

**Alaska Sustainable Salmon Fund
Statement of Work**

I. Project Title: Strategic Conservation of Priority Salmon Habitat - Phase 6

II. Project Number: 52010

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IV. **Project Period:** 3/1/19 – 11/30/21

V. **AKSSF Objective:** 1A-7 **PCSRF Objective:** HP&R

VI. **Project Description**

1. Synopsis

Great Land Trust (GLT) will work with landowners to target and conserve important salmon habitat through conservation easements and fee-title acquisitions, permanently protecting 500 acres or more of land and the waters bodies they encompass.

2. Introduction

GLT is a private, nonpartisan non-profit organization formed in 1995 with a mission to conserve and steward lands and waters essential to the quality of life and economic health of Alaskans. GLT's service area is Southcentral Alaska and includes the Municipality of Anchorage, the Matanuska-Susitna (Mat-Su) Borough, the Kenai Peninsula, and the culturally and geographically diverse communities of western Cook Inlet, the Copper River Basin (including Cordova), Prince William Sound, and Kodiak and Afognak islands. Over the past 23 years, GLT has completed 51 conservation projects totaling over 51,500 acres of valuable habitat including over 50 miles of salmon corridor. GLT has conserved salmon habitat in the most rapidly developing and developed areas of the state such as Campbell Creek in Anchorage and Wasilla Creek in the Mat-Su Borough. Areas used for subsistence have been conserved in urban and remote areas of the state including watershed scale projects in the Kodiak archipelago and the educational subsistence fishery of the Native Village of Eklutna. In 2012, GLT achieved accreditation with the Land Trust Alliance Accreditation Commission.

Background: This project builds upon five prior AKSSF grants awarded to GLT to conserve important salmon habitat (AKSSF projects 44712, 44806, 44159, 44202, and 51005, *Strategic Conservation of Important Salmon Habitat in Southcentral Alaska – Phases 1-5*). With prior AKSSF grants and Geographic Information System (GIS) habitat prioritization data, GLT has been able to identify and conserve over 7,544 acres and 19 miles of important salmon habitat. AKSSF previously funded GLT to prioritize parcels and conduct outreach to landowners, resulting in the potential projects to be conserved in this grant. Following are summaries of the past projects completed with AKSSF support:

- The 170-acre Montgomery conservation easement feeds Bartko Slough, a clearwater side channel of the Matanuska River that provides critical salmon spawning and rearing habitat for chum, sockeye, and coho salmon.

- The 30-acre O'Brien Creek Estuary conservation easement contains the mouth of O'Brien Creek in Upper Knik Arm and is important for coho salmon and Cook Inlet beluga whales
- The 976-acre Turner acquisition, including portions of the Wasilla and Spring Creek wetland complex and almost three miles of Wasilla Creek, is important for all five species of salmon and sits within the Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge; GLT also built an educational boardwalk on the conserved property used by Machetan Elementary School students to view salmon in Wasilla Creek (funded separately).
- The 800-acre Mud Lake conservation easement in the Knik River Public Use Area contains McRoberts Creek and the shoreline of Mud Lake, an important spawning area for sockeye salmon and wintering habitat for coho, chum, and sockeye; this parcel continues to be managed by Eklutna, Inc., for its conservation and subsistence values.
- The 160-acre Eagle River Greenbelt conservation easement in Eagle River protects tributaries of Eagle River that support all five species of Pacific salmon.
- The 140-acre Bear Walk conservation easement on Afognak Island protects .5 miles of coastline and kelp beds important for juvenile salmon and a number of unnamed wetland streams important to coho salmon.
- The 295-acre Settlers Bay Coastal Park conservation easement protects important wetlands and uplands along a portion of upper Cook Inlet that is home to all five species of Pacific salmon.
- The 60-acre Campbell Creek Estuary Natural Area conservation easement in Anchorage protects an old homestead which includes the main channel and estuary of Campbell Creek, an anadromous creek and popular greenbelt currently managed by the Municipality of Anchorage as a Natural Area Park.
- The 2,880-acre Portage Lake project conserves a long sought after and popular lake and river system on Afognak Island supporting pink, coho, and sockeye salmon and steelhead; the property has a long history of subsistence use.

In 2018, GLT is prepared to close on five additional conservation projects utilizing AKSSF grants in the communities of Cordova, Copper Center/Chitina, Wasilla, and Kodiak, totaling over 3,000 acres of land and almost seven miles of riparian corridor.

Purpose: This project will build on past successes and agency and community partnerships to directly conserve important salmon habitat via acquisition and/or conservation easements. All projects completed with this funding will be supported by local, state, and federal habitat regional conservation plans.

Scope: Since 1999, GLT has been using GIS resources to identify and conserve lands with high conservation value and has completed prioritizations of most of the lands in its service area (Figure 1). All of these prioritizations weighted anadromous waters and wetlands at a higher level. For this project, GLT will use the results from these prioritizations to target conservation projects throughout its service area to

permanently protect approximately 500 acres of priority habitat supporting spawning, overwintering, or rearing habitat for Chinook, coho, sockeye, chum, and pink salmon and/or steelhead trout populations.

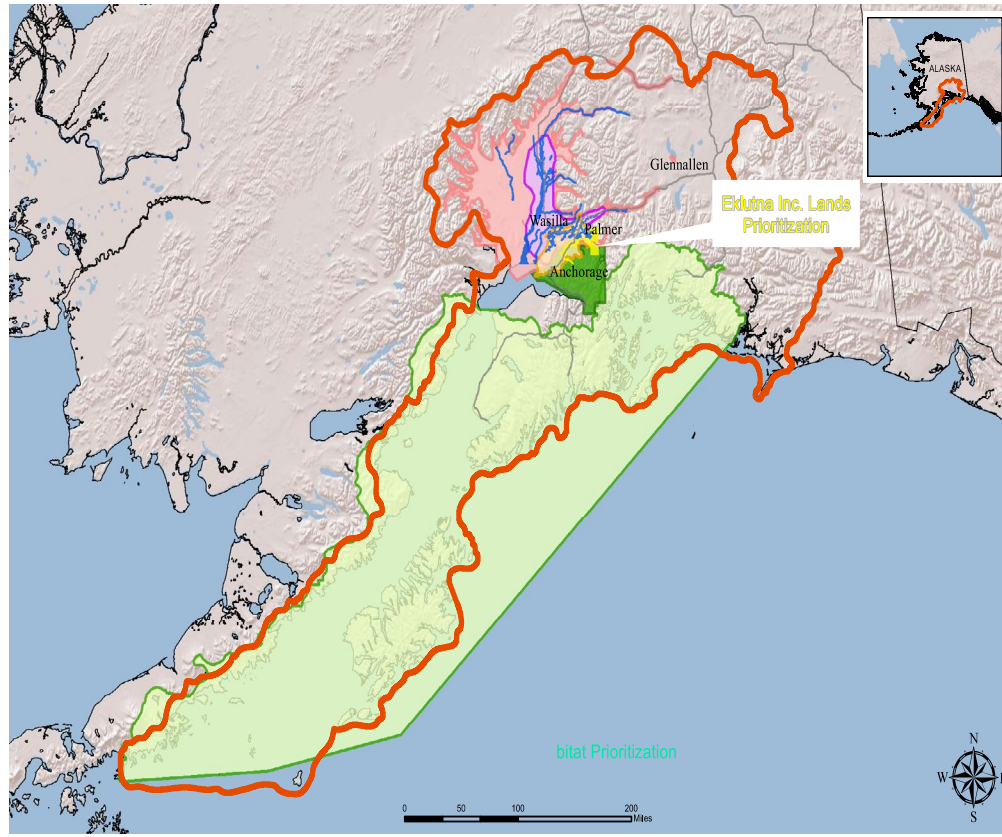


Figure 1: GLT's service area and habitat prioritizations

Activities: GLT will work with community and agency partners and private landowners to complete land conservation projects that directly protect important salmon habitat. This project will specifically target land conservation projects that are in a designated Subsistence Harvest Area identified by Alaska Department of Fish & Game (ADF&G) and those that are threatened by incompatible development.

GLT's protection methods include conservation easements and fee-simple acquisitions. Conservation easements will be granted via donation or by purchase. A conservation easement is a voluntary legal agreement between a landowner and a land trust that limits development or use of a property for conservation purposes, such as protecting wildlife habitat, open space, productive farmlands, or important salmon habitat. All of GLT's conservation easements are perpetual.

Once a conservation easement is complete, GLT will monitor and enforce the easement annually in perpetuity to ensure that the conservation values have not been impacted or degraded by human alteration. If a violation occurs and the conservation values have been negatively impacted, GLT will work with the landowners to

mitigate the impact or pursue litigation to amend the violation and restore the conservation values.

Acquisition projects will be purchased from or donated by willing landowners, transferred into public ownership with a municipal, state, or federal entity or non-profit organization, and managed as part of a new or existing refuge or protected area. In some cases, GLT will retain a conservation easement on lands that are granted to a third party.

3. Locations

This project will conserve high ranking priority lands within GLT’s service area and may include the parcels in the table below:

Location	Lat	Long
Rabbit Slough Palmer Hay Flats, Upper Knik Arm	61.527899	-149.271308
Eklutna River Greenbelt Eklutna River, Upper Knik Arm	61.449740	-149.340180
Historic Afognak Village Afognak Island, Kodiak Archipelago	58.018263	-152.763388
Sharatin Bay/Elbow Creek and Estuary Kodiak Island, Kodiak Archipelago	57.811603	-152.738283
American River and Estuary Kodiak Island, Kodiak Archipelago	57.637693	-152.524520

4. Related Projects

44513, 44712, 44806, 44159, 44202, 51005

VII. Objectives

Protect 500 acres or more of priority salmon habitat through conservation easements and/or fee simple acquisitions

VIII. Methods

Identifying lands for conservation: To ensure that the proposed work focuses on the highest conservation value projects and the lands most important to sustain salmon populations, GLT will use GIS resources, ecological data, land use information, expert opinion, and partner priorities to rank lands for conservation. GLT is constantly updating its GIS database as newer data layers become available. GLT also enlists the support of local, regional, and agency experts to verify its GIS findings. For each of the prioritizations completed, representatives from among the following organizations, as appropriate, are invited to review and comment on the findings before the report is finalized: Kenai Peninsula Salmon Habitat Partnership, the Mat-Su Basin Salmon Habitat Partnership, the Mat-Su Borough, the Municipality of Anchorage, Kodiak Island Borough, Audubon Alaska, the Environmental Protection Agency, Kenai Watershed Forum, Kachemak Heritage Land Trust, Bristol Bay Heritage Land Trust, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, ADF&G (Palmer and Anchorage offices), Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Natural Resource Conservation Service, National Oceanic and

Atmospheric Administration, the University of Alaska, the U.S. Geologic Survey, Alaska Native corporations, local fishing guides, tribal governments, The Conservation Fund, and The Nature Conservancy.

Using these tools ensures that GLT is working strategically to conserve the areas that contain the most critical habitats for fish and wildlife and lands most valued by the community. These prioritizations have been used to identify potential parcels to conserve with this project, including the five listed above. If any of these parcels become inviable, GLT will review its prioritization results, select other equivalently high-scoring projects, and evaluate the conservation opportunities with agency partners to ensure that limited salmon habitat conservation funds are most effectively utilized.

Relationship Building with Private Landowners and Partners: Once a project is identified, GLT will reach out to the landowner to explore their interest in conservation options for their lands. This may include travel to communities throughout GLT's service area. Project selection will be determined by criteria including the following: 1) habitat value to salmon, 2) an interested and willing landowner, 3) parcel threat, 4) parcel value to subsistence uses, 5) feasibility of project cost with resources available from AKSSF, non-federal matching fund sources, and other leveraged funding sources. For acquisition projects, it will be necessary to spend significant time in the community meeting with local, state, federal, municipal, or tribal governments to cultivate relationships and identify the right future owner/land manager for the project. Once a landowner has agreed to a conservation action, GLT will complete the initial site assessments of the property to further document the conservation value of the salmon habitat. Once the site assessment is done, each project will be presented to the GLT Board of Directors for approval to move forward.

Conservation Easement Drafting and Due Diligence: After the GLT Board approves a project, GLT staff will begin working on due diligence. Due diligence activities include, at minimum, a title review, environmental hazard report, appraisal, and a property boundary survey. Once the due diligence activities are completed, GLT staff begin working with the landowners to draft an engagement letter or purchase and sale agreement as well as the conservation easement, as appropriate. This often involves legal review by independent counsel and extensive meetings over many months with the landowners.

Once the due diligence is completed and the easement is drafted, GLT staff visit the property to complete the Baseline Documentation Report (BDR). GLT completes BDRs for each conservation easement GLT holds. This report is necessary because it describes in narrative and photos the condition of the property at the time the conservation easement is conveyed. The report documents the historical and current uses of the property and summarizes each of the conservation values being protected with the easement. The report serves as a legal document that is a snapshot of the property at the time the easement is conveyed and will signal to GLT at annual monitoring site visits if there has been a violation to the terms of the easement.

Acquisitions Drafting: If a project is an acquisition, many of the due diligence steps are similar. However, GLT will only acquire a parcel if there is a willing municipal, state, or federal partner that has the resources to assume ownership and to manage the land for conservation purposes. As mentioned above, determining the right partners and getting the appropriate approvals often takes significant time, attendance at official meetings, legal review from governmental council, and formal resolutions by the entity. In some instances, GLT will retain a conservation easement on a fee simple property.

IX. Benefits

This project will permanently protect via conservation easement and/or fee simple acquisition 500 acres or more of priority salmon habitat supporting spawning, overwintering, and/or rearing Chinook, coho, sockeye, chum, and pink salmon and/or steelhead trout populations.

X. Products, Milestones, and Timelines

April 2019 – December 2019:

- Finalize selection of salmon habitat conservation projects to be pursued
- Contact landowners to determine interest and type of project (conservation easement or acquisition)
- Complete initial site and habitat assessment to determine conservation value and type of project
- Have owners sign willingness statements/engagement letters to move forward with a project
- Complete budgets for each project
- Obtain GLT Board approval to move forward

January 2020 – December 2020:

- Complete title reports
- Complete environmental hazard (‘Phase 1’) reports
- Draft conservation easements or purchase and sale agreements
- Complete appraisals and identify the value for each project
- Work with community, agency, and/or municipal partners to secure acceptance of acquired lands and a management agreement for habitat
- Complete baseline documentation reports
- Complete conservation easements or acquisition negotiations

January 2021 – October 2021:

- Close on conservation easements or acquire fee simple title
- Transfer property to community, agency, and/or municipal partners, if appropriate
- Publish stories about completed projects in GLT’s eNews highlighting the parcels conserved through this project

XI. Project Budget

GLT Budget	Total
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100 Personnel	\$111,900
200 Travel	\$12,163
300 Contractual	\$583,500
400 Supplies	\$0
500 Equipment	\$0
Subtotal	\$707,563
Expenses subject to indirect	\$207,563
600 Indirect	\$20,756
Total	\$728,319

GLT Budget Narrative:

Line 100: Personnel (\$111,900)

The GLT Executive Director, Conservation Director, Community Conservation Manager, Legal Affairs and Land Transactions Director, Lands Manager, Stewardship Coordinator, and Communications and Administration Manager will be responsible for completing the objectives and deliverables of this project. Together, they will supervise the contractors for the appraisal, legal review, land survey, and title reports; track matching funds; engage landowners and work with them to draft the conservation easements; coordinate with state, municipal, or tribal entities on acquisition projects; complete the baseline report for each project; and perform all the necessary reporting requirements. Fringe costs include paid time off, health insurance, taxes, and retirement benefits and are included in the listed hourly rate.

- Ellen Kazary, Executive Director, is responsible for ensuring compliance and reporting and will oversee and manage the budget and staff in relation to the project: 400 hours @ \$70/hour = \$28,000.
- Dave Mitchell, Conservation Director, will contact potential landowners and explain the conservation options available, perform all conservation easement and acquisition negotiations, and approve due diligence documentation: 400 hours @ \$60/hour = \$24,000.
- The Community Conservation Manager (TBD) will coordinate with local agency and governmental partners, raise additional funds necessary to complete projects, and provide general project support: 400 hours at \$45/hour = \$18,000.
- Austin Quinn-Davidson, Legal Affairs and Land Transactions Director, will supervise all contractors for due diligence and draft the conservation easements and purchase and sale agreements: 400 hours @ \$52/hour = \$20,800.
- Amanda Peacock Hults, Lands Manager, will be responsible for project-related GIS mapping and will perform the initial fieldwork and baseline documentation reporting necessary for each project: 300 hours @ \$45/hour = \$13,500.

- Matt McMillan, Stewardship Coordinator, will support the Lands Manager in completing the initial GIS mapping, field/site assessment, documenting conservation values, and completing the baseline documentation reports: 100 hours @ \$38/hour = \$3,800
- Libby Kugel, Communications and Administration Manager, will be responsible for office and grant administration activities directly related to this project including entering expenditures in Quick Books, filing narrative and financial reports, coordinating travel and meetings, and ordering supplies: 100 hours @ \$38/hour = \$3,800.

Line 200: Travel (\$12,163)

- Staff will be driving throughout the region (including the Mat-Su Borough, Glennallen/Copper Valley, and Eagle River) to facilitate projects: 5,000 miles @ .545/mile = \$2,725.
- Airfare Anchorage to Kodiak: 6 tickets @ \$375/ticket = \$2,250
- Airfare Kodiak to Afognak: 3 trips @ \$500/trip = \$1,500
- Lodging in Kodiak: 6 nights @ \$194/night x 2 people = \$2,328
- Meals per diem in Kodiak: 12 days @ \$90/day x 2 people = \$2,160
- Car rental: 12 days @ \$100/day = \$1,200

Line 300: Contractual (\$583,500)

- Title insurance reports and closing costs: 5 reports @ \$1,500/report = \$7,500
- Environmental Hazard Assessment Phase 1 Reports: 5 reports @ \$3,000/report = \$15,000
- USPAP appraisals: 5 appraisals @ \$7,000/appraisal = \$35,000
- Land surveys: 2 surveys @ \$8,000/survey = \$16,000
- Attorney consultations to review the conservation easement drafts: 5 legal consultations @ \$2,000/consultation = \$10,000
- Acquisition costs (not to exceed appraised value) for conservation easements or fee-simple acquisition: 500 acres @ \$1,000/acre = \$500,000

Line 600: Indirect (\$20,756)

GLT will use the de minimis indirect rate of 10% (as described in 2 CFR 200) which excludes, among other items, subaward amounts over \$25,000, capital expenditures, and equipment.

XII. Match Budget

GLT Match Budget	Total
100 Personnel	\$0
200 Travel	\$0
300 Contractual	\$254,912
400 Supplies	\$0
500 Equipment	\$0
Total	\$254,912

GLT Match Budget Narrative:

Line 300: Contractual (\$254,912)

GLT will provide a combination of in-kind and cash match. The in-kind value of donated conservation easements and/or a bargain sales for acquisitions (when a landowner sells property for less than the fair market value) will be determined and documented by a professional appraisal.