Conservation Communicator of the Year -
Jay Erskine Leutze  ∗ Minneapolis, NC
Leutze is the author of *Stand Up that Mountain: The Battle to Save One Small Community in the Wilderness Along the Appalachian Trail*. The book chronicles efforts to shut down an illegal mining operation. Leutze remains a leading voice for investments in public lands.

Youth Conservationist of the Year
Grace Adkins  ∗ Fuquay Varina
A national scholar and the youth coordinator for the Cape Fear branch of the Quality Deer Management Association, Adkins serves as the “Rack Pack” coordinator of such outdoor education events geared towards young people.

Legislator of the Year
Ruth Samuelson  ∗ Charlotte
Representative Samuelson is the Republican conference leader and a strong proponent of land and water trust funds and practical polices for renewable energy standards.

Municipal Conservationist of the Year
Town of Elkin, NC  ∗
Elkin was one of the first and most ardent supporters of the extended urban archery deer option for municipalities.

Wildlife Volunteer of the Year
David M. Pearson  ∗ Swansboro
As president of Friends of North Carolina State Parks, Pearson is a tireless advocate for wildlife and habitat funding. He serves also as a member of the state’s Sea Turtle Advisory Committee.

Hunter Safety Education Organization of the Year
Pitt County Wildlife Club  ∗ Greenville
This club has 19 active hunter safety instructors and three master instructors. Over the last year, Pitt County Wildlife Club taught eight hunter safety education courses and three field days, and also hosts instructor training classes.

NCWF Chapter of the Year
Albemarle Conservation and Wildlife Chapter  ∗ Elizabeth City
This energetic chapter procured and planted 10,000 Atlantic white cedar seedlings to help restore acreage in the Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge and Stale Park. It also advocates against detrimental megalandfills and other large-scale destructive developments.

NCWF Affiliate of the Year
North Carolina Trout Unlimited  ∗
NCTU is a strong conservation ally for aquatic habitat protections and funding. It offers “Trout in the Classrooms” programs for schools and established long-term partnership stream conservation projects with South Mountain and Stone Mountain state parks.

Natural Resources Agency of the Year
N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission
Operation Something Brin  ∗ Raleigh
This four-year investigation targeted poachers in North Carolina and Georgia, and uncovered more than 80 wildlife violators and as many as 900 wildlife violations detected. NCWRC played a huge role infiltrating poaching circles.

Conservation Organization of the Year
Delta Waterfowl Foundation North Carolina Chapters  ∗ The last few years have seen impressive growth in the presence of Delta Waterfowl in North Carolina, with the group fighting for hunter access to public waters and posting nationally-ranked fundraising statistics.

Business Conservationist of the Year
The Fork Farm & Stables  ∗ Norwood
Founder Jim Copdell established a world-class working farm and equestrian center that balances crop production with native ecosystems and manages the acreage for wildlife. The business provides hands on learning for youth and sportsmen.

Wildlife Enforcement Officer of the Year
Chad Arnold  ∗ Mt. Holly
Marine Fisheries Enforcement Officer of the Year
Chris Lee  ∗ Kill Devil Hills