



New KHLT conservation acquisitions – photos © KHLT

KACHEMAK HERITAGE LAND TRUST PROTECTS Additional Anchor River Salmon Habitat

Kachemak Heritage Land Trust recently purchased two properties totaling 15.35 acres on the South Fork of the Anchor River for permanent conservation to protect important salmon habitat.

The newly-acquired properties front the Anchor River and contain side channels and wetlands important to juvenile salmon. They are next to other preserved riverfront properties, including KHLT’s 11.76-acre Martin property, near KHLT’s 64-acre Pate property, the 12-acre Clark property owned for conservation by Kachemak Moose Habitat Inc. (a purchase facilitated by KHLT), and a 27-acre parcel owned by Alaska Department of Natural Resources designated for moose habitat and public access.

These properties were identified as significant for conservation through detailed resource mapping work and by working closely with local salmon scientists. KHLT overlaid previously mapped priority areas on the Anchor River with new thermal imagery from Cook Inletkeeper to help identify cool water habitat important to salmon. Landowners were contacted regarding their potential willingness to sell, donate, or provide a conservation easement on their land to KHLT. Information outlined voluntary landowner options for permanent land preservation and research being conducted on the river. Building conservation corridors like this benefits salmon, people, and our economy by helping to preserve important habitat for juvenile and adult salmon.

“There are properties on the Anchor River that are especially important to conserve for salmon habitat,” says Marie McCarty, Executive Director of KHLT.

These two parcels are spectacular, with both river frontage and backwater channels for young salmon. In our ownership, these properties will continue to be places for young salmon to grow and for adult salmon to seek refuge in their cooler waters.

– Marie McCarty

In 2010, the U.S. Department of Justice, on behalf of the Environmental Protection Agency, entered into a consent decree with the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities to resolve violations of the Clean Water Act. In part, the consent decree required the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities to provide Kachemak Heritage Land Trust with \$850,000 to be used to “acquire and permanently conserve riparian areas, for the preservation of water quality and salmon habitat, on the Anchor River, Ninilchik River, Deep Creek, or Stariski Creek watersheds on the Kenai Peninsula, Alaska.” These two properties were purchased with these funds. ✧