

WILL S. GREEN AWARD

2025

Don Bransford

The 2025 Will S. Green Award recipient is Don Bransford. Don is a modern leader in the Sacramento Valley who epitomizes service and dedication to the region at a level similar to the award's namesake. This included serving as the second Chair of the Northern California Water Association Board of Directors from 1999 to 2000.

Don Bransford has dedicated so much of his life to Northern California and the communities in the Sacramento Valley through his commitment, leadership and tireless effort over the past three decades to the promotion, advancement, and protection of irrigation, water rights, agriculture, and the economic and environmental sustainability of the Sacramento Valley. Over these years, Don has led unprecedented efforts to fully integrate water management in the Sacramento Valley to support and protect our agricultural industry, while also working tirelessly to provide benefits to threatened and endangered aquatic and terrestrial species, as well as migratory birds along the Pacific Flyway, all of which are inextricably tied to the success of water management in California.

Don has provided a sage voice to educate and instill important values throughout the Valley, by committing himself to becoming both a student and teacher to identify and foster partnerships, relationships, and opportunities to benefit the region, while also serving as an ardent spokesman and ambassador to effectuate policies and programs that have served to preserve and protect our rural agricultural communities. He has been instrumental in the development and dedication of resources to design and construct important infrastructure that has been critical to maintaining water management in Northern California.

Don has served on a myriad of important boards and panels for a variety of public and private organizations, dedicating himself to the promotion of programs, goals, and policies to further the welfare of our industry. This includes serving on the Glenn-Colusa Irrigation District Board since 1993, and for 30 years as the Board President. He served as the Chair of the California Rice Commission; he was named the USA Rice Federation's Rice Farmer of the Year in 1999; he was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award in the U.S. rice industry

in 2005; and was recognized by the California Cooperative Rice Research Foundation for distinguished contributions to the advancement of the California rice industry. Don was also appointed by several Governors to the State Board of Food and Agriculture and served on the Bay-Delta Advisory Council and numerous drought advisory councils. Don is also a leader in his local community, serving on the Colusa Unified School District Board over three decades as a Trustee (many of those years as Board President).

Don has travelled throughout the region, the state, and the country, including innumerable trips to our nation's capital, to protect, preserve, and benefit water management in our region. Don has unselfishly and graciously volunteered uncountable hours of time and effort, away from his family and farm, dedicating himself to the greater good and well-being of the Sacramento Valley, the region that he and his forebears have made their home.

Don is a partner in Bransford Farms with his wife Diane, a diversified farming operation growing rice, prunes, and almonds in the Sacramento Valley. Don has always practiced what he preached--promoting and participating in studies, programs, and efforts to promote positive farming, water use, and environmentally sustainable practices for the benefit of the region.

The Northern California Water Association is pleased to honor Don Bransford with the 2025 Will S. Green Award.



The WILL S. GREEN AWARD is presented annually by the Northern California Water Association Board of Directors to an individual who has devoted their life to the promotion and advancement of irrigation and regional sustainability in the Sacramento Valley.

PREVIOUS RECIPIENTS



2024
Edward Horton



2023
Tom Ellis



2022
Stuart Somach



2021
Mary Wells



2020
Charlie Hoppin



2019
Homer Lundberg



2018
Sandy Willard
Denn



2017
Tib Belza



2016
Tom O'Halloran



2015
Richard Rominger



2014
Fran Silva



2013
Gene Harris



2012
George Basye



Founders Award
Al Montna



NCWA