

Introduced by: Sprague
Date: 05/20/08
Action: Adopted
Vote: 7 Yes, 0 No, 2 Absent

**KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH
COMMENDING RESOLUTION**

**A RESOLUTION COMMENDING ROBERT RUFFNER FOR BEING NAMED A
2008 NATIONAL RIVER HERO BY RIVER NETWORK**

WHEREAS, River Network is a national nonprofit organization working for clean and healthy waters, with their mission being to help people understand, protect and restore rivers and their watersheds; and

WHEREAS, in 2002, River Network inaugurated the annual National River Heroes Award to recognize individuals who provide leadership, inspire the work of others, use innovative strategies to achieve significant results, and foster the growth and sustainability of a watershed community; and

WHEREAS, after moving to Soldotna in 1996, Robert Ruffner began volunteering for a local group of citizens who were working to start a nonprofit organization to care for the Kenai, and was even listed as a formal “asset” (along with “office furniture” and “the Kenai River”) when the nascent group sat down for its initial strategic planning session; and

WHEREAS, in the summer of 1997, the Kenai Watershed Forum became a formal organization, and the board hired Ruffner as its first director and only employee; and

WHEREAS, in over a decade of leadership at the Kenai Watershed Forum (KWF), Ruffner has transformed the organization from a fledgling group with one employee and a budget best described as “seed money” to a highly respected local entity with nine employees and an annual budget of approximately \$2 million; and

WHEREAS, accomplishments of the Kenai Watershed Forum include the first systematic water quality collection program and baseline study of the Kenai River, the first large-scale culvert assessment of the Kenai Peninsula, the Fish Passage Restoration Program, wetlands mapping, and the development of a large-scale watershed education program; and

WHEREAS, in recent years, the Kenai Watershed Forum has expanded its focus to cover the entire Kenai Peninsula, an area of over 14,000 square miles and 15 major watersheds; and

WHEREAS, in May 2008, Robert Ruffner was named a National River Hero by River Network;

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

SECTION 1. That the Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly recognizes Robert Ruffner for being named a 2008 National River Hero by River Network.

SECTION 2. That a copy of this resolution be presented to Robert Ruffner and the Kenai Watershed Forum.

SECTION 3. That this resolution takes effect immediately upon its adoption.

ADOPTED BY THE ASSEMBLY OF THE KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH THIS 20TH DAY OF MAY, 2008.

Grace Merkes, Assembly President

ATTEST:

Johni Blankenship, Interim Borough Clerk

Yes: Fischer, Knopp, Long, Martin, Smith, Sprague, Merkes

No: None

Absent: Gilman, Superman