

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Southwest Region

National Wildlife Refuge System

*“Conserving
the
Nature
of
America”*



Meet Ben Lanford *2015 Southwest Region Federal Wildlife Officer of the Year*

I would like to introduce you to Ben Lanford, the 2015 Southwest Region Federal Wildlife Officer of the Year. I have had the privilege of working with Ben for the past five years and can attest that Ben is a true role model and is exemplary at his job.

Ben grew up New Mexico and has been working in law enforcement for six years. After he proudly served his country in the United States Marine Corps, completing two combat tours in Afghanistan and Iraq, he joined the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as a Federal Wildlife Officer stationed at Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge in Socorro, NM. Although his current assignment requires him to cover large portions of the state protecting wildlife and helping provide Refuge visitors with a positive experience, Ben has a knack for stepping up and taking on additional responsibilities. To highlight just a few, he is a certified instructor and trains other agency employees to safely operate ATV/UTV's, which is highly important to biological field work. He is an experienced Wildland Fire Investigator who is always willing to lend his skills during fire incidents and even trains others in the task. He was actively involved in training tribal law enforcement officers in 2015.

Because of Ben's work ethic and willing attitude, Refuge Managers, co-workers, and even other agencies often request his assistance. But not only for Law Enforcement work. Ben continually reaches out to educate others. He can often be found engaging the public at Refuge special events or keeping other agencies updated on issues.

I'm very proud of Ben for his outstanding work ethic and leadership. I know Ben to be very humble and he always recognizes others for their contributions. Now it's my turn to recognize Ben with this Award. I know it was well deserved.

Joseph Mojica
Regional Chief, Office of Refuge Law Enforcement

