

2010 WCC AWARDS

2010 Awards

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THE WISCONSIN CONSERVATION CONGRESS

STATEWIDE CONSERVATION ORGANIZATION



The Wisconsin Conservation Congress Awards Committee has selected **Salmon Unlimited of Wisconsin—Racine Chapter**, as the recipient of the **Statewide Conservation Organization of the Year** award. The organization was recognized and presented with the award at the annual Conservation Congress statewide meeting at The Lodge at Geneva Ridge, Lake Geneva.

For decades, Salmon Unlimited has spearheaded efforts to improve the Lake Michigan fishery. SU was instrumental in the purchase and operation of a portable weir to capture migrating trout and salmon for spawning purposes. They also raised money for and led the effort to design and build the Root River Steelhead Facility (RRSF), a crucial spawning facility for hatchery propagation and public education.

The organization continues to donate money for facility upgrades and maintenance at the RRSF and SU volunteers lead tours of the public fish viewing window where visitors can view migrating trout and salmon and participate in educational tours of the facility.

SU also contributes funds to enhance stream habitat (including the construction of LUNKER fish habitat structures below the Root River Steelhead Facility), improve stream carrying capacity, and protect eroding streambanks along Racine County's Root River. SU recently donated \$3,500 to the WDNR for the purchase of a steam cleaning system that prevents movement of invasive aquatic species between Lake Michigan and Wisconsin's Hatchery System. Racine Salmon Unlimited also donated funds to outfit Racine County and WDNR wardens with night vision capabilities and establish a Rover Patrol Program to protect and monitor the Root River during salmon and trout runs. In addition, SU has been involved with teaching the next generation of kids to fish for over 15 years. They hold an annual Kid's Fishing Clinic at Quarry Lake Park in Racine where nearly 500 kids and parents attend annually.

As always, the Conservation Congress thanks each of these organizations and their membership for their continued devotion to Wisconsin's natural resources and the mission of the Department of Natural Resources. The projects that these organizations have undertaken to protect and restore natural ecosystems are impressive, as are the educational opportunities provided. Once again, congratulations to the 2010 award recipients!



Salmon Unlimited was named the 2010 Statewide Organization of the Year by the Conservation Congress.

LOCAL CONSERVATION ORGANIZATION

The **Durand Sportsmen's Club** was honored as the recipient of the **Local Conservation Club of the Year** award.

This club of over 240 members sponsor hunter education courses, youth fishing seminars and contests, youth turkey hunts, a big buck contest, and provides funding for a local student scholarship.

Durand Sportsmen's Club members also participated in and provided funding for several local and area projects including the Chippewa River Stabilization, Restoration, Habitat, and Structure Improvement Project, the City of Durand River Beautification Project, the City of Durand Chippewa River Fish Habitat and Access Improvement, City of Durand Fish Habitat Permitting, Hubbard's Chippewa River Access Improvements, Tarrant Park playground equipment purchase and installation, tree planting and bird house making, and assisting with the Pepin County Shooting Range. The club also contributed to the Arkansas Storm Disaster Creek Park Restoration, the American Legion and VFW Memorial, and the Pepin Food Pantry.



Durand Sportsmen's Club President Bryan Bauer accepting his award.

EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR

The Conservation Congress Awards Committee has chosen **Mike Reiter** as the Conservation Educator of the Year. Mike believes strongly in conservation of natural resources and that education is a very important part of ensuring success towards this end. He provides natural resources-based educational services to a wide range of age groups. He writes a weekly "Outdoor Happenings" column in the local paper that provides insight to many aspects of our natural world. Mike has been a hunter education instructor for over 24 years, teaching more than 100 students each year.

He donates his time to the Boy Scouts as a merit badge counselor. In addition, he donates interpretive materials (such as animal skulls, etc.) and gives about 10-15 natural resource-related talks to local schools and State and County parks annually. He coordinates and runs the annual youth fishing contest at Willow River State Park (not only weighing each fish, but also takes the time to teach kids and parents how to clean and care for their catch if they wish to keep and eat it).



Mike Reiter accepts the 2010 Educator of the Year Award from Chairman Ed Harvey.

Mike also writes the newsletters for several area sports clubs, keeping members well informed on natural resource issues. He helped put together the Conservation Congress Wall of Fame, donating many of the items on display. Along with educating folks of all ages on current issues and efforts, he also helps all of us learn from the past and he takes it on himself to act as a historian for many local clubs, the Conservation Congress, and the WDNR. Mike gives countless hours working on resource-related efforts such as habitat improvement, committees, and rule changes, always making sure to involve others.

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

The Conservation Congress Awards Committee elected to award two local conservation organizations for their outstanding achievements in 2010.

In 2009, the 245-member strong **Stanley Sportsman's Club** of Chippewa County sponsored Hunter Education and ATV safety classes. They also sponsored a learn the hunt turkey program and provided mentors for participants, provided two mentors for a youth bear hunt, sponsored the Youth Outdoor Expo in Stanley where youngsters were provided hands-on experience. In addition, the active group also sponsored a youth pheasant hunt at a local game preserve, developed a public access area on Otter Lake, raised 200 pheasants for release, sponsored a fishing contest for kids and adults, assisted with a lake aeration project, and worked with the local food pantry.



The Stanley Sportsman's Club was recognized for their outstanding achievements at the 2010 Conservation Congress Annual Convention.



The **Star Prairie Fish & Game Association** of St. Croix County, with a membership of just over 50 members, has provided funding for and worked closely with other local conservation groups such as Pheasants Forever, Ducks Unlimited, and Trout Unlimited on several habitat projects. The group has also provided boy scouts with supplies and assistance for constructing bird houses, purchased equipment for a youth archery league and youth air rifle shooting team, planted trees, provided assistance with prairie restoration and trail construction in an area to be used by local schools. They have assisted an area lake association with fish crib construction, helped fund the purchase of 600 pheasants for local release, and conduct yearly wood duck and bluebird house construction, placement, and maintenance around St. Croix County. The group also conducts roadside clean ups along Highway 65, provides pontoon rides for residents of area nursing homes, created a handicapped accessible park, and assisted the WDNR with trout stocking. They also provide a scholarship for a local student, constructed and maintained loon nesting platforms, provided funds for farmers to purchase seed for wildlife food plots, and continues to provide both physical and monetary support to the Star Prairie Land Preservation Trust.



The Star Prairie Fish & Game Association was recognized for their outstanding achievements at the 2010 Conservation Congress Annual Convention.

WCC HEAVY LIFTER OF THE YEAR

John Edelblute recognized as the 2010 Conservation Congress Heavy Lifter Award Recipient

There are not many delegates who can remember a time before John Edelblute represented Washington County on the Conservation Congress.

He is a passionate waterfowl hunter and is currently the Vice-Chair of our Migratory Committee. He has served for many years as the secretary of the Migratory Committee. He has also served for many years on the Executive Council, and is a past secretary of the Congress.

For many years, John has routinely been called upon to represent the WCC on outside committees. John is always happy to help no

matter what the request entails. These committees deal with subjects ranging from migratory song birds to global warming. John has humbly acted when called upon and has received little recognition for this. In fact, most delegates are entirely unaware that these committees exist, or that we are active in them. Yet, I can assure you that, through John, you have been represented with dignity and class.

John — for all of the hard work you do on behalf of the Congress and your tireless commitment to our ideals, from myself and the entire Conservation Congress, a most sincere thanks and congratulations on receiving this award.

- Ed Harvey, WCC Chair

WCC RECOGNIZES DEPARTMENT STAFF

The Wisconsin Conservation Congress (WCC) at its Annual Convention on May 7-8, 2010 recognized several DNR employees for their ongoing, outstanding work on behalf of the natural resources of the state.

Scott Loomans Recognized for Cooperative Wildlife Management Efforts with WCC

Scott Loomans is a 1993 University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point, graduating with a degree in communications and journalism. But, as an avid hunter and angler who will spend part of his day in a turkey blind and the other part at the trout stream, his knowledge of our resources is abundant. He originally came to the Department of Natural Resources as an LTE in October of 1993, as the Wildlife Education Assistant and Wildlife Management Publications Editor.

In April 1995, Scott became the Assistant Furbearer Ecologist. In November 1997, he left the Department of Natural Resources for a full time staff position as a research assistant and committee clerk in the Legislature. He spent the next nine years there learning the in's and out's of the legislative procedure and policy-making process which became another skill that would become a great asset for the Department when Scott returned to the DNR in November of 2006 as the Wildlife Regulation & Policy Specialist. Scott's primary function is to promulgate wildlife management rules related to natural resources board policy, license and permit procedures, game and hunting, wildlife damage and nuisance control, captive wildlife, miscellaneous fur, fish, game and outdoor recreation, and the use of department properties. As the "rules guy" he works tirelessly and with little fanfare. Scott has worked closely with the Conservation Congress on an array of issues. Regardless if we agree or not, he has always been a valuable resource for us and a wealth of knowledge. His service and cooperation on wildlife-related issues has earned our respect, and our appreciation.



Scott Loomans with his wife after accepting the 2010 Wildlife Management Award

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WCC RECOGNIZES DEPARTMENT STAFF

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WCC Fisheries Management Award goes to Theresa Stabo



Theresa Stabo accepts the Fisheries Management award from Ed Harvey

For nearly 25 years, Theresa Stabo has worked to teach Wisconsin's children, their parents, and other adults about fish, their habitat, and fishing. Her work has included training more than 3,000 volunteer angler education instructors to bring fishing and an understanding of fish habitat to Wisconsin children, training teachers so they can incorporate aquatic education and fishing into their school curricula, the design of exhibits about fish and habitat at state fair and every major Wisconsin fish hatchery, and working with her counterparts in other states to promote fishing and conservation of fish habitat to children, teachers, and conservation organizations. She also produced useful publications that you see all over the state of Wisconsin — the yellow fishing ruler stuck on your boat, the Watch Me Grow poster in your grandchild's classroom, the fish ID cards in your tackle box, and the angler education curriculum that has been implemented in

many Wisconsin schools are a few examples. The Angler Education program is aligned to the Department of Public Instruction's state academic standards for K-12 education. Angler Education is designed to introduce students to the fishery in their community while beefing up their performance in core subject areas. Scout badge requirements and 4-H program needs are also met by leaders trained to use the Angler Education materials. She placed interns at the Urban Ecology Center in Milwaukee and the Boys and Girls Club in Madison to act as summer fishing coaches for disadvantaged youth. These initiatives are now self-sustaining. Theresa established the tackle loaner program and supported 52 loaner sites where teachers, youth leaders, families and individuals could borrow a rod and reel. She also planned and coordinated the design, production and installation of exhibits that tell our story and describe our work at our key fish hatcheries and facilities and the State Fair. Permanent exhibits can be seen at Governor Thompson in Spooner, Root River Steelhead Facility in Racine, C.D. "Buzz" Besadny Anadromous Fish Facility in Kewaunee, Les Voigt in Bayfield, and the award-winning Hatchery Education Center in Wild Rose. The goal of the exhibits is to help visitors to our properties understand the individual's role in maintaining a healthy, productive fishery and inspire them to get out and enjoy it.

Jeremy Peery, Rusk County, Awarded Law Enforcement Officer of the Year by WCC

Jeremy has been stationed in Rusk County for 10 years and has been the only warden located within the county for the last several years. Throughout Rusk County, Jeremy is widely respected for his enforcement program, his work ethic, and his public involvement. Jeremy helped organize the "Safe Hunters of Tomorrow" or "S.H.O.T.", a community action organization, in Rusk County. In 2009, he worked with S.H.O.T. and organized and participated in the sixth annual Youth Outdoor Field Day. Jeremy also worked collaboratively with the S.H.O.T. program and implemented the 2nd annual Rusk County Learn to Hunt Bears event. Equally important, Jeremy has built a strong community wardening program throughout the county. Of all the many meaningful community wardening programs Jeremy has been involved in, perhaps the most emotionally moving program involves youths fighting life-threatening illnesses. The first special hunt took place in 2005, and in 2009 Jeremy again organized a hunt for two special youth enabling them to enjoy "a hunt of a lifetime". Jeremy also co-hosted the first ever disabled hunt in Rusk County for veterans who were disabled while serving our country. Veterans were able to hunt on the Flambeau Mining Company property south of Ladysmith which has not been hunted in over 10 years. They had four hunters with mentors from the S.H.O.T. program and in one evening they harvested 6 deer. Each year, Jeremy volunteers for the "Shop-With-a-Cop" program with the Rusk County Sheriff Department. This program provides money for less fortunate children of the community allowing them to purchase Christmas gifts for them and their families. through his participation in the wrestling program, DARE program and various clubs and organizations.



WCC Chair Ed Harvey with Jeremy Peery, the 2010 WCC Law Enforcement Officer of the Year

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THE WISCONSIN CONSERVATION CONGRESS

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*"Let us work to together
to properly manage
and wisely use our
natural resources..."*
- Prolog of the Congress Creed

We're on the web!
Visit dnr.wi.gov and
search for
"Conservation Congress"



WCC Delegates volunteering
their time at the WCC display

WCC RECOGNIZES DEPARTMENT STAFF

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His participation with area youth extends beyond his desire for active participation in outdoor recreation but also builds character and responsibility Jeremy has an outstanding relationship with other law enforcement agencies in Rusk County. Jeremy is highly respected and is called routinely to assist these departments with enforcement efforts. Jeremy is an outstanding representative for the Department. He is always positive, very poised, and professional.

Congress chooses Doug Zeihen, Waukesha County, as the Conservation Waterfowl Officer of the Year

Doug Zeihen has been assigned to Waukesha County since 1992 and during this time has established an excellent working relationship with the people in his area. Waterfowl education and enforcement are priorities based on the resources in his area. Doug has the primary enforcement



*Waterfowl Officer of the Year, Doug Zeihen
with Dick Koerner, Chair of the WCC Migratory
Committee*

responsibility for Vernon Marsh, the Fox River, and several smaller areas including the Muskego River and Phantom Lake. Doug travels to Horicon to help teach warden recruits at their mandatory "Duck School." He is constantly working with individual waterfowl hunters to interpret laws and identify ducks. His approach is geared toward solving problems rather than just enforcing the law. Doug works in one of the most populous counties in Wisconsin. Doug has been heavily involved with a Learn to Hunt Waterfowl event that has been held for the past two years out of the Wern Valley Sportsman's Club. Doug also travels to UW Stevens Point each year to mentor students associated with the conservation program. Doug is a statewide leader in waterfowl enforcement and employs multiple methods for patrolling in his area to ensure coverage on different water types.

DO YOU KNOW AN ORGANIZATION OR INDIVIDUAL THAT SHOULD BE RECOGNIZED?

Each year the Conservation Congress seeks nominations for Statewide Conservation Organization of the Year, Local Conservation Organization of the Year and Educator of the Year.

If you know of a statewide or local conservation organization or individual dedicated to educating others on conservation matters, please consider nominating them for one of the Conservation Congress's annual awards.

Visit the WCC website at dnr.wi.gov for application and nomination forms.

