

Department of the Interior
2005 Environmental Achievement Awards Recipients

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Mr. John Rogner, Chicago Wilderness Consortium, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana

Individual, Environmental Stewardship

Mr. John Rogner, Field Office Supervisor for the FWS, Chicago Ecological Services Field Office, is recognized for nearly 10 years of partnership with the Chicago Wilderness Consortium. A model of Secretary Norton's 4C's, communication, consultation and cooperation in the service of conservation, he is an active leader as Chairman of the Chicago Region Biodiversity Council. He fostered the growth of the 177 member organizations that have collaborated on over 240 projects. His ability to build consensus and motivate members of Consortium has enabled them to develop and apply a Biodiversity Plan across 250,000 acres of protected natural lands in southeastern Wisconsin, northeastern Illinois and northwestern Indiana. This plan helps the FWS to achieve its responsibilities in protecting and restoring endangered species. In addition to collaborating with this extremely successful partnership, John shares his knowledge and experience across the United States offering advice to other community leaders that would like to develop regional partnerships by applying the Chicago Wilderness Consortium model and as a participant in the upcoming White House Conference on Cooperative Conservation.

Mr. Chris Case, Sharing Success: Bio-Fluids/Lubricants Program, Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore, National Park Service (NPS), Michigan

Individual, Minimizing Petroleum Use

Mr. Chris Case, Facility Manager at the NPS Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore, is recognized for his ground-breaking work institutionalizing the Pictured Rocks comprehensive Bio-Fluids/Lubricants Program. This program created and managed by him, showcases the effectiveness and benefits of bio-based fuels and lubricants use at DOI facilities. For example, his program demonstrated that biodiesel works effectively even in Michigan's cold winter temperatures, which had been a barrier to biodiesel use at some DOI facilities. His most noteworthy accomplishment's is that he shares his knowledge and experiences with other facility managers in DOI and across the Government. Through his far-reaching education efforts, he has presented his lessons learned to nearly 1,000 Government employees and officials who can duplicate his success.

Ms. Caryn Smith, Recycling and Reuse, Minerals Management Service (MMS), Alaska

Individual, Recycling and Waste/Pollution Prevention

Ms. Caryn Smith, Oceanographer, MMS Alaska Region, is an informed, strong, and persistent advocate for the environment – both within her office and in her community. She continually finds ways to promote recycling, prevent waste, and improve the office's working environment. As a direct result of her efforts, the region's new office space used environmentally preferable, low-emission construction materials and furnishings. She was the key person in the collaborative planning efforts who ensured that the design plans for the office space included

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space for a recycling bin at each printer/copier station as well as a recycling room for staging recyclables for collection and transfer. In addition to her highly demanding professional work as an Oceanographer, she keeps regional staff informed about the city's recycling programs and other relevant environmental issues.

Desert Managers Group, Partnering for Public Lands, NPS, FWS, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), US Geological Survey (USGS), California

Team, Environmental Stewardship

A model cooperative effort, the interagency Desert Managers Group (DMG) coordinates desert conservation, visitor services, and public safety for eleven million acres of public land in southern California's deserts. Their accomplishments, too numerous to be listed here, include a *Five Year Work Plan* which is updated annually and projects including: restoring riparian habitats, cleanup of illegal dumps, aiding recovery of the endangered desert tortoise, managing the wild burro population, protecting cultural resources, coordinating scientific research, managing water resources, and sharing data needed for effective resource management and planning.

Created in September 2000, the DMG partners includes the DOI (BLM, NPS, FWS, and USGS), several State of California agencies, Department of Defense (Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps), the U.S. Forest Service, and local county governments. All DMG partners encourage stakeholder involvement and work cooperatively with local communities and organizations such as the Defenders of Wildlife, National Parks Conservation Association, the Nature Conservancy, Quad State County Coalition, United Four Wheel Drive Association, the Joshua Tree National Park Association, and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. And, the organization is still growing as new group and land management agencies join in the DMG's activities.

Sachuest Point National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) Landfill Remediation and Wetlands Restoration, FWS, Rhode Island

Team, Environmental Stewardship

Prior to FWS's acquisition of the Sachuest Point NWR in late 1972, the Town of Middletown used approximately 21 acres of the NWR as a municipal landfill from the 1950's to mid-1972. When site remediation became a necessity, Project Manager, V.A. Sridhar, Project Leader, Charlie Vandemoer, and the remediation team partnered with several public and private groups to implement a cost effective landfill remediation. But, they did not stop there. They recognized there was a second, separate opportunity available to restore wetlands habitat in conjunction with the cleanup. By taking dredge material needed for the cleanup out of filled-in wetlands areas, they not only completed a successful site remediation, they also concurrently restored 17 acres of saltmarsh/wetlands, created 15 acres of habitat, increased inter-tidal foraging areas for migratory birds, controlled invasive *Phragmites*, promoted the establishment of native species, and increased biodiversity.

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Jupiter Work Group, BLM, Florida

Team, Environmental Stewardship

Since 1996, the Jupiter Inlet Working Group shows how Federal and local partnerships can conserve land for the community's recreation and education as well as improve critical habitat for wildlife. The Jupiter Inlet Natural Area is an 80-acre BLM tract which contains significant natural and cultural resources including eighteen special status species and two endangered plant species. The interagency working group has an assistance agreement the Jupiter High School Environmental Research and Field Studies Academy establishing the Jupiter Inlet Natural Area as an outdoor classroom. Students established long term monitoring plots in prescribed burn areas and new wetlands as well as use custom designed nets to sample fish species entering and leaving the new tidal wetlands. They assist BLM management in exotic plant removal, re-introduction of native plant species, and tortoise burrow monitoring. Other working group accomplishments include cooperative funding of an award-winning wetlands construction project on site.

The Jupiter Inlet Working Group includes seven Federal and private organizations; the BLM, the Town of Jupiter, the Village of Tequesta, Palm Beach County, the U.S. Coast Guard, Jupiter High School, and the Loxahatchie River Historical Society.

Kanuti NWR, FWS, Alaska

Team, Environmental Management Systems

Straddling the Arctic Circle, the Kanuti NWR contains 1.6 million acres and provides nesting habitat for hundreds of thousands of geese and shorebirds. Kanuti NWR staff established an Environmental Management Team (EMT) to ensure that their activities have a minimal impact on the sensitive ecosystem under their care. The EMT developed and wrote an Environmental Management Plan establishing a "leave no trace" policy for their field operations, initiated an outreach program at the Arctic Interagency Visitor Center, and work with local villages to reduce impacts of subsistence users. They use solar power at their Administrative Cabin on Kanuti Lake. Their Comprehensive Conservation Plan works with partner agencies to address issues such as invasive species and pollution prevention. They also established partnerships to recycle materials at their remote location. The NWR is meeting or exceeding all applicable Federal, State and local environmental laws and regulations.

Krejci Dump Site Restoration Project, Cuyahoga Valley National Park, NPS, Ohio

Team, Environmental Stewardship

Since the late-1980s, members of the NPS Krejci Restoration and Enforcement Team have enabled the NPS to achieve the cleanup of tens of thousands of pounds of material contaminated with hazardous substances from the forty-seven acre Krejci Dump Site in the midst of the beautiful rolling hills of Cuyahoga Valley National Park in Ohio. In addition, the NPS was very successful and persistent in cost recovery and cost avoidance. Thus, this massive cleanup has been achieved primarily at the expense of the corporations responsible for the contamination –

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saving the taxpayers over \$50 million that can be used for other Departmental contaminated site cleanups. The Krejci project could not have been successful without the establishment of positive working relationships between two DOI Bureaus (the NPS and the Bureau of Reclamation), the Department of Justice, State agencies, and environmental contractors involved in the project. In the end, after two precedent-setting court rulings, which strengthened the NPS and DOI enforcement authorities for this and for future cleanups, the Krejci Site will be fully restored and benefit the 3 million people who visit and enjoy Cuyahoga Valley National Park every year.

NPS Midwest Regional Office, Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold, Nebraska

Team, Sustainable Design/Green Building

Sited on a former Brownfield, the sustainable NPS Midwest Regional Office facility is the first facility in Nebraska and one of 50 buildings in the world to earn LEED Gold certification from the U.S. Green Building Council. The beautiful new building has a full year of data that shows that the building uses water and energy much more efficiently, provides excellent indoor air quality, and demonstrates native landscaping works in an urban setting, and helps managers achieve a high level of recycling. The dedicated Midwest Regional Office staff – working in partnership with the General Services Administration and the City of Omaha – actively collected the “before and after” data, which is crucial to demonstrating the value of sustainable buildings. They also worked closely with their fellow NPS staff who occupy the building to educate them about the buildings sustainable features. They do outreach work with the city and community as well.

Brazoria NWR, Discovery Center, FWS, Texas

Team, Sustainable Design/Green Building

The new Environmental Education Center and Visitor Contact Station is a unique off-the-grid facility in a remote area of Brazoria NWR. The center employs many sustainable design features including a highly efficient air conditioning system; energy-efficient, low-e windows; post-consumer recycled content and sustainably harvested construction materials; passive energy capture and energy saving features; water saving fixtures; and pond areas to naturally conserve rain water. All electricity used at the facility is generated by an off-grid, 7.4 kW PV solar electric system. Staff worked in partnership with the Friends of Brazoria NWR who raised funds to purchase the visitor center’s scientific educational equipment. As the FWS’ first energy independent building, it shows what is possible for other remote DOI facilities.

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White Pine Green UP, BLM, Nevada

The White Pine Green Up Program was initiated in March of 2003 by the BLM Ely Field Office, the Nevada Division of Forestry (NDF), and the Forest Service Ely Ranger District to combat illegal dumps. BLM and the NDF were cleaning up illegal dumps on a monthly basis before the free service program was initiated. In an effort to encourage rural residents to dispose their solid wastes responsibly, the agencies pooled \$40,000 over 5 years to waive disposal fees at the public landfill. The program accepts construction waste, hot water heaters, refrigerators (with or without Freon), scrap metal, tires, washing machines and dryers, as well as old cars and truck batteries. Prior to the White Pine Green Up program, the Ely municipal landfill infrequently received solid waste from rural areas. Today, rural residents regularly transport their solid waste to the landfill, reducing the expensive cleanups at the agencies' expense. The City of Ely is also reaping economic rewards because much of the solid waste received by the program is sold to be recycled.