

PRESS RELEASE: WATERMAN FUND ANNOUNCES 2009 STEWARD AWARD AND ANNUAL DINNER

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For Immediate Release

For More Information:

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The Waterman Fund will present the 2009 Guy Waterman Alpine Steward Award on Saturday, March 28th, to C. Peter M. Fish. The award is given each year to a person or organization that has demonstrated a long-term commitment to protecting the physical and spiritual qualities of the northeast's mountain wilderness.

Pete Fish, a New York State Forest Ranger for 23 years, will be this year's award recipient. As a ranger in both the Catskills and the Adirondacks, and as an active member of the Adirondack 46ers and Catskill 3500 Club, Fish has interacted with thousands of hikers on summits and in valleys. Through these organizations, as well as on his own initiative and time, Fish has educated the public about Leave No Trace, backcountry safety, mountain stewardship, and alpine hiking etiquette. He has assisted in training summit stewards since the early days of the High Peaks Summit Steward Program (a partnership of The Nature Conservancy, Adirondack Mountain Club, and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation). Fish has also worked on Ed Ketchledge's (who received the alpine steward award in 2004) summit restoration efforts in the High Peaks Region.

After retiring as a ranger in 1998, Fish is sought after as a speaker by a variety of outdoor groups. He continues to actively engage and educate hikers, especially on his beloved Mt. Marcy, a mountain he has climbed, as of the end of 2008, 707 times. Fish is an active trail steward, clearing and maintaining trails in Keene, Keene Valley, and elsewhere. Few individuals have shared as much or reached as many in service of these mountains, and especially these alpine areas.

Brendan Wiltse, former Chief Steward of the High Peaks Summit Steward Program, nominated him for the award. In his nominating letter, Wiltse wrote, "There is no doubt in my mind that Pete Fish's stewardship activities have had a substantial positive impact on the Adirondack mountains. When someone meets Pete Fish on the trail they remember what he has to say, and keep it with them for the rest of their lives."

The Fund's annual dinner will be held on Saturday, March 28th, at the Echo Lake Aquarium and Science Center in Burlington, VT. The dinner will begin at 5:30 pm, and will feature Kent McFarland of the Vermont Center for Ecostudies (VCE) in addition to the presentation of the alpine steward award. McFarland, a biologist with nearly 20 years experience working with New England wildlife, will speak about VCE's alpine butterfly monitoring project in New Hampshire's Presidential Range. The Waterman Fund

supported this project in 2008. Due to limited seating, reservations are required. The cost of the dinner is \$55. To find out further details or to make a reservation, please visit our website, or contact Julia Goren, at jgorenster@gmail.com or (845) 216-3810.

The Waterman Fund's objective is to strengthen the human stewardship of the open summits, exposed ridgelines, and alpine areas of the Northeast. In past years, the Fund has supported projects by the Adirondack Mountain Club, Antioch University New England, Appalachian Mountain Club, Appalachian Trail Conservancy, Coastal Mountains Land Trust, Dartmouth Outing Club, Green Mountain Club, Randolph Mountain Club, Vermont Center for Ecostudies, and Acadia National Park.

The Waterman Fund is a 501c(3) non-profit organization. Contributions are tax-deductible.

For more information on the Fund, including how to join the Fund's email list, see other recent news, read funded proposals and find out upcoming events, visit the Fund's web site at watermanfund.org.