



2021 Carl N. Becker Stewardship Award

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The Natural Areas Association presents the Carl N. Becker Stewardship Award to individuals or groups in recognition of excellence and achievement in managing the natural resources of reserves, parks, wilderness and other protected areas. It is given in honor of Carl N. Becker, former NAA president and conservation leader with the Illinois Endangered Species Protection Board, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, and the Illinois Chapter of the Nature Conservancy.

Carl brought leadership skills to all phases of his conservation career – he was an excellent field biologist, bureaucrat, and political thinker. He knew how to inspire his staff to work together to do more than they could possibly do on their own efforts. His skills benefited natural area conservation locally, regionally and nationally.

Carl championed Illinois legislation dedicating a portion of the state real estate transfer tax to the Natural Areas Acquisition Fund that supports natural areas acquisition and stewardship and the operations of Illinois' Nature Preserves, Natural Heritage, and Endangered Species programs, and for the Wildlife Preservation Fund income tax check-off that conserves non-game wildlife and habitat. Carl was also a state and regional leader working with the Teaming with Wildlife Coalition to urge Congressional approval in 2000 for the establishment of the USFWS State & Tribal Wildlife Grant (SWG) program. During the first 13 years of the SWG program, it has dedicated over \$760M to fish and wildlife conservation programs and projects across the nation.