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## Seven Earn New Hampshire Fish and Game Commission Awards of Excellence

**CONCORD, N.H.** – Seven New Hampshire citizens and organizations were recently recognized by the New Hampshire Fish and Game Commission with Awards of Excellence for their efforts in the conservation field in support of the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department’s mission.

"It is an honor to present these awards, which recognize truly significant contributions in support of the mission of New Hampshire’s wildlife agency, the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department," said Robert S.S. Blake, Fish and Game Commissioner for Strafford County and chair of the Commission's Awards of Excellence program. The awards were presented at the Commission's May meeting at the N.H. Fish and Game Department in Concord.

**The 2012 Commission Award of Excellence recipients (presented in 2013):**

The **Ellis R. Hatch Jr. Commission Award of Excellence**, the commission's highest honor, was presented posthumously to **Nancy Lyon of New London**, who throughout her many years of dedicated service with New England K-9 Search and Rescue was a valued friend of the Fish and Game Law Enforcement Division and a highly respected member of the wilderness search and rescue community. "We appreciate that her husband Doug could be here today as we honor her," said Blake.

Lyon joined New England K-9 in 1988 and served as its president for 20 years, helping it develop into a highly trained, full-service air scent canine unit. "We can personally recount numerous search and rescue missions where Nancy and her teams of dog handlers responded at our request, and literally, saved the day by successfully locating a lost child, a

2012 Fish and Game Commission Awardees (presented May 2013)

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*Doug Lyon and New England K-9 Rescue Team accept the Ellis R. Hatch Jr. award for Nancy Lyon.*

missing Alzheimer's patient, or an overdue hiker or hunter. Nancy's efforts saved countless lives," said Col. Martin Garabedian, Chief of N.H. Fish and Game Law Enforcement Division.

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Two Manchester brothers, **Leo and Richard Pichette of Manchester**, were honored with the Commission's 2012 **Landowner Appreciation Award**. This award recognizes excellence in the preservation or enhancement of opportunities for public use on private property as it benefits the Department's mission.

Leo and Richard own Pichette Brothers Construction in Manchester, where they allow their properties to be used to their full potential for those pursuing outdoor activities. Their land is adjacent to, and is a means of accessing, a large area of conservation land; it abounds in wild game including waterfowl, deer, black bear, turkey and an assortment of furbearers. As welcoming landowners, these two men have had a tremendous positive impact on countless outdoorsmen and women over the years.

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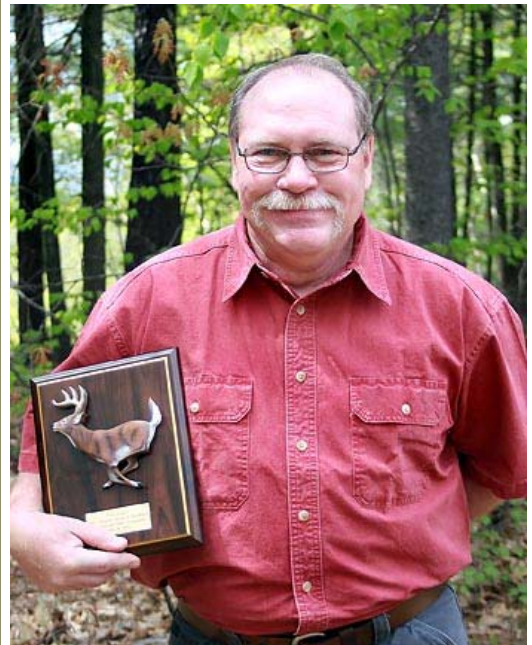
Two individuals were honored with the **Volunteer Award of Excellence**. **Gary Sleeper of Loudon** was honored for coordinating a unique fundraising event called the Wild Game Culinary Adventure, which raised close to \$4,000 for Fish and Game's Barry Conservation Camp. Sleeper is a longtime Hunter Education instructor and was an integral part of the recent renovation of Barry Camp. "Last year, he went the extra mile," explained Blake. "Knowing that the camp needed a way to raise operating costs, he came up with this creative, fun and delicious way to raise money." Sleeper recruited volunteers and spent many months planning and carrying out a program that brought more than thirty adults to Barry Camp last September to learn how to process and cook wild game. The program was a huge success, and Sleeper is now making it an annual event. "We just can't thank Gary enough for the energy and enthusiasm he brings to Barry Camp and to the Department," said Blake.

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A second individual honored with the **Volunteer Award of Excellence** was **William**



Richard Pichette and his brother Leo of Manchester - 2012 Landowner Appreciation Award Winners.



Volunteer Award of Excellence winner Gary Sleeper of Loudon

**McKee of Orford**, who has volunteered as a Hunter Education instructor for more than 20 years and gives many hours of time at Fish and Game's Owl Brook Hunter Education Center. In the last two years alone, McKee has taught 5 Hunter Education courses, 3 bowhunter ed courses and presented 11 online field days. Owl Brook Manager Tom Flynn says McKee has logged in more volunteer hours than anyone since the center opened in 2002! This dedicated volunteer also helps teach the summer youth programs at Owl Brook and assists with Becoming an Outdoors-Woman classes. "There is no way we could touch the many lives that we do, instilling a love for the outdoors, without the incredible talents of volunteers like Bill McKee," said Blake.

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In the **Habitat Stewardship** category, the Commission honored **Dave Weber of Hampton**, whose efforts have helped restore coastal osprey and support other local bird populations. The Habitat Stewardship award honors an organization, individual or corporation that has excelled in the enhancement, conservation or creation of land management practices beneficial to New Hampshire's fish, wildlife and marine resources and the Fish and Game mission.

Weber is an avid birder who built and maintains four osprey nesting platforms on Hampton Marsh. He is understandably proud that ospreys have nested on two of them. "His initiative has helped restore these magnificent birds of prey to our coastal waters," said Blake. "Weber also built and tended over 200 bird houses in the marshes along the coast." Weber has hunted the marsh for decades and is an active member of the N.H. Waterfowl Association and local chapters of Ducks Unlimited.

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The Commission honored **Alexander Kulas of Winchester** with its **Communication Award of Excellence**. This category recognizes an outdoor communicator, writer, or media source who has written or published materials beneficial to public understanding of fish, wildlife or marine resources. Kulas has been a fixture in the Keene radio scene for 15 years, where he has been a proponent of New Hampshire's abundant natural resources, never missing an opportunity to inform the public about opportunities to enjoy the great outdoors. "This service comes from the heart,



*Volunteer Award of Excellence winner, William McKee of Orford*



*Habitat Stewardship award winner Dave Weber of Hampton*

because Kulas is an avid hunter, fisherman, and an expert trapper," said Blake. "He has used his expertise to educate his listening audience about the important role sportsmen have played in preserving New Hampshire wildlife. Thanks, Al!"

There are seven award categories for New Hampshire Fish and Game Commission Awards of Excellence. Nominations are accepted each year, and must be submitted by December 31. Consider nominating your conservation hero or a worthy organization for next year's awards! For a description of the various award categories and a nomination form, visit [wildnh.com/Inside\\_FandG/commission\\_awards.html](http://wildnh.com/Inside_FandG/commission_awards.html).

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*Alexander Kulas of Winchester, Communications Award winner*

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