



All-Alaska Land Trust Meeting

Martha Reynolds and Roselynn Ressa Smith attended the All-Alaska Land Trust meeting in Homer over a beautiful weekend in September, 2007. Representatives from all six land trusts in Alaska attended and shared issues unique to their region, as well as projects that reflect the common issues shared by many land trusts. The agenda was full with speakers from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, the Kenai Borough, a private appraiser, and the Land Trust Alliance (LTA) (telephonically connected). In addition to presentations on the LTA Learning Center, USFWS grant programs, and assessing and appraising conservation easements; the group discussed the pros and cons of owning title versus easement to conservation land, the Homer Town Center Project, IRS tax breaks for conservation easements, and the self-assessment process for land trust accreditation. The Alaska land trusts pledged to begin the LTA self-assessment process with the goal to complete them by next year's meeting, which IALT offered to host in Fairbanks. We anticipate holding it around the weekend of the fall equinox.

Land Trust Website

The Interior Alaska Land Trust has a new web site: www.interioraklandtrust.com, and a new email: interaklandtrust@gmail.com. We've spruced up the old web site, so take a look. We hope the web site has all the resources you need. If not, be sure to let us know.



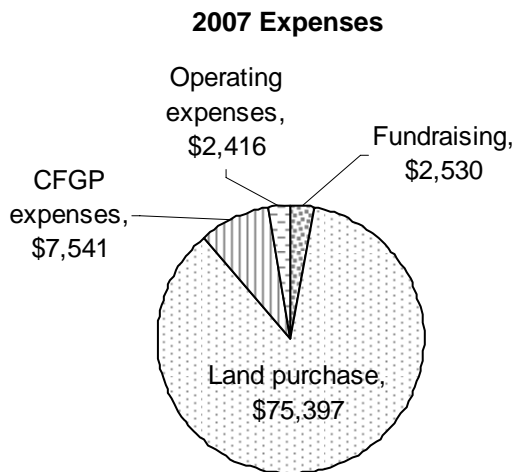
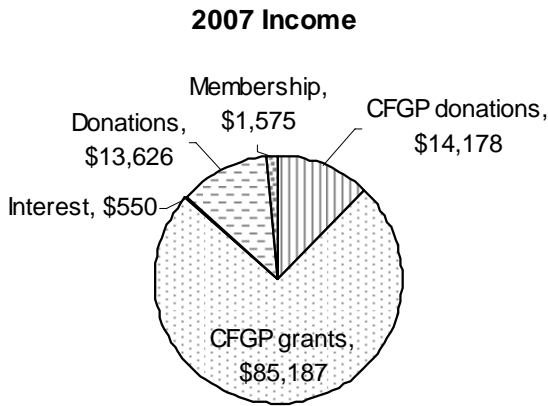
Kris Hoellen (left) of the Conservation Fund, presenting a check for the Kodak Grant to Sally Andersen (middle), Chena Flats Greenbelt Coordinator, and Martha Reynolds (right), President of the Board of the Interior Alaska Land Trust. These funds have purchased lands for the Greenbelt.

Chena Flats Greenbelt Project

The Chena Flats Greenbelt Project has currently conserved for future generations over 200 acres between Chena Ridge and Chena Pump Road. These properties not only provide open-space to the neighborhood, but are also high-biological value wetlands. The Interior Alaska Land Trust received four grants for this project totaling \$176,500; two through the North American Wetlands Conservation Act, one from the Alaska State Trails Grants, and one through Kodak Greenways. These funds were used to purchase the properties from The Conservation Fund, partially reimbursing them for their expenses in purchasing the properties. The Land Trust is currently negotiating with the Fairbanks North Star Borough for long-term management of these lands as Borough parks (see story on page 4).

There was a brunch and auction at Pike's Landing on Sunday March 30th. This event was a celebration of the successes of the Chena Flats Greenbelt Project, and a fundraiser to ensure future successes.

Your Land Trust Finances



The Interior Alaska Land Trust is financially sound, but we need additional operating funds to support our growing work. As you will see above our primary source of income is grant funds for land acquisition. We are an all-volunteer organization, but are now contemplating hiring part-time staff to accommodate the increase in community land donations and conservation easements to the organization. Our work with the Chena Flats Greenbelt project also has greatly increased the demands on the board. We solicit your donations and renewed memberships to support the protection of valuable community assets and to help us to carry out our mission.

Local Initiatives

The Interior Alaska Land Trust has been contacted by residents from two areas of town that are interested in preserving some of their local open space. Nora Foster is the contact for the Sheep Creek-Gold Hill Road-St. Patrick Road area. Contact her at (swamprat@mosquitonet.com). Linda DeFoliart has been working with some residents of the Spinach Creek-Moose Mountain area. She can be reached at 455-6928.

The Interior Alaska Land Trust supports these neighborhood efforts – the people who live in an area know the most about local land use, values and trails. The Land Trust can 1) talk to landowners about conservation options and trail easements; 2) provide a non-profit umbrella for grant writing and other activities, and 3) provide connections with the Borough and national conservation networks, as well as general advice and support.

Conservation Easement Helps Family Keep Land

In 2001, Dr. Edwin Lindig met with the Interior Alaska Land Trust to discuss options for conserving about 340 acres of land that his family owned. The family was interested in keeping the land undeveloped, for wildlife use and recreation. Dr. Lindig donated an easement to the Interior Alaska Land Trust as part of his will. In 2007, after Dr. Lindig's passing, the easement was signed, and became permanent. The Internal Revenue service reviewed the easement and found no errors. Thanks to this action, Dr. Lindig's family was able to retain the land, which otherwise would have had to be subdivided to pay estate taxes.

The property is a large piece of land, providing wildlife habitat and wetland values in a rapidly developing part of Fairbanks. As time goes on, and the surrounding area becomes more densely developed, the conservation values of property will only become more and more valuable to the community.

The Lindig easement allows the owner to continue all recreational activities, all wildlife

habitat maintenance and enhancement activities, and hunting. It allows the owner to maintain the existing trails, and to build and maintain fences and gates. The easement restricts the property owner from subdividing the property, or developing it in any other way. The easement does not grant the public any right-of-entry to the property. The property remains in private ownership, with the owners providing the stewardship of the property that they know and care for. They ask that you respect their private property rights and not trespass on their land.

New IALT Board Directors



Roselynn Ressa Smith is a Natural Resource Specialist with DNR. She brings experience in planning and Alaska State land management to the Board of the Interior Alaska Land Trust.



Carolyn Buckingham is an attorney with an interest in natural resources, land use and conservation law. After spending the summer of 2005 working for a conservation organization in Juneau, she decided to move to Alaska in 2006

after graduating from Vermont Law School, where she obtained both her Juris Doctor and Master of Studies in Environmental Law. Carolyn enjoys skiing, hiking, camping, fishing, and canoeing, and is excited to be putting her skills and passions to use by helping to preserve open space in the Fairbanks community.

Trail News

The Chena Flats Greenbelt neighborhood trails provide the access link to the 100-Mile Loop Trail. The 100-Mile Loop Trail concept will link several existing trails in a loop around Fairbanks to provide legal access to much of Fairbanks right from your neighborhood, if not from your backdoor. Mayor Whitaker and the Fairbanks North Star Borough Assembly have recognized the importance of trails to our neighborhoods by providing funds and staffing for the addition of a full-time Trails Planner in the borough's Park and Recreation Department. The position is filled by Mr. Tom Duncan.

Adding to the support of regional trails is the creation of the coordinator position at the non-profit Chena Flats Greenbelt project now filled by Ms. Sally Andersen. Establishment of this position within the project increases our chances to acquire funding and further enhance our trail network. Someday we can use these neighborhood trails for access not only the 100-Mile Loop Trail, but to the Chena and Tanana Rivers to travel region-wide. The Borough is working out how to accept trail easements from the Interior Alaska Land Trust as well as from other groups such as the Equinox Interior Trails Preservation Coalition.

The Borough has received a State Trails Grant for trail signage to promulgate observance of trail etiquette. This will attempt to remind trail users on right-of-way issues and teach basic rules of the trail. Please check the Interior Trails Quarterly for regional trail news at: etcl@acsalaska.net.

Northwest Land Trust Conference

The Land Trust Alliance will hold the 13th Annual Northwest Land Trust Conference, May 1st to 3rd, 2008 in Winthrop, WA at the Sun

Mountain Lodge. Registration is now open at http://www.lta.org/training/lct_nw.htm. There will be many useful lectures and workshops of interest to land managers, real estate organizations, land-law attorneys, and conservation groups.

Collaboration with the Borough

IALT is currently working with the Fairbanks North Star Borough to find the best way to manage conservation land in the Borough for the benefit of Borough residents. One option being investigated is to donate land to the Borough. This will relieve IALT from paying property taxes and liability insurance for the property. IALT will retain a conservation easement over the land to ensure that under the Borough's ownership, the land will remain in its natural condition and provide public access for wildlife observation and other recreational activities. IALT will also stay active in helping

coordinate with the Borough Parks Department for local volunteer management of these areas. The first parcels being considered are the wetlands at the heart of the Chena Flats Greenbelt.

Working with the Borough on this land transfer is both innovative and exciting. Transferring title to the land to the Borough ensures that the land will be managed as a park that will be open to use by the public, and IALT's conservation easement will ensure that the land's conservation values will be protected in perpetuity. This land transfer is a success story in working together with both private landowners and local government to acquire, protect and manage natural aspects of property for use and enjoyment by the public and future generations.

Interior Alaska Land Trust
PO Box 84169
Fairbanks, AK 99708-4169
interaklandtrust@gmail.com
www.interioraklandtrust.org
907-451-0737