

Richard L. Coleman

2/14/44 – 7/18/03

Born Feb. 14, 1944, in Asbury, N.J., Richard moved to Winter Haven from Clearwater in 1966 and worked as a research chemist with the USDA Agricultural Research Service. He authored or co-authored more than 50 technical papers and held several patents. He made more than 55 technical presentations and once served as American Chemical Society Lakeland sub-chapter president.

He left the USDA in 1986 and became an environmental consultant. He served as president of the Florida Lake Management Society in 1990 later serving as executive director. He was chair of the Florida Sierra Club for two terms (1978-79) and the founder and chairman of the Legislative Summit (1981-87). He was an activist for the restoration of the Kissimmee River for 32 years and for the conservation of natural resources in the Green Swamp for 29 years.

He was well known as a protector of Central Florida's wetlands, actively lobbying for passage of the Upper Kissimmee Lakes Flowage Acquisition, the Aquatic Plant Control Bill, the Florida Wetlands Bill and several local ordinances including one that helped establish the 1984 Winter Haven Canal Commission.

He was honored for his wetland preservation efforts by the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution, the Florida Lake Management Society and the Florida Wildlife Federation.

The Florida Sierra Club bestowed on Coleman its Florida Chapter Medal for sustained exceptional leadership in conservation, one of only four medals presented up to that time.

Major Conservation Activities:

Green Swamp Resource Committee - appointed by Governor Graham

Kissimmee River Resource Management and Planning Committee (1984-86) - appointed by Governor Graham

Ordinary High Water Committee (1985-86) - appointed by Governor Graham

Florida Institute of Phosphate Research – Board Member appointed by Governors Martinez and Chiles

Sierra Club: Chapter Chair, Conservation Chair, Kissimmee Restoration Committee, Green Swamp Area of Critical State Concern Committee, and Bone Valley Committee

Also active with: Lake Region Audubon, Winter Haven Lakes Federation, Winter Haven Lakes Advisory Committee, Save Our Lakes, Inc.

Recognitions:

Florida Sierra Club - Palm Leaf Award

Florida Sierra Club - Chapter Medal for Sustained Exceptional Leadership in Conservation

Lake Region Audubon - Lake Arbuckle Award

Florida Wildlife Federation - Conservationist of the Year

Florida Wildlife Federation - Water Conservationist of the Year

Daughters of the American Revolution - Outstanding Achievement - Natural Resources

Florida Lake Management Society - The President's Award

Florida Lake Management Society - The Marjorie Harris Carr Award

Trout Unlimited Silver Trout Award - Service to Conservation

Green Horizon Land Trust Blazing Star Award (with wife Frances Howell Coleman)

The Florida Lake Management Society and Ancient Islands Sierra have created awards in Richard's memory and a scholarship has been funded in his memory at New College.