STOP and write a letter to alaska@tnc.org to save Nagoonberry Trail. It has to be posted today! Letters will be considered tomorrow, Monday, Jan. 8.

OUR letter, with help from Kimber:

Ivy Spohnholz, State Director, TNC Alaska

The Nature Conservancy Alaska Program

715 L St., Suite 100 Anchorage, AK 99501

Dear Ivy:

We are writing to you, the Alaska State Director of TNC, to voice our loud objection about the proposed transfer of the Gustavus TNC lands to the Hoonah Indian Association.

The Nagoonberry trail area, the beach and forelands have been extremely important to us throughout our adult lives of 46+ years living in Gustavus. Since the trail came to be, it has been the highlight of our cottage rental business, as well as our favorite hiking spot in Gustavus. We’re in favor of getting land into native ownership, but not if giving this piece to HIA keeps local Gustavus people and guests from using this important trail and land. Not if it’s going to be developed.

Its trail, berries, at least 40+ years of brown bear generations who are easy with the presence of humans, its access to our beach, its use by all school children and Gustavus guests, are extremely important to our community. Our children and grandchildren grew up here using these lands walking, biking, berry picking, and more.

Many local Gustavus folks 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 slow walker and wheelchair clients can access the land through the Nagoonberry - it was built well.

To lose this access would be harmful 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.

Sincerely,

Kate Boesser and Fritz Koschmann

Gustavus residents since 1977