

# 2011 WCC AWARDS

## 2011 Awards

[Local](#)

[Educator](#)

[Outstanding  
Achievements](#)

[WCC Heavy Lifter](#)

[DNR Staff](#)

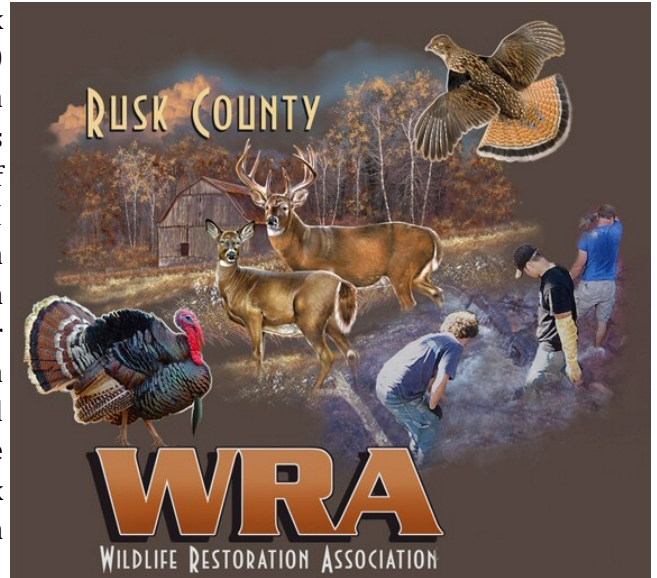
[Nomination Info](#)

## THE WISCONSIN CONSERVATION CONGRESS

### LOCAL CONSERVATION ORGANIZATION

The Wisconsin Conservation Congress Awards Committee has selected the **Rusk County Wildlife Restoration Association** as the recipient of the **Local Conservation Organization of the Year** award. The organization was recognized and presented with the award at the annual Conservation Congress statewide meeting at The Plaza Hotel and Suites in Wausau.

The population of Rusk County is less than 16,000 yet the Wildlife Restoration Association reports its membership to be in excess of 1,000...pretty remarkable! I cannot imagine that there is a Conservation Organization in the state, or anywhere for that matter, that is more a part of the community and that has overcome more obstacles than the Rusk County Wildlife Restoration Association.



They are extremely active in local schools, providing scholarships to Land and Water Conservation Summer Camp, judges for the Conservation Speaking Contest, and speakers for the Land and Water Conservation Summer Tour as well as for the Boy Scouts,

They completed fish habitat work, placing 720 cubic yards of stone and 600 whole trees in the Dairyland Flowage as well as a \$115,000 fish friendly culvert project. They funded half of a walleye wagon, created a number of take a kid fishing areas, and built or improved boat landings. They worked last year on the Einar Johnson memorial boat landing to commemorate the first game warden in Wisconsin to lose his life in the line of duty. Additionally, they provided a skid loader, rotary mower and trailer to local snowmobile clubs to help with trails and trail grooming.

Last but not least, each year the Wildlife Restoration Association sponsors a ten month service learning program which involves every school district in the County. It is called the Environmental Challenge. Students identify problems, research them and propose solutions. During the summer, the winning projects are actually implemented.

Last year, The Wildlife Restoration Association raised \$60,000 from their fundraisers. Through partnering, they parlayed that up to nearly \$200,000 actually spent. Were you listening when I said that the population of Rusk County is less than 16,000? You do the math.

## EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR

The Conservation Congress Awards Committee has chosen **Christine Jumbeck** as the Conservation Educator of the Year.

Chris Jumbeck has served as the Cochrane Fountain City School's Agricultural Education Instructor for the past 22 years. Her devotion to educating youth about wildlife and natural resources is unrelenting. Among the highlights of Ms. Jumbeck's tenure, she has taught and continues to teach a popular "Wildlife and Natural Resource Management" class emphasizing history of conservation, habitats, and current resource issues.

Under Chris' leadership, students raise purple loosestrife beetles in an Ag Department greenhouse and release them along the Mississippi River. Her FFA students assist annually with private landowner tree planting projects. They recently helped the USFWS with planting over 1,000 trees on newly created Mississippi River islands.

Chris has partnered with DNR, NRCS and UW-Extension in education and restoration efforts of driftless area trout streams and rare bluff prairie ecosystems. Her students have assisted with brush cutting and controlled burns. In 2006, Chris and students were instrumental in helping collect deer heads for CWD sampling. She also coordinates a "goose team" to offer assistance in rounding up geese for banding at the Trempealeau National Wildlife Refuge.

In addition to her other classes, she also teaches a class in taxidermy and encourages students to share hunting, fishing, trapping experiences. Bulletin board space is reserved for student success photos, and Chris's FFA chapter annually sponsors a student "big buck/ big doe" contest.

Chris Jumbeck's accomplishments and unending passion for educating youth about natural resources make her a very deserving recipient of the 2009 Conservation Educator of the Year Award.



Christine Jumbeck

## OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

The Conservation Congress Awards Committee elected to award a local conservation organization for their outstanding achievements in 2011.

The 245-member strong **Stanley Sportsman's Club** of Chippewa County once again stood out as deserving special recognition. They were our Local Club of the year in 2010. They had another banner year this year.

They sponsor a ATV Safety course, their own youth expo, a youth pheasant hunt, a learn to turkey hunt outing, and financial assistance to the learn to bear hunt program. They put in a new aeration system and contributed money for fish stocking at Otter Lake, and a dredging project and fish stocking at Chapman Lake. They pick up trash and maintain the access sites at Otter Lake. They also provide collage scholarships to students graduating from Stanley High School.

## WCC HEAVY LIFTER OF THE YEAR

### Mike Riggle recognized as the 2011 Conservation Congress Heavy Lifter Award Recipient

Mike Riggle has been a delegate since 2000. He serves on the Big Game Committee and Chairs the CWD Committee. His background as a veterinarian has been invaluable.

Two years ago when relations between DNR and DATCAP became strained over how the state had been responding to CWD occurrences within deer farms, it was suggested that the Congress should do a low level intervention. A small group of our guys, led by Mike, went to DATCAP to inspect records and meet with their veterinary staff. Mike was briefed by and reported back to both DNR staff and Natural Resources Board members. The Congress served a valuable function that day due to the efforts of those individual delegates, but especially because of Mike.

Last Fall I received a call from Tom Hauge. He said that they needed a position from the Congress on the proposed rule concerning White Nose Syndrome in bats. We went through the list of committees who had not yet met, trying to find one that could somehow be construed as appropriate. Finally he asked "can't this be referred to the CWD committee? Because I really think that Riggle needs to handle this."

Later, people from a Canadian university came to Madison for a press conference announcing the status of their work on the CWD vaccine. In the morning, prior to the press conference, they were going to meet with some of the Department's technical staff. I received a call from the Secretary's office, "Can we borrow Riggle for the morning?" I was glad when Mike called me on his way home that afternoon to tell me that he felt it had been a good use of his time. It's a great thing to have highly regarded technical people within our own ranks.

When the deer research project was conceived, the Congress was asked to help solicit volunteers and get information about the project out to local organizations. Kevin Marquette and Tony Janecek

are doing a great job in the eastern study area. Mike took on the responsibility in the northern study area.

Mike has been involved in both study areas, and he has contributed above and beyond what anyone would have anticipated that he or the Congress would contribute.



*WCC Chair Ed Harvey with Mike Riggle, the 2010 WCC Delegate of the Year.*

As a veterinarian, he was able to take blood samples from the deer when people certified to do that were in short supply. He has also been involved in helping to certify people to draw blood. When an apparatus was needed to weigh deer, Mike went home and built it. He spent weeks at a time volunteering on the research projects, and in some of the most miserable weather.

When I told Chris Jacques that Mike would be receiving this award, he said "This is outstanding! I cannot say enough good things about Mike and his willingness to help us this winter.....he was a critical part of the research team this year and went FAR above the call of duty helping to train field crew members across both study areas. It would be hard to find another delegate who showed Mike's level of excitement, interest, and enthusiasm for the project. Congratulations Mike!!!"

Let's all congratulate Mike.

*- Ed Harvey, WCC Chair*

## WCC RECOGNIZES DEPARTMENT STAFF

The Wisconsin Conservation Congress (WCC) at its Annual Convention in May 2011 recognized several DNR employees for their ongoing, outstanding work on behalf of the natural resources of the state.

### Tom Meier Recognized as Wildlife Professional of the Year



Tom Meier

Tom Meier is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. As an undergraduate student he developed ways to use power pole platforms to replace downed trees as nesting areas for cormorants, osprey and great-blue herons. Tom started his employment with the Department of Natural Resources in 1976. His first station was Spring Green. While assigned to Spring Green from 1976 to 1981 he established a new wildlife unit in the Lower Wisconsin Riverway and participated in the restoration of the state's wild turkey population. In 1981, he became the supervisor at the Mead-McMillian Wildlife Area and has recently retired from that position.

Each year, several Conservation Congress Committees meet at Mead. Our meetings are held in the 6,200 square foot state-of-the-art "green" building which houses the Mead administrative offices and an education center. This is the house that Tom built. After years of fund-raising with the Friends of Mead/McMillian Association, the \$1.7 million facility finally became a reality in 2004.

As the supervisor at Mead, he also oversaw major construction projects on dikes and flowages and participated in the acquisition of several thousand acres of sensitive land for the wildlife area.

Tom is devoted to protecting wildlife and the environment. He is known for his never say 'can't, won't or die' attitude which has driven him to be one of Wisconsin's most energetic, innovative and effective wildlife professionals."



### WCC Fisheries Management Award goes to Larry Claggett

Lawrence E. Claggett retired on December 30, 2010 after a 32 year career with the Fisheries Management program. Larry came to Wisconsin after receiving a Bachelor of Science degree from Denison University and a Master of Science degree from Ohio State University, and after working three years for a consulting firm in Pottstown, PA, evaluating the fishery impacts of a proposed nuclear power plant. His first job in Wisconsin was in Plymouth where he was the DNR fisheries biologist for a three county area from 1978 through 1982. Notable projects that he directed included trout habitat restoration on Nichols Creek and a fisheries restoration of Little Elkhart Lake.

In 1982 Larry became the statewide Trout Fisheries Specialist for the Bureau of Fisheries Management in Madison where he made significant and lasting contributions to the improvement of trout fishing in Wisconsin. He directed Wisconsin's 12 coldwater fish hatcheries from 1982-87, authored a trout and salmon strain catalog documenting the source and history of these fish stocked in Wisconsin and implemented a wild trout stocking program in 1995 that has resulted in improved survival and "wildness" of the trout currently stocked. He began restructuring trout fishing regulations by instituting a southern zone of trout fishing regulations in 1986 and was involved in the many variations of the early trout season which culminated in a statewide early season in 2001.

## WCC RECOGNIZES DEPARTMENT STAFF

He coordinated and marketed the revolutionary and trend-setting trout fishing regulation category system in 1990 that is a model for other species in Wisconsin and other states. He produced the trout fishing regulations pamphlet for 20 years and coordinated the Inland Trout stamp and Great Lakes Salmon and Trout stamp contests and printing for 27 years. He wrote a review of the trout habitat program that guided its direction for many years. He has approved and funded over 750 miles of trout habitat restoration projects costing about 22 million dollars. In 2002 he updated and printed a new trout stream book that includes maps and was the first update in 22 years, followed by a web update in 2009.

Recently he was instrumental in redesigning Wisconsin trout stream monitoring and sampling program, and served as Wisconsin's representative on the Midwest Driftless Area Restoration Effort, the first national partnership project designed to restore habitat in large regional areas. Larry has worked extensively with various partner groups in these efforts and has received formal commendations for his efforts from Trout Unlimited Wisconsin State Council, Trout Unlimited Central Wisconsin Chapter, Trout Unlimited Southern Wisconsin Chapter, Federation of Fly Fishers Great Lakes Council, American Fisheries Society, Badger Fly Fishers, and the US Department of Agriculture.

These efforts have dramatically improved trout fishing in Wisconsin. Recent calculations from historical surveys show that average brook trout numbers have increased by 70% and brown trout numbers by 117% during Larry's career. Larry gratefully acknowledges that this would not have been accomplished without the help of the Trout Team, the work of other fisheries biologists across the state, and the support and understanding of his wife Cathy.

### **Russell Fell, Barron County, Awarded Law Enforcement Officer of the Year by WCC**

Russ Fell has exhibited superb initiative to develop a well-rounded program within his administrative area and beyond. He serves as a field training officer, Glock armorer and certified firearms/rifle instructor. Russ dedicates a significant amount of time assisting at the DNR recruit academy in Tomah. He is held in high regard by fellow wardens on his team and statewide. He regularly assists wardens outside of his administrative area, participates in group checks and volunteers for statewide deployments. He is also very involved with his local law enforcement agencies and has become a household name in his administrative area.

Russ was involved in a wide variety of enforcement activities including trapping and fur tagging, bear, small game, turkey, waterfowl, wild rice, ATV, boat and snowmobile, timber theft, waste of game, illegal baiting, septic haulers, manure runoff, sport fish enforcement, water regulations and shoreline development, shine and shoot cases, fish run, Ag Damage, musky snagging, captive wildlife, littering, illegal burning and stormwater runoff.

Russ maintains a tremendous public relations program. He has cultivated a significant network of partners and cooperators that are engaged in protecting natural resources in Barron County. Russ attends all of his safety and trapper education talks. Russ does an incredible job of educating his community on natural resource topics. He attends instructor workshops, trail ambassador meetings, and does a significant amount of guest speaking at civic group meetings. Russ annually attends the Barron County Fair and staffs a DNR booth for public relations and information. He works directly with his local newspapers and

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*WCC Chair Ed Harvey with Russ Fell, the 2011 WCC Law Enforcement Officer of the Year*

**THE WISCONSIN  
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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](http://dnr.wi.gov) and  
search for  
“Conservation Congress”



WCC Delegates volunteering their time at the WCC display

**WCC RECOGNIZES DEPARTMENT STAFF**

radio shows to cover a wide variety of DNR safety topics and general information dissemination. In 2009, Russ was featured in a deer hunting article entitled “Opening Day With a Warden” in the March issue of American Hunter, a nationally distributed magazine. Russ enjoys serving as a youth mentor at Concerns Of Police Survivors camp (COPS). He plays a major role in organizing and mentoring the learn to hunt bear and turkey programs for Barron and surrounding counties on the team. Russ works with his community to host an annual shooting sports youth day event at the Rice Lake Rod and Gun Club. There are normally 120+ kids signed up for the event and 50+ mentors and volunteers. His most recent passion is working with the local Walleyes for Tomorrow program in raising and stocking extended growth walleyes as well as fish habitat projects on local waters.

**Congress chooses Mike Hirschboeck, Racine County,  
as the Conservation Waterfowl Officer of the Year**

Warden Hirschboeck has been a field warden for five years and has developed a very strong law enforcement and education program. Mike has focused on the area of promoting waterfowl and dove hunting, wetland and waterway protection and enforcement of waterfowl regulations.

Mike is very active in working with other DNR staff on wetland protection and has been involved with initiatives to protect habitat in his area. Mike also has a history of involvement with youth in waterfowl hunting. He has worked with the DNR’s Hunter Education Program as well as the local Ducks Unlimited Chapter’s Greenwings Program.



Waterfowl Officer of the Year, Mike Hirschboeck along with his family and with Chief Warden Randy Stark.

**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](http://dnr.wi.gov) for application and nomination forms.

