



For Immediate Release
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Desiree Sorenson-Groves Presented with Cal Lensink Advocacy Champion Award

WASHINGTON, D.C. (November 19th, 2018) – At our October meeting, the board of the National Wildlife Refuge Association recognized Desiree Sorenson-Groves, Vice President of Government Affairs, with the Cal Lensink Advocacy Champion Award. Since coming to the Refuge Association 13 years ago, Ms. Sorenson-Groves has sought to build bridges between Refuge Association staff, the Refuge System, lawmakers, and Friends Group members, to great success. Her dedication and commitment have brought together voices from all corners of the country in championing the Refuge System, the people who recreate on these vast acres of public lands and waters, and the wildlife that depend upon on them. She has nearly 20 years of experience as an advocate for America’s wildlife, having been assistant director of grassroots for the National Audubon Society before coming to the Refuge Association.

“Desiree is exceptional in coalescing diverse interest groups to speak with one voice for the Refuge System; I know of no one who is a greater champion and bridge-builder than she, and this award is our tribute to her tremendous success,” said Rebecca Rubin, Chair of the Refuge Association Board.

The board presented Ms. Sorenson-Groves with a carved otter, an animal known for its social, and highly intelligent nature, as a way to honor and acknowledge Desiree’s talents for communication and engagement, as she brings together diverse individuals, groups, and opinions to help build a system of supporters for the Refuge System that spans all 50 states.

The Cal Lensink Advocacy Champion Award is named in honor of a former Refuge Association Board member. After his 30-year career in wildlife management and research with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, [Cal Lensink](#) spent another 30 years as a generous supporter of the National Wildlife Refuge Association, including service as a Regional Representative and board member. His lasting contributions to conservation science and to the Refuge Association are an inspiration to those who follow. Desiree’s dedication and effectiveness as an advocate for America’s wildlife demonstrate a similar capacity to go above and beyond the norm.

“Desiree is famous throughout the Refuge System and conservation circles for her extraordinary knowledge and ability to marshal the forces needed to support and protect all the refuges across the country. This recognition for her extraordinary efforts over the years is well deserved,” said Geoffrey Haskett, President of the Refuge Association.

The Refuge Association is grateful for Desiree’s accomplishments. With her unmatched expertise and experience strengthening our team, we look forward to continued success in our efforts to support the Refuge System.

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.

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