



# GEORGIA

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

## NEWS RELEASE

### LAW ENFORCEMENT DIVISION



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## Georgia DNR Law Enforcement Colonel Eddie Henderson Wins National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Award

NORFOLK, VA – Last night, at the Director’s Reception held as part of the North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) presented Georgia DNR Law Enforcement Colonel Eddie Henderson with the prestigious Guy Bradley Award for his lifetime contributions to wildlife law enforcement, wildlife forensics and investigative techniques. The award is only presented to one state and one federal recipient each year.

“This award, established in honor of the first wildlife law enforcement agent killed while performing his duties to protect the nation’s wildlife, recognizes extraordinary individuals who have made an outstanding lifetime contribution to wildlife law enforcement,” said Jeff Trandahl, executive director and CEO of NFWF. “Through his leadership and devotion to professional development for his fellow game wardens, Col. Eddie Henderson has truly earned this distinction.”

Henderson began his career with DNR Law Enforcement in 1982 and worked his way up through every position in the Division, from field level Ranger (Game Warden) until his promotion to Colonel (director of the Law Enforcement Division) in 2011. He currently oversees 204 Game Wardens and 19 non-POST (Peace Officer Standards and Training) support personnel.

Since becoming the head of the Division, Henderson has a number of successes to his credit and, although too numerous to list, some of his contributions include reorganizing headquarters command staff to improve efficiency and closely align similar duties allowing direct support of the field, implementing a field force deployment matrix that led to additional funding through the Georgia General Assembly to hire additional Game Wardens, starting a much needed formal field training program for new Game Wardens, encouraging professional development for all employees at all levels, securing funding for equipment upgrades including patrol rifles and back-up weapons for all sworn officers, and implementing a strategic goal process involving partners and stakeholders that includes regular progress updates.

The Colonel’s two most significant and long-lasting achievements are pay parity and the creation of the Law Enforcement Division. The creation of the Law Enforcement Division was realized on July 1, 2014, and required action by the Board of Natural Resources, as well as support from the Governor and General Assembly. For many years, Game Wardens worked alongside other state law enforcement agencies and were always complemented on their commitment to getting the job done and willingness to serve. However, they were paid significantly less than their counterparts. Henderson recognized this and with support and help from others in the agency and external partners, he successfully lobbied for pay parity, placing Game Wardens on a level pay scale with other state law enforcement.

“I am grateful that NFWF recognizes Colonel Henderson’s dedication and contributions to Georgia DNR and to protecting our natural resources, our wildlife and our citizens,” said Georgia DNR Commissioner Mark Williams. “I congratulate Eddie on winning this award. He truly deserves it.”

#### **The Guy Bradley Award**

In 1905, Guy Bradley, a Florida game warden, became the first wildlife law enforcement agent killed in the line of duty protecting the nation’s wildlife. Law enforcement agents like Bradley are essential to virtually every aspect of wildlife conservation, from recovering endangered species to managing waterfowl and big game resources. In 1988, NFWF established a national award in honor of Bradley to recognize individuals for achievements in wildlife law enforcement. The award focuses on activities which directly aid or advance the law enforcement goals and mission of state and federal fish and wildlife agencies. It is an opportunity to recognize officers who, during their careers, put their life on the line for wildlife.

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*Law Enforcement Off the Pavement*