Leopold Conservation Award®

Award Application
South Dakota 2027
Deadline: March 1







Leopold Conservation Awards

Sand County Foundation and national sponsor, American Farmland Trust, along with state partners, present the Leopold Conservation Awards to private landowners in 28 states.

The $10,000 award honors farmers, ranchers, and forestland owners who go above and beyond in their management of soil health, water quality, and wildlife habitat on working land.

Given in honor of renowned conservationist Aldo Leopold, the award recognizes landowners who inspire others to consider conservation opportunities on their land. In his influential 1949 book, *A Sand County Almanac,* Leopold advocated for "a land ethic," an ethical relationship between people and the land they own and manage.

Award applications may be submitted on behalf of a landowner, or landowners may nominate themselves. Applications are reviewed by an independent panel of local agricultural and conservation leaders.

Applications must be emailed to SouthDakotaLCA@sandcountyfoundation.org.

The South Dakota award is presented and sponsored by:

Sand County Foundation

American Farmland Trust

South Dakota Grassland Coalition

South Dakota Soil Health Coalition

South Dakota Farmers Union

South Dakota Department of Agriculture & Natural Resources

South Dakota Farm Bureau Federation

South Dakota Game, Fish & Parks

South Dakota State University College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences

USDA-NRCS

Agassiz Seed & Supply

Audubon Great Plains

Bad River Ranches

Belle Fourche River Watershed Partnership

Blue Bell Ranch

Cammack Ranch

Ducks Unlimited

First Dakota National Bank

Jim and Karen Kopriva

Millborn

Pheasants Forever

2nd Century Habitat Fund

South Dakota Agricultural Land Trust

South Dakota Cattlemen's Association

South Dakota's Conservation Districts

South Dakota Sheep Growers Association

South Dakota Soil Health Coalition

South Dakota Soybean Association

The Nature Conservancy

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service - Partners for Fish and Wildlife

Wagner Land & Livestock

Leopold Conservation Award 2027

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Please provide all of the following information in your application.

Name of Nominee

Name of Farm/Ranch/Business

Mailing Address

Primary County(s) of operation

Email Address

Phone Number

Website

Name & Email of Nominator, if different from nominee

If you are selected for the Leopold Conservation Award, how would you like your name to appear on the award: (*Examples: John Smith, John Smith and Family, Smith Family Farms*)

Please provide this additional information: *Your responses to the following do not impact the selection of the award recipient. This information is intended to help the judges learn more about your practices.*

Number of acres under management (*there is no minimum or maximum acreage required*).

Describe your farm/ranch/forest (*examples: dairy farm with cash crops; cow/calf beef operation)*.

Which local, state, federal agencies or partner organizations are involved with the nominee's conservation practices?

Which, if any, federal conservation programs do you utilize (*e.g. EQIP, CSP, CRP*)?

Which, if any, farm advisors do you work with (*e.g. crop consultant, Extension agent*)?

1. I agree to be a nominee for the Leopold Conservation Award.
2. I manage and/or own the property described in this application.
3. The agricultural operation described in this application is in compliance with all applicable regulations, and provides a positive example of environmental stewardship.
4. I understand I may be asked to be available for communications/media opportunities to promote the message of voluntary private lands conservation.
5. I understand a video will be produced featuring my agricultural operation, which will require my participation.

Sign here.

In a separate document, please address these five criteria, and limit each response to 1,000 words.

1. **Conservation Ethic** – Describe how the nominee has voluntarily exceeded the minimum obligations of regulation to enhance and conserve natural resources.

2. **Resilience** – Describe the business and conservation methods used by the nominee to make the operation productive into the future.

3. **Leadership and Communication** – Describe significant efforts the nominee has made to share his/her conservation ethics and techniques with others inside and outside of agriculture. Describe community service, positions held, leadership roles and media outreach.

4. **Innovation and Adaptability** – Describe how the nominee has taken risks by utilizing or experimenting with new techniques to adapt to change (consumers, markets, weather, regulations, etc.).

5. **Ecological Community** – Describe how the nominee's agricultural operation works with natural systems (soil, water, plants and wildlife, etc.). Describe how this benefits others.

You may include up to 3 pages of photographs or maps to supplement your responses. Submit no more than three letters of recommendation. At least one letter should be from a conservation organization. The complete application, including responses to the five criteria, letters of recommendation, photographs, maps, and all other supporting materials, must not exceed 15 pages.

Email nominations to SouthDakotaLCA@sandcountyfoundation.org.

For further information, please see the Leopold Conservation Award website: www.leopoldconservationaward.org