

Environmental Service Awards 2008

Congratulations to the following Recipients:

James Milkey

Outstanding Public Service

Jim is currently Assistant Attorney General and Chief of the Environmental Protection Division of the Office of the Attorney General. Jim joined the Attorney General's office in 1984 and has effectively defended the state's air and water in relative anonymity against automakers and other industrial polluters. In November of 2006 he successfully argued and won a now famous case before the U.S. Supreme Court - Massachusetts v. EPA - challenging EPA's refusal to regulate greenhouse gas emissions under the federal Clean Air Act. This was a decision the Boston Globe dubbed, "One of the greatest rulings on earth." Because of Jim's persistence and dedication to environmental protection the water and air of Massachusetts is cleaner and we will be better prepared to address and reduce climate change.

LeeAnne Connolly

Conservation Administrator of the Year

LeeAnne has served the Belchertown Conservation Commission for over a decade and has also been an active Board member on The Kestrel Trust during a good portion of that time. Her work in Belchertown alone has resulted in 450 protected acres - her goal is 1,000 acres in her fast growing town. LeeAnne has guided the Conservation Commission with unparalleled professionalism and dedication, while going well beyond her job description—tirelessly raising funds from townspeople, writing grant proposals, negotiating with landowners and coming up with new projects each time the current one nears completion. She has developed management plans for rare species and conservation land and negotiated agreements with all sorts of user groups—steadfastly opposing inappropriate uses while finding ways to accommodate nearly everyone's needs. In the words of one of her colleagues "LeeAnne contributes an infectious desire for protecting Belchertown's natural resources."

Michele Grzenda
Jennifer Steele

Outstanding Achievements in Community Conservation, Outreach, and Open Space Stewardship:

Michele Grzenda and Jennifer Steele are Framingham's Conservation Agent and Assistant Agent, respectively. Michele has served as Framingham's Conservation Agent since 2003 and Jennifer joined her as the Assistant Agent in 2005. During their joint tenure they have improved local wetland bylaws and regulations, introduced a new land stewardship program, and reached out to build important relationships with other town offices and adjoining towns. Jennifer and Michele have proactively promoted resource conservation in a community that reviews and processes over 100 wetland related permits annually. On this day, MACC also proudly welcomes Michele as one of its newest Board members.

Francis W. Hatch, Jr.

Lifetime Achievement Award

Frank Hatch as a former Republican State Representative from the North Shore was instrumental in passing the first inland wetland protection bill in 1965, two years after Massachusetts also passed the nation's first coastal wetlands protection bill. The 1965 Hatch Act, along with the 1963 Jones Act, together formed what would later become the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act. During a time when wetlands were largely considered wastelands, Frank had the vision to protect our most important wildlife habitats. Without his pioneering legislation hundreds of acres of freshwater wetlands would have been forever lost.