



**Alaska
Conservation
Foundation**

PRESS RELEASE

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Alaska Conservation Foundation announces 2011 Conservation Achievement Award winners

26th annual awards celebrate Alaska's conservation heroes

ANCHORAGE August, 9, 2011—Alaska Conservation Foundation (ACF) today announced the winners of the 26th annual Conservation Achievement Awards, honoring the contributions of six individuals and one organization whose work to safeguard Alaska's wild lands and wildlife and raise awareness of our need for a healthy environment benefits us all.

ACF established the Conservation Achievement Awards in 1985 to recognize the accomplishments of Alaska's extraordinary conservation leaders and organizations. "This program celebrates the unsung heroes of conservation, the individuals and organizations that work tirelessly to protect Alaska's natural environment," said Nancy Lord, chair of ACF's board. "This year, each of our awardees is distinguished not just by an impressive body of work, but also by the ability to communicate, collaborate, and educate."

The winners of the 26th annual Conservation Achievement Awards are:

Caleb Pungowiyi, Kotzebue (1941-2011)

Outstanding Achievements by an Alaska Native Organization or Individual

A Yup'ik Eskimo from the village of Savoonga on St. Lawrence Island, Caleb Pungowiyi devoted his life to advocating for Indigenous people of the north. He understood that sustaining Arctic cultures requires sustaining the Arctic environment, and he was dedicated to developing relationships between Alaska Natives and conservation groups. During his lifetime, he held numerous leadership positions, including president of Kawerak, Inc., the Inuit Circumpolar Council and the Robert Aqqaluk Newlin Sr. Memorial Trust. Most recently, he was the Rural Liaison and Senior Advisor for Oceana. Caleb is recognized for his leadership, intelligence, humility, courage and kindness in protecting Alaska's environment and subsistence ways of life.

Stacy Studebaker, Kodiak

Celia Hunter Award for Outstanding Volunteer Contributions

Stacy Studebaker has devoted her life to environmental activism and education. She is being honored for her outstanding volunteer service as well as her advocacy for local and state issues involving marine and terrestrial habitat and wildlife. Among Stacy's myriad volunteer achievements are hosting a weekly environmental radio show, co-authoring field guides to Alaska's endemic plants, sharing her expertise about local plants with Alaska's visitors each summer, and co-founding the Kodiak chapter of the National Audubon Society.

Alaskans for Palmer Hay Flats, Palmer

Lowell Thomas, Jr. Award for Outstanding Achievements by a Conservation Organization

Proving that you can make a difference, a group of concerned citizens and outdoor enthusiasts formed Alaskans for Palmer Hay Flats (APHF) to revitalize an abused and neglected recreation area and ecosystem 27 miles north of Anchorage. The Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge, on the northern shore of Cook Inlet, is 45 square miles of wetlands, forest and lakes, and is home to ducks, geese, swans, cranes, moose, salmon and other wildlife. For the last six years, APHF has been instrumental in enlisting residents of southcentral Alaska in the clean-up and care of the refuge. As a result of this group's work, many more Alaskans have come to appreciate what a tremendous asset the refuge is—a place close to home where they can come to enjoy the outdoors.

Maka Monture, Yakutat

Denny Wilcher Award for Young Environmental Activists

An emerging leader, Maka Monture, is being honored for her passion for her Native culture and dedication to protecting Alaska's environment. For the last two years, Maka has led the Yakutat chapter of Alaska Youth for Environmental Action (AYEA) as well as assisting with the statewide *Wild Salmon* campaign. She traveled to Washington D.C. earlier this year to present a youth resolution to Alaska's Congressional delegation calling for protection of Alaska's wild salmon. Maka is heading to college this fall, and is a rising star to watch.

Daisy Lee Bitter, Homer

Jerry S. Dixon Award for Excellence in Environmental Education

Daisy Lee Bitter is being honored for her creative approach to science education, and for over 57 years of work motivating and informing students and educators about Alaska's natural environment. She produced two award-winning instructional television series, wrote science guidebooks, served as principle of Fairview and Susitna Elementary Schools, and was the first volunteer education director for the Center for Alaskan Coastal Studies where she helped establish their nationally recognized education program.

Robert (Bob) H. Armstrong, Juneau

Daniel Housberg Wilderness Image Award for Excellence in Film or Video

Bob Armstrong is a talented photographer with a tremendous passion for teaching us

about Alaska's wildlife and landscapes. Starting out as a fisheries biologist for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and later a professor at the University of Alaska, he turned to photography to help people understand and appreciate this great state. He has published more than 14 books and scores of magazine articles featuring his spectacular images of Alaska's birds, mammals, fish, insects and plants. His book, *Guide to the Birds of Alaska*, is now in its fifth edition and is considered the definitive field guide on Alaska's birds.

Dorothy Childers, Anchorage

Olaus Murie Award for Outstanding Professional Contributions

Dorothy Childers is recognized for her outstanding work and tremendous dedication to protecting the health of Alaska's oceans and sustaining the working waterfronts of our coastal communities. She has shown valuable leadership and effective collaboration in working with the Bering Sea Elders Advisory Group to identify culturally and ecologically sensitive marine areas and resources that Bering Sea villages rely on for subsistence. Dorothy is currently the associate director of Alaska Marine Conservation Council and also serves on the North Pacific Research Board and Marine Fish Conservation Network board of advisors.

The recipients will be honored at a ceremony being held on Thursday, September 15, 2011, at the Aviation Museum in Anchorage. The event begins at 6:30 p.m. with a reception followed by the program and includes local fare served by Chef Al Levinsohn of Bridge Catering. The public is invited to attend. Tickets cost \$30 per adult or \$15 for youth (K-12). Reservations can be made by calling ACF at (907) 276-1917 by September 8th.

Founded in 1980 by legendary Alaska conservationists Celia Hunter and Denny Wilcher, ACF is a public foundation dedicated to connecting philanthropists and foundations worldwide to Alaska's grassroots conservation organizations. Over the past 30 years, ACF has made more than \$33 million of grants to conservation causes in Alaska and has an endowment of \$5 million. For more information about ACF and the Conservation Achievement Awards, visit www.alaskaconservation.org.

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