



THE TERRY BACKER AWARD - 2017

Celebrating Waterkeepers Worldwide

BACKGROUND

The Waterkeeper story began along the banks of the Hudson in 1966, when commercial and recreational fishermen - many of them veterans - united to save their river and formed the Hudson River Fishermen's Association. These fishermen recognized that outspoken, citizen-led advocacy was the only way to ensure that laws were enforced and their river, livelihood and the health of their families were protected. Decades later, the vision held by commercial fishermen along the Hudson has spread to a movement that includes over 300 Waterkeeper Organizations and Affiliates on 6 continents.

Terry Backer, the first Long Island Soundkeeper, was - and remains - one of our movement's most iconic activists: dedicated, spirited, determined, charismatic, and effective. But most importantly, he was loved. In celebration of our collective efforts towards drinkable, fishable and swimmable waters worldwide, Waterkeeper Alliance has created the Terry Backer Award as an opportunity for us to celebrate Terry's legacy as a Waterkeeper and to honor his brothers and sisters who embody his spirit and grit.

CRITERIA

The Terry Backer Award will be presented each year at the Waterkeeper Annual Conference to up to three (3) individuals. Award recipients must be nominated by peers from the Waterkeeper movement. For the initial year, the winner(s) will be selected by a panel of Waterkeeper Alliance staff and members of the Waterkeeper Council.

Nominees must:

- Represent a Waterkeeper Organization in good standing. Waterkeeper Alliance staff, Waterkeeper Affiliates, and members of the Waterkeeper Council are not eligible to receive the award.
- Demonstrate inspirational leadership qualities; Serve as a role model for Waterkeeper Organizations and Affiliates throughout the movement; And, embody the tenacity and originality of Terry Backer.
- Have achieved a specific, measurable success within the past 2 years on his/her local waterbody.
- Have been involved with the Waterkeeper movement for at least 3 years.
- Attend the Waterkeeper Annual Conference, and be present to accept the award.

Nominators must:

- Be a staff member, board member, or volunteer of a Waterkeeper Organization or Waterkeeper Affiliate. Waterkeeper Alliance staff is not eligible to nominate anyone for the award.



- Submit a completed application by the stated deadline.

NOMINATION PROCESS

Nomination Packets must include the following three (3) items:

1. **Cover Sheet** - Not to exceed one (1) page, including:
 - Nominee's Information:
 - Waterkeeper Region
 - First/Last Name
 - Waterkeeper Organization and Title
 - Address
 - Email/Phone
 - Nominator Information
 - First/Last Name
 - Organizational Affiliation
 - Address
 - Email/Phone
 - The specific measurable success for which the individual is being nominated.
 - Top three (3) reasons - in brief bullets - stating why this success is noteworthy.
 - Five (5) words that describe the nominee.
2. **Narrative** - Not to exceed 2 pages (11 pt. font - minimum). This is your opportunity to provide information and details regarding:
 - Nominee's bio, background, and character (as it relates to the Waterkeeper movement)
 - Nominee's waterbody (e.g., size, challenges, etc.)
 - No more than three (3) specific accomplishments of the nominee, focusing specifically on how she/he meets the specified criteria. Well-composed nominations will include specific examples and concise descriptions of the strategies employed leading to the success.
3. **At Least Two (2) Letters of Support**
 - The nominator should not submit a letter.
 - Letters of support can be from individuals outside of the Waterkeeper movement.

DEADLINE

Completed Nomination Packets must be submitted no later than May 1, 2017. They should be saved as a single PDF and emailed no later than May 1, 2017 to conference@waterkeeper.org. Please use "Backer Award Nomination - [your nominee's last name]" as the subject line.



SELECTION PROCESS

All 2017 Nomination Packets will be reviewed by a committee including Waterkeeper Alliance staff and members of Waterkeeper Council. In coming years, previous winners will be invited to participate in the selection process. Up to three (3) individuals will be honored. As a general guideline, we will not select more than one nominee from any one country.

THE AWARD

Terry Backer Award recipients will receive the following:

- Recognition at the Waterkeeper Annual Conference and VIP seating for the Awards Ceremony
- A certificate of recognition and/or a to-be-determined awards package
- Acknowledgment in *Waterkeeper Magazine* and on Waterkeeper Alliance's website and social media channels
- Peer appreciation, gratitude, and acknowledgment
- The opportunity to help select future Terry Backer Award recipients

ABOUT TERRY

Terry Backer (1954 - 2015) was the Soundkeeper and Executive Director of the Long Island Soundkeeper Fund, Inc., whose mission it is to protect and enhance the environmental integrity of Long Island Sound. A third generation fisherman long-active in his family's shellfishing business, Terry has fished Long Island Sound for much of his working life. He has also fished the Pacific Northwest and Alaska for salmon and is a United States Coast Guard-licensed master.

Terry built a reputation on the Sound by monitoring and patrolling its waters and watershed, tracking down polluters and making them accountable for violations.

Terry was a State Representative from Connecticut's 121st District (Stratford) and served as Vice-Chair of the Appropriations committee. Terry was also a member of the Environment committee, Energy and Technologies committee and Regulations Review committee. His duties included overseeing budgets for ten state agencies totaling over three billion dollars annually. He was appointed by Governor Weicker to serve on Connecticut's Council on Environmental Quality from 1990 to 1992, and he was appointed by Senate President Pro Tempore to serve on the Long Island Sound Advisory Council. Moreover, Terry was an advisor to shellfishing and environmental organizations concerned with water quality both in Long Island Sound and in estuaries around the nation, and he was a founding member of the Long Island Sound Watershed Alliance.

Terry has been honored by the U.S. Committee for the United Nations Environment Programme for his contributions in protecting the Earth's Environment. Additionally, under Terry's leadership, Soundkeeper received an Environmental Achievement Award from Renew America, a national environmental organization based in Washington D.C. Soundkeeper was selected by leaders of



the nation's environmental community for its success in protecting the environment, while serving as a model for similar organizations around the country.