

**Kenai Peninsula Borough
Alaska
Proclamation**

WHEREAS, Kachemak Bay, Cook Inlet, the Gulf of Alaska and all other estuaries are integral to the State of Alaska; and

WHEREAS, estuaries are unique coastal environments that support more life per square inch than any other ecosystem on Earth, providing habitat for countless species of fish, shellfish, birds, and marine mammals; and

WHEREAS, National Estuaries Week is an annual celebration of the vibrant coastal areas where rivers meet the sea; and celebrating this day presents an opportunity to learn more about these coastal ecosystems and how Alaska's citizens can help to protect them; and

WHEREAS, estuaries provide numerous protection benefits to coastal populations, acting as a first line of defense against storms, rising sea levels, and the effects of a changing climate as well as a natural water filtration system; and

WHEREAS, protecting our local fish habitats and populations will benefit Alaska's commercial fishing industries which generate over \$5 billion annually and support over 78,000 jobs, and whose harvest is 21% comprised of estuarine-dependent species; and

WHEREAS, Alaska's living resources are the second most productive in the nation in terms of contribution to GDP from employment; and

WHEREAS, Alaska's coastal boroughs generated over \$52 billion in GDP in 2013, over 85% of the state's total GDP; and

WHEREAS, Alaska has the nation's highest leveraging ratio of federal coastal program dollars, generating nearly \$43 of additional investment for every \$1 of federal investment, demonstrating the state's commitment to protecting coastal ecosystems; and

WHEREAS, protecting and restoring our estuaries is vital to our local and national economy because they sustain the fisheries that feed America, ensure outdoor recreational opportunities for current and future generations, reduce the costly impacts of natural hazards, and support local jobs which cannot be exported.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Mike Navarre, Mayor of the Kenai Peninsula Borough, do hereby proclaim September 17-24, 2016 as:

National Estuaries Week

in Kenai Peninsula Borough and encourage all citizens to take part in the festivities and to learn more about our local estuaries and their importance to our economy and quality of life.



Mike Navarre
Mike Navarre
Mayor