

News Release



Office of Public Affairs
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March 28, 2008

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Wildlife Law Enforcement Officers Receive Lifetime Achievement Award

Resident Agent in Charge Christopher Dowd, who oversees U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service law enforcement operations in New England, and Dr. Karen Rudolph, a forensic scientist with the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, have been selected to receive the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's 2007 Guy Bradley Award for wildlife law enforcement.

Both recipients will be honored during the annual North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference in Phoenix, Arizona, on March 27, 2008. The Guy Bradley Award is named after the first wildlife law enforcement officer killed in the line of duty in 1905 and is presented each year by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to recognize individuals for outstanding lifetime contributions to wildlife law enforcement.

"We're honored to present the Guy Bradley Award to Chris Dowd and Karen Rudolph in recognition of their outstanding service in protecting and conserving our wildlife resources. Their dedication and accomplishments provide a model for all those charged with safeguarding wildlife and wildlife habitat," said Foundation Director Jeff Trandahl.

"We join the Foundation in applauding the accomplishments of Chris Dowd and Karen Rudolph," said Service Director H. Dale Hall. "Their work, as well as that of their state and federal law enforcement counterparts truly makes a difference for wildlife."

Dowd, who has worked for the Service as a criminal investigator for more than three decades, was honored for his success in safeguarding wildlife from threats such as environmental contaminants, encroaching development and illegal commercialization. He was also recognized for his commitment to supporting other investigators and agencies in protecting wildlife resources.

Dowd led the Service investigations of two of the most devastating oil spills to affect wildlife and wildlife habitat in the Nation's history. Fines and penalties secured as a result of these investigations were exceeded only by those assessed for the Exxon Valdez spill. In the first case,

the company responsible for a spill that killed hundreds of federally protected birds and damaged some 90 miles of Massachusetts beach paid a \$10 million fine. In the other, which involved a spill off the coast of Rhode Island, the corporation involved paid a \$3.5 million federal criminal fine and another \$3.5 million in state penalties. A significant portion of the fine money in both cases went to support wetland conservation projects.

Dowd was also recognized for his contributions to the protection of endangered species that range from the Northeast beach tiger beetle to the piping plover. His efforts to safeguard the piping plover included public education and outreach to secure the cooperation of municipal authorities and coastal residents in reducing the impact of beach use and other human activities on plover populations.

Dowd's accomplishments also include investigations that exposed unlawful commercial exploitation of both U.S. and global wildlife resources. His casework secured the successful prosecution of waterfowl guides in the Boston area for Migratory Bird Treaty Act violations; broke up a notorious poaching ring operating in Connecticut, Vermont, and New York; and snared a Massachusetts resident using fraudulent licenses over many years to hunt big game in Alaska. His investigations of global wildlife smuggling documented trafficking in contraband that ranged from black palm cockatoos to beluga caviar.

The Foundation honored forensic scientist Karen Rudolph for her dedicated support to wildlife law enforcement and outstanding contributions to conserving fish and wildlife resources in the State of Idaho. Rudolph, who began her career with the Idaho Department of Fish and Game in 1997 as a Wildlife Health Laboratory biologist, has played an integral role in the success of numerous investigations of wildlife crime over the past decade. During this time, she essentially created the state's wildlife forensics program, which evolved through her personal initiative, professional skills, and understanding of the role that science can play in facilitating wildlife crime investigations.

Rudolph's work consistently provided the sound scientific evidence needed to pursue successful prosecutions of violators under Idaho's wildlife laws. Her contributions to investigations include providing detailed guidance to officers on evidence collection in the field, thorough and timely forensic analyses in the laboratory and testimony in court as an expert witness. The efforts of enforcement officers throughout the state have benefited from her professional expertise and responsiveness.

Rudolph was also recognized for her contributions to upgrading the crime scene analysis capabilities of Idaho Fish and Game officers in the field. She established evidence collection protocols and developed and presented training programs focused on acquiring and preserving evidence, including DNA samples and information for use in establishing the time of death for wildlife crime "victims." She was instrumental in equipping officers with field forensic kits and has consistently worked closely and effectively with investigators as cases unfold.

Rudolph has also supported conservation outreach efforts by launching a Wildlife Crime Scene Investigation program for elementary school children. The program draws on popular interest in forensic science to teach young people the value of conservation and the importance of law

enforcement in protecting wildlife.

A nonprofit established by Congress in 1984, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) sustains, restores and enhances the Nation's fish, wildlife, plants, and habitats. Through leadership conservation investments with public and private partners, NFWF is dedicated to achieving maximum conservation impact by developing and applying best practices and innovative methods for measurable outcomes. Since its establishment, NFWF has awarded nearly 9,500 grants to over 3,000 organizations in the United States and abroad and leveraged – with its partners – more than \$400 million in federal funds into more than \$1.3 billion for on-the-ground conservation. For more information, visit www.nfwf.org.

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 www.fws.gov.