



Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Community Members Receive Conservation Awards

Methow Conservancy Honors Kent Woodruff & Chris Hartwig at December Program

Winthrop, WA – The Methow Conservancy proudly announced its 2010 Methow Conservation Awards at its December 7th Holiday Social and “1st Tuesday” program at the Twisp River Pub.

Since 2005, the Methow Conservancy has annually recognized two volunteers for their outstanding work on behalf of conservation in the Methow Valley with their Ken White and Susie Stephens Conservation Awards. Last Tuesday at the Twisp River Pub, with nearly 200 people watching, the organization presented Kent Woodruff with the Ken White Award and Christine (Chris) Hartwig with the Susie Stephens Award. The awards were a surprise to Kent and Chris, who were both in the audience but unaware that they were being honored that night. The snowy evening program was also a chance for attendees to enjoy a holiday party and an enthralling presentation on Emperor Penguins by local scientist Torre Stockard.

The Conservancy’s Executive Director, Jason Paulsen, spoke to the packed house at the Twisp River Pub, thanking everyone for their support of and commitment to conservation in the Methow Valley. Before announcing the awards, Paulsen shared news about some of the organization’s recent land protection successes, including new easements on over 220 acres of farmland and expanded protection for the biologically rich Hancock Springs area of the upper Valley.

Paulsen explained that the “Ken White Award” is given to an individual or organization with a long-standing history of inspiring conservation efforts in the Methow Valley, and who carries on Ken White’s love for the Methow Valley. Known by many people as the Methow’s first naturalist, Ken was a self-taught conservationist who shared his deep passion for appreciating this beautiful valley with all who were interested. Past award winners include, Roxie and Carl Miller (2009), Dave Sabold (2008), Katharine Bill (2007), Ron Judd (2006) and John Sunderland (2005).

Paulsen honored Kent Woodruff saying, “He is an encyclopedia of knowledge about the natural world here in the Methow, and the most patient of teachers, always willing to educate others and foster and interest in nature. He generously gives his time to field trips and other learning opportunities in our community. If you know him, then you know that he loves this place.”

Paulsen went on to say, “As a biologist working here in the Methow for the United States Forest Service, he is a key partner and architect of the Methow Conservancy’s innovative Beaver Restoration Project where he also serves as a mentor for the team of younger field biologists working here in the Methow

Valley. Thanks to his dedication to projects like this one, children raised in our community have the opportunity to grow up aware of the natural world. He has been a strong supporter of the Methow Conservancy and our education programs for many years, and we look forward to many more opportunities to tap his knowledge and talents and to share them with our members and community.”

The Methow Conservancy’s award certificate to Kent Woodruff stated, “For the Methow Valley’s friend of all feathered creatures, who will always take the time to share his deep knowledge of this incredible Valley’s flora and fauna; who thinks always of the generations yet to come; and who inspires us all in his constant quest to learn from and speak for this place he calls home.”

Sarah Brooks, the organization’s Associate Director, talked to the crowd about the annual “Susie Stephens Award” which is given to someone who has provided outstanding volunteer service to the Methow Conservancy’s efforts, and who carries on Susie’s endless energy for helping others and her strong belief that education about conservation can make a difference. Susie was the always friendly Development Director at the Methow Conservancy in the early 2000s until a tragic accident took her life in 2002. Susie’s enthusiasm for reaching out to people to inspire conservation was the impetus for creating the award, which is both a way to remember Susie and to honor those who follow in her footsteps. Past award winners include, Carole and Brian Reid (2009), Laurelle Walsh (2008), Dotti and Bob Wilson (2007), Joyce Bergen (2006) and Suzanne Follis (2005).

Brooks explained that Chris Hartwig was chosen as this year’s recipient for her years of loyal service to the Methow Conservancy. Chris served on the Conservancy’s Board of Directors for 6 years (2001-2007) and helped establish many policies and procedures that enabled the organization to grow. Chris remains an incredibly active volunteer with the Conservancy, serving on the Board’s Retention and Recruitment Committee; providing human resource and other administrative guidance; and by being one of a handful of truly stalwart office volunteers. The Conservancy’s award stated, “Chris has shared her wisdom, passion, composure, and grace in an effort to inspire others to join her in protecting a Methow Valley she so loves.”

For more information about these awards, visit <http://www.methowconservancy.org/awards.html>

The Methow Conservancy is a local nonprofit organization dedicated to inspiring people to care for and conserve the land of the Methow Valley, ensuring it will remain a place where future generations can enjoy the rural character and natural beauty we cherish today.

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