



Finalists named for 2014 California Leopold Conservation Award

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- **All are from Central Valley**
- **An ethical relationship between people and the land they own and manage**

The finalists for the California Leopold Conservation Award, which honors private landowner achievement in voluntary stewardship and management of natural resources, are all from the Central Valley this year.

They are:

- Full Belly Farm, Yolo County
- Hafenfeld Ranch, Kern County
- Kautz Farms, San Joaquin County

Here is how the award's sponsors, the Sand County Foundation, the California Farm Bureau Federation and Sustainable Conservation, describe them:

“Full Belly Farm is a certified organic farm owned by Andrew Brait, Paul Muller, Judith Redmond and Dru Rivers. It produces a large diversity of crops that are sold year-round directly to consumers. The owners strive to balance the farm's bottom line with environmentally sound practices to support the local food economy. The farm has an extensive education and outreach program, including popular tours, events, class visits, a children's summer camp and a farm internship program.

“Hafenfeld Ranch is owned by Bruce and Sylvia Hafenfeld and operated with their son and his wife, Eric and Jamie. They manage certified organic cattle pastures on the family ranch and their leases with the U.S. Forest Service and Audubon's Kern River Preserve. The ranch has a Southwestern willow flycatcher mitigation easement that demonstrates how cattle, wildlife and water management are tied together. The Hafenfeld's land stewardship also includes erosion control, installation of wildlife-friendly water systems, and improved irrigation infrastructure to more efficiently use water and manage water quality.

“Kautz Farms is owned by John and Gail Kautz and includes vineyards in Lodi and the Sierra Foothills. The Kautzes have been technological pioneers, bringing drip irrigation to California, implementing natural methods for combating damaging insects and other sustainable practices in their vineyards. Wastewater from their winery is now naturally treated on-site for field irrigation. Kautz Farms steadfastly advocates for California agriculture and agriculture education.”

The 2014 California Leopold Conservation Award will be presented in December at the California Farm Bureau Federation's annual meeting in Garden Grove. The award recipient will be presented with a crystal depicting Aldo Leopold and \$10,000.

In his influential 1949 book, "A Sand County Almanac," Mr. Leopold called for an ethical relationship between people and the land they own and manage, which he called "an evolutionary possibility and an ecological necessity."

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