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Western MA Biologist Receives Prestigious National Wildlife Conservation Award

John Organ, current Division Chief of the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Northeast Region and internationally respected biologist has received the Wildlife Management Institute's 2014 George Bird Grinnell Memorial Award for Distinguished Service to Natural Resource Conservation. The award was conferred on Wednesday, March 12, during the 79th North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference in Denver, Colorado.

Organ also has served as past president of The Wildlife Society and is a champion of the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation.

“Over the course of his 35 year career, John has relentlessly driven to make worthwhile contributions to the natural resource profession, and he has done so with great energy and little focus on recognition,” said Wildlife Management Institute (WMI) president Steve Williams who presented the award at the annual Conservation Administrators Luncheon. Williams further applauded Organ for his dedication to promoting “the role of hunting in wildlife conservation, science-based resource management, wildlife diversity, international conservation, and irreproachable professionalism.”

Organ received his Ph.D. in wildlife biology from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, where he now serves as Adjunct Associate Professor of Wildlife Ecology and Conservation. He became the first-ever Assistant Regional Wetland Coordinator for the Service's National Wetland Inventory program, where he attained extensive knowledge of wetland ecology and mapping and frequently acted as Regional Wetland Coordinator when called upon.

“John is a consummate professional and valued colleague who exemplifies the meaning of public service”, said Service Northeast Regional Director Wendi Weber. “He is an expert on a range of species and subjects – ranging from Canada lynx, river otters, spotted-necked otters, beaver,

adaptive management, human dimensions, wildlife education, wildlife policy, leadership and wilderness. Conservation is not his vocation; it is his life's passion.”

During the course of his highly respected career, Organ has served as a Certified Wildlife Biologist, Fellow and Past President of The Wildlife Society, Professional Member of the Boone and Crockett Club, Senior Specialist in the Fulbright Scholarship Program, Permanent Invited Professor at the Universidad Andres Bello in Santiago, Chile, and supervisor of M.S. and Ph.D. students studying carnivore conservation and ecology in Canada, Chile, and the U.S.

To many in the profession, Organ's seminal contribution to North American conservation has been his work to describe, advance, and promote the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation. He is considered by his peers to be perhaps the single most knowledgeable living professional who understands the history and heritage of wildlife conservation in North America.

“WMI is extremely pleased and proud to present the Grinnell award to John Organ,” concluded Williams. “His character, dedication, and friendship place him at the top of an elite list of stellar professionals who have dedicated their careers to North American natural resource conservation.”

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 in the Northeast region, visit www.fws.gov/northeast. Connect with our [Facebook page](#), follow our [tweets](#), watch our [YouTube Channel](#) and download photos from our [Flickr page](#).