

Shelley Owens

From: Whitney Rapp <whitneyrapp@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 5, 2024 1:13 PM
To: alaska@tnc.org
Cc: Mayor; Kathy Leary; Kimber Owen; Kathy Lochman
Subject: Gustavus Forelands Preserve

Dear Ms. Spohnholz and other staff at TNC Alaska,

As a Gustavus resident, I am strongly concerned to learn this week of dialogs to transfer the Gustavus Forelands Preserve to the Hoonah Indian Association. Any dialog on change should be transparently talking with the Gustavus community that was instrumental in bringing these lands to the protected status they now hold for everyone's enjoyment and conservation.

I grew up near the [The Nature Conservancy's Long Island Chapter](#) and spent many childhood summer's at camps on that parcel. I remember buying my first Earth Day t-shirt in elementary school at their shop. The Nature Conservancy is a trusted leader in land conservation. We are privileged in Gustavus to have TNC as a partner.

There are two parallel proposals that are tugging on the heart strings of Gustavus now. We have the [Xunaa Borough Petition](#) and now the [Gustavus Forelands Preserve](#) where lands and waters that we value are being requested by our neighbors. I would say most of us want to be good neighbors, but good neighbors require open and honest communication. Surprises undermine this relationship.

Please learn more about the history of Gustavus' involvement with the acquisition of the Gustavus Forelands to better understand our deep connection to these lands. The relationship since the deed's were transferred in 2004 have proven beneficial to the community. If land transfers are being considered, please ensure that Gustavus has a seat at the table to learn how the future might play out for these lands.

Sincerely,

Whitney Rapp
Gustavus, AK