

Barry Alan Long Award



Diane Switzer

2019 Barry Alan Long Award Recipient



Diane Switzer is receiving the Barry A. Long Award for her outstanding contributions to water monitoring programs regionally and nationally, strong advocacy of state and tribal programs, support for volunteer monitors, and significant technical and programmatic contributions to EPA and the environment during her long and illustrious career!

During her thirty-two-year career at EPA, Diane has been a strong regional and national advocate for the Clean Water Act monitoring and assessment programs. After getting a BS in Biology from the Virginia Commonwealth University and a MBA from Texas A&M, Diane started work at EPA in 1987 as a NPDES water inspector at the Region 1 Laboratory, where she spent her entire career. Due to her excellent work and accomplishments, Diane was promoted to become the Regional Monitoring Coordinator (RMC) in 1994, and shortly afterwards to be the Team Leader for the Region's water and biological monitoring programs. She has extensive experience with both field and lab work, however, her real love has always been fieldwork and she has never passed up an opportunity to get out of the office and on the water!

Diane has been a national leader in developing foundational components of the monitoring and assessment program, including development and implementation of 305(b) guidance and reporting improvements, Elements of a State Water Monitoring Program guidance to improve state programs, national water databases STORET/WQX, the Biological Condition Gradient, and the National Aquatic Resource Surveys. According to the Office of Water, "Her willingness to share her knowledge and expertise helped develop other staff in HQs and in other Regions, leading to a more cohesive and collaborative national program. Her efforts have been integral for improving and expanding water quality monitoring and assessment for states in New England, as well as across the country."

Most notably, Diane has been a passionate advocate for the states and tribes and is held in high regard by her peers in state and tribal government throughout the Region. She has consistently demonstrated an ability to understand state and tribal programs and to support the individual needs and priorities of those programs. Her strong advocacy of EPA's partners' perspectives has strengthened the relationships between states and tribes and EPA, to the benefit of all. In part

as a result of her activities, Region 1 has a well-connected network of state monitoring programs that are well known nationally for innovation and excellence. She has worked hard to successfully create multiple communication networks between the states, the Region and Office of Water. Region 1 has a great relationship with its states' water monitoring programs, a testament to Diane's commitment to "Cooperative Federalism" before we had that term for it.

Diane has always been a strong supporter of volunteer monitoring, and in 2005, she established the first EPA Volunteer Monitoring Equipment Loan Program. She has loaned out more than \$300,000 worth of monitoring equipment to more than 60 New England volunteer groups and the states, enabling a great expansion of monitored waters in the Region. This program served as a national model and several other Regions adopted this approach.

She never stops looking for opportunities for improvement and innovation. Most recently, Diane worked with New England states to establish the Regional Monitoring Network, a network of stream reference sites where temperature and flow are measured using EPA-loaned equipment to detect climate change impacts. This successful effort has since expanded to other Regions and also to lakes.

Diane is an excellent role model and mentor to her staff. Diane was instrumental in the successful ISO 17025 accreditation of EPA field sampling procedures during FY17, a first for the EPA lab. The Team now has a solid field and lab program with standard operating procedures and routine testing to ensure the quality of data being collected meets requirements. In addition to being Team Leader, she also participates in field and lab activities, always volunteering to conducting Assistance Visits (audits) for the National Aquatic Surveys.

Barry Long was a hydrologist and water quality specialist with the National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, and the U.S. Forest Service. In June 2000, Barry was diagnosed with acute myeloid leukemia. His colleagues and supporters were moved by the tremendous perseverance, spirit, and courage he displayed during his long struggle with the disease. Barry continued his career as a tactful advocate for the protection of water resources and through his work on the Council, which included organizing the 2010 National Monitoring Conference in Denver, Colorado. In his memory, the Council established the Barry A. Long award to honor an individual who has demonstrated exceptional perseverance, positive spirit, and significant contributions to water resource protection.