

Nominations sought for Delaware's 2013 Wetland Warrior: Award honors exemplary efforts that benefit the state's wetlands

DOVER (April 9, 2013) – DNREC's Wetland Monitoring and Assessment Program is seeking nominations for the 2013 Delaware Wetland Warrior Award, which recognizes exemplary efforts to protect wetlands and the critical services they provide to all Delawareans.

The Wetland Warrior award, now in its sixth year, is presented annually to a citizen, organization, business or group that has demonstrated outstanding efforts to benefit Delaware wetlands through outreach and education, monitoring and assessment, or restoration and protection. The award will be presented on Governor's Day, Thursday, July 25, at the Delaware State Fair in Harrington.

Information on submitting a nomination is available on DNREC's [Delaware Wetlands web page](#). Nominations must be submitted by Friday, June 21. For more information, please contact Wetland Outreach Specialist Maggie Pletta at 302-739-9939, or email Margaret.Pletta@delaware.gov.

“The award recognizes wetland stewards who have made an effort to help ensure that future generations will be able to enjoy the natural services provided by wetlands that contribute to our quality of life including clean water, flood and storm protection, and wildlife habitat,” said Pletta. “Wetland Warriors are Delaware's environmental heroes – who work tirelessly to slow wetland loss, help restore degraded

wetlands, preserve habitat, increase awareness of the value of wetlands and bolster support for their protection.”

The 2012 Wetland Warrior recipients were:

- **Clif Bakhsh** of Middletown, a member of Delaware Ducks Unlimited’s Appoquinimink Chapter who has been active for more than 25 years in numerous local and national roles, was recognized for his dedication to preserving open space in Delaware and to educating children about the benefits of wetlands.
- **David Carter**, a biologist and wetland professional with DNREC for more than 25 years, was recognized for his use of innovative planning and funding tools to improve the management and protection of wetlands in the state, as well as supporting outreach and education initiatives such as Thank You Delaware Bay.

For a complete list of past recipients, visit DNREC’s [Wetland Warrior Page](#).

Delaware has more than 320,000 acres of wetlands, comprising about 25 percent of the state’s area. Wetlands protect lives and property from the impacts of floods and storms, filter pollutants and improve water quality, reduce erosion and provide critical habitat for fish and wildlife. Almost every part of our state is within one mile of a wetland – making wetland protection vital to our health and safety.

DNREC studies indicate that over the past 15 years, more than 3,896 acres of wetlands were lost statewide due to conversion to other land uses. This acreage is significant because in the previous 10-year period, the total statewide wetland loss was 1,996 acres. These recent trends make recognizing the conservationists who have prioritized wetlands even more important. It is through natural resource stewards, such as Wetland Warrior, that Delaware will protect its natural treasures.

Check out the "[How You Can Help](#)" webpage to learn more about opportunities to protect wetlands. Here you can find the [Wetland Public Participation Guidebook](#), a comprehensive resource developed to inspire citizens to take actions to protect wetlands. Also featured is the latest information on wetland health, wetland loss studies, regulations, wetland impacts and how they can be prevented, and how the public can get involved with local land use decisions that could affect wetlands. Also on the webpage is a new wetlands video highlighting wetland benefits, [Purify, Provide, and Protect](#).

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