Municipality of Anchorage

P.O. Box 196650
Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6650
Telephone: (907) 343-7100
Fax: (907) 343-7180
Email : www.muni.org

Dan Sullivan, Mayor

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Contact: Sarah Erkmann, MOA, 343-7103
or Phil Shephard, Grt. Ld. Trust, 278-4992

Municipality of Anchorage, Great Land Trust reach agreement on Campbell Creek Estuary

Final deal reduces city's liability, preserves estuary

ANCHORAGE- Mayor Dan Sullivan and Great Land Trust Executive Director Phil Shephard announced today that the Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) and the Great Land Trust (GLT) have reached agreement on the Campbell Creek estuary issue.

Under terms of the deal, GLT will provide the $6.1 million purchase price for the coastal, 60-acre property at the mouth of Campbell Creek. The property is adjacent to the Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge and offers high value wetland habitat and views across Cook Inlet. The MOA will acquire title to the property and grant conservation easements in perpetuity to the GLT and to the State of Alaska. At a time when the Municipality is facing substantial budget challenges, the GLT has agreed to raise an additional $1 million as needed to clean up, plan, develop, maintain and protect the property; the Municipality simply could not have acquired the property without GLT's financial assistance.

For the next year, while GLT is removing all buildings and other debris on the property, access to the property will be restricted to only GLT personnel and contractors. After the property is cleaned up, the next step will be to initiate a planning process for how to best use and develop the property consistent with its conservation values. The GLT also has agreed to indemnify the Municipality for all environmental events related to the property in the event that any are discovered within the next five years.

It is anticipated that eventually there will be walking trails and viewing sites throughout the property, but final decisions about any development or public access to the property will be made through the planning process.

Mayor Dan Sullivan applauded the deal and thanked Great Land Trust for their hard work on reaching an agreement. "Early on, there was talk of the city 'rejecting' the estuary deal; that was never the intent. By working out the details together in a cooperative manner, we have a solution that works for both parties. I'm pleased with the end result and grateful to the city's attorneys and the GLT's professional staff for making it happen."

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"Great Land Trust is proud that through partnerships with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; NOAA Fisheries; the Army Corps of Engineers; AK Depts. of Natural Resources and Fish and Game; the Rasmuson Foundation; Conoco Phillips; JL Properties; The Nature Conservancy; Ducks Unlimited; and hundreds of individual donors, we have been able to provide the citizens of Anchorage with a new 60-acre coastal natural area that will be conserved for generations to come, "said Phil Shephard. "This area is one of Anchorage's signature landscapes and Great Land Trust is committed to working closely with the Municipality to ensure this property will become yet another asset important to our quality of life."

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