



August 29, 2016

Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority  
Trust Land Office  
Attn: John Morrison, Executive Director  
3745 Community Park Loop, Suite 200  
Anchorage, AK 99508

US Forest Service  
Tongass National Forest  
Attn: M. Earl Stewart, Forest Supervisor  
648 Mission Street  
Ketchikan, AK 99901

Dear Mr. Morrison and Mr. Stewart,

The Petersburg Borough Assembly is extremely concerned with the August 24, 2016 decision of the Alaska Mental Health Authority to approve the sale of timber if Congress does not pass the Alaska Mental Health Trust Land Exchange Act of 2016 by January 15, 2017. The sale parcels, located near Ketchikan and Petersburg, are part of a proposed land exchange between the Trust Land Office and the US Forest Service that has been in negotiations since 2006.

We are in favor of the Alaska Mental Health Trust Land Exchange Act of 2016 and strongly encourage the Trust Land Office to continue to work with the US Forest Service to realize the exchange. While we support the Southeast Alaska timber industry, we strongly feel that logging should not take place on the slopes of Mitkof Highway in Petersburg under any circumstances, as doing so could pose an imminent threat of landslides, blowdowns and loss of water quality or worse to the homeowners below.

Alaska Mental Health Trust has expressed concerns for the cost of required environmental review needed to complete the land transfer; however, previous credible analyses of the likely landslide risk as a result from logging these acres clearly puts the burden of liability on the State of Alaska should impact of life or property occur. As we are sure you would agree, the safety of all Alaskans should be the driving force in matters such as these.

The Petersburg Assembly respectfully implores you, Mr. Morrison and Mr. Stewart, to find a way to complete the land exchange within a reasonable timeframe. Doing so will be the best course of action for **all** Alaskans.

Sincerely,

Mark Jensen  
Mayor

Cc: Governor Bill Walker  
Senator Lisa Murkowski