Property Name:	KEN 4017: Ninilchik River Property
Owner:	Cooper Properties, LLC
Agency Manager:	Proposed for ADF&G
Appraised Value:	To be determined upon completion of appraisal
Funding Request	Up to $400,000
Acreage	Approximately 31.59 acres
Legal Description	T 2S R 14W SEC 2 SEWARD MERIDIAN HM 0970042 COOPER SUB RIVER ADDN TRACT B

Overview:

The Cooper parcel is an approximately 31.59-acre property encompassing over one mile of streambank frontage along the Ninilchik River, roughly 3.1 miles upstream from the mouth, and which includes the river's floodplain, extensive high-value wetlands, and wetlands drainage slopes abutting the Ninilchik River. The property is located roughly 1.4 miles southeast of the community of Ninilchik on the Southern Kenai Peninsula, and .7 miles upstream from the State of Alaska's Ninilchik State Recreation Area. The acquisition of this parcel will protect wetland and riparian habitat of spill-injured species and secure public access to the river for sport fishing and other recreation activities, which is currently not road accessible at this location. The proposed parcel is undeveloped except for an ADF&G managed fish weir, which was installed and is being maintained under a land use agreement with the current landowners. Although the weir is on the Cooper property and requires a land lease for access and operation, additional necessary access for operation of the weir is through a third party's private property for an annual fee. A section line easement from Garrison Ridge Road to the Cooper property will allow for direct public and agency access to the river once the parcel is purchased. The attached photos and maps show the parcel and its location along the Ninilchik River in relation to the Ninilchik State Recreation Area.

ADF&G is proposed as the parcel's manager. ADF&G is also the manager of a separate 78.8-acre property on the Ninilchik River that is an adjacent downstream parcel from the Cooper parcel.

Added Benefit to Past EVOS Trustee Council Actions:

Since 1994 the Council has made efforts to protect high habitat-value lands on the Kenai Peninsula and has acquired several properties on the Ninilchik, Deep Creek, Kasilof and Anchor Rivers containing significant riverine, riparian, and wetland habitats. This parcel would be additive to these earlier Council purchases by expanding protection already present in the Ninilchik River watershed. In addition, the acquisition would ensure ADF&G's long-term use of a small portion of the Cooper property for its fish weir, which is key infrastructure needed for ADF&G management of Ninilchik River fisheries, particularly king and coho salmon. Marine fisheries for both species occur off the mouth of the Ninilchik River. The small size of the Ninilchik River is also conducive to shore-based recreational angling from the parcel. The productive fish runs of the Ninilchik contribute food sources for other nearshore species including river otters, harbor seals, sea birds, sea otters, sea lions and whales.

Protection Benefits:

The parcel encompasses high-value riverine and wetland habitats for EVOS injured species and ranked high in the 2014 EVOSTC Habitat Land Prioritization compiled by Great Land Trust. It includes land extending from the toe slope to the riverbank of the Ninilchik River and encompasses both sides of the riverbank for the length of the property, providing habitat for migratory waterfowl, shorebirds, raptors, beaver, river otter, muskrat, mink, and anadromous fish. The parcel benefits the following EVOS-affected species and services: Bald eagles, Barrow's goldeneye, Dolly Varden, pink salmon, river otters, and EVOS affected services including commercial fishing, passive use, recreation and tourism.

In addition to the habitat provided for EVOS-affected species, the parcel provides the following additional resources. The naturally vegetated riverbank helps provide excellent rearing and/or overwintering habitat for Dolly Varden, Chinook, Pink, and Coho salmon and Steelhead. Migratory waterfowl, shorebirds, and raptors use this area for feeding, nesting, and staging. Willow production in the riparian area along the Ninilchik River is also important for moose, especially in winter. The property contains approximately 94% riparian wetlands. Consistent with its habitat-protective status, access for public fish and wildlife-oriented recreation also would be enhanced by purchase of the Ninilchik River property.

Potential Threats:

The parcel contains desirable Ninilchik River frontage. It is not far off of the existing road system and could be subdivided into small house lots. The landowner plans to list the property with a real estate agent if the EVOSTC does not purchase it.

Proposed Management:

Title to the property would be held by the State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources, and management would be overseen by ADF&G. A conservation easement would be conveyed to the U.S./BLM.

Funding Request:

Up to $400,000, including due diligence and closing costs, with the final purchase price to be determined upon completion of the appraisal in accordance with EVOSTC, USPAP and UASFLA standards. Due diligence will be completed by Kachemak Heritage Land Trust or other contracted entity with up to $32,700 of the total requested funding.

Looking east from adjacent upland property across the Cooper Property river bottom.

Looking west from adjacent upland property across the Cooper Property river bottom. The Garrison Road Bridge is visible at left and the ADF&G fish weir (which had not yet been installed at the time of this photo) is located upstream of the bridge.

KPB Parcel Map of Nilnilchik River/Deep Creek Area. Cooper parcel shown in bold yellow in relation to the Ninilchik River State Recreation Area.

Overview aerial imagery map of Ninilchik River property on Ninilchik River, Kenai Peninsula.

Close up aerial imagery map of Ninilchik River property and adjacent ADFG-managed parcel on Ninilchik River, Kenai Peninsula.

CURVE	RADIUS	LENGTH	TANGENT	CHORD	BEARING	DELTA
C1	3912.77'	575.08'	288.06'	574.56'	N34°08'26"W	08°25'16"
C2	3962.77'	704.60'	353.33'	703.61'	N33°15'46"W	10°11'15"

Subdivision map of Cooper Property on the Ninilchik River.