



November 6, 2023

Brittany Williams, Trust Resource Manager
Alaska Department of Natural Resources
Mental Health Land Trust
2600 Cordova Street, Suite 100
Anchorage, AK 99503

Via email to: Brittany.williams@alaska.gov

Dear Ms. Williams,

The Petersburg Assembly would like to discuss options for establishing a 50-foot public access easement to Lot 37, TLO parcel number CRM-2387, which is included in the 2023 Land Sale Auction: Petersburg (MHT 9101276), and to Lots 38 (CRM-2388), and 39 (CRM-2389).

Our concern is that at mean high water, recreation and subsistence users are cut off from accessing traditional fishing areas, or if they were fishing, will not be able to safely travel back to the US Forest Service trailhead. These lots are located along Blind Slough, which is the salmon release and return for Crystal Lake Hatchery and an important driver for our local economy as the hatchery provides harvest opportunity for subsistence, sport, charter, and commercial fisheries. As a result, Blind Slough is heavily used by residents and visitors alike and the area is valued aesthetically, historically, and economically.

It is our understanding that the TLO is asserting that AS 38.05.127, Access to navigable or public water and requiring "to and along" easements is not applicable here because the subject property is "original Trust land" and that applying an easement diminishes the sale value of trust lands and therefore is inconsistent with Trust management principles.

As this area is important to area residents, the borough would like to purchase the public easement across these lots to ensure access along the Blind Slough shoreline. Such an arrangement would benefit area residents and likely generate additional revenue to the Trust.

We appreciate your consideration of our request, and our borough manager will follow up in the coming week to discuss this possibility with you.

Respectfully,

Mark Jensen
Borough Mayor
Petersburg Borough

cc: Katie Vachris: katie.vachris@alaska.gov