



JACKSON HOLE CONSERVATION ALLIANCE  
P.O. Box 2728  
Jackson, WY 83001  
(307) 733-9417  
[www.jhalliance.org](http://www.jhalliance.org)

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**Contact:** Dorothy Jankowsky, Communications Director, (307) 733-9417

## ***Alliance Annual Meeting Highlights 2008 Accomplishments***

JACKSON HOLE – Contributing to the Comprehensive Plan update, building community support for an amendment to conserve the Path of the Pronghorn, and protecting the region’s wolves, grizzlies, wolverines and elk were only a few of the Conservation Alliance’s achievements in 2008.

At the Alliance’s Dec. 4 annual meeting, executive director Franz Camenzind outlined a list of successes that spanned from helping to regain Endangered Species Act protection for Northern Rockies wolves, to reducing development at Grand Targhee, to working to protect our iconic elk herds from disease, to creating an endowment fund that will ensure that Jackson Hole is sustained for future generations. (See our annual report at [www.jhalliance.org/Library/Reports/JHCAAnnualReport.12-08.pdf](http://www.jhalliance.org/Library/Reports/JHCAAnnualReport.12-08.pdf) for additional 2008 accomplishments.) Camenzind noted that the Alliance consistently partnered with the community, elected officials, other nonprofits, such as the Greater Yellowstone Coalition and The Community Foundation of Jackson Hole, and government agencies like the Wyoming Game and Fish Department, Bridger-Teton National Forest and Grand Teton National Park, to come up with long-term solutions to sustain Jackson Hole.

“So often, the Conservation Alliance’s successes are the things you *don’t* see,” Camenzind said. “We hope people realize that when the Alliance says ‘no’ to certain development, what we are really saying is ‘yes’ to preserving the valley’s precious wildlife and natural resources.”

Also at the meeting, Alliance members formally elected retired real estate broker Nancy Hoffman to the board of directors. A supporter since the organization’s early days, Hoffman owned Ely Associates Property Management in Jackson for 17 years and retired in the late ’80s to enjoy raising and racing quarter horses. Having lived in the Jackson Hole area for more than 30 years, Hoffman said she hopes her experience, history and familiarity with the issues will prove to be a good resource for the Alliance.

Board co-chair Anthony Stevens then awarded certificates of appreciation to three outgoing board members: David Carlin, who was instrumental in the Alliance’s recent branding efforts; Dick Ferguson, whose experience as a national park worker for more than 40 years has been invaluable; and Amy Unfried, whose work on the Nominating Committee has resulted in such a strong board.

“Remember,” Stevens told them, only half jokingly, “you only get a year off, and then we’ll be back knocking at your door.”

The evening also featured awards honoring wildlife advocates Lisa and Steve Robertson, and community activist Rich Bloom.

“I have now presented six Outstanding Conservationist awards, and each year, I think that I have the

honor to recognize the best, and each year the recipients get more worthy. This year tops everything,” said Camenzind. “Lisa and Steve Robertson do so many things, and they do them so quietly and so humbly, that their work has gone under the radar.”

The Outstanding Conservationist award is given annually to people who have made a lifelong commitment to – and impact on – conservation in Jackson Hole. Previous recipients are: Gil and Marge Ordway, Tom Wiancko, Bert Raynes, Yvon Chouinard and Kathe Henry.

As volunteer pilots for the environmental aviation groups Ecoflight and Lighthawk, as well as on their own, the Robertsons have logged literally thousands of hours of flight time in support of scientific studies. Here in the Greater Yellowstone, the couple’s generous help has proved invaluable for countless wildlife projects over the years, including research on wolves and lynx, pronghorn studies and other work by the Wildlife Conservation Society, Craighead Beringia South’s cougar research, and the National Wildlife Federation’s work on grazing allotment buyouts.

“If it’s wildlife, if it’s a good conservation program, Steve and Lisa were probably in the middle of it – a strong and quiet force in its success,” Camenzind said.

The Robertsons’ modest acceptance of the award exemplified his remarks:

“We’re very fortunate to live in such a wonderful place with such wonderful people,” Steve said. “We just did our little share.”

Lisa, who served on the Alliance board from 1998 to 2004, said that previous Outstanding Conservationists Tom Wiancko and Kathe Henry had inspired her to work on behalf of wildlife.

“No matter if it’s a black wolf in our backyard, or Cougar F101, a snow leopard in Afghanistan, or a child who we’re trying to educate about all of this, we’re all in it together and we all keep the world turning,” she said. “We all need to help.”

Camenzind also presented Rich Bloom, founder of South Park Neighbors, with a Hats Off award for his dedicated efforts to get citizens involved in keeping Jackson Hole wild and beautiful.

“The Hats Off award is our way of recognizing an individual’s extraordinary work for conservation in Jackson Hole,” Camenzind said. “This year, it became obvious that Rich Bloom was this individual. He’s just become a catalyst and a solid spokesperson for community planning.”

Bloom accepted the award “on behalf of the 300-plus households of South Park Neighbors and the 700-plus households that are part of other neighborhood groups that are working in conjunction with the Alliance on community planning issues.”

“I really see this award as an affirmation of the growing citizen involvement in the planning process to protect our treasured natural resources and community character,” he later added, “especially given our unique location as a gateway to Grand Teton and Yellowstone national parks and the Greater Yellowstone ecosystem.”

A social hour and showing of the film, “Grizzly and Man: Uneasy Truce,” co-produced by Franz Camenzind, wrapped up the evening.

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*The Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance is a non-profit organization dedicated to responsible land stewardship to ensure that human activities are in harmony with the area's irreplaceable wildlife, scenic and other natural resources. The organization has 2,000 members from Jackson Hole and across the nation.*