



**CITY of
KUPREANOF**

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PETERSBURG, ALASKA 99833
PHONE : 907-340-2400

February 17, 2020
Senator Bert Stedman
Representative Jonathon Kreiss-Tomkins

RE: Kake Access Road

Dear Senator Stedman and Representative Kreiss-Tomkins,

Income for the State of Alaska has been substantially reduced since the height of the oil boom. In fact, it has been reduced so much that the State has had great difficulty balancing the annual budget. It has only been able to achieve a balanced budget by digging deeply into budget reserves and taking a substantial portion of the Permanent Fund earnings that should have been paid to the people as their annual dividend. The heyday of large grants to municipalities for capital projects is long over. Fiscally responsible budgeting and spending is mandatory for the legislature. Many good and beneficial projects that were easily funded in the past can no longer be afforded.

The City of Kupreanof believes that one of these projects is the Kake Access Road. The \$40,000,000 budgeted for the project is only the tip of the iceberg for the total cost of the project. This is even truer when you consider the current status of the Marine Highway and the reduction of ferry service to Kake and other small communities.

The City of Kupreanof has opposed the construction of this project for many years. Resolutions 09-1, 12-6, and 13-4 have all expressed our concerns for and objections to the project. In 2020 our concerns are much greater. Our objections are based on impacts to the City of Kupreanof and fiscally responsible planning.

1. A complete capital plan and associated costs are not available:
 - The proposed road is a road from Kake to or near the City of Kupreanof. Two ferry landings and a car ferry would be needed to make it a road to Petersburg.
 - A capital budget is not available that includes all costs including design, construction, contingencies and inflation.

2. An operating and maintenance plan and budget is not available.
 - A plan is not available that considers how the required ferry would be operated and maintained. If there was an emergency during the night and someone drives from Kake to the Kupreanof ferry landing, would the ferry be available to transport the vehicle to the Petersburg Hospital?
 - A plan is not available for how the road would be maintained as an all-weather road. Where would machinery and materials be staged to respond to snow, ice, blow-downs, etc.? How would the road be maintained so potential users of the road had a level of confidence that the road was open and safe?
 - A plan is not available that considers emergencies along the road. Since there are no communication services along a substantial portion of the road, how would an accident be reported and help requested? This is particularly important during the winter months.
 - An operating and maintenance budget and plan is not available that includes all costs including new personnel and new equipment. Existing personnel in Kake and Petersburg would not have the time or resources to do the work. How would a heavy winter storm be dealt with?
3. A plan is not available that deals with the environmental challenges of building a road on steep mountain sides and over many streams.

The Legislature and other officials need to work together to solve the current financial crises challenges that the State faces. Compromise and proactive cooperation are mandatory. A part of the solution is re-appropriating the \$40 million currently appropriated for the Kake Access Road.

Sincerely,



Butch Anderson
Mayor

cc: Governor Mike Dunleavy
Petersburg Borough Assembly