KAP 4021: North Kodiak Island Coast
Sharatin Bay and Estuary

Property Name:	KAP 4021: North Kodiak Island Coast Sharatin Bay and Estuary
Owner:	Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, Trust Land Office
Agency Manager:	Proposed for ADNR Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation
Appraised Value:	To be determined upon completion of appraisal
Funding Request	Not to exceed $2,800,000 including due diligence and closing costs
Acreage	Approximately 2,815 acres
Legal Description	Seward Meridian Alaska T. 27 S., R. 21 W. Sec. 7, Lot 1; Sec. 18, Lot 1; Sec. 19, Lot 1; Sec. 20, Lot 3; Sec. 29; Sec. 30, N 1/2, SE 1/4; Sec. 32, N 1/2, SE 1/4; Sec. 33, W 1/2. located in the Kodiak Recording District, Third Judicial District, State of Alaska.

Overview:
This project encompasses the permanent protection of approximately 2,815 acres in the Sharatin Bay area on northern Kodiak Island. The Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority is the current owner of the surface and subsurface estate of the property and the Trust Land Office will oversee the sale. The project aims to acquire the surface estate with a no surface occupancy clause restricting use of the surface of the property by the subsurface owner.

The property contains lands ranked in the highest priority category in the 2014 EVOSTC Habitat Land Prioritization, compiled by Great Land Trust, for its contributions to services and resources injured by the spill. The parcel is also in close proximity to prior EVOSTC habitat protection projects and thus builds on past EVOSTC efforts. The Sharatin Bay/Estuary property will be conveyed to the State of Alaska, Department of Natural Resources, to be managed by the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation. A conservation easement will be held by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management.

Injured services, species recovery and habitat protection is the EVOSTC's focus in the spill area. Acquisition of this property would contribute to EVOSTC area-wide goals including recreation uses and habitat protection for injured species. Injured species are dependent on the coastal, wetland, and upland habitats provided by this parcel. Protection of the Sharatin Bay and Estuary parcel would conserve high value habitat for fish, shore birds, seabirds, migratory birds, and marine mammal species.

This acquisition from the Mental Health Lands Trust Authority is immediately adjacent to the proposed North Kodiak Coast (Anton Larsen Bay and Sharatin Bay) acquisition of lands owned by Ouzinkie Native Corporation, and together with that purchase it would provide habitat protection for the entire Sharatin Bay Estuary. The project is consistent with the Kodiak Island Borough Comprehensive Plan Update and the Kodiak Road System Trails Plan adopted by the Kodiak Island Borough. A map and photos are also attached showing the location and surrounding land ownership of the property.

Added Benefit to Past EVOS Trustee Council Actions:
The EVOS Trustee Council has long focused on the habitat and recreational values of the Kodiak Archipelago and its importance to spill affected resources and services. The project contains lands in proximity to Termination Point, which was approved and funded by EVOSTC resolution 15-03 dated November 12, 2013, and it also would extend the protection provided by the proposed purchase of the immediately adjacent ONC lands at Sharatin Bay and Anton Larson Bay, thus protecting the whole of the Sharatin Bay Estuary.

Property Description and Habitat:
The area is primarily undeveloped and is accessible from the Anton Larsen Bay boat launch or by float plane. The project contains valuable habitat including continuous eel grass and kelp beds, spawning and rearing habitat for anadromous fish, seabird nesting sites, and estuarine and terrestrial wetlands. The area supports commercial and sport fishing, goat, bear, and deer hunting, waterfowl hunting, multi-day kayaking and hiking opportunities. The lands would also be accessible from the planned Anton Larsen Bay road extension and development of a new ice-free boat launch on the adjacent ONC property, which will improve a year-round transportation link between outlying communities off the Kodiak road system and Kodiak.

Protection Benefits:
A number of Injured Species would benefit from acquisition of the subject parcel, including sea otters, harbor seals, Double-crested and Pelagic Cormorants, Black Oystercatchers, Pigeon Guillemots, Harlequin Ducks, Marbled Murrelets and Bald Eagles. Acquisition of the parcel would provide permanent habitat protection for these species and assist the EVOSTC in reaching and maintaining its recovery objectives in the Kodiak Archipelago.
The parcel also contains important wetlands, including Fish and Wildlife Service-identified nationally declining freshwater forest/shrub, freshwater emergent, estuarine and marine wetlands. Estuarine wetlands provide habitat for Intertidal Communities and other Injured Species. Marine wetlands provide habitat for Subtidal Communities. Acquisition of this parcel would assure high function of these wetlands, which would benefit Injured Species.

Kelp beds and eel grass beds occur along the perimeter of Sharatin Bay, which provide a productive and dynamic marine ecosystem. The continuous kelp beds and eel grass beds provide important juvenile fish habitat that could bolster injured commercial, sport and subsistence fisheries, particularly salmon fisheries. These subtidal communities comprise various invertebrate species, such as amphipods, polychaete worms, snails, clams, sea urchins and crabs. Subtidal habitats provide shelter and food for an array of nearshore fishes, birds, and marine mammals.

Sharatin Bay is near the city of Kodiak, which is the third largest fishing port in the United States. The natural abundance of fish and wildlife and wild setting provide fish and wildlife oriented recreational and subsistence opportunities for visitors and residents. This parcel would add lands open to the public in the Kodiak area and contribute to recreation and tourism, which were identified by the EVOSTC as an Injured Service. The purchase of this parcel would also continue to contribute to the perpetual health of the local Native population and benefit subsistence harvest levels, which is identified as an Injured Human Service.

Potential Threats:
This project represents a unique opportunity to acquire lands near the City of Kodiak suitable for management for public access consistent with State Park uses. Many of the public lands on Kodiak available for hunting and fishing require expensive travel by boat or plane. This parcel provides those opportunities easily accessible by boat via the Anton Larsen Bay boat launch. The subject property provides essential habitat and migratory grounds for numerous species of fish, birds, and mammals and recreational lands important to the community of Kodiak. Conservation of this parcel would eliminate the threat of future habitat fragmentation or loss from construction, subdivision, and development or restricted access.

Proposed Management:
The property would be conveyed in fee simple surface estate to the State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources, to be managed by the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, with a conservation easement to be held by BLM.

Funding Request: Not to exceed $2,800,000, including due diligence and closing costs.

The Mental Health Trust Lands Office follows state statutes regarding the disposal of lands. The statute requires that, "the disposal of Trust land shall be made on a competitive basis, unless (1) the executive director, in consultation with the trust authority, determines in a written decision required by 11 AAC 99.040 that a non-competitive disposal is in the best interest of the trust and its beneficiaries." This purchase would comply with all Mental Health Trust Authority processes and procedures.

Photo: Sharatin Bay

Photo: Sharatin Bay

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Mental Health Trust Lands - Sharatin Bay

The subject property ranked as high priority in the Great Land Trust EVOS Habitat Land Prioritization:2014

- Roads
- Trails
- Mental Health Trust Land - Sharatin Bay
- Proposed Ouzinkie EVOS Project
- Ouzinkie Native Corporation Land
- Afognak Native Corporation
- Bureau of Land Management
- US Coast Guard
- State of Alaska

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EVOS Habitat Prioritization
2014