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To:**Parks & Recreation Advisory Board**

Cc:

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Stephanie Payne

Sat 8/17/2024 9:16 AM

PIA is in the process of gaining approval to construct an upper portion of the City Creek trail across borough lands. This proposed trail would run above the Cabin Creek road (Frederick Point road) through mostly muskeg and tie into the garbage dump hill road. The idea is to provide a loop trail where the lower portion of the loop is the trail from Sandy Beach park to City Creek. There actually already is a loop trail if you consider the road as part of the trail.

I'm writing you to let you know I'm in opposition to the upper loop portion mainly because of the present use of that muskeg area by certified bowhunters. The piece of property that is bounded by the Cabin Creek road, the dump hill road and City Creek is one of very few areas near to town that are legally open to hunting by certified bowhunters. I have personally taken dozens of deer from that area, but if a trail is built there my hunting time there is done. Bowhunters are a select group who generally prefer silence, little movement, and solitude. A walking trail with hikers doesn't fit in well with bowhunting.

A few years ago I asked ADF&G how many certified bowhunters had addresses in Petersburg. At that time there were 110 of us. Not all of us actually use that area but I know of more than a dozen who do. Bowhunting is allowed on the outskirts of town because of the abundance of deer near town. They are routinely involved with vehicle collisions as well as flower and garden damage, allowing some of these deer to be culled from the herd is a management tool used by ADF&G to control the deer population. I believe that the presence of a new trail through this area will displace hunters and extend the shelter area used by deer, which may actually increase the deer numbers along the Sandy Beach road area.

I humbly ask that when you as a board are approached by PIA regarding the use of borough lands to support this upper loop trail that you give it some thought before you rubber stamp approve it. I'm almost always in favor of trails, but not this one. The loop trail already exists if you use the road as a portion of it, many people already do. If folks want to experience the upper loop muskeg it's there for them today, they don't need a trail to get them there. Ask the many cross country skiers who use that area every winter.

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