

**GRASSLAND RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT AWARDS
Dr. FRITZ REID the J. MARTIN WINTON CONSERVATION
AWARD**

At its annual landowner meeting, Grassland RCD President William Parham presented the J. Martin Winton Conservation Award “for outstanding achievement in National Resource Conservation” to Dr. Fritz Reid of Ducks Unlimited. The GRCD represents over 170 duck clubs in the San Joaquin Valley of California and the largest remaining wetland/grassland complex in California. The award is named after long-time conservationist J. Martin Winton who for nearly 60 years battled to protect rivers, wetlands and water of the San Joaquin Valley.

Upon accepting the award, Reid said “I am humbled to accept this award because of the great efforts of Grasslands RCD and Water District to protect the integrity of these critical wetlands, but also because of who J. Martin Winton was. Martin joined Ducks Unlimited in its founding year of 1937 and went on to serve as a national trustee from 1967 to 1980. Martin was tireless in his pursuit to conserve the entire Pacific Flyway for ducks, geese and shorebirds.”

Speaking at the award were Grassland Water District Directors Pepper Snyder and Doug Federichi (also member of Ducks Unlimited Conservation Program Committee), as well as District Manager Dave Widell. Federichi spoke of Reid’s effort throughout the flyway, from Barrow to Baja. He spoke of the effort to educate U.S. duck hunters to the challenges and potential solutions for habitats across the flyway. Most especially, he remarked to the recent efforts with Ducks Unlimited and Pew’s International Boreal Conservation Campaign in helping conserve the entire Canadian Boreal Forest and helping guide full protection for at least fifty percent of this critical waterfowl habitat. This is critical for a wintering ground such as the Grasslands where principal harvest includes green-winged teal, American wigeon, ring-necked duck, and northern pintail.

Upon accepting the award, Reid spoke to the audience of the complex challenge to continue to conserve and protect the Pacific Flyway. He spoke of new challenges to water availability in the south and further degradations of the few remaining wintering wetlands. He spoke of critical staging wetlands in Klamath and southern Oregon, and the decline of duck usage in the Columbia Basin. He spoke of the critical 11 million acres of Prairies that

still existed in Alberta and Saskatchewan, but the need to expand that acreage and work with farmers in programs for set asides and spring wheat. He spoke of new challenges in the arctic with changing food resources for sea ducks and arctic-nesting geese. He concluded that boreal conservation offered a huge opportunity now that waterfowl hunters must support and champion for future generations. The Prairies and Boreal landscapes of western North America are the key breeding habitats for future generations of waterfowl.