



City of Homer

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Planning

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Memorandum

Agenda Changes/Supplemental Packet

TO: PLANNING COMMISSION
FROM: TRAVIS BROWN, PLANNING TECHNICIAN
DATE: JUNE 2, 2021
SUBJECT: SUPPLEMENTAL PACKET

NEW BUSINESS

- B. Staff Report 21-36, Ordinance 21-26 Extending the No Wake Zone in City Tidelands, Closing Areas to Motorized Vessels & Funds for Regulation Changes

Comments received from the following people are provided in this packet:

Kathryn Carssow

Sue Christiansen

Lynn Takeoka Spence

Robert Vernon

Dear Commissioners,

Please support this important ordinance to protect our valuable and sensitive tidelands and to provide for the continual enjoyment of our beaches by all. This ordinance sends an important message to personal watercraft and other users about our community's values with regard to marine flora and fauna that are key to the quality of our Kachemak Bay environment. It provides the means for citizen reporting of violators, especially anyone harassing wildlife or otherwise abusing our marine environs.

Thank you,

Kathryn Carssow

City of Homer resident

Hello. My name is Sue Christiansen. I have lived in Homer for 42 years. Thank you for serving on the Planning Commission. I appreciate all the long hours and hard work involved. Thank you for coming up with solutions and helping put them into place. In terms of solutions, I'd like to encourage you to recommend Ordinance 21- 36 extending the 'No Wake Zone' to City tidelands and closing areas to motorized vehicles. The changes will protect vulnerable habitat and shoreline users. Jet skis have a unique ability to change direction, operate at high speeds and in very shallow water. As you know, Kachemak Bay, and areas within the City are part of the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network. This international recognition of crucial, endangered wildlife habitat (enhancing our economy with the Shorebird Festival and vast numbers of tourists) needs to be honored and respected, which this ordinance does. Though we do not have funds to enforce these changes, citizen enforcement will take place. *It makes sense to attempt to prevent accidents in City waters with an ordinance which will provide legal standing.* According to the US Coast Guard, personal watercraft have a higher rate of collisions than any other type of boat. The National Transportation Safety Board reports that over 80% of personal watercraft users have never received any type of boating instruction (Mangione et al 2013). The American Red Cross reports that personal watercraft use is highest among boaters with little or no experience. This inexperience is due, in part, to the fact that personal watercraft are more likely to be rented or borrowed than any other vessel and almost half of the renters have “never or once” operated a personal watercraft. They can take up to 300 feet to stop from 60 mph. Many areas require licenses, limit use to daylight hours, restrict age, require equipment and education, designate corridors, and GPS tracking and identification devices. This ordinance is conservative in comparison. Please recommend it be put in place.

<http://www.nasbla.net/referenceguide/index.php?queryID=4.6>), https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2016/08/qb/pwc-mgt-guide_0.pdf, <https://inletkeeper.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Enc-2-Annotated-biblio-PWC-Impacts-May-2017.pdf>, <http://www.alaskaquietrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Kachemak-Bay-Defense-Fund-Jan-2021-letter.docx>

Jet skis could also bring invasive species into these pristine estuaries.

Thanks for your consideration and all you do.

Sue Christiansen

PO Box 3, Homer, AK, 99603

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Please forward to the Planning Commission.

I am a resident of the City of Homer and think this proposed ordinance is sensible and makes considerations for users of the land and water under City jurisdiction. I personally spend more time on the beach than the water so I appreciate the idea of having less noise from the water. It is always great to see eagles and other sea birds skim the water close to shore or to see otters or seals while walking the beach. These simple sights add to our quality of life and attract visitors from around the world.

I also love seeing boats out on the water. Most boats are far enough off shore that we don't hear them. I consider this a plus. Considering the obstructions that are sometimes hidden and shifting ground around the spit it seems like a safety precaution that boaters would embrace. With more people using the water for non-motorized recreation like surfing and kite surfing, paddle boarding, kayaking, and swimming, going slow near the shore makes sense. No one plans on an accident but they happen without thoughtful planning.

Thank you for the work you do on our behalf. I encourage you to support ordinance 21-26.

Sincerely,
Lynn Takeoka Spence
331 Mountain View Drive
Homer, AK 99603

907 299-6646

Hard-working members of the the Homer Planning Commission, As a resident of Bishop's Beach (that's right I live between Two Sisters and the Park) I applaud the foresight you have to prevent jet-skis from launching from Bishop's Beach. A couple yahoos launching jet skis from the park and then parking their rigs and trailers in the parking area while they cavort in the waves destroys the parking (and use of the park) for dozens of others. (There still needs to be some length restriction on Winnebagos as three of these oversized behemoths can totally clot the parking for the park. Maybe a sign suggesting that vehicles over 25 feet turn right at the corner of Bunnell and Main and park at the Elk\$ or Chamber of Commer\$e parking lot\$.) Anyway the issue before you now is allowing jetski access to Beluga Slough , Louie's Lagoon, and other city tidelands. As a property owner next to Beluga Slough I find it reprehensible that jetskis would be allowed in an area that birders (and Homer is getting to be quite a magnet for this sport which I admit I really don't understand) come to watch whimbrels, godwits, geese, sandpipers, dowagers, curlews... That they'd be allowed in a gathering area where sandhill cranes are teaching their young to land and take-off before migrating dismays me. Maybe civilization will become what their laws allow - extinct. Also Beluga Lake needs to be set aside as a no jet-ski area as a combination of crotch rockers and float planes is a Cuisinart recipe.

I was shocked to learn last year that Homer had been chosen by National Geographic as the #1 city in the US for outdoor adventure. I profit from this with a Bungalow on the Beach. I would be disappointed that a few of the governor's appointees can destroy

the tranquility of Homer when there are numerous lakes in Mat-Su that have outlawed jetski use despite these laws being odorous overbearing government regulations. Jetski use is open from Ketchikan to Vladivostock. Surely there should be one spot where testosterone-driven teenagers can't buff up their masculinity by making a noisy spectacle of themselves.

Homer can be that voice of reason far from the maddening crowd if you so choose.

Electronic Signature: Robert G Vernon Submitted on Wednesday, June 2, 2021 - 9:56am The results of this submission may be viewed at: <https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/node/60481/submission/46859>