



## **For Immediate Release**

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## **Pennsylvania Resident Receives High Honors**

**NASHVILLE, Tenn.** — Volunteers are the lifeblood of the National Wild Turkey Federation, and each year the NWTF recognizes the best of the bunch with the Roger M. Latham Sportsman Wild Turkey Service Awards during its annual Convention and Sport Show.

This year, during its 33rd annual Convention and Sport Show, themed "Year of the Volunteer," in Nashville, Tenn., the NWTF presented a Latham Service Award to James Panaro of Ebensburg, Pa., for his contributions to the NWTF's conservation legacy.

"The NWTF's volunteers are the world's best without a doubt," said James Earl Kennamer, Ph.D., the NWTF's chief conservation officer. "But James Panaro stands out because he goes far beyond the call of duty to promote conservation, hunting and the wild turkey."

The Latham Service Awards are given to NWTF members who are not employed as professional wildlife managers, but have made significant contributions to wild turkey conservation. Winners are chosen from a field of the NWTF's nearly half a million volunteers.

Panaro works as the vice president of engineering and development for Robindale Energy Services in Johnstown, Pa. An NWTF Bronze Sponsor Member, he serves the NWTF's Chesquehanna Spurs chapter as president, the Pennsylvania State Chapter as a board of directors member and the Pennsylvania State Chapter Executive Committee as treasurer.

In addition to serving the NWTF, Panaro is a member of various outdoor-oriented organizations and has earned multiple awards for his exemplary service.

"James Panaro knows hunters were the first, and best, conservationists," Kennamer said. "He is one of our most dedicated volunteers, and we are proud to recognize all he does to ensure that hunting and conservation last for future generations."

Greg Balch of Ontario, Steve Gage of Indiana, Kevin Jech of Nebraska and Jon Leonard of Utah also took home Latham Service Awards at this year's NWTF convention.

The NWTF is a national nonprofit conservation organization that was founded in 1973 and has worked with wildlife agencies to restore wild turkey populations from 1.3 million wild turkeys in 1973 to nearly 7 million today. Now, NWTF volunteers raise funds and work daily to improve critical wildlife habitat, increase access to public hunting land and introduce new people to the outdoors and hunting.

To date, the NWTF and its partners have spent more than \$286 million upholding hunting traditions and conserving nearly 14 million acres of wildlife habitat.

For more information about the Roger M. Latham Sportsman Wild Turkey Service awards or other convention highlights, call (800) THE-NWTF or visit [www.nwtf.org](http://www.nwtf.org).

### **2009 Convention Sponsors**

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**About the NWTF:** In 1973, Tom Rodgers founded the National Wild Turkey Federation in Fredericksburg, Va., as a national 501(c)(3) nonprofit conservation and education organization with a mission dedicated to conserving wild turkeys and preserving hunting traditions. Shortly thereafter, Rodgers relocated the NWTF to Edgefield, S.C., where it's still headquartered today.

At the time NWTF was established, there were only 1.3 million wild turkeys. Today that number stands at more than seven million birds throughout North America, thanks to the efforts of state, federal and provincial wildlife agencies, the NWTF and its members and partners.

Growth and progress define the NWTF as it has expanded from 1,300 members in 1973 to nearly a half million today. With that growth has come impressive strides in wildlife management as the NWTF has forged dynamic partnerships across the country to further its conservation mission. Together, the NWTF's partners, sponsors and grassroots members have raised and spent more than \$286 million upholding hunting traditions and conserving nearly 14 million acres of wildlife habitat.

While wild turkey restoration is nearing completion, the NWTF still has much work to do. Across North America, supporters are working to enhance habitat for wild turkeys and other wildlife while providing hunters with more opportunities and access to public and private land. In addition, NWTF volunteers and partners are introducing youth, women and people with disabilities to the outdoors through special educational events.

If you would like to become a member of Team NWTF, join a committee or start a chapter, please visit our Web site at [www.nwtf.org](http://www.nwtf.org) or call us at 800-THE-NWTF.