

Introduced by: Dunne
Date: 04/03/18
Action: Adopted
Vote: 8 Yes, 1 No, 0 Absent

**KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH
RESOLUTION 2018-015**

A RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING 2018 AS THE “YEAR OF THE BIRD”

WHEREAS, 2018 marks the centennial of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, one of the earliest wildlife conservation laws enacted anywhere in the world; and

WHEREAS, National Geographic, Audubon, Birdlife International and Cornell Lab of Ornithology together with dozens of other organizations created an alliance to declare 2018 as the “Year of the Bird”; and

WHEREAS, there is considerable interest in birding, nationally, in Alaska, and on the Kenai Peninsula:

- the 2016 U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation states that “over 86 million people 16 years old and older fed, photographed, and observed wildlife [of which 45.1 million were bird observers] in 2016 [and] spent \$75.9 billion on their activities [an increase of] 28% from 2011.”
- the National Audubon Society says that “Alaska is home to some of the best birding in North America” (<http://www.audubon.org/news/birding-alaska>),
- *A Birders Guide to Alaska* by George West says “The Kenai Peninsula is a microcosm of Alaska, including all habitats except high-arctic tundra the Kenai is a good way to enjoy a taste of birding in Alaska”; and

WHEREAS, the Kenai Peninsula, because of its diverse habitat, attracts nearly 300 bird species (about 60% of the birds found in Alaska) including birds that are resident, migrants, breeders and even some that overwinter here; and

WHEREAS, the year-round abundance of birds on the Kenai Peninsula creates outstanding opportunity for local and visiting birders, as evidenced by the fact that among all the boroughs in Alaska, the Kenai Peninsula Borough has the second highest number of checklists on eBird; and

WHEREAS, the Kenai Peninsula regularly reports rare bird sightings that often bring avid birders from all over to the Kenai Peninsula, an example being the international acclaim that Homer received in December 2013 when Neil Hayward came all the way from Florida to tie the North American “Big Year” record by seeing a rare Rustic Bunting reported by a local birder (<http://homernews.com/homer-news/local-news/2013-12-31/birder-achieves-big-year-in-homer>); and

WHEREAS, the many field trips, national speakers, and educational workshops offered by the Kachemak Bay Shorebird Festival and the Kenai Peninsula Bird Festival which showcase the birding opportunities that the Kenai Peninsula offers both borough residents and visitors; and

WHEREAS, The Year of the Bird gives the Kenai Peninsula Borough and its residents an opportunity to recognize and celebrate the importance of bird conservation efforts accomplished by many local, state, and federal agencies throughout the borough; and

WHEREAS the Kenai Peninsula Borough is headquarters for several state and federal resource management agencies that have locally based staff who manage local lands and waters and routinely conduct research and monitoring projects that provide a better understanding of our fauna (including bird populations and habitat) and flora, including:

- Kachemak Bay State Park managed by the Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation
- Kachemak Bay, Anchor River/Fritz Creek, Fox River Flats, Homer Airport, and Clam Gulch Critical Habitat Areas managed by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game
- Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge with its Islands and Ocean Visitor Center, managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Kachemak Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve
- NOAA's Kasitsna Bay Laboratory operated by University of Alaska Fairbanks
- Kenai National Wildlife Refuge (Moose Range) with its new Visitor Center
- Kenai Fjords National Park and visitor center.
- Chugach National Forest
- The Alaska Sea Life Center in Seward; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of the diverse and productive habitat that the Kenai Peninsula has for birds, the National Audubon Society has recognized 19 areas as Important Bird Areas (IBAs) on the Kenai Peninsula, (<http://ak.audubon.org/conservation/important-bird-areas>); and

WHEREAS, the Kenai Peninsula Wildlife Viewing Trail Guide has 65 sites that encompass the Kenai's major wildlife habitats ranging from roadside platforms to backcountry trails, offering borough residents and visitors accessible opportunity to view birds; and

WHEREAS, Homer and Soldotna have campuses of the University of Alaska Anchorage that offer classes and student research opportunities related to birds and other wildlife; and

WHEREAS, Homer and Kenai/Soldotna are the homes of Kachemak Bay Birders and Keen-eye Birders, both very active local organizations that promote the enjoyment and protection of the Kenai Peninsula's native birds and their habitat through citizen science, field trips, education and stewardship. Also, Kachemak Bay Birders sponsors the annual Kachemak Bay Shorebird Monitoring Project that collaborates internationally with shorebird biologists; and

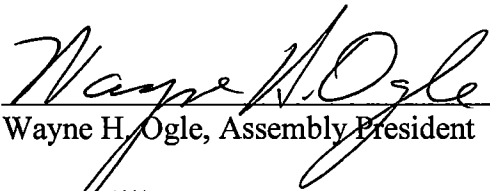
WHEREAS, Homer is the home of Kachemak Crane Watch, a citizens' organization whose goal is to study, foster and protect the local Sandhill Crane population;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE ASSEMBLY OF THE KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH:

SECTION 1. That in recognition of the outstanding opportunities that exist on the Kenai Peninsula to appreciate birds, the Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly hereby recognizes 2018 as "The Year of the Bird", and thereby encourages its citizens to continue to make the Kenai Peninsula area and surrounding waters a bird-friendly place to live or visit.

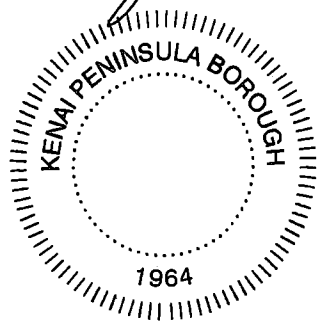
SECTION 2. That this resolution takes effect immediately upon its adoption.

ADOPTED BY THE ASSEMBLY OF THE KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH THIS 3RD DAY OF APRIL, 2018.


Wayne H. Ogle, Assembly President

ATTEST:


John Blankenship, MMC, Borough Clerk



Yes: Bagley, Carpenter, Dunne, Fischer, Hibbert, Smalley, Ogle
No: Blakeley
Absent: None