

## California Leopold Conservation Award: Nominate Your Favorite Farmer or Rancher

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Sacramento, California - In the eyes of conservationist Aldo Leopold, an ethical relationship between the land and the people who benefit from it was “an evolutionary possibility and an ecological necessity.” His vision of a “land ethic” is what drives the search for nominees 2012 California Leopold Conservation Award.

If you are a California farmer or rancher committed to sound environmental stewardship or know someone who is, please consider a nomination.

The award recognizes private landowners’ commitment to responsible environmental stewardship and land management. It underscores the fact that many ranchers, farmers and other private landowners are on the front lines of conservation and should be recognized for protecting the environment. So often, voluntary conservation by private landowners provides the most effective, efficient and durable means of protecting land, water and species.

At the recent Ag Day celebration at our Capitol, I had the pleasure of celebrating 2011 Leopold Award Winner Tim Koopman, a third-generation rancher whose efforts to protect wildlife and improve water quality have made his ranch an exemplary agricultural component of a largely urbanized community in Sunol.

As in past years, finalists in 2012 will be selected in part based on their commitment to responsible and sustainable land management, the overall health of their land, implementation of innovative practices and dedication to community outreach and leadership. The California Leopold Conservation Award judging panel will evaluate properties in two categories: (1) Nurseries & Crops, and (2) Livestock. In California, the award is presented by the Sand County Foundation, Sustainable Conservation and the California Farm Bureau Federation.

The grand prize of \$10,000 and a crystal rendering of Aldo Leopold, author of the “Sand County Almanac,” will be presented at the California Farm Bureau Federation’s annual convention in December. Runner-up prizes of \$1,000 will also be presented.

The deadline for nominations is July 15. For more information and a nomination form, visit

[http://leopoldconservationaward.org/uploads/LCA\\_CANom2012\\_final2.pdf](http://leopoldconservationaward.org/uploads/LCA_CANom2012_final2.pdf)

or contact Sustainable Conservation at (415) 977-0380. For information about past winners and finalists, visit

<http://suscon.org/leopoldaward/index.php>.

I encourage you to participate in this program and help California’s innovative, forward-thinking farmers and ranchers get the credit they so richly deserve when it comes to conservation.