
- How will the recreational traffic monetarily support Ohlson Mtn Road maintenance?
- How will Snowmad and Kachemak Rope Tow clubs contribute to Ohlson Mtn Road maintenance?
- How does either propose to commit to year-round parking lot monitoring and upkeep? Including portable toilets, waste removal, no open fires, ect.?

**Ohlson Mountain Road Landowners opinions/suggestions need be heard by NRCS, USDA, Soil & Water, State and Federal elected Representatives, KPB planning, the assembly, and State DOT:**

As for my family who homesteaded here in the 1950's and continue to reside here: nonprofits and recreationalists opinions, most who do not live or own property in the area, should be respectful and not considered more relevant than the landowners.

Very Respectfully,

Sharon Strutz Norton MSN RN  
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Homer, Alaska 99603  
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**From:** Sharon Strutz-Norton <inupiaqpmhnp@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, April 17, 2022 5:12 PM  
**To:** Planning Land Management  
**Subject:** <EXTERNAL-SENDER>Re: RESPONSE: OHLSON MTN ROAD RECREATION RECLASSIFICATION

CAUTION:This email originated from outside of the KPB system. Please use caution when responding or providing information. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender, know the content is safe and were expecting the communication.

Ohlson Mountain Road landowners reported to me today today that they think the road side pull-out turn-outs should be room for 40-50 so 400 to 500 feet including the existing one BUT the nonprofits should have to pay themselves for either the road side or the parking lot build, plowing, and maintenance NOT to be funded by taxpayers. and there should be a designated EMS parking spot and handicap spots. Just passing along the comments.

Sharon

On Sun, Apr 17, 2022 at 10:21 AM Sharon Strutz-Norton <[inupiaqpmhnp@gmail.com](mailto:inupiaqpmhnp@gmail.com)> wrote:

Please see the attachment.

Do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sharon Strutz-Norton MSN RN  
907-435-7173