



# PRESS RELEASE

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## **Donor Partnership Conserves Critical Salmon Habitat**

*Three tracts near Alaska's Wood Tikchik State Park conserved*

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Anchorage, AK –Three properties on the Agulowak River and Lake Nerka within Alaska's Wood Tikchik State Park have been purchased by a group of corporate and non-profit conservation groups with pooled funds. The parcels total 261 acres and sold for \$614,000.

Non-profit funds came from Wildlife Forever of Minnesota and The Vital Ground Foundation. Corporate donors included Columbia Sportswear, Normark Rapala, Orvis, Pure Fishing, and Woolrich, all involved in outdoor retailing or fishing tackle manufacturing, and from Bristol Bay Native Corporation and General Communication Inc. Congressional funds were also used for the purchases with all funds being matched by The Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation.

The partnership supports the Southwest Alaska Conservation Coalition's goal of conserving wild salmon habitat, increasing rural incomes, and securing public access for fishing, hunting, kayaking, camping and hiking.

“The Coalition and the landowners are pleased to see these nationally important areas conserved,” said Glenn Elison, Alaska Director for The Conservation Fund and land purchase coordinator. The Conservation Fund is an Arlington, Virginia-based non-profit group that identifies key habitat areas across the country, negotiates agreements and raises funds to protect them.

“Two of the parcels are located on either end of the Agulowak River and the third is nearby on the shore of Lake Nerka,” Elison said. “The Agulowak provides spawning habitat for up to 200,000 sockeye salmon and an additional 1.2 million sockeye pass through the Agulowak en route to spawning grounds higher in the watershed.”

The Wood Tikchik State Park is 1.6 million acres, Alaska’s largest state park. The parcels are key access points for an area that provides 1,700 angler days of recreation targeting salmon, rainbow trout and grayling. In addition, moose, brown and black bears, beavers, otters, fox, wolverine, and wolves are common in the area.

“Wildlife Forever members want us to find exceptional areas to conserve and we’re thrilled to support this three parcel land acquisition,” said Douglas H. Grann, President and CEO of Wildlife Forever. “We like to target our funds to projects that conserve exceptional natural resources and invest in the lands and waters that our members and all Americans can use and enjoy.”