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

Photography Exhibit of Southwest Alaska and Wood-Tikchik State Park Begins National Tour

The landscape of Bristol Bay and the Wood-Tikchik State Park will be featured in a nationally touring exhibit of photographic images taken by Robert Glenn Ketchum. The tour opened at the Hoffman Gallery on the campus of Lewis and Clark College in Portland, Oregon in September. The Anchorage Museum of History and Art hosts the exhibit from May 7 to September 17, 2006.

Ketchum is a world renown landscape photographer in the mold of Ansel Adams. His exhibit features a selection of work he completed for two recent books *Rivers of Life: Southwest Alaska – The Last Great Salmon Fishery* (with an essay by Bruce Hampton) and *Wood-Tikchik: Alaska’s Largest State Park* (with an essay by Bill Sherwonit). Both books were underwritten in part with funding obtained by the Land Trust.

The exhibit is entitled: *Southwest Alaska: A Land of National Parks and Wildlife Refuges.*

Ketchum is working with the Land Trust and its partners The Nature Conservancy of Alaska and The Conservation Fund to use the occasion of each venue to raise awareness of the need for salmon habitat protection in Southwest Alaska.

The exhibit next moves to Houston, Texas where it will open in February at the Houston Museum of Natural Sciences.

Allen River – taken by Robert Glenn Ketchum

Plans for Open Pit Mine Raise Concerns in Bristol Bay

Northern Dynasty Mines Inc., a Canadian company, is in the process of planning development of what could become one of the largest open pit gold and copper mines in the world. The deposit is nestled in the mountains that straddle the drainage of the Nushagak River and Lake Iliamna that flows into the Kvichak River. The prospect is known as the Pebble Mine Project. The Pebble project is now in the early stages of investigation and environmental review, but test drilling does confirm that substantial deposits of gold and copper are present.
Several communities in the region and hunting and fishing guide businesses have already voiced opposition to the mine out of concern for salmon and other subsistence resources. The Lake and Peninsula Borough has gone on record in favor of the mine expressing concern about the poor market for salmon and the need for local jobs. At this time, however, many communities and organizations, including the Bristol Bay Native Corporation, are withholding judgment until plans are more fully developed. Bruce Jenkins, COO of Northern Dynasty, in an editorial for the Anchorage Daily News urged SHRSOHWR³NHHSDQRSHQPLQG´EHFDXVHWKH project is still many years way from being permitted. As a measure of reassurance Jenkins set the bar high by stating the company “must ensure that there is no net loss to the region’s fisheries as a result of our project.”

When the bill came before the Committee for final consideration the line items had been removed. These line items authorized the receipt from the Federal Government of a $1,000,000 USF&W Coastal Wetlands grant and a $2,378,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Legacy Program. The Land Trust and several other organizations, concerned citizens and sport fishing lodges mounted a last minute letter campaign asking the Committee to accept the money for the Wood-Tikchik State Park. That effort helped Senator Lyman Hoffman, whose district includes the Park, to get the bill amended to restore the funding before it was passed on to the floor of the Senate.

The federal funding was a critical component of the anticipated acquisition of the 22,000 acre conservation easement that the State, the Land Trust, The Conservation Fund and the Native corporation have been negotiating. The parties have all agreed to the terms of the conservation easement. The acquisition price will be negotiated when appraisals of the easement value are completed. The Conservation Fund has matched the federal funding with private donations and significant support from the Salmon Initiative of the Gordon and Betty Foundation.

If the acquisition is successfully completed the Land Trust and the State will share enforcements rights over portions of the conservation easement.

Ongoing Conservation Projects in Southwest Alaska

Wood-Tikchik State Park

Agulowak River Initiative: A major component of the Land Trust’s effort to secure funding to protect the Agulowak River survived a last minute challenge in the Senate Finance Committee of the Alaska Legislature in May. The Governor’s capital budget request included two line items for the expenditure of pass-through federal funds to go to the Alaska Division of State Parks to purchase a conservation easement on 22,000 acres of Native corporation land surrounding the Agulowak River and at the Eastern end of Lake Nerka.

A plaque remembering the late Massa Gorman was placed on her Native allotment by her children who conveyed her land into conservation in her memory. The property located on the Agulowok River was acquired by The Conservation Fund and transferred to the Wood-Tikchik State Park. Funding for the plaque was provided by GCI.
Nushagak River

Olie and Butch Smith circa 1940. Butch Smith is regarded as one of the great rivermen of the Nushagak. He was a prospector, fisherman and trapper. He came into the Nushagak country after mining for gold in Nome and Goodnews Bay. “Butch” Mountain above Koliganek is named for him. His wife Olie was from the Kuskokwim and she is remembered as an accomplished trapper in her own right.

Land Trust and The Nature Conservancy of Alaska Join Forces to Protect Nushagak River

At the December 2004 meeting of the Board of Directors, The Nature Conservancy of Alaska asked whether the Land Trust would be interested in participating in its newly funded effort to develop a Traditional Use Area Conservation Plan for the villages of the Nushagak River Watershed. Specifically, The Nature Conservancy asked whether Land Trust Executive Director, Tim Troll, could spearhead the three year project. At a special meeting in March, the Board approved a formal memorandum of understanding that permits the executive director to become a part-time employee of The Nature Conservancy for the duration of the project. Troll will continue to serve as Executive Director and the Conservancy will provide the Trust with office space in Anchorage.

The Traditional Use Area Conservation plan will be developed by The Nature Conservancy under contract with the Curyung Tribe of Dillingham and the Bristol Bay Native Association. The project entails the gathering of traditional knowledge about the habitat of the Nushagak River watershed that is important for the wild salmon and other key species needed by local residents to maintain their subsistence lifestyle. The information obtained will be incorporated into maps and will be used by The Nature Conservancy to develop a set of recommendations to the local communities for protecting key habitat sites.

The project is being underwritten by grants from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation.

Historical Note
Alaska Constitutional Convention

Truman Emberg signing Alaska Constiititution

Fifty Years ago fifty five residents of the Territory of Alaska convened at the University of Alaska in Fairbanks to draft a constitution for the State of Alaska. Truman Emberg of Dillingham was there to represent Bristol Bay. Truman was a trapper, fisherman and a leader in the movement to organize fishermen and cannery workers in the 1950’s.

Visit the Land Trust website to learn more about our work, our partners and our Board of Directors.

www.nmwtlandtrust.org
Financial Status

During 2005 the Land Trust raised $16,103 in general donations, $800 for the Stewardship fund, $38,850 in grant support, $10,100 in sales income (books, t-shirts, canned salmon), and $3,246 in interest. Total income for the year was $68,328 expenses came to $78,082.

Total equity for the Land Trust at the end of 2005 was $208,514 down from $228,502 the previous year. Corporate assets are distributed as follows:

- General Savings $177,160
- General Checking $3,769
- Stewardship Fund $27,874

Look For Our Wild Bristol Bay Red Canned Salmon In Stores, Lodges and Gift Shops