

Stariski Meadows Property Plan Evolves

Kachemak Heritage Land Trust has received a matching grant from the Pacific Coast Joint Venture to assist with management of our 258-acre Stariski Meadows property and help us move closer to completion of national land trust accreditation requirements.

The Stariski Meadows property is habitat for waterfowl, cranes, and moose and contains significant wetlands surrounding over 8,000 feet of anadromous Stariski Creek. Three conservation easements held by KHLT cover another nearby 68 acres.

The grant from Pacific Coast Joint Venture will help us to complete a new management plan for the Stariski Meadows property and create signage indicating KHLT's involvement with the land so that neighbors and others recognize its conservation value and status.

A portion of the required matching funds for this grant have been received from the Mountaineers Foundation, and we are seeking the remaining funds to complete this important project. ✧

The Pacific Coast Joint Venture

By Lynn Fuller
Alaska Coordinator, Pacific Coast Joint Venture

The Pacific Coast Joint Venture (PCJV) is one of 18 habitat joint ventures across the U.S. and Canada. Habitat Joint Ventures are public/private partnerships that work collaboratively to protect, restore and enhance habitats for birds and other wildlife. Nationwide, the habitat joint ventures have been bringing partners and resources together for twenty years to accomplish on-the-ground conservation projects. The PCJV territory includes the coastal regions of northern California, Oregon, Washington and British Columbia, and all of Hawaii and Alaska. Joint Ventures are closely aligned with the North American Wetland Conservation Act (NAWCA) grants program. NAWCA provides matching grants to regional partnerships to carry out wetlands conservation projects.

The PCJV has had a long association with Kachemak Heritage Land Trust. KHLT and other partners on the Kenai Peninsula have used NAWCA grants to secure more than 1,500 acres of wetlands along the Anchor River floodplain, Beluga Wetlands and other areas of high conservation value. The PCJV has also recognized that successful conservation projects require both people and organizational development, so they have supported capacity building at critical junctures. The PCJV recently funded a project through its small grants program that allowed all of Alaska's land trusts to move a step closer to accreditation.

Another priority for the PCJV is to encourage and support conservation and biological planning. The Alaska PCJV was an

early supporter of KHLT's "Focused Conservation" parcel ranking project, which served as a model for other communities grappling with where to conserve land. PCJV more recently provided funds to allow KHLT staff to develop a management plan for the Stariski Meadows property.



PCJV Alaska's Strategic Plan highlights Kachemak Bay as one of the world's most productive marine environments, and highlights the ecological importance of the wetlands complexes that drain into the Bay. The use of Kachemak Bay's tidal mudflats by up to 200,000 shorebirds during spring migration led to its designation as a Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN) site of international importance, and there are also several Audubon Important Bird Areas on the lower Kenai Peninsula.

The PCJV also recognizes that habitat loss, land conversion to industrial or urban uses, spills and other threats have the potential to affect the intertidal and wetlands that make these habitats of such high value. The PCJV hopes to continue working with KHLT and its partners on additional projects that ensure the long-term ecological health of habitats on the Kenai Peninsula. ✧