

The 2012 Rise to the Future, National Hydrology, Soil Science, and Air Awards

Aquatic Recreational Accomplishment

The Happy Meadows Team, including the South Park Ranger District on the Pike and San Isabel National Forests and Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands; Coalition for the Upper South Platte; Sportsman's Paradise; Colorado Watershed Alliance; Fin-up Fish Consultants; and Colorado Parks and Wildlife are recognized for their strong external partnership and strong internal integration to restore a 2.7 mile section of the South Platte River. The restoration work on this high-profile fishery consisted of an irrigation dam removal and natural channel design approach to improve channel stability, floodplain connection, and instream aquatic habitat on National Forest System (NFS) and private land. This river section had suffered from road and sedimentation impacts and from the catastrophic Hayman fire in 2002.

Collaborative/Integrated Aquatic Stewardship

The Salmon River Estuary Project on the Siuslaw National Forest, consisting of Salmon-Drift Creek Watershed Council; Siuslaw National Forest; Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board; Oregon Department of Transportation; Oregon Department of State Lands; Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife; U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service; Greenpoint Consulting; "Hire the Fish Crew" Program; Sitka Center for Art and Ecology; Westwind Stewardship Group; and the Institute for Natural Resources (OSU) are recognized for completion of a complex, multi-year project to restore the 1300 acre Salmon River Estuary. This collaborative effort capped four decades of previous restoration work, and since 2006 restored tidal influence to 130 acres and restored more than 2.5 miles of stream channel and floodplain. The project decommissioned and removed an aging theme park and a trailer park, removed over two miles of dikes and ten tide gates, ditches, and invasive species to benefit endangered coho salmon, as well as chinook salmon, steelhead, coastal cutthroat trout, and waterfowl and elk habitat.

Field Soil Scientist of the Year

Dave Hoppe, Field Soil Scientist on the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest is recognized for his outstanding contribution toward field soil science over the past two decades that have had local, regional, and national beneficial impacts to the Forest Service and numerous other Federal, State, and academic institutions. Dave has contributed pioneering work on topics such as the Terrestrial Ecological Unit Inventory, the nationwide soil disturbance monitoring protocol, and the terrestrial condition framework. He is also recognized for his long-term collaboration with the Natural Resources Conservation Service among others. He works tirelessly to integrate soil science into other program areas, and his model work on hundreds of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analyses is used as the regional template for cumulative effects.

Friend of the Fish/Watershed

Brian Austin, Civil Engineer on the Green Mountain & Finger Lakes National Forests is recognized for his strong leadership on and off the National Forest in difficult circumstances following the devastation from Tropical Storm Irene in 2011. Brian has championed the aquatic organism passage program and the Forest Service's stream simulation design approach and contributed to 25 aquatic organism passage projects at road-stream crossings in the past several years with internal and external partners.

Line Officer

Timothy Love, Seeley Lake District Ranger on the Lolo National Forest is receiving the Line Officer Award for his long tenure and dedication to his position, his staff, and many partners. Tim has led a variety of successful fisheries and watershed projects including stewardship, stream restoration, and road decommissioning projects. As a member of the executive committee of the Southwest Crown of the Continent Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Project and a member of the interdisciplinary team, Tim has been essential in planning landscape scale watershed and fisheries restoration work.

Partnership

Miller Coors Brewery is recognized for their commitment to the Clear Creek Project on the Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests and Pawnee National Grassland. Over the past six years Miller Coors invested significant funding and provided over 1500 hours of volunteer labor from their employees on various conservation projects, including abandoned mineland drainage restoration, road maintenance and decommissioning, fence building, riparian planting, and the construction of aquatic organism passage at multiple road crossings.

Professional Excellence - Fish Management

Jim Herrig from the Cherokee National Forest is recognized for his 30 years of outstanding contributions as a professional within the Forest Service; conserving rare aquatic species, leveraging his work with multiple partners and the public, excelling in innovative techniques for fisheries conservation and public education, and contributing to fisheries assessments and forest planning. Jim is perhaps best known for his public outreach and education accomplishments through his snorkeling "fish watching" program that he developed. The program targets underserved local school groups on several rivers that boast outstanding aquatic biodiversity. Jim is directly responsible for successfully protecting and expanding the habitat of four federally threatened and endangered fish species, including the extremely rare *Conasauga logperch*, and he recently pioneered the successful propagation of southern Appalachian brook trout for reintroduction into the wild.

Public Awareness

The Wild and Scenic Snake River Headwaters Interdisciplinary Team of the Bridger-Teton National Forest is recognized for their significant contributions in communicating the intent of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (WSRA) in balancing our Nation's water development investments with the ecosystem values of functional river systems with a focus on retaining the ecological integrity and resiliency of the Snake River headwaters. This broad, interdisciplinary team was dedicated to a collaborative approach and worked tirelessly on public outreach to a diverse range of constituents and parties through presentations, workshops, publications, and social events. The 390 river miles designated as "Wild & Scenic" are the largest single designation in one watershed, with the most miles classified as "wild" in the country.

Tribal Accomplishment

Tony Christianson of the Hydaburg Cooperative Association is recognized for bridging Traditional Ecological Knowledge with western management for fisheries and subsistence management benefits on the Tongass National Forest in cooperation with the Alaska Region, the Federal Subsistence Board, and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. As the Natural Resources Director for Hydaburg Tribes, Tony, whose traditional Haida name is "Saanh_l_K_ingwaas," is a leading fisheries scientist in the Pacific Northwest. He is respected for his leadership and wisdom on recreation, forest, watershed, heritage, and subsistence resource management of the national forest lands of Alaska. He has dedicated himself over the past 10 years to engaging local tribal members in fisheries resource management and is responsible for the creation of many fisheries and natural management jobs for his Tribe and the surrounding community that also provide invaluable data to the Forest Service Subsistence Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program (FRMP). Among his many accomplishments is his critical role in the resurrection of an important sockeye salmon run to Hetta Lake.

Jim Sedell Research Achievement

Dr. Pete Bisson of the Pacific Northwest Research Station is recognized for his high performance, intellectual curiosity, technically sound fisheries and watershed research with significant application to on-the-ground land management. As a member of the Land and Watershed Management Program's Aquatic Ecology and Management Team, Pete has focused on characterizing the structure and function of stream ecosystems, understanding fish population dynamics and community structure, and investigating the environmental impacts of land-use practices on aquatic ecosystems. His prolific career is marked by authorship on over 100 peer-reviewed publications, participation on a variety of aquatic and natural resource panels, mentoring over 40 graduate students, and dedication to professional fisheries organizations in all capacities of service.

Special Category for “Professional Accomplishment – Soil Science”

Nancy Burt, Forest Soil Scientist of the Green Mountain and Finger Lakes National Forests, is recognized for her achievements over more than 30 years as a soil scientist. In particular, Nancy has been a leader in identifying and championing the need for long-term soil monitoring to identify trends in soil acidification and changes in productivity related to acid deposition and climate change. She initially collaborated with the Natural Resources Conservation Service to establish two long-term soil monitoring plots as part of a state-wide network, and then secured support and funding to establish 20 sites for collecting integrated soil and vegetation data on the Green Mountain National Forest. The plots will be re-measured in 10-year intervals and will provide invaluable information on the impacts of environmental change. Nancy’s accomplishment in establishing the monitoring program with a coalition of partners has placed the Forest in a leading role in the long-term soil and ecological monitoring arena.

“Wagon Wheel Gap” Hydrology

Dana Butler of the Pike and San Isabel National Forests and Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands is recognized for his significant and noteworthy contributions to District level project planning, watershed restoration planning and implementation, and restoration of areas impacted by catastrophic wildfires over the past decade. As the sole hydrologist for over 1 million acres, Dana has worked at the District level with interdisciplinary teams on mining, fuel reduction, and riparian and fisheries enhancement projects and played a leading role in multiple stream and wetland restoration projects involving drinking water supply watersheds affecting 5 million residents across Colorado’s Front Range as well as populations of the federally endangered Greenback Trout. Dana’s continuous efforts to integrate with other Forest Service program areas are matched by his successful partnership with youth groups, ski resorts, watershed groups, municipalities, private land owners, and others. Dana is recognized for his Burned Area Emergency Response Team experience and expertise on such fires as the Hayman, Tunner, Callie Marie, Waldo, and others.

Paul Miller Air Award

Janice Peterson of the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest is recognized for her significant leadership during the 2012 wildfire season in Washington. Janice demonstrated tremendous skill working in coordination with county, State, and Federal partners to share information about smoke forecasts, summarize monitoring data, and communicate this information to community decision-makers and the public. The result of her effort was a model for future coordination of air quality impacts from wildfires in Washington and Oregon.