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**MEDIA RELEASE** –

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## **Colorado Individuals & Programs Receive Awards for Excellence in Environmental Education**

The Colorado Alliance for Environmental Education (CAEE) is recognizing exemplary and effective environmental education programs and individuals across Colorado who are setting a new standard for learning in their communities. Four programs and nine individuals are being acknowledged with an Award for Excellence in Environmental Education for their outstanding work in helping learners understand their role in the environment. The recipients of the 2017 Awards for Excellence in Environmental Education will be honored at a lunch reception hosted by CAEE on Saturday, March 3, 2018 at the Auraria Campus in Denver, CO.

The Colorado Alliance for Environmental Education and its Board of Directors will honor **John Fielder**, nationally renowned photographer, publisher, teacher and environmentalist, with its 2017 President's Award in recognition of his tireless work to promote the protection of Colorado's open space and wildlands. His photography has influenced people and legislation for more than 45 years, including the enactment of the Colorado Wilderness Bill in 1993 and the Great Outdoors Colorado initiative, which has protected more than 2 million acres of open space, parks, trails, wildlife habitat, and ranches

Each year an individual is nominated by his/her peers to receive the Enos A. Mills Lifetime Achievement Award for outstanding, individual, long-term accomplishments in environmental education (EE). This award is named in honor of Enos Mills, whose writings, photography and passion for education and environmental protection are largely responsible for the establishment of Rocky Mountain National Park. This year Lisa Bardwell is being recognized with this prestigious award. For over 35 years, including 17 years with the nonprofit Earth Force, Lisa has been a role model for innovation, research, and leadership in EE. She is a fearless facilitator for and supporter of the power of community whether it be engaging young people as agents of change or working across sectors to ensure all the players have the resources they need to be effective environmental advocates. Lisa's determination, compassion, insight, resourcefulness, and enthusiasm combine to make her a coveted thought leader and mentor.

Also being recognized this year are nine individuals and four programs who are bringing innovative, inclusive and cross-sector environmental education to Colorado:

### Advancing Environmental Literacy Awards

E Guidelines, E Movement and Samantha Messier, Boulder Valley School District

Colorado EE Founders: Carol Bylsma, Colorado Division of Wildlife; Jeff Rucks, Colorado Division of Wildlife; and Don Hollums, Colorado Division of Wildlife/Colorado Department of Education

### Innovative Environmental Education Program Awards

TREE Semester, Colorado College and Catamount Center

E3 (Elevate Environmental Education), Catamount Institute  
On the Wing, Bird Conservancy of the Rockies

Outstanding Environmental Educator Awards

Kay Phelps, Fort Lewis College

Allison Plute, Colorado Springs Utilities

Maria Talero, Climate Courage LLC

Outstanding Youth Environmental Leadership Award

Yesica Chavez, Environmental Learning for Kids

Outstanding Retiring Educator Recognition

Jody Morse, Bear Creek Lake Park

Katie Navin, CAEE Executive Director, said, “The environment is where we live and the decisions we make about the environment impact our economy, our communities and our homes. All across the state these innovative environmental educators and programs are helping create informed and responsible decision makers.”

CAEE’s 22nd Annual Awards Celebration is on Saturday, March 3, 2018 at noon at the Auraria Campus, Tivoli Turnhalle in Denver, CO. For more information, please visit <http://www.cae.org/awards> or contact CAEE at [info@cae.org](mailto:info@cae.org).

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CAEE is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting and supporting quality and inclusive environmental education by facilitating communication, coordination and professional development among the varied environmental education programs in the state. A comprehensive electronic information clearinghouse and resource directory for environmental education is available on the organization's web site, [www.cae.org](http://www.cae.org).