

MEDIA RELEASE



Vicki Wojcik vw@pollinator.org t 415.362.1137
Tom Van Arsdall tva@pollinator.org t 703 509 4746
Bethany Shively, NACD, bethany-shively@nacdn.net, 202.547.6223

National Award Given to Nebraska Ranchers Peter and Laura Berthelsen **Washington, D.C. (Tuesday, October 25, 2011)**

The North American Pollinator Protection Campaign (NAPPC) and the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) are pleased to announce the winners of the 2011 Farmer/Rancher Pollinator Award: Peter and Laura Berthelsen of Elba, Nebraska. The award recognizes an individual or family in the farm and ranch community in the U.S. who has contributed significantly to pollinator species protection and conservation on working and wild lands.

The Berthelsens have implemented pollinator conservation on their own land with an outdoor education classroom where people from across the state can see firsthand just how important pollinator habitat is. Through a number of tours targeted at landowner and resource-professional, the Berthelsens have showcased the many benefits of pollinators while demonstrating best-management practices for habitat preservation. As a result, many landowners have begun planting pollinator habitat on their own property.

“The Berthelsens are true champions for conservation,” said NACD President Gene Schmidt. “Through their passion and leadership in natural resource preservation, they’ve made a positive impact not only in their local community, but across the nation.”

Peter has helped secure many of the pollinator planting guidelines present in new Conservation Reserve Program across the United States. Locally in Elba, Nebraska, he successfully worked to make pollinator habitat a part of many other Farm Bill conservation programs. Peter has served as a speaker at meetings across the country to help educate stakeholders and decision-makers about the importance of pollinators and pollinator habitat.

“Often we recognize farmers/ranchers for the work that they do locally within their community, but Peter and Laura Berthelsen are exceptional,” says Pollinator Partnership Executive Director Laurie Davies Adams. “They have taken a significant extra step after all they have done on their land and went to Washington to help support pollinators with policy as well.”

Pollinators not only play a critical role in bringing food to the table, they also provide important ecosystem support, including in recreational hunting, wildlife viewing, local revenues and basic wildland stability. Through the annual Farmer/Rancher Pollinator Award, NAPPC and NACD seek to encourage conservation stewardship and to catalyze future actions on behalf of pollinators through public recognition of the award winner.

The award ceremony initiates the 11th Annual International NAPPC Conference, an annual meeting that brings together some of the country’s most prominent scientists and pollinator experts. NAPPC consists of 120-plus organizations in the U.S., Canada and Mexico that work to promote public awareness of the importance of pollinators. NAPPC is managed by the non profit Pollinator Partnership. The NAPPC Conference is being hosted this year by the Smithsonian Institution. To learn more about the **Pollinator Partnership** and the **North American Pollinator Protection Campaign** visit www.pollinator.org.

The National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) represents America’s 3,000 conservation districts, which are local units of government established under state law to carry out natural resource management programs at the local level. Districts work with millions of cooperating landowners and operators to help them manage and protect land and water resources on all private lands and many public lands in the United States. To learn more about **NACD**, visit: www.nacdnet.org.

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