

News Release



Pacific Southwest Region

2800 Cottage Way, Suite W-2606

Sacramento, CA 95825

Tel: 916-414-6486; Fax 916-414-6486

<http://fws.gov/cno>

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Contact: Scott Flaherty 916-978-6156

scott_flaherty@fws.gov

California Scientists, Channel Islands Fox Conservationists Recognized as Recovery Champions

Award Recognizes Exceptional Efforts to Help Nation's Rare Fish, Wildlife and Plants

Sacramento – Several Californians are being recognized for their work to help rare species. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is naming a former biologist of the Sacramento Fish and Wildlife Office who pioneered recovery planning for imperiled species in the San Joaquin Valley, and a team of eight land managers who helped lead the recovery of Island fox species in the Channel Islands as 2015 Recovery Champions today.

"Conserving our nation's imperiled species is one of the toughest challenges of our time," said U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director Dan Ashe. "The recipients of this award have dedicated their lives to this task and we are eternally grateful for their tenacity, dedication and passion for safeguarding hundreds of species of native wildlife and the wild places they call home."

Cay Goude, former assistant field supervisor at the Sacramento FWO, was recognized for her 25 years of work to improve the status of many federally protected species in California. Goude served as a leader in promoting the importance of collaborative recovery planning as an underpinning for the day-to-day conservation activities both within the Service and with conservation partners. Her involvement in the development of the 1998 *Recovery Plan for Upland Species of the San Joaquin Valley, California*, was ahead of its time as a multi-species, ecosystem-based recovery strategy. Later in her career, she led the recovery planning for 126 species, and continued to involve partners and the public to help recover at-risk species. Goude retired from the Service in 2015.

A team of seven land managers: **Tim Coonan**, **Kate Faulkner** and **Russell Galipeau** with the National Park Service; **Christie Boser**, **Scott Morrison**, **Eamon O'Byrne** and **Lotus Vermeer** with The Nature Conservancy and **David Garcelon**, a fox researcher with the Institute for Wildlife Studies, are also being recognized as 2015 Recovery Champions. The team led the recovery of three subspecies of island fox: San Miguel Island fox, Santa Rosa Island fox, and Santa Cruz Island fox. Collectively, as the land managers of San Miguel, Santa Rosa, and Santa Cruz Islands, the team worked tirelessly to improve the status of these subspecies. In the late 1990s, these island fox subspecies experienced precipitous declines as a result of predation by non-native golden eagles and were estimated to have a 50 percent chance of extinction within 10 years. Working with state and federal agencies, the academic community, and non-profit organizations, the team successfully identified and ameliorated threats to the island fox. Recovery efforts included: captive breeding, relocation of golden eagles,

removal of golden eagle prey base, habitat restoration, monitoring and vaccinating against canid disease.

The Recovery Champion awards began in 2002 as a one-time recognition for Service staff members for their achievements in conserving listed species. However, in 2007, the program was expanded to honor Service partners as well, recognizing their essential role in the recovery of threatened and endangered species.

For information about the 2015 Recovery Champions, please visit: <http://www.fws.gov/endangered/what-we-do/recovery-champions/index.html> .

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals, and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit <http://www.fws.gov/cno>. Connect with our [Facebook page](#), follow our [tweets](#), watch our [YouTube Channel](#), and download photos from our [Flickr page](#).

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