



NH Fish and Game Commission Announces 2016 Awards of Excellence

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MEDIA: High-resolution images of award recipients are available by selecting images for larger view.

CONCORD, NH -- The New Hampshire Fish and Game Commission recently honored several individuals with 2016 Commission Awards of Excellence for outstanding efforts in the conservation field in support of the NH Fish and Game Department's mission.



"Each of these individuals has contributed in important ways to the work of New Hampshire's wildlife agency," said Commission Chairman Ted Tichy.

The 2016 Commission Awards of Excellence (presented on April 12, 2017):

VOLUNTEER AWARD OF EXCELLENCE

Jessie Tichko, of Canterbury, NH

Jessie Tichko is a long-time volunteer of the Department who is involved in many different programs. She is a volunteer instructor for the Let's Go Fishing and Becoming and Outdoors Woman (BOW) programs. She serves on planning committees for BOW and the Department's Wild Game Culinary Adventure. She is on the fundraising committee for Barry Conservation Camp and volunteers at the Department's big spring event, Discover WILD NH Day.

The many letters of support received for Jessie describe her as "a force to be



reckoned with.” “Kind and patient nature.” “Embodies the true spirit and meaning of this award.” “Not quite sure when she sleeps.” “From hunting to fishing, to tying her own flies, to volunteering, Jessie simply does it all. And she does it all with the biggest, most contagious smile you have ever seen.”



“Jessie’s extraordinary efforts and personal touch makes Fish and Game Programs excel,” said Fish and Game Commissioner Tom Hubert. “She truly is an ambassador for Fish and Game, and for the future of hunting and fishing.”

CONSERVATION ORGANIZATION AWARD OF EXCELLENCE

Nancy Bell, of Shrewsbury, VT



Nancy is the New Hampshire and Vermont Director of The Conservation Fund and has worked with them since 1995. She is recognized among her peers for her excellent skills in communication, team building and collaboration. She has been described as a master at creating partnerships and collaboration to conserve working forests and wildlife habitat. Her unparalleled level of enthusiasm and thoughtfulness make her an ideal partner in conservation efforts in New Hampshire.

Because of Nancy Bell and The Conservation Fund’s efforts, over 6,000 acres along the Beebe River and an additional 4,777 acres along the Androscoggin River are now conserved.

Altogether, the Conservation Fund has been instrumental in conserving 36,275 acres of important habitats in New Hampshire. These areas have outstanding habitat values and all are open to the public for outdoor recreation, including wildlife watching, hunting and fishing.

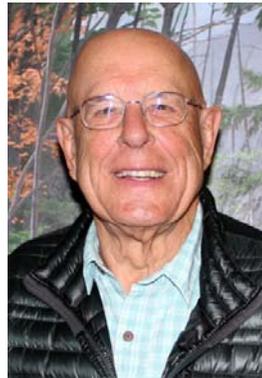
HABITAT STEWARDSHIP AWARD

Art Greene, of Littleton, NH

Art Greene can easily be described as a man with a clear passion for brook trout and rivers. For many years, he has engaged students from kindergarten through college in various stewardship activities such as river clean-ups and stream habitat assessments.

He has helped to inform local leadership and residents about the challenges and opportunities of natural resource stewardship in northern New Hampshire.

Art has been an integral partner of NH Fish and Game, especially in the recent stream crossing protocols project, which involved assessing over 1,000 stream crossings statewide.



Art’s service continues to stimulate community-scale discussions of stream stewardship within the Ammonoosuc Watershed, drawing the attention of local municipal leaders and river advisory committees. He has been successful in securing financial support for watershed protection work from local, regional and national funders.

Letters of support received on behalf of Art’s nomination said it well: “Art’s most enduring quality perhaps is his huge heart. Art has a heart as big as the White Mountains that he loves and inhabits. He is among the most humble and kind people I have met in my life.”

YOUTH CONSERVATIONIST AWARD OF EXCELLENCE

Jon Bromley and students from Oyster River High School Sustainability Club of Durham, NH



The young men and women of the Oyster River High School Sustainability Club in



Durham represent the future of land conservation in New Hampshire. Over the past year, they have worked diligently to protect 285 acres in the towns of Madbury, Durham and Lee. Last December, they organized an Italian dinner and raffle event that raised \$4,295. Through this project, the students are learning what it takes to conserve land and wildlife habitats. They have engaged their

local community and collaborated directly with peers, teachers and conservation organizations such as the Forest Society. The area, known as the Powder Major Farm and Forest, will also serve as an outdoor learning classroom for future students in the local communities.

“These students embody the mission of the NH Fish and Game Department,” said Commissioner Tom Hubert. “Their efforts will not only conserve important natural resources in their community, but also provide opportunities for the public to use and appreciate these resources for generations to come.”

In addition, two **YOUTH CERTIFICATES OF RECOGNITION** were presented.

Hannah Verville of Loudon, NH, is 10 years old, full of enthusiasm and energy and loves Barry Conservation Camp. She has attended Barry Camp for three years and will be there again this summer. When Hannah learned that there was a fundraising campaign taking place for an addition to expand the dining hall and provide indoor classroom space, she wanted to help.



With the help of her mother and grandmother, Hannah organized a cookie sale. She designed and distributed a flyer to advertise and take orders for her cookie sale. Within three days, she had orders for 70 dozen cookies (quick math: that equals 840 cookies!). Using her grandmother’s recipe for chocolate chip cookies, and her mother’s kitchen, Hannah raised about \$600 that put the Barry Camp Dining Hall Addition fundraising campaign over its goal.



Christopher Heckman of Deerfield, NH, is 12 years old and has been volunteering at the Great Bay Discovery Center since he was 6. In just the past three years, since Discovery Center staff began recording his volunteer hours, he has accumulated 74 hours of volunteer time. He has been described as one of the “most well-versed unofficial spokespeople” for the NH Fish and Game Department.

Christopher educates visitors at the Great Bay Discovery Center’s touch tank. He also volunteers at the Discover WILD New Hampshire Day event held in Concord each spring. There, he can be found educating people about horseshoe crabs at the Great Bay Discovery Center’s table or walking around the event dressed up in a horseshoe crab costume. Wherever he goes, Christopher is a true ambassador of New Hampshire’s fish, wildlife and marine resources.

LANDOWNER APPRECIATION AWARD

Conan Eaton, of Lunenburg, VT

Mr. Conan’s land is located in Vermont, yet it provides direct access to the Connecticut River and an area known locally as Eaton’s Oxbow. This area is known by anglers for its plentiful pike, pickerel, perch and crappie, and by waterfowl hunters for some of the best duck and goose hunting around.

There is little public access to the area. Parking along the road is limited and steep embankments make getting to the water difficult and even dangerous at times.



NH CO Matt Holmes (right) and Vermont Game Warden

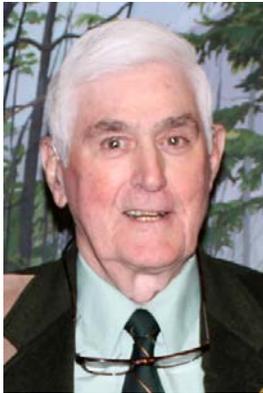
Sargent Trevor Szymanowski (left) accept the Landowner Relations award for Conan Eaton, of Lunenburg, VT, from Fish and Game Commissioner Tom Hubert.

Due to the generosity and understanding of Mr. Eaton and the Eaton Family, anglers and hunters have enjoyed years of access to this prime hunting and fishing area via the Auburn Star Farm. Hunters and anglers are allowed to drive through the farm complex and park on farm property, which undoubtedly impedes farm operations at times. Yet the Eaton's recognize the desire of the sporting public for access and graciously allow it.

In a world where nothing is free and "Posted" signs pop up like dandelions, the Eaton's exemplify a disappearing breed of landowner whose simple gift of access is worth more than money.

COMMUNICATIONS AWARD OF EXCELLENCE

William Carney, of Bow, NH



Many know Mr. William "Bill" Carney for his is monthly column in the *Hawkeye Hunting and Fishing News*. What many may not realize is Bill's extraordinary record of consistent communication over many years, or the amount of time, energy and research he puts into his writing.

Bill has been a member of the New England Outdoors Writers Association since the 1960s. He is a past president and now a life member and Director Emeriti of the Association. He also belongs to the Outdoor Writers Association of America; is a retired member of the Association of Great Lakes Outdoors Writers, and for ten years was a member of the Outdoor Writers Association of Canada. Prior to moving to New Hampshire, Bill wrote a weekly outdoor column for 15 years for a Lynn, Massachusetts, newspaper.

Currently Bill writes a monthly column in the *Hawkeye Hunting and Fishing News*; in fact, he was writing for the publication before it was purchased by the current owners and became known as the *Hawkeye*. His articles in the *Hawkeye* keep outdoor sports enthusiasts abreast of fishing, hunting, outdoor recreation and legislative issues. Bill has been described as one who "uses his skill and wit to look out for the best interests of New Hampshire sportsmen and sportswomen."

From the average person's perspective, it is hard to understand the amount of time and energy Bill puts into his writing. From phone calls, to library research to submitting Right-to-Know requests to the Department, Bill has spent countless hours over recent decades collecting and compiling information to raise awareness, defend sportsmen's right and advocate for sound wildlife management.

New Hampshire is fortunate to have an advocate such as Bill speaking and writing on behalf of hunters, anglers, trappers and conservationists alike.

ELLIS R. HATCH JR. COMMISSION AWARD OF EXCELLENCE

Theodore "Ted" Walski, of Langdon, NH

Ted Walski's name is part of local history in New Hampshire for his role in restoring wild turkeys to the state. During the 1960s, wild turkeys were non-existent in New Hampshire. Through a series of trap and transfers of wild turkeys around the state, careful monitoring, and regulated hunting seasons over the years, wild turkeys are now thriving, with an estimated 40,000 occurring statewide.

While Ted's legacy as the turkey biologist is widely known, we'd like to share a few details about this restoration that people may not know.

In the 1970s, when the turkey project was starting, NH Fish and Game did not have regional offices around the state. Ted bought a trailer from a local farmer, towed it to the State Barn in Alstead and parked it there. He put a Fish and Game sticker on it and that



became his office.

Ted helped establish the first local chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation in New Hampshire. In the late 1970s, he organized a meeting at the Keene Junior High School and that night, the Connecticut River Valley Chapter was born.

When the Department needed to buy radio telemetry equipment to keep track of the turkeys, the National Wild Turkey Federation did a fundraiser by selling Christmas trees. The trees were purchased from the Sebago Tree Company in Colebrook, by Ted, with his own money.

During the early days of the restoration, while relocating turkeys around the state, Ted was known to sleep in barns or in his truck so he could be up early and keep track of the birds.

After working so hard to bring wild turkeys back to New Hampshire, Ted supported opening a hunting season. He put on turkey hunting seminars to recruit and train turkey hunters.

In 1980, a total of 750 permits were issued by lottery and 31 wild turkeys were harvested. In 2015, a total of 19,659 turkey tags were sold and 5,048 turkeys were harvested.

There are seven award categories for New Hampshire Fish and Game Commission Awards of Excellence. If you are aware of a worthy individual or organization, please consider nominating them for the 2017 awards. Nominations must be submitted by December 31. For a description of the award categories and a nomination form, visit www.wildnh.com/about/commission-awards.html (<http://www.wildnh.com/about/commission-awards.html>).

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