

MEMO

TO: Sgt. Mike Merrill

FROM: Steve Johnson

DATE: 3-22-05

SUBJECT: Speed Limits

Reference our conversation earlier today:

The speed limits on Hood Canal Drive, Cliffside, and Bridgeview are all being reviewed. These speed limits were set in 1976 in an omnibus speed ordinance. At that time the speed limit was set at 35 mph for Hood Canal Drive, from Cliffside to Twin Spits. The speed limit for Cliffside was set at 35 mph, and Bridgeview was set at 30 mph. Someone has since replaced all the speed limit signs in the area with 25 mph signs.

There has been a lot of complaining about speeding on Hood Canal Drive, from the hairpin curve south to Cliffside. Since it was discovered that the wrong signs were in place we have worked toward the goal of placing the proper signs, however, we have run into "political" resistance. Last week Dave Smith and I talked to Commissioner Endresen about this and she said to put the correct signs back on Hood Canal Drive. She said there is a procedure they must go through to lower the speed limit and merely stealing signs from somewhere else and putting them up is not the proper method.

Since then there has been discussions about leaving the 25 mph signs in place and I have been asked to write an ordinance lowering the speed limit on Hood Canal Drive to 25 mph.

I will write the ordinance, however, this is not going to solve the problem of speeding vehicles. We have done several speed studies on Hood Canal Drive and the results of all of them are about the same. The latest that was done on 5/18/04 showed the 85 percentile speeds southbound was 51 mph and northbound was 44 mph. There have only been 2 collisions in 2000 and two in 2001 in this stretch of road (none in 2003 and none in 2004). The ADT is about 1359 vehicles per day. The average speeds are 39 mph and 98% of the vehicles were exceeding the posted 25 mph. As you can see, the unrealistic and arbitrary speed limit of 25 mph will continue to cause you grief.

I have enclosed the latest speed study and also a report from the Federal Highway Administration on the effects of raising and lowering speed limits. I have a ton of reports like this if you find them interesting reading. They all say the same thing; the speed limit should be set at the 5 mph increment below the 85th percentile speed. Good Luck.