estuaries

where rivers meet the sea

Ten Ways to Protect Estuaries

1 **Learn more about estuaries!** Visit www.estuaries.gov.

2 **Keep septic systems working properly.** Pump your system every three years.

3 **Pave less.** Hard surfaces hasten runoff and increase pollution and erosion.

4 **Adhere to "no-wake" zones when on your boat.** Waves destroy shorelines and increase erosion.

5 **Think before your pour.** Many hazardous products flow from household drains through sewage treatment plants and into coastal bodies of water.

6 **Fish respectfully.** Follow "catch and release" practices and keep more fish alive.

7 **Create non-toxic pesticides.** A bit of soap and water does the job and keeps harmful chemicals from ending up in nearby waterways.

8 **Use native plants.** Garden and landscape with plants native to your area to reduce the need for watering and fertilizing.

9 **Respect habitat.** Treat the homes of vital marine life with care. Habitat and survivial go hand-in-hand. When habitat disappears, so do many plants and animals.

10 **Take action!** Organize a stream or beach cleanup. Encourage your local newspaper to write a story, or ask an expert to speak at your community organization or local school.