



Commonwealth of Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet

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State Nature Preserves Commission Bestows Highest Volunteer Honor *2014 Volunteer Steward Award given to Boone County couple*

Frankfort, Ky. (March 13, 2015) – The Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission (KSNPC) presented its Volunteer Steward Award to Bob and Ruth Matheny of Boone County during the March commission meeting at the Franklin County Cooperative Extension Office in Frankfort.

The annual award recognizes a person, persons or organization that has made a significant contribution to a specific preserve or to the furtherance of KSNPC's mission by volunteering their time, expertise or physical efforts without anticipation of compensation.

Starting out as volunteers for The Nature Conservancy in 1990, they later moved to volunteering for KSNPC. They were the preserve stewards at Boone County Cliffs State Nature Preserve (SNP) and also helped with management at nearby Dinsmore Woods SNP. The Mathenys planned and led workdays to maintain the trail and combat relentless invasive weeds such as garlic mustard and bush honeysuckle. They assisted with boundary work, fostered good neighbor relations, built and installed beautiful wooden trail signs and cleared dangerous windfalls blocking trails.

Beyond their physical labor, they transcribed species lists and maintained computerized records for plants and birds, reported trespassers and poachers and led hikes for public visitors.

Joyce Bender, who serves as the commission's nature preserves and natural areas branch manager, praised the couple. "Bob and Ruth took such good care of our northern Kentucky preserves that our small staff was able to give more time to other preserves across the state. Their dedication to the Boone County preserves buoyed our spirits as we knew that at least some folks cared as much as we did about their protection."

For additional information on the KSNPC, call 502-573-2886 or visit the website at <http://naturepreserves.ky.gov> or Facebook at <http://facebook.com/ksnpc>.

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