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Kansas Leopold Conservation Award Seeks Nominees

Nominations and applications are now being accepted for the 2024 Kansas Leopold Conservation Award®.

The \$10,000 award honors ranchers, farmers and forestland owners who go above and beyond in their management of soil health, water quality and wildlife habitat on working land.

[Sand County Foundation](#) and national sponsor [American Farmland Trust](#) present the Leopold Conservation Award to private landowners in 27 states. In [Kansas](#), the award is presented with state partners: [Kansas Association of Conservation Districts](#), and the [Ranchland Trust of Kansas](#).

Given in honor of renowned conservationist Aldo Leopold, the award recognizes landowners who inspire others with their dedication to environmental improvement. In his influential 1949 book, "[A Sand County Almanac](#)," Leopold called for what he called "a land ethic," an ethical relationship between people and the land they own and manage.

Nominations may be submitted on behalf of a landowner, or landowners may nominate themselves. The application can be found at www.sandcountyfoundation.org/ApplyLCA.

The application deadline date is June 1, 2024. Applications should be emailed to award@sandcountyfoundation.org. Applications will be reviewed by an independent panel of Kansas agricultural and conservation leaders. The 2024 award will be presented in November at the KACD Annual Convention.

The 2023 recipients of the award were [Ray and Susan Flickner](#) of Wichita.

"The Leopold Conservation Award Program provides a valuable opportunity to recognize the outstanding accomplishments of Kansas agricultural landowners who are committed to strong conservation practices and effective stewardship," said Dan Meyerhoff, Executive Director of the Kansas Association of Conservation Districts.

“RTK is a proud supporter of the Leopold Conservation Award in Kansas. It is our honor and privilege to help recognize Kansas ranchers and farmers who go above and beyond the standard in stewardship of the natural resources they manage daily,” said Barth Crouch, Ranchland Trust of Kansas Board Chairman.

“Conserving our state’s rich and diverse natural resources is ingrained deeply in the culture of our multi-generational farms and ranches,” said Kansas Agriculture Secretary Mike Beam. “The Leopold Conservation Award serves an important role of reminding the general public of how private land managers conserve and enhance these resources for future generations.”

“As a national sponsor for Sand County Foundation’s Leopold Conservation Award, American Farmland Trust celebrates the hard work and dedication of farmers, ranchers and forestland owners,” said John Piotti, AFT President and CEO. “At AFT we believe that conservation in agriculture requires a focus on the land, the practices and the people and this award recognizes the integral role of all three.”

“Recipients of this award are examples of how Aldo Leopold’s land ethic is alive and well today. Their dedication to conservation shows how individuals can improve the health of the land while producing food and fiber,” said Kevin McAleese, Sand County Foundation President and CEO.

The [Leopold Conservation Award Program in Kansas](#) is made possible thanks to the generous support of American Farmland Trust, Kansas Association of Conservation Districts, Ranchland Trust of Kansas, Sand County Foundation, Farm Credit Associations of Kansas, ITC Great Plains, Kansas Department of Agriculture’s Division of Conservation, Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, Kansas Forest Service, McDonald’s, The Nature Conservancy in Kansas, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Green Cover Seed, and a Kansas Leopold Conservation Award recipient.

For more information on the award, visit www.leopoldconservationaward.org.

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LEOPOLD CONSERVATION AWARD

The Leopold Conservation Award is a competitive award that recognizes landowner achievement in voluntary conservation. Sand County Foundation presents the award in California, Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Wisconsin, and in New England (Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont). www.leopoldconservationaward.org

AMERICAN FARMLAND TRUST

American Farmland Trust is the only national organization that takes a holistic approach to agriculture, focusing on the land itself, the agricultural practices on the land, and the farmers and ranchers who do the work. AFT launched the conservation agriculture movement and continues to raise public awareness through its No Farms, No Food message. Since its founding in 1980, AFT has helped permanently protect over 6.8 million acres of agricultural lands, advanced environmentally sound farming practices on millions of additional acres, and supported thousands of farm families. www.farmland.org

KANSAS ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

The Kansas Association of Conservation Districts is a voluntary, non-governmental, non-profit, incorporated organization composed of members from the conservation districts located throughout Kansas' 105 counties. Through partnerships with federal, state, and local entities, the Kansas Association of Conservation Districts has brought together groups that share the common goal of wise and efficient conservation practices that protect Kansas' natural resources. The Kansas Association of Conservation Districts promotes and supports the establishment of programs dedicated to conservation and the organized development of Kansas land, water and related resources. www.kacdnet.org

RANGLAND TRUST OF KANSAS

The Ranchland Trust of Kansas is a private, non-profit organization founded by members of the Kansas Livestock Association in 2003. The organization was created to provide assistance to ranchers and landowners who desire to conserve their land with conservation easements. Guided by their mission to preserve Kansas' ranching heritage and open spaces for future generations through the conservation of working landscapes, RTK values a commitment to conservation, respect for private landownership, integrity, organizational excellence and collaboration with those who share their values. The Ranchland Trust of Kansas remains an affiliate of the Kansas Livestock Association. www.ranchlandtrustofkansas.org

SAND COUNTY FOUNDATION

Sand County Foundation inspires and empowers a growing number of private landowners to ethically manage natural resources in their care, so future generations have clean and abundant water, healthy soil to support agriculture and forestry, plentiful habitat for wildlife and opportunities for outdoor recreation. www.sandcountyfoundation.org

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