

The

Spring 2023

SOUTHEAST STEWARD



The Indian River conservation property abuts the Alaska Raptor Center and preserves 10 acres of the Indian River corridor in Sitka. Indian River provides excellent spawning habitat for coho, pink, and chum salmon, steelhead, and Dolly Varden char.



A SEASON OF GRATITUDE

I have a friend I've been hiking with for many years. She was raised in Juneau so you'd think she'd be used to the landscape by now. But no, she regularly stops in her tracks, looks around in amazement, and exclaims, "Can you believe we live here!"

I like to think our mission at the Southeast Alaska Land Trust might well be preserving "I can't believe we live here" lands.

Just last fall—with your help—the Trust conserved another 14 acres on north Douglas Island, expanding our holdings at Hendrickson Point, along the shoreline of the Mendenhall State Game Refuge in Juneau.

These wetlands provide food and cover for deer, bear, and hundreds of species of native and migratory birds; as well as gob smack views that would stop my friend cold.

There are now 42 properties across Southeast protected by the Trust. It takes staff, volunteers, partners, and contractors to do this kind of work. But it also takes a community of people who value our great

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COVER

Two bald eagles sitting
in a spruce tree on
the Vanderbilt Creek
conservation property, in
Juneau, courtesy of Mark
Kelley.
See more at MarkKelley.com

**Thank you to the
photographers who
contributed to this
newsletter!**

outdoors; members, like you, who care about keeping nature in their neighborhood.

Consider it an investment in our quality of life, one that improves health and habitat for both people and critters.

As spring rushes in and the land reemerges, the Trust is again drawing up plans to visit each property and take stock. Please join us if you can. Maybe we'll stop in our tracks together, shake our heads in disbelief, and say, "I can't believe we live here."

Wishing all of you a happy spring!

Anne Sutton
President, Board of Directors



New SEALT Stewardship Coordinator, Dan Hysell and his trusty trail companion, Goofy, appreciating Juneau's trails.



Ceona Koch, in charge of Outreach and Development for SEALT, enjoying a beach near Wrangell.

SEALT IS GROWING

We are delighted for you to meet our new Stewardship Coordinator, Dan Hysell, and our new Outreach and Development person, Ceona Koch. Dan and Ceona both started at SEALT this spring.

Having Dan and Ceona on our team means that we have more capacity to monitor and care for our conservation properties, and conserve land that sustains the communities of Southeast Alaska. Welcome, Dan and Ceona!

To learn more about our team and our work, please visit our website at: [www. SoutheastAlaskaLandTrust.org](http://www.SoutheastAlaskaLandTrust.org).

SECOND CROSSING NEWS

Curious about the current discussion of a second crossing between Juneau and Douglas Island?

The Southeast Alaska Land Trust has been actively participating in the ongoing Planning and Environmental Linkages Study sponsored by AKDOT&PF, as we own and conserve 22 conservation properties adjacent to the Mendenhall Wetlands State Game Refuge.

To see our public statement about this issue, please visit our website at www.SoutheastAlaskaLandTrust.org.



**Hilda Creek
Conservation Property**

Hilda Creek

SPOTLIGHT ON HILDA CREEK

The Hilda Creek conservation property is 43+ acres located on the back side of Douglas Island, Juneau. The Southeast Alaska Land Trust purchased the property in 2009 and donated it to the City and Borough of Juneau with a conservation easement in 2010.

The Hilda Creek conservation property conserves the lower reach of Hilda Creek - the most productive anadromous fish stream system along the 20-mile shoreline of west Douglas Island. Hilda Creek flows into Stephens Passage and provides habitat for Coho Salmon and Steelhead Trout, and its eastern branch supports Cutthroat Trout, Dolly Varden Char, Coho, Pink, and Chum Salmon.

Hilda Creek is open to the public and is a popular stop-over for kayakers. It is only accessible by boat, plane, or foot, and is surrounded by undeveloped, pure wilderness!



Inset photo of the Hilda Creek conservation property in relation to Juneau.



Hilda Creek conservation property on a bluebird summer day.



Bear scratches on a tree at the Hilda Creek conservation property.

THANK YOU

We sincerely appreciate the generosity and strong commitment to local land conservation shown by our members. Thank you to the following donors who gave so generously between January 1, 2022, and December 31, 2022. Also, a big thank you to our Acquisition Fund donors ♦, our Legacy Fund donors ●, our Evergreen Society members ▲, and our Sustaining members ■. If you believe you have been left off of this list in error, please email us at info@sealt.org.

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"I like to think of our properties and conservation easements as our front yard. The Tongass National Forest serves as our backyard but these conservation easements are intimate, tied to our cities - Sitka, Petersburg, Haines, Juneau - and things will change in the future, whether it's because of the climate or because of the way we decide to develop our community. So the values on our easements can be reviewed periodically but they are for all kinds of function but especially our habitat function, and that includes human habitat, too."

~ Nancy Waterman, longtime member of the Board of Directors and advocate for conservation, speaking on KTOO's Juneau Afternoon.



Merganser family at Ward Creek, near Ketchikan, courtesy of Ben Limle, US Forest Service.



SOUTHEAST ALASKA LAND TRUST

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The Southeast Alaska Land Trust collaborates with communities, individuals, and organizations throughout Southeast Alaska to help ensure that highly valued habitat, recreation, open space, and cultural and historic areas continue to thrive for the well-being of each generation.



Save the date!
MOTHER'S DAY
at THE
Jensen-OLSON
ARBORETUM
Sunday, May 14

www.SoutheastAlaskaLandTrust.org