



## Conservation Leaders Recognized with 2018 National Wildlife Refuge System Awards

March 21, 2018

**Washington, D.C.** The National Wildlife Refuge Association announced the 2018 National Wildlife Refuge System Awards exemplifying the outstanding conservation management skills and volunteer leadership found throughout the Refuge System. The annual awards honor the Refuge Manager, Refuge Employee, Refuge Volunteer and Friends Group of the Year.

“We are extremely proud to honor these individuals who have demonstrated exceptional dedication to enhancing and protecting America’s national wildlife refuges,” said Geoffrey Haskett, President of the National Wildlife Refuge Association. “They are an inspiration to all of us to remain positive and continue protecting and enhancing the National Wildlife Refuge System.”

The 2018 Awardees are:

### [Andy Loranger: The Paul Kroegel Refuge System Manager of the Year](#)



The National Wildlife Refuge Association is proud to award Andy Loranger of Kenai National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska with the 2018 Refuge Manager of the Year Award. He is a visionary, an innovator, and a trusted advisor for fellow conservation partners, community leaders, Alaska Natives, and his staff when it comes to conserving Alaska’s critically important landscape. Andy’s wisdom, work ethic and modest can-do attitude make him an inspirational and respected leader among his peers. We are proud to announce Andy Loranger as our 2018 Paul Kroegel National Wildlife Refuge System Refuge Manager of the Year.

## [Victoria “Vicki” Touchstone: Refuge System Employee of the Year](#)



The National Wildlife Refuge Association has named Victoria Touchstone as our 2018 National Wildlife Refuge System Employee of the Year. Ms. Touchstone is a Refuge Planner for the San Diego National Wildlife Refuge Complex in southern California, and has developed and implemented critical projects that have not only benefited wildlife populations, but also created greater public access for the community. Ms. Touchstone’s level of achievement cannot be overstated – she is at the core of nearly everything the San Diego NWR Complex is able to accomplish. As the 2018 Refuge System Employee of the Year, we thank her for her commitment to getting the job done right, her extensive attention to detail, and promotion of community involvement. For these reasons, we are proud to present this award to the very deserving, Victoria Touchstone.

## [Claire Goad: Refuge System Volunteer of the Year](#)



Claire Goad, a volunteer at the Wertheim National Wildlife Refuge in New York, is the 2018 Volunteer of the Year. This award recognizes outstanding accomplishments of volunteers in support of the operation and management of the National Wildlife Refuge System. Claire’s love of the Wertheim Refuge, and her dedication to the Refuge System nationwide, is apparent to all those who have had the privilege of knowing her. Her contributions to the Refuge System over the last 50 years have left a legacy worthy of the conservation heroes who came before her, and a challenge to those generations yet to follow. We are proud to present this award to the very deserving, Claire Goad.



## Friends of Necedah National Wildlife Refuge: The Molly Krival Refuge System Friends Group of the Year



The Friends of Necedah National Wildlife Refuge in Wisconsin have been announced as the 2018 Molly Krival National Wildlife Refuge System Friends Group of the Year. Named to honor the late Molly Krival, a pioneer in the Refuge Friends Group movement, the award recognizes outstanding contributions by a group of dedicated volunteers in Friends organizations who provide essential services to the Refuge System. The Friends of Necedah NWR embodies a strong positive influence within the refuge and the surrounding community. They support the refuge with whatever they might need out of love for the refuge, its staff and wildlife that call it home. The Friends have worked tirelessly to help their refuge grow and prosper, and we are proud to present them with this esteemed award.

To read more about this year's winners, visit the Refuge Awards page [here!](#)

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*The mission of the National Wildlife Refuge Association is to conserve America's wildlife heritage for future generations through strategic programs that protect, enhance, and expand the National Wildlife Refuge System and the landscapes beyond its boundaries that secure its ecological integrity. For more information, visit [www.refugeassociation.org](http://www.refugeassociation.org) or contact [Geoffrey L. Haskett](#), President, National Wildlife Refuge Association, 505-401-5298.*