

NEWS RELEASE

USDA Forest Service -- Northern Region



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Local Winner of National Environmental Excellence Award

Missoula, Mont – The 2005 Environmental Excellence Award in Environmental Leadership was awarded April 22 to Bill Ruediger for his work on habitat protection as related to road and highway development. The Federal Highways Administration (FHWA) national award was presented April 22 in Washington, D.C. by Deputy FHWA Administrator J. Richard Capka.

“Bill has been a national and international leader in the new field of road ecology,” said James Claar, Forest Service Carnivore Leader. “He recognized the significant fragmentation caused by highways on fish and wildlife habitats years ago. Subsequently, he developed a dialog between road engineers and fish and wildlife biologists that has significantly improved road design and public safety.”

The Federal Highway Administration’s (FHWA) Environmental Excellence Awards highlight federally funded transportation projects, programs and processes that surpass environmental compliance guidelines to achieve noteworthy natural resource preservation goals. Winners of the 2005 awards, presented during an Earth Day ceremony, were selected from among 238 nominations from 38 states and the District of Columbia. He was cited for his leadership commitment, foresight, and tireless efforts to improve habitat connectivity and protect wildlife along our nation’s highways. “The award winners have provided fresh and innovative ideas that can lead to greater environmental excellence in the future,” said Deputy Federal Highway Administrator J. Richard Capka, who presented the awards.

Ruediger, a wildlife biologist, retired from the Forest Service in December. He had served as the national Ecology Program Leader for Highway for the Forest Service since 2001; working out of the Forest Service regional office in Missoula.

Note to editors:

- The U.S. Department of Transportation news release can be found at:
<http://www.dot.gov/affairs/fhwa0505.htm>



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