

Testimony of William Cormier and Melissa Rooth-Cormier - 11/3/2017

Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak about the trail project. We have lived in Sammamish for over 30 years, much of that time outside of the immediate vicinity of trail. Four years ago, we purchased a home that is adjacent to the trail at Section 339, in the Viewpoint Park neighborhood.

We use the trail heavily for walking and biking and are strong trail supporters. Fortunately, our section of the trail (Sections 338 to 342) contains ample space to accommodate the widening of the trail. We have reviewed the 60% plan and have a few minor concerns about fencing and signage. Our only major concern is about the possible expansion of the project in our neighborhood as has been implied by the County.

In April of 2017, King County Parks Department gave a presentation at the city of Sammamish as part of their community outreach program. In that presentation, the Department showed a picture of the View Point Park community beach area as an example of "free private use of public land," and stated that one of the Department's goals was to eliminate this practice. There were many owners of View Point Park at that meeting, and we were shocked by the Department's characterization of our use of our beach because we, as a community, have owned and used that beach for decades. The Owners of View Point Park have a long-established and documented ownership claim on the community beach and adjacent area, including the second-class shore lands. Our property taxes have been increased based on that beach access; our estimate is that collectively, the tax premium paid due to beach access has been more than \$85,000 since 2010. We respectfully disagree with the County's assertion that we are using public lands for free, private use.

If the trail project is allowed to expand to include public access to the water, it will present significant safety and security issues. The main reason is that all roads leading down to this area are private and gated. The public has no way to access the Viewpoint Park beach area other than on the trail. Our concern is that the public will find the fastest way from the closest public road (East Lake Sammamish PI SE) to the beach, and that is to trespass down our driveway and through our backyard.

As a result, we have two specific requests:

1. In its report, the city's staff states that Regulation 25.06.030 - Shoreline Public Access applies to this project. The specific wording is "The project is a public access facility and has been designed to provide visual access to the Lake Sammamish Shoreline (the project does not include water access)." We strongly agree with this statement, and request that this be a condition for final project approval.