Leopold Conservation Award®

Call for Applications
South Dakota 2023

Presented by
Sand County Foundation ***in partnership with***
American Farmland Trust, ***and state partners:***
South Dakota Cattlemen's Association
and South Dakota Grassland Coalition

Leopold Conservation Award

In his influential book, *A Sand County Almanac*, Aldo Leopold called for an ethical relationship between people and the land they own and manage. The development of a land ethic was, he wrote, "an evolutionary possibility and an ecological necessity." A land ethic is alive and well today in the thousands of American farmers, ranchers and forestland owners who improve soil health, water quality and wildlife habitat.

Sand County Foundation proudly presents the Leopold Conservation Award to private landowners dedicated to leaving their land better than how they found it. They exemplify the spirit of Leopold's land ethic.

In South Dakota, Sand County Foundation presents the Leopold Conservation Award in partnership with American Farmland Trust, and state partners: South Dakota Cattlemen's Association and South Dakota Grassland Coalition. The Leopold Conservation Award recipient receives $10,000 and a crystal award.

Leopold Conservation Awards recognize extraordinary achievement in voluntary conservation, inspire other landowners through their example, and help the general public understand the vital role private landowners play in conservation success.

Leopold Conservation Award 2023

Application Deadline: March 6, 2023

The South Dakota award is presented and sponsored by:

Please provide all of the following information in your application.
Name of Nominee, Name of Farm/Ranch/Business, Mailing Address, Primary County(s) of operation, Email Address, Phone Number, Website:
Name of Nominator, if different from nominee:

If you are selected for the Leopold Conservation Award, how would you like your name to appear on the award: (*Examples: John Smith, John Smith and Family, Smith Family Farms*)

Please address the five criteria, and limit each response to 1,000 words.

1. **Conservation Ethic** – Describe how the nominee has voluntarily exceeded the minimum obligations of regulation to enhance and conserve natural resources.
2. **Resilience** – Describe the business and conservation methods used by the nominee to make the operation productive into the future.
3. **Leadership and Communication** – Describe significant efforts the nominee has made to share his/her conservation ethics and techniques with others inside and outside of agriculture. Describe community service, positions held, leadership roles and media outreach.
4. **Innovation and Adaptability** – Describe how the nominee has taken risks by utilizing or experimenting with new techniques to adapt to change (consumers, markets, weather, regulations, etc.).
5. **Ecological Community** – Describe how the nominee's agricultural operation works with natural systems (soil, water, plants and wildlife, etc.). Describe how this benefits others.

Describe any other relevant accomplishments and/or challenges.

Please provide this additional information: *Your responses to the following do not impact the selection of the Leopold Conservation Award recipient. This information is intended to help the judges learn more about your practices.*

Number of acres under management (*there is no minimum or maximum acreage required*).

Provide a one line description of your farm/ranch/forest (*examples: dairy farm with cash crops; cow/calf beef operation; integrated forestry with focus of pulp wood production*).

Which local, state, federal agencies or partner organizations are involved with the nominee's conservation practices?

Which, if any, federal conservation programs do you utilize (*e.g. EQIP, CSP, CRP*)?

Which, if any, farm advisors do you work with (*e.g. crop consultant, Extension agent*)?

Attach three letters of recommendation. At least one should be from a natural resources conservation organization or agency.

Please sign and submit the following statements with the application.

1. I agree to be a nominee for the Leopold Conservation Award.
2. I manage and/or own the property described in this application.
3. The agricultural operation described in this application is in compliance with all applicable regulations, and provides a positive example of environmental stewardship.
4. I understand I may be asked to be available for communications/media opportunities to promote the message of voluntary private lands conservation.
5. I understand a video will be produced featuring my agricultural operation, which will require my participation.
6. I understand I must be available to host a tour and video production team during the summer, and participate in a fall award presentation.

Application materials may be mailed or emailed:
Leopold Conservation Award c/o South Dakota Cattlemen's Association
P.O. Box 1258, Pierre, SD 57501 Email: award@sandcountyfoundation.org

For further information, please see the Leopold Conservation Award website: www.leopoldconservationaward.org

First Dakota National Bank

South Dakota Department of Agriculture & Natural Resources

South Dakota Farm Bureau Federation

South Dakota Game, Fish & Parks

South Dakota State University College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences

USDA-NRCS

Audubon Dakota

Bad River Ranches

Belle Fourche River Watershed Partnership

Blair Brothers Angus Ranch

Cammack Ranch

Daybreak Ranch

Ducks Unlimited

Jim and Karen Kopriva

McDonald's

Millborn Seeds

North Central SARE

Pheasants Forever

Professional Alliance

South Dakota Agricultural Land Trust

South Dakota's Conservation Districts

South Dakota Soil Health Coalition

The Nature Conservancy

Todd Mortenson Family

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service - Partners for Fish and Wildlife

Wagner Land & Livestock