This is the third annual report of the Nushagak/Mulchatna – Wood/Tikchik Land Trust.

Land is the gift of our ancestors and the guarantee of our right to continue our subsistence lifestyle. Land is the heart of our culture. Without the land, we are nothing.

Harvey Samuelsen
1926 - 2004
Bristol Bay Village
Leadership Workshop 2001

Harvey Samuelsen, Native Leader and Land Trust Advocate Dies

Bristol Bay’s prominent leader and respected elder Harvey Samuelsen died in Dillingham November 26 at the age of 78. Harvey was born on the Kuskokwim River in 1926. Harvey moved to Bristol Bay with his wife Florence after he returned from World War II where he began his long career as a commercial fisherman in cannery-owned sailboats.

If only one word could be used to describe Harvey – it would have to be “fighter.” He fought for his country in WW II. In the late 1940’s and early 1950’s he fought the canneries to discontinue the use of the obsolete and dangerous sail boats and he helped form a union that fought to give Alaskan and Native commercial fishermen parity with fishermen from outside Alaska. He helped establish the first credit union to loan money to Alaska fishermen for boats and gear. He was an early advocate and led the Bristol Bay region in the movement that resulted in the passage of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act in 1971. He was there when the Bristol Bay Native Association was formed. He was there when Bristol Bay Native Corporation was formed. He was there when the Bristol Bay Economic Development Corporation was formed. He was there when the Wood-Tikchik State Park was formed.

His legacy also includes the Nushagak-Mulchatna / Wood-Tikchik Land Trust. Harvey understood that the land has always been at the heart of the fight for the rights of Alaska Natives, in particular the struggle to protect subsistence. He lived that conviction in his personal life. Despite his need and more lucrative offers Harvey sold his Native allotment into conservation – protecting its subsistence value forever. His allotment at the head of
the Agulukpak was the first conservation easement conveyed to the newly formed land trust. The future of subsistence in the Bristol Bay region may depend upon how many people will once again follow Harvey’s lead.

Oak Foundation Provides $75,000 Grant for Land Trust

The Oak Foundation, an international philanthropic organization with its home offices in Geneva, Switzerland, has awarded the Land Trust a grant of $75,000 to be used for the general support of its conservation operations. The grant will be made in annual installments of $25,000 through 2007.

The Oak Foundation supports environmental programs that emphasize the protection and sustainable use of the world’s marine ecosystems. The mission of the land trust is to protect the watersheds and marine environment of Nushagak Bay and the Togiak National Wildlife Refuge. These ecosystems nurture the world’s largest runs of wild Pacific salmon. The mission of the Land Trust is local, but the failure of that mission could have global consequences. The Land Trust uses the tools of private lands conservation, primarily conservation easements, to protect wild salmon habitat and the continued subsistence and recreational use of that habitat.

The grant will be distributed over the next three years in annual installments of $25,000.

The Conservation Fund and Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation Continue Work in Southwest, Alaska

In 2003 The Conservation Fund, a national organization dedicated to protecting habitat, secured a significant grant of $4.5 million dollars from the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation for salmon habitat protection in Southwest Alaska. In 2004 The Conservation Fund used some of this support to leverage Federal funds provided through the Forest Legacy program to secure conservation protections for two parcels on the Agulowak River (See the story about the Agulowak River Initiative below) and one parcel on the Agulukpak River. The Land Trust will steward conservation easements on each of these properties. The grant from the Moore Foundation is also providing $75,000 in general operations support for the Land Trust.

William H. Donner Foundation Continues Support

The William H. Donner Foundation of New York City recently awarded the Land Trust $21,000. The grant is pledged in the memory of Foundation board member Bill Roosevelt. Bill Roosevelt was a longtime guest of Tikchik Narrows Lodge who looked forward to his annual visits to the region. The funds are to be used to support general operations of the Trust.

The Donner Foundation was the first philanthropic organization to invite a proposal from the Land Trust and the first to make an award. Since the inception of the Land Trust in 2000 the Donner
Mead Foundation Support

The Mead Foundation of California awarded the Land Trust $20,000 to stewart and document acquisitions in the Wood-Tikchik State Park.

Ongoing Conservation Projects in Southwest Alaska

Wood-Tikchik State Park

Agulowak River Initiative: The Conservation Fund in support of the Land Trust’s Agulowok Initiative has provided funds to purchase two Native Allotments along the Agulowok River within the Wood-Tikchik State Park. Mr. Raymond Conquest and the children of the late Massa Gorman elected to have their properties protected from development. Title to the properties will be transferred to the State of Alaska subject to conservation easements in favor of the Land Trust. The Land Trust provided $50,000 toward the purchase through a grant from the North American Wetlands Conservation program administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Land Trust will also be raising additional sums to contribute to its stewardship fund for the long term protection of these properties.

The Agulowak River is one of the salmon rich jewels of Southwest, Alaska. This 4.5-mile long river flows from Lake Nerka to Lake Aleknagik within the Wood-Tikchik State Park. The river provides a robust fishery for sport anglers, subsistence and commercial users.

Agulkpak River: The Agulkpak is the highly productive 2 mile river that connects Lake Beverley to Lake Nerka. Like the Agulowak it is a major migration corridor for sockeye salmon and supports dense populations of rainbow trout and Dolly Varden. This last year The Conservation Fund and the Land Trust conserved one of four small parcels we have been working to protect. The Land Trust already monitors one conservation easement on the Agulkpak.

Support from the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, Bristol Bay Native Corporation, and the Forest Legacy program have made many of these acquisitions possible.

Togiak National Wildlife Refuge

Togiak River: The Togiak National Wildlife Refuge expects to have more funds available in the FY 05 budget to
make conservation acquisitions within the refuge. The Conservation Fund has been able to leverage appropriations for the refuge to make more funds available. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service seeks to protect the conservation values the Togiak River. To date acquisitions along the river have totaled about 1,360 acres. The services of the Land Trust have not yet been requested as all acquisitions have been fee acquisitions with title fully vesting in the Federal government.

Southwest Alaska Conservation Websites

The website for the Land Trust is online at www.nmwtlandtrust.org. The web site was developed with financial assistance provided by the Alaska Conservation Foundation. The site provides general information about the trust and the area served by the trust. A unique feature is an interactive satellite photo of the Bristol Bay region. A click of the mouse on the map will bring up a Robert Ketchum photo taken from the area selected. Two other websites of interest that feature conservation work Southwestern, Alaska are The Conservation Fund, www.conservationfund.org, and The Southwest Alaska Conservation Coalition, www.swakc.org.

Financial Status

During 2003 the Land Trust raised $5,675 in general donations, $3,000 for the Stewardship fund, $35,000 in grant support and approximately $1,600 in miscellaneous income. Total income was $46,562, expenses came to $19,727. The Trust earned interest income of $1,678.

During 2004 through the end of November the Land Trust raised $9,975 in general donations, $9,622 for the Stewardship Fund; $98,993 in grant support, and $6,770 in miscellaneous income. Total income for the period is $114,263 and total expenses are $54,532.

Total equity for the Land Trust at the end of November 2004 was $228,502 distributed as follows:

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<th>Category</th>
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<tr>
<td>Stewardship Fund</td>
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Board of Directors

Norm Van Vactor, superintendent of the Peter Pan Cannery in Dillingham, will be joining the Board of Directors. Norm Van Vactor brings to the Board a lifetime of experience as a fisherman and commercial buyer of wild salmon in Bristol Bay.

Greg Jones works for GCI Communications and oversees the operation of GCI’s business retreat on the Agulowok River. Greg and GCI have been instrumental in helping secure protections on properties along the Agulowok River as part of the land trust’s initiative. Greg brings to the Board a background in land use planning and real estate management. His familiarity and appreciation of Southwestern Alaska goes back to the late 70’s when he helped prepare Dillingham’s first comprehensive plan and worked on the development of the State’s first community maps for many of the villages in the region.

Jan Konigsberg is director of the Alaska Waters Program for Natural Heritage Institute; previously director of Trout Unlimited's Alaska Salmonid Biodiversity Program and former Executive Director of Alaska Conservation Foundation. He has served on the board of the Land Trust Alliance and was Lands Director of Montana Land Reliance.
Bobby Andrew is a lifelong resident of Bristol Bay and President of Aleknagik Natives LTD, the ANCSA village corporation for Aleknagik. Bobby also chairs the Citizen’s Advisory Board for the Wood-Tikchik State Park.

Ward Jones, Board Chair, has been a resident of Alaska and Dillingham for 36 years. He taught school and coached for 20 years and was a commercial fisherman for 13 years. He is currently employed by Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation as an injury prevention specialist. Ward enjoys the outdoors and wishes to help preserve the unique flavor of this beautiful area.

Frederick (Bud) Hodson first came to Alaska in 1974. After working at various lodges in the region, Bud purchased Tikchik Narrows Lodge in 1986, and has been owner operator ever since. He is embarking on his 30th year of taking anglers fishing in Wood-Tikchik State Park. Bud served five years on the Alaska Board of Fisheries, three as chairman. He is committed to conserving the natural resources and wilderness values of the region.

Thomas Tilden was born and raised in Bristol Bay and has been a commercial fisherman most of his life. He serves on the Board of Directors of the Alaska Federation of Natives and Choggiung LTD. Tom was president of Choggiung LTD at the time the village corporation initiated the formation of the Nushagak/Mulchatna – Wood/Tikchik Land Trust.

Sue Flensburg is the Environmental Coordinator for the Bristol Bay Native Association and also serves as staff to Nushagak Watershed Council. Prior to that she was the director of the Bristol Bay Coastal Management Program for over 10 years and helped prepare the Nushagak-Mulchatna Rivers Recreation Management Plan. She came to Alaska in 1974 and continues to pursue her interests in the outdoors, first as a recreational dog musher and later as a private pilot. She also commercial fishes with her husband.

Luki Akelkok was born and raised in Bristol Bay. He resides in Ekwok where he serves as President of Ekwok Natives LTD. Luki has operated a hunting and fishing service on the Nushagak and Mulchatna Rivers for nearly twenty years. The Land Trust Board meets 2 to 3 times per year. The next meeting is scheduled for May, 2005 in Dillingham.

**Historical Note**

Restored sailboat on exhibit at Peter Pan cannery in Dillingham

Double-ended Columbia River style sailing gillnetters dominated the commercial fishery of Bristol Bay from the late 1880’s until power boats were finally allowed in 1951. These are the kind of boats in which the late Harvey Samuelsen began his commercial fishing career. It is often remarked that the “Sailboat Days” were a time of “iron men in wooden boats” while our modern fishery is described as the time of “wooden men in iron boats.” A restored sailboat can be seen today, courtesy of boardmember Norm Van Vactor in one of the net loft of the Peter Pan Cannery. If you are a visitor to Dillingham during the commercial fishing season you should make it a point to visit the exhibit.
Chairman’s Advisory Council

The Board of Directors recently established a Chairman’s Advisory Council. The Council will advise the Land Trust on matters of policy and fundraising. The following were appointed to the Council: Jerry Liboff, Curt Winsor, Jim Davis, Kenny Powers, Dan Hourihan, Alice Ruby, Russell Nelson, Glenn Elison, and Ron McMillan.

Board Resolves to Accept but not Pursue Conservation Easements Throughout SW Alaska

The Land Trust focuses its efforts to protect private lands along the Nushagak and Mulchatna rivers and within the Wood-Tikchik State Park and the Togiak National Wildlife Refuge. However, the impact of private land sales is a concern throughout SW Alaska. At present the Land Trust is the only conservation organization within the region in a position to accept and monitor conservation easements. The Board of Directors decided to permit the Land Trust to accept conservation interests in properties outside of its primary service area as an accommodation to other organizations like The Nature Conservancy or The Conservation Fund who may help with conservation acquisitions, but prefer local ownership of conservation properties. The Land Trust will accept, hold and steward conservation interests throughout SW Alaska but will not pursue or use its own funds to acquire property interests outside of its service area.

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Harvey Samuelsen 1926 - 2004