

**Embargoed until December 7th**

Contact: Sarah Brooks, Associate Director  
509-996-2870; sarah@methowconservancy.org

**Community Members Receive Conservation Awards**

*Methow Conservancy Honors Maggie Coon, Wendy Sims, and Fernne Rosenblatt  
for their Inspiring Efforts on Behalf of Conservation*

**Winthrop, WA** – The Methow Conservancy proudly announces the recipients of its 2016 Methow Conservation Awards.

Maggie Coon has been named this year's *Ken White Award* winner. The award recognizes individuals or organizations with a long-standing history of inspiring conservation efforts in the Methow Valley. Ken White, long-known as the Methow's naturalist shared his deep passion for appreciating this special Valley with anyone interested. The Methow Conservancy recognizes Maggie's four decades-long commitment to conservation in the Methow Valley. In 1976, Maggie found her civic voice in helping to form the Methow Valley Citizens Council and has since played a role in issues as broad-ranging as the proposed downhill ski area, county zoning ordinances, and most recently the Methow Headwaters Campaign. Infused in all of her efforts, including choosing to protect her Twisp River farm with a conservation easement, is a firmly held belief that ordinary citizens can have a say in their community's future.

Wendy Sims is this year's *Susie Stephens Award* winner, honoring outstanding volunteer service to the Methow Conservancy. For more than a decade, Wendy has asked "how can I help" and then enthusiastically finished the tasks at hand. She's faithfully served on the Conservancy's Education Committee and been a lead volunteer in much of that committee's work including, running the Conservancy's noxious weed & native plant education booth at the Farmers' Market, cleaning up the group's Adopt-a-Highway section on Highway 20, and helping brainstorm and create much of the public education programs. Wendy has also helped manage the mailing of thousands of Good Neighbor Handbooks to new landowners and spearheaded the creation of new projects like a Natural History Book Club and the Conservancy's now established high school volunteer internship program. Wendy is the 12<sup>th</sup> recipient of this award, given annually in memory of Susie Stephens, who served as the Methow Conservancy's Development Director and left an indelible mark on the community and organization with her energy and passion for helping others. Wendy shares Susie's commitment to inspiring others to care for the land.

Fernne Rosenblatt received this year's *You Inspire Us Award* for her patient, thoughtful, practical, and impressive response to the 2015 fires that burned through her Loup Loup conservation easement. In the fire, Fernne lost the cabin she and her late husband Roger had built and much of the timber land they had carefully stewarded through the years. As devastating and deeply personal as the loss was, however, Fernne has always chosen to see the potential in what remains. She quickly learned about the ecological needs of her property post-fire and has spent countless hours nurturing the property and celebrating its renewal.

The recipients were presented with their awards at the Methow Conservancy's Annual Holiday Social and Program at the Winthrop Barn on December 6th. For more information on the organization's awards and to see past recipients visit <http://methowconservancy.org/awards.html>.

###