

California Environmental Protection Agency
PRESS RELEASE

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Governor Names Recipients of State's Top Environmental Leadership Awards

SACRAMENTO – Tomorrow, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger will announce the winners of the 2006 Governor's Environmental and Economic Leadership Awards. He will honor 14 individuals, organizations and businesses for making extraordinary contributions to protect California's natural resources and environment.

"California has a long history of promoting and maintaining a healthy environment for our residents. This year's Environmental and Economic Leadership Award recipients have demonstrated a tremendous commitment to preserving our natural resources, while also contributing greatly to our economy," said Governor Schwarzenegger.

Honorees will accept awards at a ceremony in the Byron Sher Auditorium at the California Environmental Protection Agency headquarters building in Sacramento. The event begins at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 5, and is open to the press.

The Governor's Environmental and Economic Leadership Awards Program is the state of California's highest and most prestigious environmental honor. The program recognizes individuals, organizations, and businesses operating in California that have demonstrated outstanding environmental leadership. This year's winners have made notable, voluntary contributions to conserving California's precious resources, protecting and enhancing our environment, and building public-private partnerships.

Categories and recipients of the 2006 Governor's Environmental and Economic Leadership Awards are:

Sustainable Practices or Facilities

Pioneering efforts to integrate environmental values and conservation of natural resources into long-term decision making and management of businesses and facilities.

- State of California Auto Dismantlers Association (SCADA) - Statewide: SCADA's "Partners In The Solution" program requires member facilities to meet specified environmental, safety, and business and licensing standards.
- Lodi-Woodbridge Winegrape Commission - San Joaquin County: The commission promotes the use of sustainable farming practices, creating the first sustainable winegrowing certification program in the state.
- Waldeck's Office Supplies - San Francisco County: The family-owned business offers recycled, biodegradable, reusable, energy-efficient, non-toxic products and lets customers drop off, at no cost, used batteries, computer parts and other e-waste products.

Children's Environmental Education

Unique and exemplary educational programs and curricula that align with California's academic content standards and raise children's awareness of, and involvement in, environmental issues.

- RecycleWorks - San Mateo County: The countywide resource group started as a recycling and composting program, but now includes education tools like the RecycleWorks KIDS website. The website teaches 3rd to 6th grade students about how they can protect the environment, through recycling and other methods.
- The Hilton Bialek Biological Sciences Habitat - Monterey County: The Habitat offers outdoor learning experiences and programs, like bird identification and organic gardening, to local students on land comprised of coastal scrub, restored native grasslands and an organic garden.
- Pacific Gas and Electric Company - Northern and Central California: Through the PG&E Solar Schools Program, students learn the financial and environmental benefits of converting sunlight into electricity.

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Environmental and Economic Partnerships

Efforts in fostering unique, cooperative approaches between the private, public, and/or non-profit sectors to achieve demonstrable results in both environmental and economic improvement.

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Riverside Land Conservancy, and Vulcan Materials Company - Riverside County: The Colton Dunes Conservation Bank partnership utilizes 150-acres of land to conserve critical habitat for the endangered Delhi Sands flower-loving fly. In addition, the partnership utilized a bond to financially guarantee restoration activities.
- PG&E, Agricultural Energy Consumers Association, California Farm Bureau Federation, San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District, and Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District - Sacramento and San Joaquin Counties: The Agricultural Internal Combustion Engine Conversion Incentive (AG-ICE) encourages agricultural customers through reduced rates and other incentives to convert to less-polluting electric-powered irrigation pumps.
- Goodwill Industries and Dell Inc. - San Francisco, San Mateo, and Marin Counties: The ReConnect San Francisco partnership invites county residents to drop off, at no cost, used computer equipment at Goodwill locations. Goodwill then sorts the equipment for recycling or refurbishment for resale and directs the proceeds to job-creation and community programs.
- The Hearst Corporation, American Land Conservancy, California Rangeland Trust, and State of California - San Luis Obispo County: The Hearst Ranch Conservation Project includes 128 square miles of fish and wildlife habitat and a conservation easement on the 80,000 acres east of Highway 1, restricting future development. The State also received ownership of land that will become part of the State Parks System.

Ecosystem and Watershed Stewardship

Innovative and sustainable approaches to land and water management that restore or protect natural conditions, functions and processes, and provide economic, social and environmental benefits.

- Lower Clear Creek Restoration Team - Shasta County: Project participants guided the recovery of naturally reproducing salmon and steelhead populations and restored riparian plant and animal communities on the floodplain.
- Leon Lesicka, Desert Wildlife Unlimited - Imperial County: Mr. Lesicka designed, funded, and constructed a wetland system that removes contaminants from the New River, a major source of pollution for the impaired Salton Sea.

Sustainable Communities

Exemplary project design or development of local communities and landscapes that makes efficient use of land, protects public health and safety, and conserves local watersheds, habitats and other sensitive lands.

- Clarum Homes - Santa Cruz County: Vista Montana by Clarum Homes is California's largest zero energy home community. Completed in 2005, Vista Montana includes 257 zero energy homes and 132 affordable apartment homes, a 14-acre city park, and a new elementary school.
- Windsor Unified School District and Town of Windsor - Sonoma County: Projects between the school district and town include school recycling efforts and converting school buses to run on cleaner biodiesel or natural gas, resulting in thousands in fewer gallons of diesel fuel burned, annual savings of more than 1.4 million gallons of fresh water and more than a 50 percent waste diversion rate.

The Governor's Environmental and Economic Leadership Awards program was established in 1993. Recipients are selected by a large panel of evaluators and the Secretaries of Cal/EPA, the Resources Agency, Business, Transportation and Housing Agency, the Department of Food and Agriculture, the State and Consumer Services Agency, and the Governor's Office.

To learn more about the Governor's Environmental and Economic Leadership Awards program, and for information about this year's award recipients, visit the Cal/EPA Web site: <http://www.calepa.ca.gov/Awards/GEELA/>.