Kimberly Owen

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Date

Ivy Spohnholz, State Director, TNC Alaska

The Nature Conservancy Alaska Program

715 L St., Suite 100 Anchorage, AK 99501

Dear Ivy:

I am writing to you, the Alaska State Director of TNC to voice my loud objection about the proposed transfer of the Gustavus TNC lands to the Hoonah Indian Association.

The Nagoonberry trail, the beach and forelands are woven into my everyday routine through walking, birding, and enjoying its beautiful quiet yet dynamic nature. School kids conduct science hikes learning about the Gustavus Forelands ecosystems and the flora and fauna. Each season brings its own gift to all of the residents of Gustavus. Spring is spruce tips, cottonwood buds and fiddleheads, summer bears berries galore, the fall harvest of natural herbs and winter when the snow comes it provides great skiing. Many a freezer has been filled with moose from this bountiful TNC land. I bet some folks do not even know it is the Nature conservancy land, but they know it is land they are free to enjoy-it is very much a part of our fabric of life in Gustavus.

Many of us raised the money 3.2 million from multiple sources, 120,000 from Gustavus residents to help purchase the land to protect its resources, stop any development and keep the access open to everyone. We helped the various organizations build the trail and currently locals keep the trails clear and accessible for everyone. Even my slow walker and wheelchair clients can access the land through the Nagoonberry- it was built well.

To lose this access would be crushing to the Gustavus residents and a disservice to all the donors who made this purchase happen. My personal preference would be for TNC to continue to own the Gustavus Forelands, continuing in their pledge to keep it protected. If this is not an option, then the residents of Gustavus have earned and deserve a voice at the table to help decide on the future management of these lands to ensure they remain in the same state in perpetuity as they are today- pristine and accessible to all for free.

Respectfully Summitted,