

# STILLY NORTH OWNERS ASSOCIATION

## Owner Information Pamphlet

### INTRODUCTION

Hello and welcome to the Stilly North Community! This informational pamphlet offers guidance for new landowners about our shared road access.

The Stilly North Owners Association (SNOA) is our road maintenance association. Since we all share the road, maintenance is very important.

SNOA is a corporation and owns the entry road property (from the end of the paved county road to the top of the first hill). SNOA members (and associate members) have easement rights along this road, so we owners and guests may drive freely here, limited to 15 mph.

As you continue past our corporate road, the remaining road to the east allows each of us, and our guests, access to our properties. We, as property owners, all hold easements to the remaining portions of this road. As good neighbors, we watch out for children and pets as we drive 15 mph across each other's easements. (See Appendix A for a map)

SNOA can best serve our community by understanding the needs of our members. This enables us to find solutions to the real concerns of the community. This pamphlet provides some basic information to lay a foundation for effective communication. These guidelines will evolve as the needs and experiences of the community change. Constructive suggestions are actively encouraged!

Our association strives to maintain the rural character of our roads. We pay annual dues to share in the costs of road maintenance. We meet annually and elect a Board of Directors. Our fellow owners, who volunteer and are elected to the board, manage the care of the road. Our Annual Meeting is generally a business meeting and potluck; and is a good time to meet new owners and to talk to the board members.

### ROAD MAINTENANCE

SNOA works to keep our shared rural gravel road useful for all property owners, their guests, and service vehicles. Through member dues, SNOA pays for typical operations that include adding gravel, road grading, cross-road culvert maintenance, road side drainage maintenance, and snow removal per policy.

Sections of the roads that receive more traffic get more maintenance. Side roads with minimal vehicular traffic are maintained less than once per year to provide basic access.

Road maintenance dues are set based upon an expectation of single-family homes and vacation properties. Property access in excess of this, including commercial operations, require additional road dues to be paid by the property owner to cover the extra expenses. Extraordinary road damage to any part of the road easement caused by a lot owner, their guests, or contractors is the responsibility of the lot owner and fees may be assessed to pay for repairs.

Prior to owner-initiated road maintenance or modifications on their property, we ask that the owner coordinates with the Board to ensure that the work will be consistent with SNOA plans for road maintenance and proper drainage.

## SENSITIVE AREAS

There are some sections of the roadways that are considered sensitive areas. These may be due to water quality, drainage, road safety, speed, dust generation, blind corners, existing landscaping, drop-offs, fencing, mailboxes, etc. To identify and protect sensitive areas within the easement, the property owner must inform the SNOA Board in writing about their concerns. See more in the Owner Responsibilities section elsewhere in this document.

## VEHICLE SPEED

Observe the posted speed on SNOA maintained roads, which is 15 mph; this is the neighborly thing to do. Most of the roadways are owned by individual property owners and cut through the middle of the properties. When you cross through each property to access your own, drive carefully as children or pets could be on the road at any time.

Blind corners require a slow approach and careful driving.

Potholes are “carefully maintained” to reduce vehicular speed. Potholes and dips do tend to slow vehicle speed, but as they get too big, these can cause damage. The Board will hear requests to include the keeping of potholes by property owners (i.e., not remove them completely during regular grading operations). We strive to minimize the number of depressions and their depth. Property owners must ensure their depressions do not exceed an agreed upon depth, or grading will be required. These and other speed reduction measures will be considered by the Board and should include appropriate warning signs as necessary.

## GATE AND MAILBOXES

There is a farm gate on the entrance road at the base of the hill. It is normally left open but could be locked under extraordinary circumstances. If this should happen, every SNOA member will be provided the lock combination.

Owners are responsible for their own mailboxes. SNOA provides minimal maintenance for the wooden mailbox rack near the entrance gate. Overhead lighting is provided by the Snohomish County PUD, and electricity is paid by SNOA through membership dues.

## SNOW AND ICE

Snow is not a common occurrence on SNOA roads, but some years it can be more frequent. Often, when there is snow, it is just a few inches. Every few years or so there can be one foot to several feet of snow. The SNOA policy is to call the snow plow when depth is about to reach 6 inches: the maximum depth recommended by the Darrington Fire Department. Road easement branches that are seldom used in the winter are not plowed.

Just as in the city, there may be snow piled along the road edge including driveways. Owners need to be prepared to shovel their own driveways. You may also call the snow plow company that SNOA uses to clear your drive.

SNOA does not sand or salt the roads when snowy or icy. Property owners, guests, and service vehicles are expected to provide their own vehicular traction devices: snow tires, 4-wheel-drive, and/or chains.

Contact an SNOA board member for the current information or find it in the Members Only section of the [www.snoa.info](http://www.snoa.info) web page.

## UNEXPECTED ROAD HAZARDS

### DOWNED TREES

It is not uncommon to see a tree or two fallen across the road after a severe windstorm. SNOA does not provide tree removal service. This is a rural, wooded area and road users are expected to cut and move the downed tree to provide vehicular access. Road users and lot owners will often help each other to clear the way.

### DOWNED POWER AND PHONE LINES

A fallen tree may also break a power and phone line cutting service to homes further down the road. Call the Snohomish County PUD (425-783-1001) if you observe downed lines. Use extreme caution around downed power lines as the power line may be deadly, even several feet away. Contact Frontier Telecom (1-800-921-8101) for downed phone lines

## RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### ASSOCIATION RESPONSIBILITIES

The SNOA Board maintains the road easements providing access to every property. Easements are typically 60 feet wide and the road winds through them. The gravel road is maintained to a width of approximately 15' to 20' wide within this easement, though gravel will slough off to the sides. A crown or slope to the road, plus ditching, is provided to improve water drainage.

Sometimes conditions require re-routing the road to a different portion of the legal easement. Road maintenance operations may come dangerously close to permanent structures or landscaping that were placed by the land owner very close to the road edge.

### OWNER RESPONSIBILITIES

Adequate room for road maintenance and snow plowing operations is needed. Road maintenance operations may come dangerously close to things placed near the road. The SNOA Board recommends that fences, structures and landscaping be at least 16 feet from the road centerline or 6 feet from the existing road edge, whichever is further.

Property owners should notify the Board in writing if these guidelines cause any concern. The Board will work with property owners to try to prevent damage or inconvenience. Pictures documenting the location of these items can be sent to the Board as a proactive measure. The Board maintains a list of such sensitive areas. See the Sensitive Areas portion of this document for further details.

Some road sections may be wider or narrower as appropriate for the geography and traffic. Where there are narrow sections there are appropriate safe passing areas nearby. As good neighbors we share the road.

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## SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES

Each year, the SNOA Board will share proposed maintenance and cost estimates with all members. Lot numbers will be highlighted explaining where repairs will be made.

If the SNOA Board or the lot owner foresees a potential of damage to occur, or if damage has already occurred, then the following must happen:

- 1) Initial Notice: Contact the other party in writing or email and confirm receipt.
- 2) Response: A Board representative, in cooperation with the property owner, will determine if the at-risk item is inside the margin along the road that is necessary for maintenance and snow plowing operations. Typically, the setback is at least 16' from the road center and 6' from the edge of the gravel as diagrammed below in Figure 1. The margin will vary by geography, pre-existing structures, and landscaping.
- 3) Action: This response (2) should be done within 3 weeks of the initial notice (1).
  - a) If the item is within this setback, the Board will attempt to protect the item, if possible, without compromising the road maintenance operations. Risk of damage is assumed by the property owner.
  - b) The Board will make every effort to protect the item assuming it is beyond the setback.
  - c) If a property owner objects to the outcome of the above process, an appeal may be made to the full Board.
  - d) If damage already occurred, every attempt to work out an amicable resolution will be made.

See Appendix B for an example of road grading operations and concerns for nearby objects.

## ANNUAL MEETING AND BOARD MEETINGS

The annual meeting of the members is announced by mail and email each summer. The meeting is held in the late summer, where Board members are elected. Membership votes on issues important to the association and gives guidance to the Board.

The Board of Directors meets at least twice each year. Nominations and elections to the Board are made at the Annual Meeting.

Meetings are guided by the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised.

## MEMBERSHIP DUES

Membership dues are determined by the Board each year. Funds are used to:

- Protect and maintain the roads.
- Purchase insurance policies for Officers & Directors and for general Liability.
- Pay taxes on SNOA owned properties (the entrance road) and for corporation filing fees
- Pay miscellaneous legal and administrative expenses as required

Extraordinary road damage caused by a property owner can result in extra assessments for individual property owners as necessary.

Extreme road damage (e.g., flooding and landslides) may require emergency assessments shared by all property owners.

## PUBLICATIONS

SNOA publishes an annual **newsletter** with current topics of interest, which is sent by U.S. postal mail. Appropriate articles may be submitted via the Board email address found at the [www.snoa.info](http://www.snoa.info) Members Only area. Members are encouraged to provide their email address to receive additional updates and notices items of interest, including road work.

The **membership directory** is usually sent with the newsletter and includes contact information for all members. It also has a map of the association roads and properties. The directory is also available in the Members Only area of [www.snoa.info](http://www.snoa.info).

The following documents guide SNOA policies and procedures:

1. Articles of Incorporation, filed with the State of Washington, a legal document.
2. Bylaws, filed with Snohomish County, a legal document
3. Owner Information Pamphlet (this document). It is a guidance document.

These documents are available as PDF files at the [www.snoa.info](http://www.snoa.info) web site.

The [www.snoa.info](http://www.snoa.info) page provides additional information for property owners. There is a SNOA Members-Only section with further useful information such as association maps and the member directory. Members may request access to this section through the provided link on the web page.

The SNOA Board maintains an email distribution list, and new members may sign up for this list by sending an email to: [secretary@snoa.info](mailto:secretary@snoa.info).

## CONTACT THE BOARD

The board may be reached by sending an email to: [secretary@snoa.info](mailto:secretary@snoa.info).

The SNOA Board is committed to addressing community concerns. Solutions are best attained through communications and supporting procedures described in this document and the publications listed above.

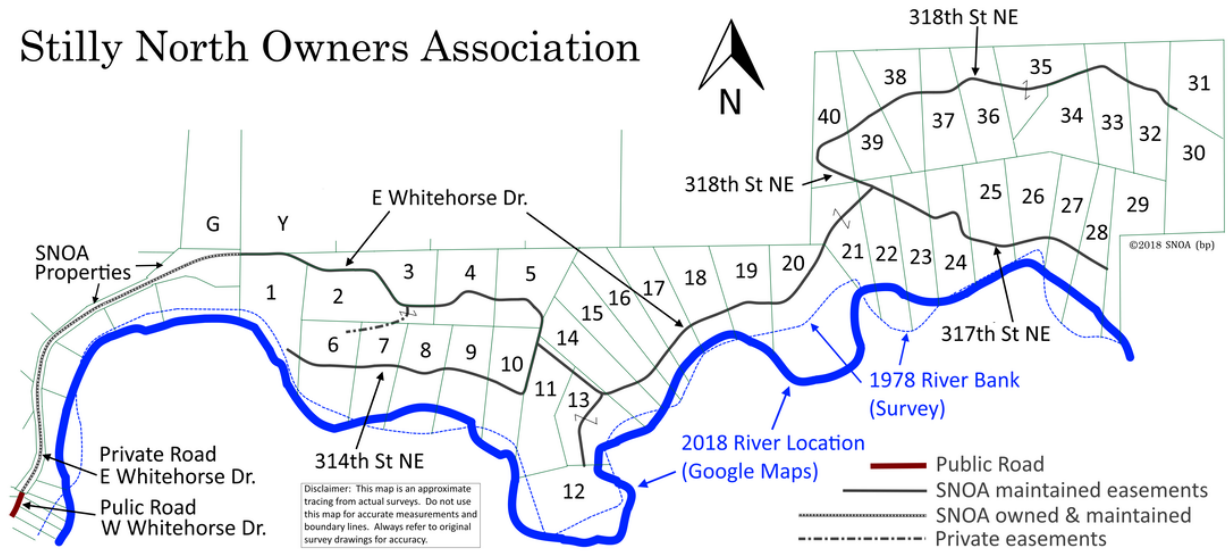
## REVISION HISTORY

Approval Process:

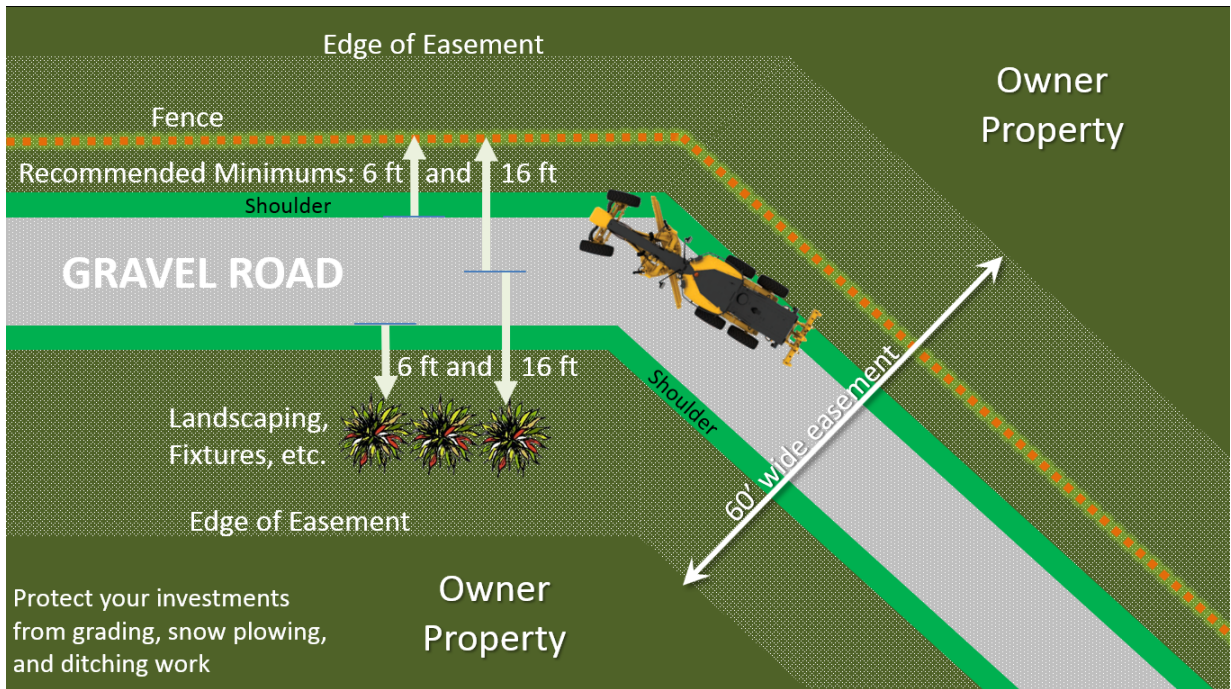
1. SNOA Rights and Responsibilities Committee
  2. SNOA Board
  3. SNOA General Membership
- Approved 3/24/2020

**APPENDIX A: SNOA MAP**

**Stilly North Owners Association**



**APPENDIX B: OBJECTS NEAR ROAD GRADING OPERATIONS**



An example of road grading operations and concerns for nearby objects.