



## Rock keyboardist Chuck Leavell becomes an honorary Forest Service ranger

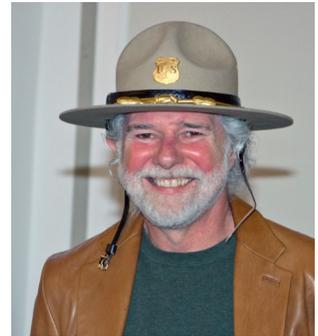
Keyboardist for the Rolling Stones, Allman Brothers Band, and tree conservationist

ATLANTA — Chuck Leavell’s conservation ethic, his forest advocacy and his personal stewardship of Charlane Plantation near Macon, Ga., were recognized on Feb. 27 when the U.S. Forest Service proclaimed him an honorary forest ranger.

“This means every bit as much to me as that Grammy did a couple of weeks ago,” said Leavell.

During a ceremony at the Georgian Terrace Hotel in Atlanta, Leavell accepted the award in the presence of dozens of uniformed past and present forest rangers.

“Trees and forests are the lifeblood of our country. They give us so much,” Leavell said. “We have many challenges to keep our American forests healthy ... and yet the forests have proven to be exceptionally resilient, it’s up to us to keep it that way.” **(right) Chuck Leavell joins actress Betty White as an honorary U.S. Forest Service ranger. USFS photo.**



Forest Service Chief Tom Tidwell bestowed the honor and the symbolic forest ranger hat.

“We are grateful to Chuck for using his platform as a world-famous musician to help spread the word about the importance of sustainable forest management,” Tidwell said. “When Chuck talks, people listen.”

Leavell and his wife Rose Lane have studied conservation techniques here and abroad, constantly finding ways to improve their wildlife and forest management. At home, their forestry practices have turned Charlane Plantation into a textbook tree farm, earning accolades from the [Georgia Conservancy](#), the [National Arbor Day Foundation](#) and the [American Tree Farm System](#).

Leavell is very active in forestry and conservation issues, sitting on several boards and committees of conservation organizations. Over the years, Leavell has supported many conservation activities at the Forest Service. His book, *Forever Green: The History and Hope of the American Forest* has been acclaimed by both the forestry and conservation communities.

“It was only a couple of short weeks ago that Rose Lane and I had the distinct honor and pleasure to go to Los Angeles and to be a part of accepting a Lifetime Achievement Award at the Grammys for the Allman Brothers Band. But I can tell you,” Leavell said, “that this means every bit as much and even more to me today. I am sincere when I say that.” **(right) Leavell is one of the most sought-after pianists in modern music, playing keyboard with the Rolling Stones for 30 years. USFS photo.**

“We are all in this together, on public land and on private land. We are going to have to work together across borders and boundaries to protect the lands and waters that sustain us all. And Chuck Leavell understands that better than anyone,” Tidwell said.

