



For Immediate Release
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Allen Williams Named 2019 National Wildlife Refuge System Advocate of the Year

WASHINGTON, D.C. (February 4, 2019) – The National Wildlife Refuge Association is pleased to announce that it has named Allen Williams as our National Wildlife Refuge System Advocate of the Year. Mr. Williams has led a movement across multiple school districts in the Lower Rio Grande Valley in Texas to connect youth to nature and more specifically to the Santa Ana National Refuge. In a time when lack of relevancy is as great a threat as environmental pressures to National Wildlife Refuges across the country, Mr. Williams, who is the Landscaping/Wildlife Habitat Specialist for a local school district, is a true advocate dedicated to furthering the mission of the NWRS locally.

“We are thrilled to present Allen Williams with our Refuge Advocate Award,” said Geoffrey Haskett, President of the National Wildlife Refuge Association. “Through his work connecting local schools with the Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge, Mr. Williams has reached out to the entire community and garnered the support of parents, teachers, principals, and needless to say, students, by sharing his expertise and enthusiasm.”

With the direct assistance of Mr. Williams, the Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge has engaged hundreds of teachers and thousands of students in environmental education and creating habitat in the urban environment. Consequently, this has led to an increase in visitation of local visitors to the Refuge. It has also led to more partnerships with other school districts and even entire cities to develop valuable habitat where there had been empty space. With advocates like Mr. Allen Williams, the Refuge continues to advance its conservation mission through community engagement.

Mr. William’s award will be presented on February 27, 2019, at the National Wildlife Refuge Association’s Annual Awards Dinner in Washington, D.C.

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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 or contact [Kristen Berry](mailto:kristenberry@refugeassociation.org), National Wildlife Refuge Association, 202-417-3803.