



# The SOUTHEAST STEWARD

Newsletter for the Southeast Alaska Land Trust

Winter 2018

## The Grand Old Apple Tree

By Merrill Jensen

Historically, one of the most significant plants at the Jensen-Olson Arboretum in Juneau is the Grand Old Apple Tree that was most likely planted about 100 years ago. It can be seen in some of the earliest photos from the Peterson and Olson eras. In those photos, one finds it as a small tree growing behind the home that Irma and Charlie Olson built. Later photos of that era reveal its success and continued growth year after year. A favorite photo shows Irma standing in front of the tree while it was in full bloom with Marie Peterson looking on from the dining room window.

Since my arrival in 2007, I've heard repeated references to the tree being a 'Golden Delicious' variety, but over the years I've had my doubts; where would the Peterson Girls have found a 'Golden Delicious' apple at a time when named cultivars probably wouldn't easily have found their way north? Also, the 'Golden Delicious' was introduced in 1914, and the possibility of finding it this far north that soon after introduction may not have been realistic. Since I first met this tree, I have been speculating that the Petersons started it from the seed of an apple one of them had eaten. Being the resourceful homesteaders they were, they would always have been looking for another food source. Since apples do not come true from seed, they wouldn't have gotten a Golden Delicious tree from a Golden Delicious fruit.

Through a chance reading, I discovered an opportunity to put my hypothesis to the test and, in the spring of 2016, got the process started. The noted East Malling Research Station in Kent, England provides a service that would allow us to finally determine what our tree actually is through a process of genetically fingerprinting our tree and comparing it with their extensive cultivar database. Leaf samples were meticulously collected, prepared, sent at the appropriate time, and analyzed. The results were screened against 2,400 different cultivars.

The results: We have a unique tree that doesn't match any known apple cultivars.

Below is an excerpt from the report I received in early July of 2016, from Dr. Edward Dobbs and his laboratory staff at the East Malling Research Station:

Results: All samples gave a clear fingerprint for each of the 12 SSR markers used. The genotyping profiles obtained for the sample were compared against the standard accession, as well as the database for *Malus* held in The National Fruit Collection (NFC) (located in Brogdale, Kent) and other *Malus* accessions previously submitted for fingerprinting by other customers. The data were also compared to 75 accessions held in an observation plot at East Malling. Thus, more than 2,400 different apple accessions were used to compare fingerprints of samples tested here.

Conclusions: We can conclude that test sample is not "Golden Delicious". In addition, this sample does not clearly match any of the fingerprinting data held in our data base. It suggests that the "Jensen-Olson" sample is a unique genotype. As some of the markers match between the test sample and the standard, it may be that the "Jensen-Olson" tree is a seedling of "Golden

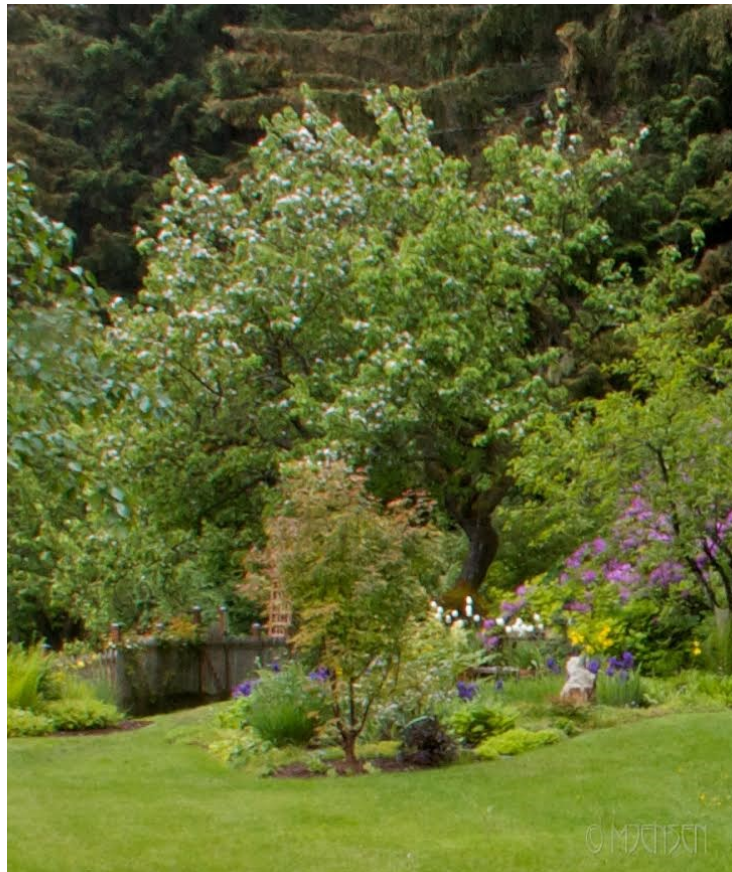
Delicious".

At some point in the not-so-distant past, someone saved a seed from the apple they were eating, grew it and planted it behind one of the historic Peterson cabins. It grew into the magnificent specimen that graces the Arboretum today.

Merrill Jensen is the Arboretum Manager and Horticulturist at the Jensen-Olson Arboretum. The Jensen-Olson Arboretum was the first property protected by the Southeast Alaska Land Trust in 1998.

The Jensen-Olson Arboretum is open Wednesday-Sunday from 9:00am-5:00pm. Admission is free.

Come enjoy the grandeur of this historic garden icon!



▲ Grand Old Apple Tree. Photo courtesy of Merrill Jensen

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## A Note From the Executive Director



Did you know that there are roughly 1,300 land trusts throughout the United States working to protect the places they cherish? SEAL Trust is one of only six land trusts operating within the entire State of Alaska.

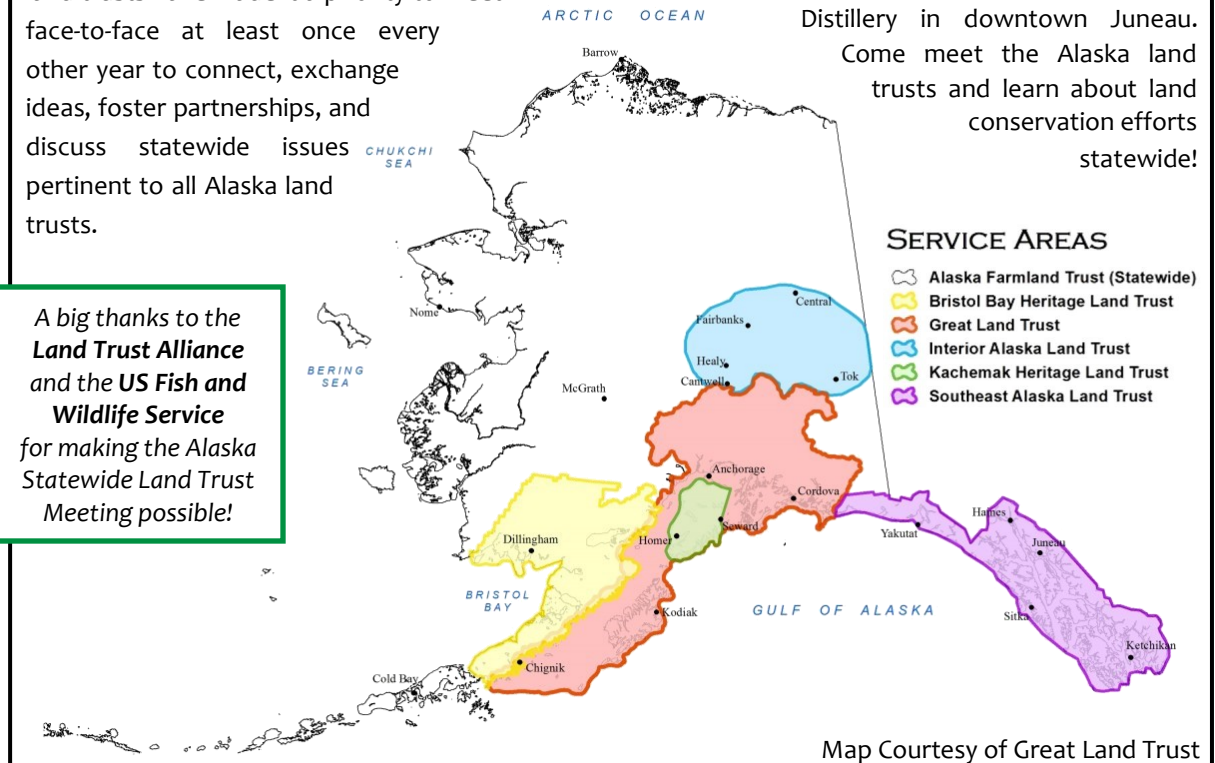
Over the past ten years, despite Alaska's large size and oftentimes challenging geography, the Alaska land trusts have made it a priority to meet face-to-face at least once every other year to connect, exchange ideas, foster partnerships, and discuss statewide issues pertinent to all Alaska land trusts.

A big thanks to the **Land Trust Alliance** and the **US Fish and Wildlife Service** for making the Alaska Statewide Land Trust Meeting possible!

This year, for the first time ever, SEAL Trust is hosting the biennial **Alaska Statewide Land Trust Meeting** here in Juneau. During the last week of April, representatives from all six Alaska land trusts, as well as The Conservation Fund and The Nature Conservancy will be convening in Juneau to strengthen our relationships and ultimately to increase the pace of land conservation statewide.

**You're invited to be a part of it!** Please join us on Wednesday, April 25<sup>th</sup> from 5:00-6:30pm for the Meeting's opening reception at Amalga Distillery in downtown Juneau.

Come meet the Alaska land trusts and learn about land conservation efforts statewide!



## SEAL TRUST PROTECTS SUNNY POINT

Since 2002, SEAL Trust has been working with upland landowners adjacent to the Mendenhall Wetlands State Game Refuge in Juneau to permanently preserve vital wetlands and the Refuge boundary. In 2017, SEAL Trust permanently protected two new properties as part of our larger "Accreted Lands Project".

These two latest acquisitions were originally part of the Refuge, which is administratively bounded by the mean high tide line. As coastal glaciers retreat and land once covered by ice undergoes isostatic rebound, lowland areas rise and create new or "accreted" land. When the land lifts above the mean high tide line, the upland landowners are legally entitled to claim the accreted land as private property.

One of the properties protected in 2017 was the final piece of land needed to completely protect the accretion lands surrounding Sunny Point! With these two latest acquisitions, SEAL Trust now protects 17 accreted parcels totaling over 55 acres.





# THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

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We greatly appreciate the generosity and strong commitment to local land conservation shown by our members. SEAL Trust is fortunate to have a broad group of dedicated supporters building a lasting legacy of protected lands. **Thank you** to the following donors who gave so generously between **January 1, 2017 and December 31, 2017**. If you believe you have been left off this list in error, please call Amanda at (907) 586-3100.

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*"If you want to go fast, go  
alone. If you want to go far,  
go together."*  
*-African Proverb*

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\* SEAL Trust Legacy Fund Donors

*THANK YOU  
to all our supporters!  
We could not do it  
without you!*

## UPDATE: Marjory & Edgar Huizer Fishing Access Site



SEAL Trust staff is hard at work finalizing site plans and permits in order to make the **Marjory & Edgar Huizer Fishing Access Site** a reality! Planned site improvements include:

- Access stairs down to the beach
- Public parking for five cars
- Bank restoration and stabilization
- A kiosk and educational signage

Located at 2.7 mile of North Douglas Highway, in Juneau, this new public access point will provide easy and safe access to Gastineau Channel and the Mendenhall Wetlands State Refuge for public recreation, including hunting and fishing access.

**Construction is slated to begin this spring, and a ribbon cutting ceremony will take place this summer.**

### WE NEED YOUR HELP!

We still need to raise

**\$52,000**

to cover project costs.

Please donate today at our website:

**[SoutheastAlaskaLandTrust.org](http://SoutheastAlaskaLandTrust.org)**

or call the office at

**(907) 586-3100**

**THANK YOU!**

### A big **THANK YOU** to all of our project supporters so far:

#### **\$20,000+**

Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game  
Division of Sportfish

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Douglas Island Pink and  
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## Leave a lasting legacy for Southeast Alaska

Making a bequest to the Southeast Alaska Land Trust is a simple way to protect the places you value. You can name the Southeast Alaska Land Trust as a beneficiary in your will, trust, retirement plan, life insurance policy, or financial accounts. Anyone can make a bequest, and no amount is too small.

For more information, contact **Allison Gillum:**  
(907) 586-3100 | [Allison@setrust.net](mailto:Allison@setrust.net)

*The Southeast Alaska Land Trust cannot render tax or legal advice.  
Please consult your financial advisor before making a gift.*



## UPCOMING EVENTS



**JUNEAU WETLANDS  
COMMUNITY CLEANUP**

*Saturday, April 28*



**4th ANNUAL WILD FOR  
CONSERVATION 5K**

*Saturday, June 9*



**FLY CASTING WORKSHOP  
with Trout Unlimited**

*August (Date TBD)*



**HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE  
& WINE PULL**

*Friday, December 7*

**YES!** I want to help preserve the  
natural landscapes of my community!

***Gifts of any size are welcome and make a difference!***

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

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☐ I would like to remain anonymous.

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Your gift is tax deductible.**

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Southeast Alaska Land Trust, 119 Seward St., Ste. 2, Juneau, AK 99801  
or donate online at our website: [www.SoutheastAlaskaLandTrust.org](http://www.SoutheastAlaskaLandTrust.org). **THANK YOU!**

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**We thank these  
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conservation in  
Southeast  
Alaska!**

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# Southeast Alaska Land Trust

119 Seward Street, Suite 2  
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## 2018 Winter Newsletter

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# New Signs Mark SEAL Trust Properties

Have you noticed our new signs around town? Starting last year, several of SEAL Trust's conservation properties were adorned with signs—our first property signs ever! These signs help to identify our conservation properties, improve our visibility in the community, and increase awareness of SEAL Trust's work and mission.

We're not done yet! If you would like to volunteer to help install property signs with us this summer, or if you would like information about donating materials for installation, please contact us at:

**info@setrust.net** or **(907) 586-3100**.

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