SELC Board Member Elizabeth Haskell Named Outstanding Virginian for 2005

Businesswoman, community leader, and environmental champion Elizabeth Haskell was honored by the Virginia General Assembly on February 9 as the 2005 Outstanding Virginian for more than 30 years of leadership and service to the state.

“We are extremely proud of our friend and board member,” SELC Deputy Director Jeff Gleason says of the award. “This is wonderful and well-deserved recognition for Elizabeth’s many contributions to Virginia.”

Elizabeth’s appointments include 16 years as member and chairwoman of the state Air Pollution Control Board and subsequent tenure as the Commonwealth Secretary of Natural Resources from 1990-1994, during which she directed environmental and historic conservation programs in a manner consistent with economic growth. She served on the Martinsville City Council from 1996-2000. Elizabeth Haskell is the author of many books and articles on the environment, including The Politics of Clean Air and State Environmental Management.

SELC Senior Attorney Deb Carter: NC Conservationist of the Year

The following is excerpted from remarks by emcee Eddie Nichocks at a February 19 awards ceremony given by the NC Wildlife Federation:

“For so many critical conservation issues, Deb Carter and the Southern Environmental Law Center are our last, best options. When negotiations with developers have failed, when public outcry is ignored, when elected officials turn a deaf ear to their duty to protect North Carolina’s natural resources and the conservation community has no choice but to go to court, we turn to Deb Carter... There is not a single North Carolinian who loves wildlife or wild places who does not owe him a debt of gratitude.

Deb is a senior attorney with SELC in Chapel Hill. Name a major conservation issue over the last 20 years, and you’ve named a fight Carter and SELC have fought. He led the legal battles to successfully challenge proposals to drain tens of thousands of acres of coastal wetlands in the mid-1980s... (He) challenged destruction of the East Dismal Swamp, oil drilling off the Outer Banks, development in Buxton Woods, and weakening of rare species protections.

And over the last year, Deb Carter has been the field commander for the effort to halt construction of the Navy’s OLF on top of eastern North Carolina’s most precious wildlands. He is the chief strategist for a team that has included public and private sector attorneys, two counties, and a squadron of 30 volunteer law students who pored over 200,000 pages of Navy documents... This fight—perhaps the most critical of a generation for eastern North Carolina—is not over. His two decades of commitment to conservation assure us that Deb Carter will be in it till we hope is the ultimately triumphant end.

For 20 years, when all else has failed, Deb Carter and SELC have not. For all of these reasons, Deb Carter is the North Carolina Conservationist of the Year.”