

**From:** [SteveJoan Gilbertson](#)  
**To:** [Commission, Boundary \(CED sponsored\)](#)  
**Subject:** Hoonah Annexation Proposal  
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February 28, 2024

Local Boundary Commission

550 West Seventh Avenue, Suite 1640

Anchorage, AK 99501

Re: City of Hoonah petition to form the Xunaa Borough

This is in response to the petition by The City of Hoonah for a proposed Xunaa Borough. The area we are most interested in is northern Admiralty Island.

We are part of a group of cabin owners in the Wheeler Creek area near Pt. Marsden on the west side of Admiralty Island, five miles south of the Greens Creek mine. The property is part of a homestead patented in 1917 by Frank and Helen Wheeler. There are 9 private properties in our group and 5 cabins are occupied seasonally and sometimes year-round.

The Wheeler Creek homestead and subsequent homesites have existed for over 100 years with no services, no taxes and no local government. We are similar to the private properties in Funter Bay located 10 miles to the north in that we commute by boat or float plane.

The Wheeler Creek homesite owners would prefer to remain an unorganized area. However, in 2018 the City and Borough of Juneau held public meetings about annexing the northern part of Admiralty Island. They proposed to annex

the Wheeler Creek area but voted to exclude Funter Bay from the Borough because a large number of landowners there objected to paying property taxes to Juneau with no services. Subsequently, on April 5, 2024, the City and Borough of Juneau adopted Resolution No. 3055 that objected to the Xunaa proposal and stated the position of including the entire Manfield Peninsula in the Juneau Borough. Wheeler Creek homesite owners would prefer not to be part of Juneau because of its property tax policy. The Xunaa Borough proposed charter specifically states that there will be no property tax. If we were required to be in a Borough, our preference would be Xunaa.

In passing Resolution 3055, the City and Borough of Juneau undoubtedly considered the substantial number of private properties on the east side of Admiralty (Horse and Colt Islands) and Funter Bay on the west that would represent a significant tax base for the City. In many respects, it makes sense that the western half of northern Admiralty Island should be part of a Xunaa Borough and the eastern half of the Peninsula would be part of the Juneau Borough.

In summary, we would prefer to remain outside any proposed borough. However, we prefer inclusion in the Xunaa Borough over the City and Borough of Juneau because of the difference in taxing policies.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Steve and Joan Gilbertson, Wheeler Creek property owners

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