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# Hurchalla receives national award

The former Martin County commissioner is recognized for her work with environmental causes.

**By Jim Turner**

staff writer

Former Martin County Commissioner Maggy Hurchalla has long been known locally as a driving force behind such environmental causes as restoring the St. Lucie River and Indian River Lagoon.

Now, that recognition has reached the national level.



**Hurchalla**

In Washington on Saturday, Hurchalla was one of 12 individuals and organizations to receive the National Wildlife Federation's National Conservation Achievement

Award, which honors conservationists whose activities set an example for others around the country.

"I was with some very good company," said Hurchalla. "It was a great bunch of people up there. They all care a lot."

According to the federation, the nation's largest member-supported conservation group, Hurchalla's efforts should be a model for wetland restoration around the country, with low-tech solutions examined first and grassroots leaders heavily involved in the process.

"Maggy Hurchalla is the epitome of the kind of citizen watchdog the conservation movement needs as we undertake the largest environmental restoration ever attempted," Federation President Mark Van Putten said in a prepared statement. "She is the conscience of Everglades restoration."

Hurchalla has been a proponent of restoring the natural habitat of the ecosystems through wetland preservation, such as the state's \$50.7 million purchase of 20,445-acres of the Allapattah Ranch in western Martin County last year.

The awards, established to showcase outstanding contributions of individuals and organizations to conservation and environmental protection, have been presented annually since 1965.

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