

Media Contact:  
Andi Cooper  
[Cooper.andi@gmail.com](mailto:Cooper.andi@gmail.com)



## **TWRA officer honored by regional peers**

### **Leith Konyndyk named 2015 SEAFWA Wildlife Officer of the Year**

ASHEVILLE, N.C. – Nov. 5, 2015 – The Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies named Leith Konyndyk the 2015 Wildlife Officer of the Year at their annual meeting in Asheville this week. Konyndyk is a conservation officer for the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency.

“Each state submits their officer of the year for consideration as the regional officer of the year, and these individuals are all deserving of recognition and appreciation,” SEAFWA President Bob Ziehmer said. “Konyndyk is certainly not only a great asset for his department, but also for the hunters, anglers and boaters that recreate throughout Tennessee.”

Konyndyk has conducted educational and outreach events for more than 3,300 participants, including a kids fishing rodeo, scholastic clay target program, an ATV safety course and an outdoor youth summit. He also coordinated a Kid’s Hunting for a Cure deer hunt with more than 1,000 people participating to raise more than \$50,000 for St. Jude Children’s Hospital.

“Leith has been one of our most active teachers in the community,” said TWRA Director Dr. Ed Carter. “He has certified more than 100 students in hunter education, assisted with school programs and sportsman’s groups in six counties to reach 922 people, conducted firearm and boating safety programs for 400 children and facilitated the leasing of two dove fields for public hunting.”

Konyndyk’s law enforcement efforts resulted in 606 hunters, fishermen and boaters being inspected for game law compliance. These efforts produced 129 court citations, 45 warning citations and 16 physical arrests. He also assisted other offices with more than 70 cases and assisted biologists with goose and dove banding.



TWRA Director Ed Carter presents the Wildlife Officer of the Year award to Leith Konyndyk (right). Photo by Thomas Harvey.

He not only teaches ATV safety for TWRA employees, but also for the National Guard, drug task force, Alcohol Beverage and Commerce, highway patrol and the U.S. Forest Service.

“Konyndyk is dedicated to helping his fellow officers and his community in any way he can, and has been formally designated as a Chaplain for his department,” Carter said. He has been trained in individual and group crisis prevention, concerns of police survivors and traumas for law enforcement through the American Police Chaplains Association.

The Association’s Wildlife Officer of the Year Award is determined by nominations submitted to the Chiefs of Enforcement from the SEAFWA states and territories. In addition to direct law enforcement, an officer is selected based on community service, outreach and education, interdepartmental cooperation and innovations that may be utilized by other officers and departments.