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California Leopold Conservation Award

By [Kathy Voth](#) / July 1, 2013 / [No Comments](#)

Each year the Sand County Foundation presents Leopold Conservation Awards recognizing achievement in voluntary conservation in eight participating states: California, Colorado, Nebraska, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Wisconsin and Wyoming. Winners receive a trophy and a check for \$10,000. This is the time of year when nominations are being taken and winners are being announced. We thought you'd enjoy hearing about some of them.

As we come up on the 2013 deadline for nominations in California, we thought we'd share a little inspiration from last year's nominees and winner. In this video, they share a little about their farms and their guiding principles for creating a farming future for the next generation.

Do You Know Someone in California Who Deserves This Award?

You can nominate them! [Download the application here](http://www.cfbf.com/leopold/pdf/LeopoldNomination2013.pdf) (<http://www.cfbf.com/leopold/pdf/LeopoldNomination2013.pdf>) (PDF) and complete it by July 12, 2013. Questions? (415)977-0380

I was fortunate to meet finalists Ward and Rose Burroughs a few years ago at a conference in California. They focus on merging food production and wildlife habitat conservation on their collection of farms near Denair California where they run an organic dairy, an organic egg business, and grow organic and conventional almonds. Each year their farms produce about 300 tons of compost which they use to feed their soil, which then feeds the pastures that provide 80 percent of the forage for their beef and dairy herds. Says Ward, "We're only on this earth for a short time and in that time, we want to make a difference."



Finalists Stephen Pedersen and Jeanne Byrne of High Ground Organics in Watsonville, California are first-generation farmers growing organic fruit, vegetables and flowers. Their 38-acre farm is on the edge of a conservation easement established to protect critical wildlife habitat, a goal the couple

(http://onpasture.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/2012leopold4_367x250.jpg)

Rose and Ward Burroughs

works on actively. Stephen says “All of the challenges we face every day as farmers are actually rewarding in so many different ways. I can’t imagine doing anything else with my life.

Dino Giacomazzi, winner of the 2012 Leopold Conservation award, says “My family has been farming and milking cows in this same spot every single day since 1893. I feel privileged to keep that tradition



going so hopefully my children can take it over someday.” He has

adopted tilling practices to improve water conservation and reduce fuel consumption, diesel emissions and dust. He also volunteered to work with state agencies on long-term groundwater monitoring to determine the relationship between dairy operations, waste and nutrient management practices and groundwater quality. He also trains fellow farmers to use social media to advocate for sustainable agriculture and the work that farmers and ranchers do.

We think our readers have a lot in common with these folks. Thanks for all the good work you do!



(http://onpasture.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/2012leopold3_367x250.jpg)

Stephen Pedersen and Jeanne Byrne



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