

Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Awards

Nominations Form 2014

Award Categories (check only one per form)

I want to nominate: Robert Stroess, WI Conservation Warden (WNDR) for:

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Spirit of the Shack

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Wildlife Biologist of the Year

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Excellence in Conservation

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Fisheries Biologist of the Year

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Law Enforcement Officer of the Year

Nominator information

Name: George Protogere

Organization: WI DNR

Title: Warden Supervisor

E-mail: george.protogere@wisconsin.gov

Phone number: 920-450-0496

1. Provide a brief (one page or less) overview explaining why the individual/agency meets the criteria for the award:

Please see page 3.

2. Please list and/or describe specific projects, work or accomplishments relevant to the award. Please limit your information to one page.

Please see page 4.

1. Brief Overview:

I would like to nominate WI Conservation Warden Robert D. Stroess for the law enforcement officer of the year award. This year Robert was awarded the 2013 Wisconsin Conservation Warden of Year (Haskell Noyes Award). Robert was hired in January of 2000 and first assigned to the Manitowoc Station in the NE Region. Robert has shown leadership, initiative and dedication throughout his career as noted below.

Robert has achieved an excellent balance of enforcement, education and community involvement which shows in his well-rounded program. Robert's law enforcement program has a well balanced mix of criminal and civil actions coupled with a good public relations program. On a daily basis Robert models each of our law enforcement values (Professionalism, Respect, Integrity, Dedication and Excellence).

Robert has maintained sustained performance over his career even in the first few years as a warden. He started out miles ahead of the typical recruit and was performing as a veteran in his early years. Robert never lets up and continued on as a high performer. It should also be noted that it seems that each year Robert will add more duties to his plate. This year he added the duties of the Regional Internet Investigator to his other duties (FTO, Background investigator, Academy Instructor – Report Writing, DAAT, intern supervisor and assistance to the SOU when requested).

Robert is working in a two warden county however he has been dealing with a vacancy in his county for over seven years. With this added workload, Robert is still one of the leaders on the team for most categories. Robert is dedicated and handles most complaints in the area and requests for assistance by other agencies. In one case, Robert received information from a CI regarding a private marijuana grow. The information was relayed to the SO who requested Robert to guide their deputies into the area which resulted in the seizure of over 300 plants. The property is now up for asset forfeiture. Robert also addresses the public relations requests and makes time for these important functions.

Robert is a leader on the team for a number of reasons. He takes upon himself to provide training at a team/region/state level to make all of us better. One training session involved trapping techniques and what was legal. He set up an actual field course where wardens had to find the trap and then determine if it was legal or not. Another training session he set up was dealing with trail cameras. Robert set up some trail cameras and we walked a perimeter to determine when we would be caught on the camera. It was very eye opening. This was followed by a field test where a number of cameras were set up in a woodlot and the wardens had to find all the cameras and not be caught on film. This was very realistic training and made us have a better understanding of our surroundings.

These are just a few examples of the dedication, leadership and initiative that Robert possesses. Robert has received numerous awards Chief's Cups, 2011 Warden of the Year (WI Trappers Association), 2007 NER Employee of the Year and 2007 Special Achievement Award – Manitowoc County Conservation Hall of Fame to mention a few.

2. Specific Projects:

As mentioned above, Robert volunteered to be one of 5 Regional Internet Investigators (RII) on top of his core field duties. This added duty comes with no pay increase. It is an added workload as any internet type complaint around the state will go to the RII. If the complaint is serious, Robert will have to find time in the day to address the complaint and work the investigation. Prior to being assigned the RII duties, Robert took the time to get training in computer investigations. The training covered Facebook, Twitter and other sites natural resource criminal activities could take place. What was planned to be about an additional 140 hours of work for the fiscal year turned into about 250 plus extra hours for the year and still growing. This work also involves serving preservation orders, affidavits and search warrants which are all time consuming.

Cases:

Turkey Poaching Case: Robert finished a turkey hunting investigation that began in May 2013 by issuing six citations to three hunters, all for a single turkey that one of them shot and the others tried to help cover up. Two brothers went turkey hunting near Manitowoc and only one of them had a tag. One or both of them shot a turkey but they ended up with two dead turkeys. A nearby hunter spoke to the brothers after hearing numerous shots, saw two dead jake turkeys, and got their vehicle license plate. A check of turkey registration records showed the younger brother who had a tag registered a turkey, the other brother didn't have a tag, and their father registered a turkey at the same time as the younger brother. One problem for them was that the father's timesheet from his employer showed he was at work until several hours after the turkey was shot. Another problem was that the older brother posted a video on Facebook, supposedly of the hunt. However, the location in the video didn't match the scene of the incident and the three empty shot shells at the scene, along with the account of events provided to Robert by the younger brother, didn't match the single shot fired in the Facebook video, so the video appeared to be posted as a way to cover up the actual incident.

Illegal Deer Case: Robert settled a case this year regarding a 2012 deer poaching case where one defendant shot a deer out of season only to return a few hours later to pick up the deer. The defendant denied being in the area the time the shot was fired, but cell phone tracking records put him in the area. Two defendants are facing a total of four criminal charges and five citations.

Whooping Crane Case: Robert assisted a warden with an endangered whooping crane shooting investigation with two possible suspects by conducting internet investigation portion. Robert spent 7 hours on this case over three days, was unable to find either suspect on Facebook even after searching through many likely friends and relatives, but found a relative who happened to belong to a Facebook group titled "Wisconsin Sandhill Crane Hunting." This information was relayed to the warden who turned out to be the shooter and provided a confession.

Robert is also on various committees. He is a leader/instructor for report writing and has assisted with the training of new wardens on report writing. We are now rewriting our report writing manual which Robert is part of at this time. He has some great ideas and is providing input to set the stage for report writing for generations to come.

Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Awards

Nominations Form 2014

Award Categories (check only one per form)

I want to nominate: Andy Lindbloom, Senior Big Game Biologist
Member State: South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks
for:

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Spirit of the Shack

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Wildlife Biologist of the Year

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Excellence in Conservation

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Fisheries Biologist of the Year

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Law Enforcement Officer of the Year

Nominator information

Name: Jeff Vonk

Organization: WI DNR

Title: Secretary, South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks

I am pleased to submit this nomination for Andy Lindbloom for the MAFWA Wildlife Biologist of the Year award. Andy has been a wildlife manager for over 10 years, and took over the position as the department's Senior Big Game Biologist in July of 2011 to lead and coordinate big game research and management in South Dakota. In only a few short years Andy has taken the department's big game management activities and approach to a higher level with staunch leadership and work ethic. Andy is a science-based manager that recognizes the importance and need for collaboration and teamwork. He exudes a high level of professional excellence, and most importantly represents our agency well to the public and the Game, Fish and Parks (GFP) Commission.

Shortly after taking the position as SDGFP Senior Big Game Biologist, the department's on-going scrutiny of its big game management culminated with the SD Governor's office ordering an external review of big game management. Throughout this review, Andy maintained a professional composure and represented the Department exceptionally well in his capacity as the lead biologist in the primary topic of the external review. Andy continued down a path of moving the big game program in a direction that would enhance the agency's foundation of science-based management decisions. Many of the suggestions provided in Final Report from the Wildlife Management Institute (WMI) were ideas and direction Andy had initiated and was developing while the review was progressing. Additional recommendations provided by WMI are being incorporated through Andy's leadership of the researchers and regional managers across the state.

The most notable change over the past year is the quality of the information gathered, organized, and presented to the GFP commission on big game (in particular elk, mountain lion, and deer) during the agencies annual season setting process. Andy's leadership and talents again shines through in these instances as he works with technical staff and managers to provide sound recommendations to the Commission based on the best available information. Not only is the Commission better informed and provided a solid foundation for answering questions they receive from the public, but the public is better informed of population changes, reasoning for changes, and explanations of the direction being taken to address those changes. Andy's professionalism has built credibility for our big game management and our agency in instilled confidence with GFP Commissioners and the public.

In summary, I appreciate your consideration of Andy Lindbloom for the Wildlife Biologist of the Year award. Andy has truly taken big game management to a

higher level; turning a highly critical situation into an opportunity to build upon. I'm confident his leadership will continue this momentum in a positive trajectory for the agency and the management of big game in South Dakota.

Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Awards

Nominations Form 2014

Award Categories (check only one per form)

I want to nominate:

*Randall M. Claramunt
Fisheries Research Biologist
Michigan (Department of Natural Resources)*

Mr. Claramunt has worked as a research biologist at the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) Charlevoix Fisheries Research Station for almost twelve years, leading research and assessment efforts related to Coregonid and Salmonine population dynamics in Great Lakes systems. Prior to his employment with the MDNR, he spent four years overseeing the fisheries research and assessment program and managing tribal commercial and subsistence fisheries for the Little Traverse Bay Band of Odawa Indians in Petoskey, Michigan, and prior to that worked for the Illinois Natural History Survey conducting trawling and hydroacoustic assessments to determine the effect of vessel traffic on large river fish populations in the Mississippi River. He received a B.S. in Fisheries and Wildlife from Michigan State University in 1994, and a M.S. in Aquatic Ecology from the University of Illinois in 1998. He is a winner of the AFS Skinner Memorial Award (1996), the AFS Fisheries Administrators Section Sport Fish Restoration Award (2005), and the AFS Excellence in Public Outreach Award (2011), among other honors.

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Spirit of the Shack

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Wildlife Biologist of the Year

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Excellence in Conservation

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Fisheries Biologist of the Year

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Law Enforcement Officer of the Year

Nominator name: David F. Clapp
Organization: Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Title: Station Manager, Charlevoix Fisheries Research Station
E-mail: clappd@michigan.gov
Phone number: 231-547-2914 (XT 237)

1. Provide a brief (one page or less) overview explaining why the individual/agency meets the criteria for the award:

The work Mr. Claramunt has done in improving our understanding, management, and conservation of cisco (lake herring), lake whitefish, and salmonid populations in the Great Lakes is truly unparalleled. Randy is a very productive research biologist. He has published almost 40 articles in peer-reviewed scientific journals, and completed more than 50 agency and inter-agency reports. He has shown an excellent ability to develop productive collaborative relationships, and is recognized as a leader in the Great Lakes fisheries research and management community. Mr. Claramunt's duties are often completed in settings, and deal with issues, that can be contentious, and the products delivered are subject to significant scrutiny. He has demonstrated an excellent ability to work with people on all sides of an issue and help bring the group to successful consensus. The products he has delivered have consistently been of the highest caliber. The quality of his service has propelled the Charlevoix Fisheries Research Station and the Fisheries Division, Michigan Department of Natural Resources into leadership roles in Great Lakes research and fishery management.

Mr. Claramunt's cisco research has led to recognition of a remnant population in northern Lake Michigan (http://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-153-10366_46403-252442--,00.html), has documented important population dynamic information for this population, has identified and led to protection of significant spawning habitat, and has contributed significantly to ongoing Great Lakes-wide recovery efforts aimed at this species. His almost decade-long collaboration with other Great Lakes researchers to better understand lake whitefish early life history dynamics has significantly improved our management of that species, and he has contributed greatly to ongoing management of lake whitefish in treaty-ceded waters of the Great Lakes through his work on the Modeling Sub-committee (http://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,1607,7-153-10364_36925--,00.html). Finally, his work as chairperson of the Lake Michigan Technical Committee Salmonid Working Group and Planktivore Working Group has contributed significantly to the improved understanding and management of predator/prey balance in one of the world's most important fresh water sport fisheries.

In conclusion, I believe that Mr. Claramunt is extremely deserving of the "Fisheries Biologist of the Year" award. I would be happy to discuss this nomination with you further, should you have any additional questions concerning his contributions.

Sincerely,

David F. Clapp, Research Station Manager, Michigan Department of Natural Resources

2. Please list and/or describe specific projects, work or accomplishments relevant to the award. Please limit your information to one page.

- Leadership role on numerous Great Lakes basin scientific advisory committees related to salmonid management, including several Task Groups of the Lake Michigan Committee (<http://www.glfc.org/lakecom/lmc/lmchome.php>; Salmonid Working Group – past chairperson, Planktivore Working Group – past chairperson, Lake Trout Task Group, Great Lakes Hydroacoustic Working Group).
- Lead or co-author on numerous publications directly linked to successful management of Great Lakes predator:prey balance, including...
 - Tsehaye, I., M.L. Jones, T.O. Brenden, J.R. Bence, and R.M. Claramunt. 2014. [Changes in the salmonine community of Lake Michigan and their implications for predator-prey balance](#). Transactions of the American Fisheries Society 143:420-437
 - Claramunt, R.M., C.P. Madenjian, and D.F. Clapp. 2013. Pacific salmonines in the Great Lakes basin. In Great Lakes Fisheries Policy and Management. Edited by N.J. Leonard, C.P. Ferreri, and W.W. Taylor. Michigan State University Press, East Lansing, Michigan.
 - Claramunt, R. M., T. L. Kolb, D. F. Clapp, D. B. Hayes, J. L. Dexter, Jr., and D. M. Warner. 2009. Effects of increasing Chinook salmon bag limits on alewife abundance: implications for Lake Michigan management goals. North American Journal of Fisheries Management 29: 829-842.
 - Warner, D. M., C. S. Kiley, R. M. Claramunt, and D. F. Clapp. 2008. The influence of alewife year-class strength on prey selection and abundance of age-1 Chinook salmon in Lake Michigan. Transactions of the American Fisheries Society 137:1683-1700.
- Decade-long collaboration with other Great Lakes researchers to better understand lake whitefish early life history dynamics. Work included authorship of numerous peer-reviewed journal articles (including leadership on publication of a special issue – 36,S1 – of the Journal of Great Lakes Research). Research results have significantly improved our management of Great Lakes lake whitefish populations.
- Michigan Department of Natural Resources representative to the Modeling Sub-Committee for the 2000 Consent Decree (http://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,1607,7-153-10364_36925---,00.html). Lead modeler for development of lake whitefish quotas in Michigan waters of Lake Michigan.
- Leadership role on a multi-agency research initiative documenting a remnant population of Great Lakes cisco (state threatened species) that led to protection of significant spawning habitat and has contributed significantly to ongoing Great Lakes-wide recovery efforts aimed at this species (<http://www.nature.org/ourinitiatives/regions/northamerica/areas/greatlakes/newsroom/traverse-bay-invasives-1.xml>).
- Numerous popular articles and public presentations describing the work highlighted above, recognizing the importance of transferring knowledge of fisheries issues to the public. Mr. Claramunt is truly an effective communicator and a strong advocate for Great Lakes fish and fisheries. Also an exceptional advisor and mentor to many fisheries students.

Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Awards

Nominations Form 2014

Award Categories (check only one per form)

I want to nominate: __Raymond A. Eisbrener_____ for

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Spirit of the Shack

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Wildlife Biologist of the Year

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Excellence in Conservation

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Fisheries Biologist of the Year

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Law Enforcement Officer of the Year

Nominator information

Name: John Buhnerkempe

Organization: Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Division of Wildlife Resources

Title: Chief, Division of Wildlife Resources

E-mail: john.buhnerkempe@illinois.gov

Phone number: 217-557-5059

1. Provide a brief (one page or less) overview explaining why the individual/agency meets the criteria for the award:

Raymond A. Eisbrener retired in May 2014 after a 36 year career with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) during which time he worked 15 years in the Lands Division in state parks and 21 years as a Private Lands Biologist and a District Wildlife Biologist. Much of the last 21 years was spent working in Kane and McHenry Counties. However, as IDNR's wildlife biologists retired over the last several years Ray eagerly assumed additional responsibilities in Boone and Lake Counties despite an already challenging work load and eleven habitat management projects either in the planning or implementation phase.

In the words of McHenry County Conservation District Biologist Brad Woodson, "Ray has been an exceptional role model, mentor and partner in conservation during my career and the career of many field biologists from agencies throughout Northern Illinois. These field biologists worked with and sought advice from Ray on many topics including planting prairies, invasive weed management, nuisance wildlife, water level manipulation, Blanding's Turtles, wood ducks, wild turkeys, and wildlife disease management. Ray has always been a great sounding board and more than willing to provide firsthand practical experience that works."

Ray always sought to use every contact with the public as an opportunity to educate and to win support for wildlife and the wildlife management profession. He approached even the most hostile inquiry or human-wildlife conflict phone call with respect and good humor. Several years ago he suggested and used IDNR Habitat Funds and a donation from Pheasants Forever to establish a demonstration habitat restoration at the entrance of Chain O'Lakes State Park, a very popular state park in northeastern Illinois and within miles of the Wisconsin border. Ray also went out of his way to locate and time his annual wood duck trapping assignment so that older hunters could participate after their work. He also ensured that young hunters attending the annual Ducks Unlimited Greenwing Event at Redwing Slough (reported to be the largest in the Midwest) would have a hands-on wildlife experience they would remember forever.

Forest Preserve Districts and Conservation Districts in northeastern Illinois have been very reluctant to entertain the idea of any public hunting programs on their land. However, Ray was instrumental in helping the McHenry County

Conservation District develop a recreational hunting program in 2001. Through Ray's efforts the District now provides hundreds of hunters with the opportunity to hunt deer and waterfowl close to home. Ray duplicated this success and helped Kane County Forest Preserve District develop their own archery hunting program to manage white-tailed deer in 2013. His passion for conservation, knowledge of hunting, and credibility within the IDNR has helped facilitate these new public hunting opportunities.

On his "time off", away from work, Ray is a conservation leader as well. He is a chairman on the local Pheasants Forever chapter, helps organize the banquet and assists in the development of habitat projects. He also practices conservation at home in a very unique way since he happens to live within a McHenry County Conservation District site. He has become the steward of the site and helps maintain the woodland and cuts firebreaks around the prairie restorations. If this were not enough, he also got together with many of the surrounding landowners to develop a deer management plan. The most important part of the plan was thoughtful advice which Ray easily provided.

2. Please list and/or describe specific projects, work or accomplishments relevant to the award. Please limit your information to one page.

Throughout his 36 year career Ray worked to promote wildlife and manage habitat for the benefit of wildlife on private and public land. The Chain O'Lakes demonstration project mentioned above is a good example. He worked with site staff and field biologists from other disciplines to effectively manage wildlife habitat and hunting programs on approximately 6133 acres at 3 Illinois state parks and nature preserves. On private and public land Ray's projects included wetland creation and restoration, grassland and prairie establishment and management, and woodland management. Through his efforts 9 landowners permanently protect 650 acres of privately-owned habitat in northeast Illinois. The importance of these areas is increased since many sites are in close proximity to already public owned/permanently protected land within the morainal area of northeastern Illinois.

IDNR Natural Heritage Biologist, Brad Semel commented "his professionalism and unbridled enthusiasm helped the Department in reaching their goal to make a positive impact on the public and their perception of the Department's wildlife programs. Ray was unequalled in being able to converse with ease and skill with hunters, farmers, and the lay public, and to help promote conservation and a conservation ethics. He was able to diffuse controversial issues and work well with many organizations (Wild Turkey Federation, Ducks Unlimited, Farm Bureau, etc.) and public agencies (Soil and Water Conservation Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, McHenry County Conservation District) and bring together diverse groups to support wildlife programs and initiatives. His

demeanor and knowledge combined to make him well-respected among his peers and those with whom he worked.”

The greatest challenge during Ray’s career was the 2002 appearance of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) in Illinois. He served as field supervisor for a team of @ 12 IDNR sharpshooters for the subsequent 12 field seasons. He willingly assumed this responsibility even though his job description did not require him to be a supervisor. This massive undertaking and responsibility was thrust upon him basically because his district was located where CWD first surfaced in Illinois. Yet despite this unexpected appearance of CWD, Ray stepped up and proved to be the best person for the job. The details and logistics Ray had to handle daily during the sharpshooting program seasons, as well as, throughout the year regarding CWD were staggering. He made up to 20 notification phone calls a day, selected the day’s shooting sites, distributed baiting/shooting assignments, organized field equipment including providing for repairs, supervised laboratory operations, and still actually went into the field as a sharpshooter himself. Despite it all, he maintained a positive and professional attitude with the sharpshooting team, police departments and public and private landowners, and made it look easy. He also continued to give his habitat projects and state site responsibilities the attention they needed to be successful. His departure by retirement will leave a very big hole for IDNR to fill on the CWD program and at the District level.

In a very short time span, CWD transformed Ray’s beloved IDNR from a leader in deer management to a villain in the eyes of some of the hunting public. However, Ray remained positive and continued to educate individual hunters, landowners, fellow biologists, and journalists. He did the hard dirty work of making landowner contacts and securing permission to cull deer on private land. He had to deal with vandalism, threats, coyotes, equipment breakdowns, misinformation, and hundreds of landowners. This past year was the fourth coldest winter on record with 70+ inches of snow which added to the challenge and stressed work crews.

Through it all Ray has remained the consummate professional. He is one man on the ground that has helped demonstrate that Illinois methodology in CWD management can work and be effective. In order for this success to continue, it will take more individuals like Ray Eisbrenner to do the work and lead the way.

Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Awards

Nominations Form 2014

Award Categories (check only one per form)

I want to nominate: **The Missouri Department of Conservation for its leadership implementing the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's National Fish Habitat Initiative Project at Table Rock Lake and Lake Taneycomo.**

for the:

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Spirit of the Shack

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Wildlife Biologist of the Year

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Excellence in Conservation

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Fisheries Biologist of the Year

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Law Enforcement Officer of the Year

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Midwest President's Award



Nominator information

Name: Brian D. Canaday
Organization: Missouri Department of Conservation
Title: Fisheries Division Chief
E-mail: brian.canaday@mdc.mo.gov
Phone number: 573-522-4115 *3174

1. Provide a brief (one page or less) overview explaining why the individual/agency meets the criteria for the award:
2. Please list and/or describe specific projects, work, or accomplishments relevant to the award. Please limit your information to one page.

It is my pleasure to nominate the Missouri Department of Conservation for work they did leading and implementing the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's National Fish Habitat Initiative Project at Table Rock Lake and Lake Taneycomo.

In 2007, the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC), in cooperation with Bass Pro Shops (BPS), the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), Arkansas Game and Fish Commission (AGFC), the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Table Rock Lake Water Quality Inc. (TRLWQ) and many other partners began the National Fish Habitat Initiative (NFHI) project to sustain and improve the degrading physical habitat within Table Rock Lake. These partners provided the funding and resources necessary to improve habitat and water quality within Table Rock Lake and its tributaries. The project began in October 2007 and continued through December 2013 with funding totaling \$4 million dollars. During this timeframe, a total of 2,096 fish habitat structures were installed in Table Rock Lake; including 1,869 brush structures, 114 rock piles, 76 stump fields, 11 rock and stump combination structures and 26 shallow water rock fence structures. These structure locations were recorded by GPS and are available to the public on the MDC website. The MDC, in conjunction with the James River Basin Partnership and TRLWQ, implemented a program to improve water quality throughout Table Rock Lake. This program offered a \$50 incentive to landowners in the Table Rock Lake and James River watersheds for preventative pumping out of septic tanks before failure occurred. Over 1,800 septic tank pumpouts were completed equating to a potential reduction of 1.8 million gallons of septic effluent entering the Table Rock Lake watershed and helping to reduce the amount of nitrogen entering the lake by 550 pounds per year. The program also offered educational packets to each participating landowner to increase their knowledge of the benefits of properly maintaining their septic systems. To reduce the amount of sediment transferred from the watershed to Table Rock Lake, MDC also worked with landowners to provide a cost share program to stabilize highly eroding streambanks. A total of eight (8) cost-share projects were completed in the Table Rock Lake watershed. This aspect of the NFHI project offered a cost share incentive of up to 95% to the landowners and were designed and built with the most effective techniques to stop erosion. Approximately 3,610 linear feet of streambank was stabilized and many more acres of riparian corridor were established. Habitat improvements were also completed in the upper portion of Lake Taneycomo. Much of the habitat in the upper sections of Lake Taneycomo is comprised of homogenous gravel substrate. Boulder clusters were installed in the upper mile of Lake Taneycomo to add diversity of habitat to the lake, create improved feeding areas for trout and other species of fish, and increase angling opportunities in Lake Taneycomo.

The NFHI project provided a unique opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of habitat structures that were installed in Table Rock Lake. Four different evaluation techniques to determine fish and angler use of the habitat structures began in 2009. Electrofishing surveys of habitat treated coves showed that fish can be attracted locally to habitat structures for spawning but habitat structures are not likely to congregate fish from other areas of the lake. Underwater SCUBA surveys of bass and crappie species were conducted on five of the main types of structures installed in Table Rock Lake (hardwood trees, cedar trees, pine trees, stump fields and rock piles). During these surveys, largemouth bass were observed on all of the structure types and observed most often on hardwood structures. Crappie species were observed on all structure types except rock piles and most often on cedar trees. Finally, two types of angler surveys were utilized to determine angler use and opinions of installed habitat structures in Table Rock Lake. A roving-roving creel survey was used to determine if angler catch rates were improved as a result of habitat placement, as well as to assess angler opinions of the habitat project. A web-based survey was also conducted to determine opinions from the general angling public about the installed habitat structures and the NFHI project. The information gained through both surveys indicated anglers do support installation of habitat structures in Table Rock Lake and also feel that the installed habitat structures in the lake improved their fishing. This combination of information was used to determine that the habitat structures

installed in Table Rock Lake generally employed the most effective techniques and materials for fish and angler use.

The Table Rock Lake NFHI project builds upon a long-standing public/private partnership in southwest Missouri to improve and restore fish habitat in Table Rock Lake, Lake Taneycomo and their watersheds through cover augmentation, watershed management and other water quality-related projects. The MDC, NFWF, BPS, AGFC, USACE, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Southwestern Power Administration, TRLWQ, various non-government organizations, angler groups and private citizens all worked cooperatively to fund the project and ensure the success of this project.

This project was an excellent opportunity to act proactively to maintain and enhance fish habitat in and around two of the Midwest's most popular sportfisheries. This project has proven to be a national example of sustaining and improving reservoir sportfish populations through large-scale habitat improvements. Results from this work have been widely shared with our conservation partners, the public and other professionals. The results and lessons learned from this effort will help shape the future of fish habitat management across the nation for many years to come.