



Stearns County Soil & Water Conservation District

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January 23, 2007

For Immediate Release

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Stearns County Pheasants Forever Members Recognized at State Convention

Brad Cobb of the Stearns County Pheasants Forever (SCPF) Chapter was named the Pheasants Forever (PF) Minnesota Volunteer of the Year at the MN Pheasants Forever State Convention. Over 300 PF chapter leaders and natural resource professionals from across the state gathered at Breezy Point for the 2007 PF State Convention. Attendees discussed Minnesota habitat initiatives and celebrated habitat accomplishments from the past year. Cobb has been volunteering for Pheasants Forever in Stearns County since 1996.

The Minnesota PF Volunteer of the Year recognizes an individual that best embodies the PF mission through their local, state and national volunteer efforts. Cobb exhibits unwavering devotion and loyalty to PF and works diligently to maintain and improve wildlife habitat and our outdoor heritage in Minnesota. Cobb has been a Stearns County Chapter committee member since 1994 and the chapter president since 1996. He also has previously won the Dedication Award and is a member of the Longspur Society, two of Minnesota PF's most prestigious volunteer awards.

During his tenure with the Stearns County Chapter, Cobb has shown great leadership in conservation education. The chapter conducts annual youth shoots and in the past year developed a new partnership to conduct youth mentor hunts with Big Brothers and Big Sisters of central Minnesota.

The development of wildlife habitat in Stearns County under Cobb's leadership has been significant as well. The chapter has been a leader in hosting landowner forums about farmland conservation programs, particularly the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). Since 1996, the Stearns County Chapter has helped purchase an astonishing 29 parcels that have been added to the state Wildlife Management Area System. These parcels now managed by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, provide habitat and recreation for public benefit. In addition, Stearns County was the second chapter in the nation to reach the \$2 million mark in dollars spent for PF's mission. Cobb has also been the past chair of the Minnesota Pheasant Stamp Oversight Committee and the new chairman of the Budget Oversight Committee.

"Brad has a passion for habitat and recognizes the importance of being an active participant in seeing habitat programs hit the ground," reported Eran Sandquist, PF's regional wildlife biologist in Minnesota. "Brad is a big-picture thinker who has been willing to do whatever it takes to achieve the habitat mission of PF and we are all indebted to him for his leadership and willingness to lead the habitat charge."

Bob Zylla and Fred Bengtson also were recognized for their roles as Stearns County Pheasants Forever (SCPF) members. Zylla was awarded the PF Dedication Award for his committee member contributions, being instrumental in the continuation of the chapter and development of chapter programs. Bengtson was inducted into the PF Long Spur Society for his continued dedication and contributions to Pheasants Forever.

Stearns County Pheasants Forever and Stearns County Soil and Water Conservation District would like to congratulate Brad, Bob and Fred on their deserving awards.

The Stearns County Chapter banquet for this year is on Saturday, February 24th at Gerards in Sauk Centre, Minn. The public and media are invited to attend. For ticket information, please go to the Stearns County PF Website www.stearnspheasantsforever.org or www.minnesotapf.org. To learn more about the chapter, please contact Jason Selvog at (320)251-9171 or via email at Jason.Selvog@mn.nacdn.net. If you are interested in starting a PF or Quail Forever chapter in Minnesota, contact Eran Sandquist at (320)236-7755 or email esandquist@pheasantsforever.org.

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