

# WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE'S GRINNELL AWARD PRESENTED TO NATIONAL WILD TURKEY FEDERATION CEO REBECCA HUMPHRIES

**The George Bird Grinnell Memorial Award for Distinguished Service to Natural Resource Conservation was awarded to Rebecca Humphries on March 11, during the annual Conservation Administrators Luncheon at the 85th North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference in Omaha, Nebraska.**

This award, established in honor of the widely acknowledged “Father of American Conservation”—George Bird Grinnell—is natural resource management’s highest individual honor and was presented by the Wildlife Management Institute’s President, Steve Williams. The award was established to honor a person who has dedicated their career to professional science, management, and conservation of natural resources and who has done so without fanfare or search for personal recognition.

In presenting the award, Williams noted, “This year’s recipient is known widely among those in the profession as a model of servant leadership and whose wisdom, vision, and oftentimes firm but fair nudge, reflect the highest qualities of the award’s namesake.”

After completing a degree in Wildlife Biology from Michigan State University in 1978, Humphries began her career 50 miles south of Lake Huron’s Saginaw Bay as a Program Leader for the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service on the Shiawassee Wildlife Refuge.

Shortly thereafter, Humphries joined the Michigan Department of Natural Resources where she began an extraordinary and exemplary rank-by-rank progression through nearly every rung of the agency’s professional ladder: Resource Specialist, Wildlife Habitat Biologist, Area Wildlife Biologist, District Biologist, Support Section Supervisor, Acting Resource Management Deputy, Wildlife Division Chief, and finally, agency Director.

“Becky possesses the type of leadership you can’t learn in school. Hers is a collage of hard work, life lessons learned, and above all else, integrity,” praised Williams. “Her patient and steadfast shepherding has left an indelible mark on North American conservation, as well as many of us.”

After 33 years of professional service to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Humphries became Director of Operations for Ducks Unlimited’s Great Lakes/Atlantic Region in 2011 before finally settling in her current role as Chief Executive Officer of the National Wild Turkey Federation.

In addition to the laudable service Humphries dedicated to agency wildlife conservation, she lent her patient tenacity and natural savvy to numerous natural resource committees and boards. A few of these include the Executive Committee of the Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, Chair of the

National Fish and Wildlife Health Initiative Steering Committee, Vice President of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, Chair of the Boone and Crockett Club’s Wildlife Health Sub-committee, and member of the Blue Ribbon Panel on Sustaining America’s Fish and Wildlife Resource Steering Committee.

“Through all this work, Becky has come to be regarded as a resolute and fierce defender of science as a foundation upon which to make decisions and frame policy,” concluded Williams. “Often

REPRINT FROM WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE’S OUTDOOR NEW BULLETIN  
March 2020 Edition | Volume 74, Issue 3

described as resilient, tough, and not afraid to cuss when necessary, she is also treasured as a colleague who is smart, fair, and who always has your back. Becky is at the top of an elite list of stellar professionals who have dedicated their careers to North American natural resource conservation.” ■



Rebecca Humphries receiving the Grinnell Award from Steve Williams. Both Rebecca and Steve are Professional Members of the Boone and Crockett Club. Rebecca became a member in 2010 and is the chairman of the Wildlife Health committee. Steve Williams became a member in 2002 and is the Conservation and History Editor of *Fair Chase* magazine. The Boone and Crockett Club congratulates Rebecca Humphries for her dedication to wildlife conservation.