KENAI MOUNTAINS TO SEA – COASTAL CONSERVATION AT A LANDSCAPE SCALE

Restoring America’s Estuaries Conference, November 2014
KENAI MOUNTAINS TO SEA PARTNERSHIP

Kachemak Heritage Land Trust
Audubon Alaska
Cook Inlet Keeper
Kenai Watershed Forum
Pacific Coast Joint Venture
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Contributors to this presentation include:

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John Morton – Kenai National Wildlife Refuge
**Kenai Mountains to Sea**

Sustain healthy watersheds & viable populations of fish and wildlife important to the Borough’s economy and cultural resources

Minimize the impact of projected urban growth and climate change on these economies.

Promote and conserve a natural pattern and connectivity of fish and wildlife habitat
Federal lands = 4.37 million acres (73%)

Nonfederal lands = 1.65 million acres (27%)
1941

Kenai National Moose Range
2.1 million acres
Good times make for other stressors...

- ~56,000 people in Kenai Peninsula Borough
- 238,800 acres of private lands divided into 55,000 parcels
- 2.2% human population growth = 1,000 new residents/year
  = 1.5 housing units/day
- 175 miles wild land-urban interface
- >3,016 miles of road
- 1.7 million vehicles on Sterling Highway
- >1,800 miles of seismic lines
Anadromous streams
Climate refugia (landcover)
Developable lands
Culverts
Impervious surface
Audubon IBAs
Invasive plants
Land cover
Land ownership
Soil
Birds
Hydrology
Stream refugia (temperature)
Wetlands
Coho salmon habitat
Fish passage barriers
Moose winter habitat
### High Ecological Value and High Threat

Weighted at 20% each for Anadromous Streams, Wetlands: All, Watchlisted Birds, and Climate Refugia, and 10% each for Developable Lands and Impervious Surfaces, by watershed and subwatershed.

#### Top Areas on the Kenai Peninsula

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Watershed</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Subwatershed</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Lower Kenai River</td>
<td>79.37</td>
<td>Kenai River Mouth</td>
<td>82.03</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Anchor River</td>
<td>73.92</td>
<td>Anchor River Mouth</td>
<td>66.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Stariski Creek – Frontal Cook Inlet</td>
<td>67.46</td>
<td>Stariski Creek</td>
<td>61.38</td>
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<td>Ninilchik River</td>
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<td>Chakok River</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Kasilof River</td>
<td>66.14</td>
<td>North Fork Anchor River</td>
<td>58.85</td>
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Stream Corridors

- 377 anadromous stream outlets (1784 miles)
- 216 on federal estate
- 140 on private lands
- 1 in federal estate with inholdings

✓ 20 interjurisdictional = 990 miles (392 miles in private land)

Top Areas in Priority Corridors on the Kenai Peninsula

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<td>5</td>
<td>Swanson River</td>
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<td>Lower Moose River</td>
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</table>
OBJECTIVES

✓ Conserve and/or restore landscape connectivity between publicly-managed and privately-owned lands by focusing on parcels adjacent to selected anadromous streams

✓ Work with partners to identify suite of opportunities to conserve and/or restore selected parcels

✓ Use tool to meet with funders

✓ Create focused outreach to key decision-makers, stakeholders, and landowners

✓ Share strategy with governmental and Native landowners and other partners
OTHER THINGS BEING EQUAL, CONSERVING ANADROMOUS RIPARIAN CORRIDORS IS SMART...

✓ Saves salmonids
✓ Maintains hydrology
✓ Provides wildlife and plant dispersal corridors
✓ Provides contiguous and linear green infrastructure
✓ Connects conservation estates
✓ And in a world of rapidly changing vegetation due to climate change, is the one sure bet.
Kenai Mountains to Sea

A Land Conservation Strategy
to Sustain Our Way of Life on the Kenai Peninsula

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2014