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Finalists Named for 2014 South Dakota Leopold Conservation Award

PIERRE, SD – (April 7, 2014) Sand County Foundation, the South Dakota Cattlemen’s Association and the South Dakota Grassland Coalition are proud to announce the finalists for the 2014 Leopold Conservation Award which honors South Dakota landowner achievement in voluntary stewardship and management of natural resources.

The finalists are:

- Cronin Farms of Gettysburg, a multi-generational mixed livestock and crop farm owned by Monty and Mike Cronin and their wives Nancy and Jamie.
- John and Donita Moes of Florence. The Moes family owns and operates a cow/calf operation and farm including a feedlot and ag waste pond.
- Jorgenson Land and Cattle Partnership of Ideal, a fourth generation diversified crop, livestock and hunting operation. It is owned by Bryan and Brenda Jorgensen; Cody and Abby Jorgensen; Greg and Deb Jorgensen; Martin and Mary Jorgensen, and Nicholas Jorgensen.
- Rock Hills Ranch of Lowry owned and operated by Lyle and Garnet Perman along with their son Luke and his wife Naomi. The Permans raise crops and Angus cattle.

Given in honor of renowned conservationist Aldo Leopold, the Leopold Conservation Award recognizes extraordinary achievement in voluntary conservation. It inspires other landowners through these examples and provides a visible forum where farmers, ranchers and other private landowners are recognized as conservation leaders. In his influential 1949 book, “A Sand County Almanac,” Leopold called for an ethical relationship between people and the land they own and manage, which he called “an evolutionary possibility and an ecological necessity.”

Award applicants are judged based on their demonstration of improved resource conditions, innovation, long-term commitment to stewardship, sustained economic viability, community and civic leadership, and multiple use benefits.

"Our South Dakota finalists work to enhance the South Dakota landscape through their commitment to stewardship of natural resources and to sharing what they've learned with the broader community," said Brent Haglund, President of Sand County Foundation.

The 2014 award recipient, who will receive \$10,000 and a crystal depicting Aldo Leopold, will be announced in April and recognized at the South Dakota Cattlemen’s Association’s Annual Convention in December.

“The Leopold Conservation Award is an important tool in helping us celebrate the conservation efforts of South Dakota’s private landowners and SDCA is proud to recognize these finalists for making conservation a priority in their family businesses,” said Cory Eich, a cow-calf producer and president of the South Dakota Cattlemen’s Association.

“Each year as we honor an outstanding landowner with the Leopold Conservation Award, we’re reminded of how dedicated South Dakota agricultural producers are to our natural resources,” said Jim Faulstich, Chairman, South Dakota Grassland Coalition.

The Leopold Conservation Award in South Dakota is possible thanks to generous contributions from many organizations, including: South Dakota Department of Environment & Natural Resources, Discovery Center, South Dakota Department of Game, Fish & Parks, South Dakota Farm Bureau Federation, South Dakota Grassland Coalition, South Dakota State University Foundation, American State Bank, Belle Fourche River Watershed Partnership, Daybreak Ranch, Ducks Unlimited, Millborn Seeds, Mortenson Family, Professional Alliance, South Dakota’s Conservation Districts, South Dakota Department of Agriculture, The Nature Conservancy, World Wildlife Fund Northern Great Plains, DuPont Pioneer, Farm Credit, The Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation and The Mosaic Company

ABOUT THE LEOPOLD CONSERVATION AWARD

The Leopold Conservation Award is a competitive award that recognizes landowner achievement in voluntary conservation. The award consists of a crystal depicting Aldo Leopold and a check for \$10,000. Sand County Foundation presents Leopold Conservation Awards in California, Colorado, Kentucky, Nebraska, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Wisconsin and Wyoming.

ABOUT SAND COUNTY FOUNDATION

Sand County Foundation (www.sandcounty.net) is a private, non-profit conservation group dedicated to working with private landowners to improve habitat on their land. Sand County’s mission is to advance the use of ethical and scientifically sound land management practices and partnerships for the benefit of people and their rural landscapes.

ABOUT THE SOUTH DAKOTA CATTLEMEN’S ASSOCIATION

The South Dakota Cattlemen's Association (www.sd cattlemen.org) is a member-driven organization working to advance and protect the interests of all cattlemen. SDCA works to facilitate a profitable business climate and promote environmental stewardship.

ABOUT THE SOUTH DAKOTA GRASSLAND COALITION

The South Dakota Grassland Coalition (www.sdgrass.org) is a non-profit organization that seeks the voluntary improvement of grasslands for the long-term needs of the resource and its various species. The SD Grassland Coalition is dedicated to improving and maintaining the state’s grasslands by informing and guiding grassland managers to make cost-effective and environmentally sound management decisions.

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