



DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

Fish and Wildlife Service

For release September 30, 1994

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HARVEY NELSON, MINNESOTAN AND FORMER REGIONAL DIRECTOR, RECEIVES PRESTIGIOUS INTERNATIONAL AWARD

Harvey Nelson of Bloomington, Minnesota, has received the prestigious **International Canvasback Award** from the North American Waterfowl Management Plan Committee for "outstanding contributions to the continent's waterfowl and wetlands resources." The award was presented recently by Mollie Beattie, Director of Interior's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

"Harvey Nelson's long dedication, personal interest, people skills, and waterfowl expertise brought the North American Plan from infancy to a continental force for conserving wetland ecosystems," Beattie said in presenting the award. "No individual is more deserving of this honor."

The award is conferred annually by the International Plan Committee, made up of members from Canada, Mexico, and the United States, for substantial long-term contributions on a continent-wide basis. The North American Waterfowl Management Plan is an agreement among the three countries to reverse the continent's loss of wetlands and stem the decline in populations of waterfowl and other migratory birds. It is carried out through joint ventures with public- and private-sector partners.

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Nelson stepped down as director of the Service's Great Lakes-Big Rivers Region in the Twin Cities in 1987 to become the first executive director of the Service's U.S. office of the North American Plan. Under his leadership, the Plan moved forward through the growing pains of implementation; organization of joint ventures and their conservation strategies; procedures for adding new joint ventures; development of the international protocol for funding projects in Canada, the U.S., and Mexico; and finally, passage of the North American Wetlands Conservation Act.

"It took a person of Harvey Nelson's stature, dedication, and talent to bring this Plan from concept to fruition in a few short years," Beattie said. "Even in retirement, his contributions to waterfowl conservation continue through those he inspired by example and leadership during more than 40 years of service to this continent's wildlife resources."

Nelson's lifetime dedication to waterfowl conservation began during his youth on the shores of Lake Christina, a premier canvasback stopover in Minnesota near his hometown of Evansville. It continued throughout his career with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Since his retirement in 1992, he has remained active in conservation, serving as a consultant and on various boards and commissions.