

## ORCAS HIGHLANDS ASSOCIATION

P.O. BOX 474  
EASTSOUND, WA 98245

### ASSOCIATION NEWS AND UPDATE WINTER 2018

Happy 2018 and Welcome New Members. We have a busy year ahead of us for the Association and look forward to continuing to improve our roads, water service, and communications. For new members, the welcoming committee is getting its feet on the ground and will be contacting you soon with community information and to answer any questions you have about the Orcas Highlands Association (OHA) and the neighborhood.

With the start of the new year we would like to update everyone's contact information. The OHA records are being reviewed and brought up to date for each property and we are setting up an improved bulk email and postal mail system so we can send timely notices regarding water and power issues and upcoming road work. **Please fill out the enclosed member information form and return it with your quarterly invoice payment.** It is very important that we maintain current emergency contact information including renter contacts. In the future, we plan to send this form out to new owners as soon as their property purchase closes.

**ROADS:** We have a contract open from this fall for Island Ex to complete some minor road repairs throughout the Highlands. They will also be doing some prep work on the roads this spring in advance of the major repaving project. We will notify everyone as soon as we get the word that a stretch of roadway is scheduled for a crew so you can plan your trips around the work and ensure no vehicles are parked along the roadway. We plan to repave most of our roads this coming summer, hopefully in June. More information will be available in spring and it will be posted to the website and in the next newsletter.

**WINTER BURNING PERMIT:** There is a winter burning permit in place for the community burn area. The permit is in place through the end of May. If you have wood or cleanup debris to be burned contact Brian Ehrmantraut for access, dates, and instructions. If you bring materials to the site, you must also complete the burn and ensure the fire is out and equipment is returned for the next user.

**WATER:** If you plan to be away, especially during the winter months, please be sure to turn off the water to your home at the meter valve. Unexpected cold weather, pipe breaks, or appliance failures can cause a great deal of damage and expense in a very short period of time.

We are currently in the beginning stages of discussions with Washington Water Service regarding sale of our water system. Our objectives are to ensure improved water service, reduce OHA liabilities and fees, and achieve an attractive financial arrangement. As soon as more information becomes available we will be having a community meeting to explain and discuss possible options for water service modifications. Again, having your current contact information is key to making sure everyone gets the information needed to stay involved in any upcoming water issues. We hope to provide an internet link to share any community meetings that might happen in the winter while many owners are enjoying warmer, drier climates.

**POSSIBLE CHANGES IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD:** Washington State Parks has announced that they are exploring the possibility of purchasing some or all of the Youngren property that adjoins the Highlands along our northern boundary. They are developing a proposal for the State Parks and Recreation Commission to consider at the March 22, 2018 meeting in Snohomish, WA. Comments are being taken up to March 16<sup>th</sup>. There will also be an opportunity for public testimony at the Commission meeting. To learn more about the proposal and to make any comments, visit the website:

<http://parks.state.wa.us/1087/Moran-Long-Term-Boundary-Revision>

This site includes the PowerPoint presentation, maps, and a place to comment.

This proposal does not include Eric Youngren's 40 acre adjoining parcel. It is state park's policy not to access park property through private roads; this includes our Highland's road network. Any development of the Youngren's property will include many public meetings and extensive coordination with neighboring properties, so stay tuned. Currently, there is no funding identified for any park build out or future development.

**STORMS, EARTHQUAKES, AND FIRE:** Historically, the very worst of the winter weather is now behind us, but storms, including snow and ice can happen anytime throughout the winter. If we receive more than 4" of snow we will call out the plowman but think carefully about whether you really need to venture out or not. It is typical in periods of bad weather for folks who know they need to travel to park their vehicles down by the mailboxes, and to walk down to their cars as needed. Be mindful about how you park at the mailbox area. Please park along the south side of the area and perpendicular to the mailboxes--this will provide space for the greatest number of cars.

Do not park on Lindsay Way on the roadside across from the mailboxes as this creates a hazard. When the slope above is a bit icy, cars come sliding down, and keeping this area clear allows for a safer run-off area where they can gain some traction. In the past, some cars have been unable to stop and sailed right on through, across Olga Road, and off the road on the other side.

Orcas Fire and Rescue (OIFR) has a selection of 4x4 vehicles, chains for extreme weather conditions, and a technical rescue team that can respond in extreme conditions, and emergency conditions. The biggest impediment to OIFR responding when the road is snowy/icy is people parking along the sides of the road and especially the areas around the turns, making it very difficult to safely traverse the road even with proper gear and training. To make it safer and easier for OIFR emergency vehicles to respond, please do not park your vehicle along the shoulders of the road or in the turns or runoff areas when the road is snowy/icy. Please **DO NOT PARK** on any roadways.

Following are some important resources and recommendations of the San Juan County Department of Emergency Management to help all of us prepare for island life during emergencies that will happen, we just don't know when:

<http://joomla.sanjuandem.net/>

The preparedness guidelines suggest that island residents be prepared for being without power or access to town for \*a week or more\* in the event of one of our severe winter storms. There are other likely events here (earthquake) that may require even longer periods of self-reliance.

[http://joomla.sanjuandem.net/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=68&Itemid=53](http://joomla.sanjuandem.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=68&Itemid=53)

**WEBSITE:** Our website will be getting a facelift and major update in the next few months. It will hopefully become a more useful site for current issues and new owner information. The site does currently have all the information needed for Architectural Committee review if you plan to build on your property. Please remember to seek review prior to any construction to avoid costly revisions later.

**WEBSITE:** <http://orcashighlandshoa.com>

**EMAIL any questions or other issues or concerns to:** [info@orcashighlandshoa.com](mailto:info@orcashighlandshoa.com)