

Staff  
Local Boundary Commission  
State of Alaska

Norm Carson  
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Dear Commission Members:

I composed a paper earlier identifying my objections to the proposed borough based upon the exhibits supporting the petition. I reviewed the petition itself and it is necessary add more argument against this proposal.

Page 3 Section 5. General Description of the area.

“The proposed Xunaa Borough includes the area currently comprising the City of Hoonah, and neighboring communities of Game Creek, Elfin Cove, Glacier Bay, and Funter Bay—“. It is my belief that Game Creek is a Christian settlement, not organized as a municipality. While not connected by the Hoonah road, off the public road, one can take a private road and walk to Game Creek. Glacier Bay is a Federal site staffed by employees that may transfer in or out. Gustavus is their hub for a store, airport, ferry service, and school as the park is connected to Gustavus by a road. Funter Bay is best described as a collection of recreational homes that are used seasonally. Elfin Cove is a commercial fishing community and also a sport fishing lodge center. Elfin does not have a school or even a dozen year round residents; at times in the winter there are only 4 or 5 people there. Elfin Cove is not an organized municipality. This petition presents a false picture of several communities that would benefit from a government structure; Glacier Bay National Park has a structure; it is called the Federal Government. The rest of the “communities” are very seasonal in nature, none an organized municipality, and none of them have a school that needs funding. The outlying pockets of residents are best left in the unorganized borough.



Page 3 Section 6. Reasons for the Petition.

- “The proposed borough's boundaries likewise encompass most of the Huna Tlingit's core historic and current subsistence hunting and fishing grounds. Id. The ability of the Huna Tlingit to influence future decisions regarding these lands is of critical importance to the Tribe;”

This assertion is utterly false. I know that Hoonah residents do not hunt in Lisianski Strait or Stag Bay. In over 50 years of hunting the Lisianski waters and around Yakobi Island I have never seen a Hoonah boat with hunters in the area. I have participated in many ADF&G Advisory Board meetings and have never heard a Hoonah voice concerning the Lisianski or Yakobi Island area. The same goes for Federal Subsistence Board meetings; Hoonah residents have not testified about Lisianski or Yakobi Island issues. During a very limited seine opening for pink salmon there may be a boat from Hoonah that fishes in Lisianski Inlet, Stag Bay, or Lisianski Strait. By boat, Lisianski and Yakobi Island are minimally 50 miles distant from Hoonah.

- “The boundaries have been drawn to enclose a geographically distinct and interrelated region dependent on fishing and tourism from the abundant waters within and surrounding the borough, and in which all of the residents of the borough have a common interest.”

I would not say we are interrelated just because we all have commercial fishermen and tourism businesses. This might apply to Elfin Cove and Pelican as we are only about 20 water miles apart, our fishing gear is similar as is our tourism. Hoonah on the other hand is very much an industrial type tourism center, (zip line, whale watching boats, shoreline tours, road tours, etc).

- “The Xunaa Borough has been purposefully structured to honor the wish of the proposed borough's remote residents to live their lives independently. Funter Bay and Elfin Cove are remote, without road access or ferry service (ferry service is limited to the City of Hoonah)”

Well, there is another community with ferry service; Pelican. Residents of Elfin Cove often take a private boat to Pelican in order to meet the ferry from Juneau.

- “Borough incorporation will enfranchise residents of the region, enabling them to vote on issues affecting not only their immediate environs, but also borough wide issues. Currently, residents outside the city of Hoonah have no say in areawide decisions;”



Simply put, there is only one organized community within the proposed borough, and the number of voters in Hoonah will dominate any issue.

- “Hoonah is the hub of the region proposed for incorporation, and even the proposed borough's more remote residents make significant use of Hoonah's infrastructure;”

This is false. The present hub for the region is Juneau. Juneau is where ferry service and scheduled air service to the affected communities begins and ends. There is no scheduled transportation service between Hoonah and Elfin Cove, Glacier Bay, or Funter Bay. Costco is in Juneau!

- “Hoonah is a prosperous community with more than adequate resources to support the new borough. Moreover, the waters surrounding the proposed borough represent untapped wealth that, through fair and uniform taxation, can better the lives of everyone within the borough;”

Now, the City of Hoonah attached a paper “Titled Borough Formation, Frequently Asked Questions”. The first question is why? Answer: “The City of Hoonah maintains the position that proactive formation of a Borough with proper alignments in the community of Hoonah’s best interest now and into the future, particularly for sustainability of the Hoonah School District.” “The City government is limited to its corporate boundaries to generate revenue and both additional sales tax and property tax are not viewed as a favorable means to raise more money for the school at this time.”

Based upon these last two paragraphs one is left with the impression the borough formation is very much needed for the Hoonah School District; the resources within the boundaries of the borough are necessary for the school district. But, in a report by Meilani Schijvens, Rain Coast Data, Exhibit BB, the following economic data is shared: “In 2023, arriving passengers in Hoonah are expected to spend \$52 million in the community. Hoonah’s city sales tax is 6.5% and the city receives a portion of the State-collected Commercial Passenger Vessel Excise Tax, while Hoonah Totem collects additional revenue. In 2023, the last ship will depart Hoonah on October 26. By 2024, the first ship will arrive April 1, meaning the tourism season has been extended to a full seven months allowing the sector to attract year-round businesses and residents.” In 2024 there are 327 cruise ships scheduled to stop at Hoonah. So, why is it necessary to create a borough that will tax the harvest of natural resources



adjacent to the outlying communities? These outlying communities are already utilizing revenue generated by their adjacent natural resources; this borough will have a negative effect on these communities.

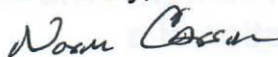
In a previous letter I have addressed these issues:

- Regional hub; not Hoonah.
- Boundaries: questionable claim of Lisianski waters, Yakobi Island, and outside waters.

Please consider all these issues and disavow the formation of the Xunaa Borough in its present form. If the borough is formed, the south western border should not go beyond a line from approximately Mud Bay on Chichagof Island to Pt. Carolus. This line would connect to the apex of the converging border lines of the Sitka Borough near the head of Lisianski Inlet.

Thank you for your time in attending to this very important issue.

Sincerely,



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