

**Conservation Lands Advisory Committee
Report for March 9, 2026, City Council General Meeting**

The City of Gustavus Conservation Lands Advisory Committee was established by Resolution CY24-2 in May 2024. Members are:

John Barry	Tanner Horst
Larry Landry	Shelley Owens (Secretary)
Colleen Stansbury	Kathy Streveler
Mike Taylor (Chair)	Susan Warner

Our charge from Resolution CY 24-2

Mission: Provide recommendations, strategies, and supporting documentation to the City on oversight and stewardship of conservation lands within the City boundaries.

Scope: The committee’s efforts shall be limited to undeveloped lands recognized or formally identified for their conservation values. Developed properties and City lands with industrial or intensive recreational uses are outside the committee’s scope.

Activities may include:

- Develop a framework for Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs), comment on management plans, joint projects, and title transfers with owners of conservation lands and conservation easements on those lands.
- Help develop formal deed instruments for full protection of all conservation lands.
- Participate in management planning on the City’s behalf.
- Advise private owners in designating protection for the golf course area.
- Advise or facilitate transfer or association of private parcels to larger conservation units.

We last reported on December 8, 2025. Following Southeast Alaska Land Trust’s successful conclusion of a five-year temporary conservation easement in June with the DeBoer Family to protect the 187 acre Beach Meadows tracts, we were awaiting results of Southeast Alaska Land Trust’s application for a US Fish and Wildlife Service grant under the North American Wetlands Conservation Act to fund a perpetual conservation easement for the Beach Meadows. And, we were printing materials and planning for our January exhibit of conservation maps and descriptions at the Gustavus Community Center with an opening reception scheduled for Jan 9, 2026.

The Committee has since met on January 4, 2026, at the GCC to set up the exhibit, and on Feb 6, 2026, for regular business at City Hall. We are pleased to report progress toward our assigned directives.

Beach Meadows Conservation Easement

The Southeast Alaska Land Trust’s 2025 grant application for funding under the North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA), of a perpetual easement was not successful. However, feedback and encouragement from reviewers was so positive that SEALT decided to re-apply in 2026. As of August 4th, 2025, the US Fish and

Wildlife service has received \$102.9 million for wetland conservation projects under NAWCA through public-private partnerships.

<https://www.fws.gov/press-release/2025-08/interior-department-announces-1029-million-wetland-conservation-projects>

Furthermore, in 2026 SEALT will also be applying to another US Fish and Wildlife fund under a National Coastal Wetlands Conservation (NCWC) grant for up to a million dollars, and through yet an additional solicitation for private funding.

<https://www.fws.gov/service/national-coastal-wetlands-conservation-grants>

A critical factor in favorable reviews of the first NAWCA grant application was the amount and quality of community engagement in the project. From initial project seed money from the City to citizen participation in the Beach Meadows photo contest and gallery reception in May, the people of Gustavus have shown how deeply these lands are valued by the community. The successful Lands Maps exhibit at the Community Center, will undoubtedly bolster these next grant opportunities.

Conservation Lands Mapping and Descriptions—GCC Exhibit

In addition to protection for the Beach Meadows (Golf Course) lands, the City of Gustavus Conservation Lands Advisory Committee was initially charged in 2025 to conduct and compile an inventory of local conservation lands. In January, 2026, the Committee hosted an exhibit at the Gateway Gallery of the Gustavus Community Center featuring maps of Gustavus conservation lands. The maps were annotated to include text descriptions and conservation measures for each tract, and related materials such as management plans and access information. The January 9 reception was postponed to January 30 due to heavy snow. The reception was a popular winter event with 43 people attending.

Exhibit left side



Exhibit right side



With the help of the City Clerk, a link and instructions to download a map and free app to a phone are now available on the City C-LAC web site. At the reception Susan Warner demonstrated how to use the map app Avenza on the Gustavus Beach Meadows and distributed instruction handouts.

The Southeast Alaska Land Trust kindly sent their staff member Bailey Williams to attend the Gallery exhibit reception. She answered questions and described SEALT's work to secure funding for the perpetual easement—a high priority for 2026. Bailey

also contacted two local bird enthusiasts who can help to see if data from the Gustavus Christmas 2025 bird count might be useful in future grant applications.

Exhibit reception



SEALT'S Bailey Williams at reception



The Committee hopes to repeat the exhibit in September 2026, when more summer seasonal folks can see it. Committee members are working with the City Clerk to post the exhibit contents to the committee's city web site. So, stay tuned.

We are grateful to John Barry for developing land maps, the City of Gustavus for covering map printing costs, Colleen Stansbury for donating the Gallery fee and supplying beverages for the reception, Susan Warner for arranging for printing of SEALT exhibit materials and for organizing reception food, and Lillian Ruedrich for printing and mounting photos. The exhibit was mounted by Susan Warner, Lillian Ruedrich, Betty Hanson, Tanner Horst, and Mike Taylor. Thanks to Breanna Lawson at the GCC for promotion of the exhibit and reception.

TNC Gustavus Forelands Preserve

The committee's team of Kathy Streveler, Tanner Horst, Larry Landry, and Colleen Stansbury monitor developments with The Nature Conservancy Gustavus Forelands Preserve. TNC has been short staffed in Alaska this year. We hope to resume discussions with them soon.

The committee will meet at 3:00 pm, Friday, March 1, 2026, at City Hall. Interested members of the public are welcome to join us in person or by Zoom.

Mike Taylor

Conservation Lands Advisory Committee Chair