

June 6, 2013



WINGTIPS

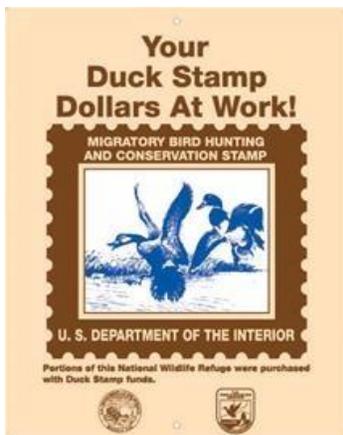
Friends of the Migratory Bird/Duck Stamp

MBCC Selects New Refuge Properties

On 5 June, the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission (MBCC) approved the addition of more than 9,600 acres in fee-title (direct purchase) and leases to three units of the National Wildlife Refuge System:

- Trinity River National Wildlife Refuge (Texas - 81 acres fee-title)
- Red Rocks Lakes National Wildlife Refuge (Montana - 6,323 acres lease)
- Upper Ouachita National Wildlife Refuge (Louisiana - 3,219 acres fee-title)

All properties, of course, depend upon willing sellers. The funding for all these acquisitions comes from the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund, commonly understood as the account where Duck Stamp dollars are deposited.



The relatively small piece of property at Trinity River NWR, located about 45 mile northeast of Houston, provides important wetland habitat (seasonally flooded forest) for migrating, wintering, and breeding waterfowl, as well as breeding colonial waterbirds.

The Red Rock Lakes NWR leases, in southwestern Montana, involve wetland and upland

habitat, especially important for Lesser Scaup and Trumpeter Swan.

The Upper Ouachita NWR acquisition, almost on the Louisiana/Arkansas border, protects bottomland hardwood forest habitat for migratory waterfowl and other birds. It is

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Did You Know?

1) The 1960-61 stamp was the first stamp to raise over \$5 million. (In 2013 dollars, that's about \$39 million.)

2) In 1992, after realizing that some waterfowl species were frequently depicted on Duck Stamps while others simply never appeared, the Federal Duck Stamp office began a program of prescribing which species could be painted in any given year.

3) The eligible species for the 2014-15 stamp contest - to be held in September - are Mallard, Canvasback, Gadwall, Cinnamon Teal, and Blue-winged Teal.

4) Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge, stretching along Delaware Bay, is more than 16,250 acres, most of which is tidal salt marsh. The rest is

part of the final large inholding east of the Ouachita River, a high priority for acquisition since the founding of the refuge in 1978.

Representatives from the states of Texas and Montana approved the MBCC actions pertaining to their states. But the state of Louisiana objected to the Upper Ouachita purchase, in part due to limitations on hunting on refuge lands and perceived current Federal budget constraints. A discussion ensued, attempting to resolve the differences with the state and reaffirming the defense of the acquisition process. Congressman John Dingell (D-MI) was the MBCC member who was most vocal and historical in clarifying that the acquisition process is separate from the Congressional budgetary process and that hunt-plan issues ought to be resolved locally and not threaten acquisition.

The Upper Ouachita NWR acquisition was approved by the MBCC, despite Louisiana's objections. But it was approved on the condition that Louisiana and the Service resolve disagreements over a hunt plan for this refuge.

Everyone who bought a stamp last year actually contributed to acquiring these valuable properties. As the standard sign shown here indicates, these investments represent "Your Duck Stamp Dollars At Work!"

The MBCC also discussed the extent of activities to acquire wetlands and grasslands in the Dakotas and Montana through the Small Wetland Acquisitions Program (SWAP). It's virtually a race with agricultural and energy development. Over 200,000 acres held by willing owners are currently available for easement or fee-title acquisition. All that's missing is adequate funds (e.g., from the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund or the Land and Water Conservation Fund). The race is on, and bird conservation could be doing better.

In other business, a report was made to the MBCC concerning last year's accomplishments. Almost 63,000 acres were secured last year through Migratory Bird Conservation Fund acquisitions in fee-title and easement properties across the U.S., for refuges and waterfowl production areas (WPAs). That's impressive.

forest and fields. The refuge is managed for large numbers of waterfowl arriving in the fall, migrating songbirds and shorebirds in spring, and provides habitat for tall wading birds in summer. Fully 95.2% of the refuge was acquired through MBCF/Stamp investments.

5) Only two women artists have won the Federal Duck Stamp Competition: Nancy Howe in 1990 (King Eider) and Sherrie Russell Meline in 2005 (Ross's Goose).

6) The first year for self-adhesive - as well as the traditional gummed - stamps was the 1998-1999 stamp (Barrow's Goldeneye, by Robert Steiner).

7) The first Federal Duck Stamp Art Contest open to the general public was in 1966.

8) A current valid Duck Stamp is a "free pass" for all National Wildlife Refuges that charge for admission. It's a real bargain!

9) The Act to create the stamp was signed by Franklin D. Roosevelt on March 16, 1934.

10) The Upper Ouachita NWR in Louisiana is about 47,000 acres in size, consisting of upland pine-hardwood and bottomland hardwood forest, with associated wetlands and open waters. It provides excellent wintering habitat for tens of thousands of ducks and geese. Endangered Red-cockaded Woodpeckers are also found on the refuge as are Bachman's Sparrows. Almost 96% of the refuge has been acquired through MBCF/stamp dollars.

New Stamp to be Released on June 28

"The First Day of Sale Ceremony" for the 2013-2014 Federal Duck Stamp and Junior Duck Stamp will be held on Friday, June 28 at the Bass Pro Shops in Ashland, Virginia, with the event beginning at 10am:

Bass Pro Shops
11550 Lakeridge Parkway
Ashland, VA 23005



The Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation [Duck] Stamp will display Robert Steiner's prize-winning artwork, a beautiful male Common Goldeneye shown here. The two stamps will also be available across the country for sale.

More details on the First Day of Sale and on the stamp can be found [here](#).

About the Friends of the Migratory Bird/Duck Stamp



Our Friends Group is an independent, nonprofit organization dedicated to the promotion, preservation, sales, and better understanding of the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp (commonly called the Duck Stamp). Our organization fosters an appreciation of how the funds collected through the Stamp build the National Wildlife Refuge System.

The purchase of a Stamp is not something that will just benefit ducks, of course. Among the many other bird species, numerous species of shorebirds, long-legged waders, and wetland and grassland songbirds are dependent on habitats derived from Stamp purchases.

And it's not only birds that benefit from the Stamp! Reptiles, amphibians, fish, butterflies, all flourish through Stamp investments. Water quality is also strengthened.

A 15-dollar purchase of a Stamp goes a very long way!

WHAT YOU CAN DO RIGHT NOW: There are many ways you can help support the growth and appreciation of the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation [Duck] Stamp. For starters, become familiar with the Stamp on the [Federal Duck Stamp Office website](#). You can review the content of our [Friends website](#). You can download our flyers and posters for distribution. You can also forward *Wingtips* to friends (See the forwarding tool on the very bottom of the page.) And if you know others who wish to receive this irregular *Wingtips* newsletter, have them ask to be added to our mailing list. See [here](#).

Of course, buy a Stamp - or two - and use/display it proudly. And become a Friend. To find our how to do so, you can visit our [website](#).

Our "Regular Friend" fee is modest, equal to the cost of one current Stamp (\$15), but all Friends are also asked to pledge to buy *two* stamps per year, joining with other individuals and organizations across the country with that promotional effort.

You can also become a "Supporting Friend."

[Become a Friend Today!](#)