

# ARRI Member, Victor Davis wins 2006 Forest Conservationist of the Year

Conservation Achievement Awards Ceremony

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By Becky Hatmaker

Photos by Tim D

**NASHVILLE, TN** - Victor Davis received the “2006 Forest Conservationist of the Year” award from the Tennessee Wildlife Federation (TWF) during the Annual Conservation Achievement Awards Ceremony and Legislative Reception on Wednesday, March 21, 2007 in Nashville.



Above: Victor Davis receiving Forest Conservationist of the Year Award.

The Forest Conservationist of the Year honors an individual for outstanding achievement in forest and woodlands development management or use including reforestation, preservation of wilderness areas, wildlife habitat development, fire protection, wise cutting practices and multiple-use forest lands. Selection was made by a statewide committee of natural resource conservation experts.

Sixteen awards were given to individuals or groups who have shown exemplary leadership in conserving the resources of the State of Tennessee.

In May 1999 Davis wrote policy for the Knoxville Field Office Reforestation and Wildlife Enhancement Initiative, which established the Forestry Reclamation Approach (FRA) as the preferred method for mine land reforestation in Tennessee.

In December 2003 he submitted a concept paper to the regional technology transfer team, which was the basis for the Appalachian Regional Reforestation Initiative (ARRI).

“It is very gratifying to see establishment of productive forestland on reclaimed mine sites become a reality,” said Davis. “During the initial years of enforcing the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act special emphasis was placed on stabilizing mine sites by using high soil compaction rates and planting aggressive ground covers. This practice resulted in dense grasslands that were not conducive to productive forestland. Fortunately, forestry researchers identified specific reclamation practices that needed to be changed, and developed the Forestry Reclamation Approach. We began the

Appalachian Regional Reforestation Initiative in January of 2004 and have not looked back,” he said.

Below: Victor Davis shakes hands with John Gregory, TWRA, after signing the ARRI Statement of mutual intent.



Davis’ selection was based on his tireless efforts promoting reforestation of reclaimed mine lands utilizing the FRA. Davis is a member of the ARRI Core Team and serves as a liaison to the ARRI Academic Team. Davis is continually promoting ARRI and the use of FRA to coal mining companies, various private, state, and federal stakeholders in any venue he can find. As an example, he obtained the

signature of the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency on the ARRI Statement of Mutual Intent before the TWF Achievement Awards Ceremony.

Davis is the Senior Reclamation Review Specialist for the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSM), Knoxville Field Office and has worked for OSM for 28 years. He is a 1974 graduate of the University of Tennessee, College of Agriculture, where he majored in Forest Management.